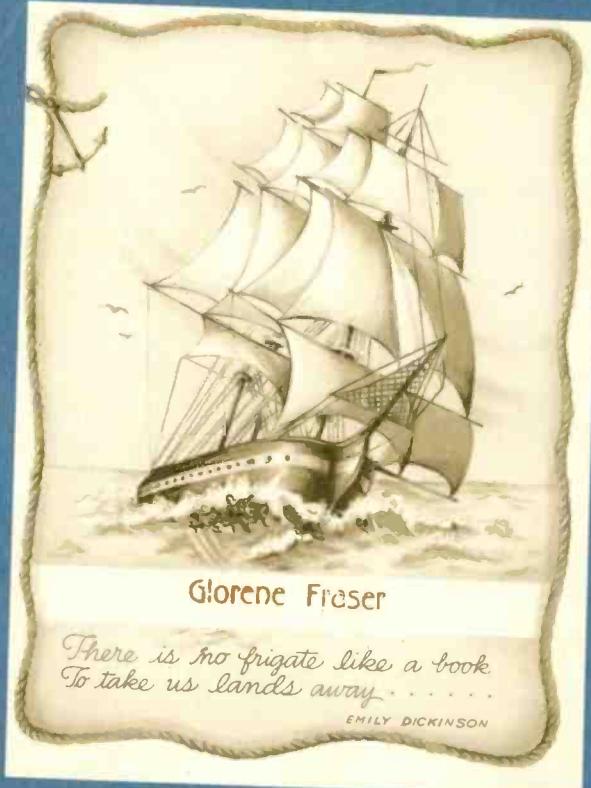


# RADIO DRAMA PRODUCTION

## A Handbook

ROME & WALTER KRULEVITCH



Glorene Fraser

*There is no frigate like a book  
To take us lands away . . . .*

EMILY DICKINSON

# Radio Drama Production

*A HANDBOOK*

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*RINEHART RADIO SERIES*

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Erik Barnouw

RADIO DRAMA IN ACTION

Walter and Rome Krulevitch

RADIO DRAMA PRODUCTION

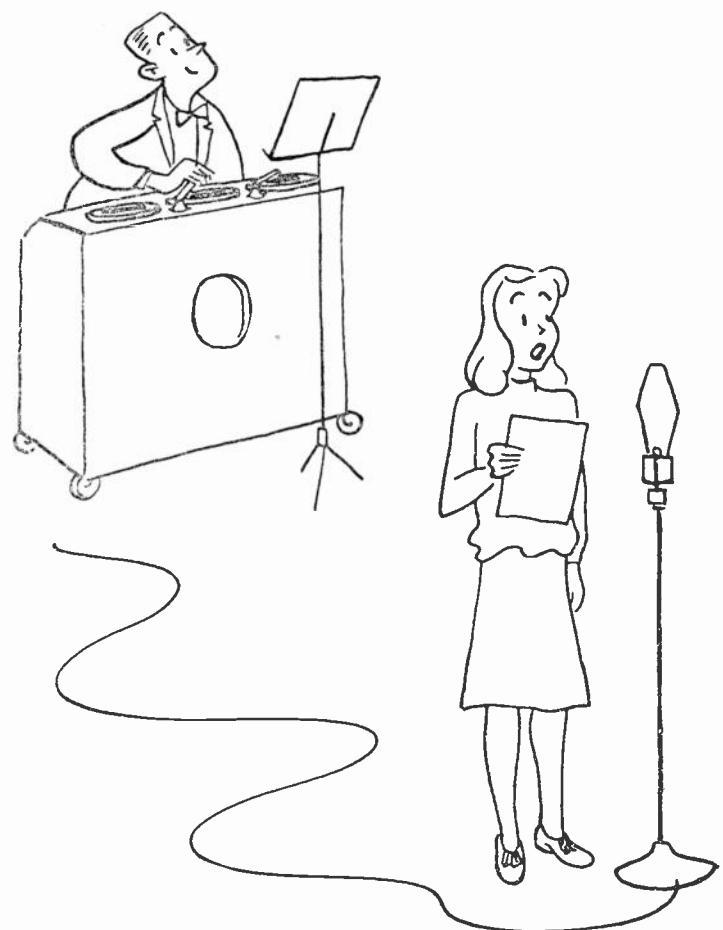
William B. Levenson

TEACHING THROUGH RADIO

Max Wylie

RADIO WRITING

# RADIO DRAMA



Sketches by  
WILLIAM G. HARLEY

RINEHART & COMPANY, INC.

# PRODUCTION

## *A Handbook*



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and

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University of Wisconsin

PUBLISHERS

NEW YORK



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## PREFACE

When radio first achieved academic standing, and took its place on the course lists of colleges and universities, teachers asked for materials. Students flocking into courses in radio—drama, speaking, production, acting, writing, announcing, and composite workshops—needed textbooks. Books were published, many of them excellent, most of them written by professional radio people, accustomed to large stations with splendid facilities and corps of trained actors and technicians. But the average classroom workshop is a modest affair; its actors are students still hesitant and awkward before the microphone; its technicians are usually themselves in training.

It is difficult to adapt to such workshops and classes material written for the professional. We have found it so in the various workshops we have taught. We needed scripts simple enough for beginners to direct; we needed exercises designed to develop facility in elements of radio drama production; we needed scenes in which amateur actors and sound engineers could practice specific skills demanded by the radio play. Because we combine teaching with active participation in radio writing and production we have been able to meet our classroom needs by writing a series of exercises, scenes, and scripts for radio production. This handbook is a compilation of the most successful of our materials, combined with a text offering suggestions for procedure, and a background of production theory.

Although our workshop is held in the well-equipped studios of the University of Wisconsin radio station, we are aware that many successful production courses are conducted in classrooms outfitted with little more than a microphone and a turntable. Consequently we have made the exercises flexible enough to be used by those teaching under the most limiting conditions, and challenging enough to engage the full equipment of the best-stocked radio studios.

With the beginner in mind—the amateur whose first professional production experience may well come in a small local station, with home-talent actors and a homemade script—we have included in an appendix chapters on script editing for producers, and scoring from records, as well as a list of sources of radio plays, and of sound effects. But we realize that most students of radio production are eager to attain the highest professional standards, and our handbook contains scripts and exercises to stimulate creative imaginations, and to encourage those who believe, as we do, that the radio play can be a distinguished dramatic performance, blending artistry and skill, its horizons yet unvisioned.

W. K.  
R. C. K.

*Madison, Wisc.  
January, 1946*

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# I

## Directing the Radio Production



# Chapter 1 ·· THE DIRECTOR, HIS STUDIO, AND HIS ASSISTANTS

There are as many kinds of radio drama directors as there are kinds of people. Some directors are easygoing; some intense. Some directors cue in by hand signal almost every line in a play; others cue only openings of scenes and difficult sound and music routines. There are directors who stand calmly in the control room during a broadcast, nodding at one actor, smiling encouragingly at another. And there are directors who dramatize with facial expression and arm gestures every effect and emotion their cast is producing in the studio. There is no typical radio director and no one formula for direction.

But probably all directors have in common certain general qualities of personality—a flexible imagination, a basic respect for the intelligence of others, and a degree of self-assurance. The good director usually adds to these qualities the ability to control his temper, to organize detail, to give understandable directions and express himself clearly, and to make lightning-quick decisions in moments of tension.

In one word these qualities and abilities spell leadership. But the radio director is a very specialized sort of leader. Working with a small group of artists and technicians, he transforms twenty pages of cold black and white typewritten script into half an hour of absorbing drama. Using only voices and music and sounds he creates pictures and builds scenes, holding the attention of listeners hundreds, sometimes thousands, of miles away. He not only leads his actors and musicians and engineers in their production of a drama, he helps them to interpret it. And the more he knows about each of their arts and skills the more skillfully he

can direct them. He should know at least a little about music and acting, about drama and literature. He should understand some of the technical problems of his medium—what the microphone can and cannot do. He should know something about audiences, particularly radio audiences, and their interests, preferences, and listening habits.

If, when you examine yourself as a potential radio drama director, you find you lack some of the qualities and abilities and appreciations indicated as desirable, you can set yourself the long-range goal of acquiring as many of them as possible. Much easier and quicker will be the job of learning the procedures and routines of direction. What are these procedures and routines? Let us take you now through a production from beginning to end and introduce you as a director to your problems.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A DIRECTOR

1. Your first responsibility as a director is to the script with which you are working. As the author wrote the script he heard the radio broadcast in his mind. The script is a record of what he heard, and through it he attempts to communicate to you not only the story but the very sounds he imagined. Your responsibility and challenge is to re-create them from the written script. Indeed, with your knowledge of the medium and your acquaintance with the devices and techniques at your disposal, you may improve on the author's concept of some of the scenes. By careful casting and imaginative use of sound and music, you can exploit to their

## DIRECTING THE RADIO PRODUCTION

fullest some of the author's ideas. On the other hand, you may have serious limitations in your cast and in your sound and music equipment. But first plan the show as you would like to see it directed, and then come as close as possible to the ideal you have set up.

This responsibility to the script carries beyond your own relationship to it. It is important that you establish the attitude of the cast toward the script. Frequently an actor or an entire cast will berate a script, suggesting that its inferiority is the real cause of their not being able to act convincingly. Quash this at the start. Assume that you are working with a script worthy of your and the cast's best efforts.

2. Your next responsibility is to your cast and to the other people with whom you are working—your sound operator, musician or music assistant, engineer, and production assistant. Respect their persons and their time. As director you are in complete charge. Give your orders firmly and concisely, but maintain a friendliness and courtesy which shows unmistakably that your production is a cooperative venture. Never allow yourself whatever personal pleasure you may get from sarcasm and, above all, avoid embarrassing anyone. Be generous with thanks and praise when either of these is due. It is remarkable what a lift such a little thing as a wink or a smile of approval or an "OK" sign can give an actor. Insist on the maximum each member of your cast can deliver, and give him the satisfaction of knowing that he has done his best in your show.

Respect your cast's time. It is easy for a person with just a few lines in a fifteen-minute production to become impatient in an extended rehearsal period. A certain amount of waiting is inevitable, but you can do much to avoid unnecessary waste of your cast's time. Plan details in advance so that during a rehearsal you will not have to make decisions that could have been made beforehand. Schedule your rehearsals accurately. Arrive on time, and, if the studio must be set up, see that this is done before the cast arrives. Try to keep your rehearsals from lasting beyond the time they are scheduled to end.

### *YOU ACQUAINT YOURSELF WITH THE STUDIO AND CONTROL ROOM*

Your studio may be a little square room lined with acoustic board. It may be a modern, scientifically treated studio with staggered walls and live and dead ends. It may have a single microphone or it may have several. It may have a platform for orchestra, an organ, and a piano, or its music facilities may be limited to several albums of records. It may have a three-turntable sound truck with variable speeds or a single turntable. Probably it comes somewhere between these two extremes. Whatever the case, this is your studio, and as director you must learn its properties, and understand how to use it.

Since the scripts you direct will be written in the language of sound, music, and voices, test your studio for all three. Start with voices. Find out what kind of microphone or microphones you have, whether they are "unidirectional," "bidirectional," or "nondirectional," and how studio fades are best executed for them.<sup>1</sup> Test a voice on a microphone in various parts of the studio so that you will know at what spot it transmits best. If your studio seems so live that voices have a barny sound or so dead that voices lack luster, you will have to adjust to it or remedy it. An engineer is the best person to prescribe the remedy. You as the director, however, can experiment with adjustments of microphone placement to get the most from your studio as it is. Remember that your actors' mikes must be placed so that actors can watch you in the control room.

You will probably have a separate sound mike. When your acting mike or mikes are placed to suit you, mark off the best position for sound equipment. Sound operators, like actors, must be

<sup>1</sup> A "unidirectional" microphone picks up sound from one side only. The dynamic mike is an example of this type.

A "bidirectional" microphone can pick up sound from two sides. The most common of this type is the coffin-shaped "ribbon" mike, particularly well suited for drama.

A "non-directional" microphone can pick up sounds equally well from all sides. This type is illustrated by the "eightball" mike.

Manufacturers have developed microphones which can be used for any and all directional pickups. The "cardioid" is an example of such an instrument.

able to watch the director, and the sound mike is best placed some distance from the actor's mike. Leave ample room for manual sound equipment, and locate the sound truck so that its speaker will feed into the sound mike but is on the dead side of the actors' mikes.

Your music equipment is less flexible than the rest. Location of the music microphone will depend upon the location of your music facilities. An organ is rooted to the spot on which it stands. A piano can be moved as, in a more limited way, can an orchestra. If recorded selections comprise your music equipment, you may play them in the control room or on the sound truck. Make what adjustments you can or feel are necessary for effective use of music.

Until you understand your studio and its equipment, you cannot direct well. Examine and survey the studio as a theater of operations, in which a cast, sound engineers, and musicians will bring a drama to life. You guide and direct all these activities from the control room, and it is important for you to understand your control room as well as your studio.

In most of your rehearsals and during the broadcast, you will be directing the production according to what you hear over the control room loudspeaker. It is important that the loudspeaker be in excellent condition to give an accurate representation of voices, sounds, and music.

Learn the details of the control board. How many channels are available for your production? Each knob dial on the control board represents a single channel. How many are microphone channels? Are any reserved for other purposes? Is there a turntable for playing records in the control room? Is there provision for a talk-back—a microphone set up in the control room with a speaker in the studio so that you can converse with your cast during rehearsal without having to go into the studio. Can a talk-back be hooked up with earphones for your assistant, so that during the broadcast, when the talk-back speaker is cut, you can communicate with him?

Your control room education should go far beyond understanding what the knobs and dials are

for, and what you have to work with. You need not be an operator to direct a show, but you should be able to sit at the board in emergency and "ride gain," cut and open mikes, and if there is a turn-table, play records on it without ruining them or the arm. "Riding gain" is the controlling of microphone volume in the control room, and opening and cutting mike channels is a business of manipulating switches or buttons. For both, however simple they may seem, you need some experience and the instruction of an operator. Playing records is mostly a matter of skill and practice. You will find it helpful not only in emergencies but in ordinary production situations to understand what your operator is doing.

At the very least, be familiar with the equipment in the control room and studio in which you will work. No matter how much it seems to lack, if you use what it does have skillfully you can produce good shows. And keep in mind that the most elaborate equipment will not substitute for an alert and imaginative producer.

### YOU SELECT AN ASSISTANT

The work involved in your production will be immeasurably easier if you have a right-hand man always standing by. A production assistant is helpful in a number of ways. He calls members of the cast for rehearsals. He sets up the studio for you before rehearsals. He helps time the script. During rehearsals he runs any errands necessary or checks up on late members of the cast, allowing you to remain in the control room to keep your cast together. During dress rehearsal he may take notes for you. In the studio he is a liaison between you in the control room and any member of the cast who needs emergency direction. If during the airing of a show one of the actors who refuses to look regularly at the control room has crept up to the microphone, a signal to your assistant, and the actor can be moved back. To help you maintain continual contact with your assistant your engineer may be able to patch in a set of earphones so that you can communicate from the control room to the studio throughout the airing of your production.

## DIRECTING THE RADIO PRODUCTION

Otherwise you can maintain contact by means of standard studio sign language.

The assistant is especially helpful after the production is over. He may either supervise or be responsible for the collection of all scripts and their proper arrangement and stapling for filing,

and he may assist in putting all manual sounds and recordings in their places, and in cleaning up the studio. After the pressure and concentration involved in producing a show is relaxed, it is most gratifying to have someone on whom you can rely to help clear up the final, unexciting details.

## Chapter 2 • ANALYZING AND CASTING THE SCRIPT

Surveying your studio and control room domain is a preliminary and general step in becoming a director. Direction actually begins when you accept the challenge of transforming ten or twenty pages of typewritten script into a fifteen-minute or half-hour drama, with life, color, mood, and emotional intensity.

Only a portion of your time is spent in the studio or control room. At the first you work alone, reading the script much as you would a story to acquaint yourself with its plot, characters, and general tone and movement. Then, either with your assistant or by yourself, you read the script aloud, time it, reread and analyze it, cast it, and before you set foot in the studio, direct it mentally.

### ***YOU READ THE SCRIPT ALOUD***

To understand the script as a broadcast play rather than as a narrative, read the script aloud before you cast. Do not stop to ponder detailed problems of direction—whether to use a board fade in this scene, or ask that character to use a foreign accent. Many of the problems will suggest their own answers. Others will need close study. Let yourself be conscious of them but make no decisions.

Reading alone, or alternating characters with your assistant, gives the reading a semblance of an actual broadcast. You will find that the sound of your voice gives the script a much more realistic touch, helps suggest the mood or characters needed, and clarifies production problems that you will meet later. As far as possible even simulate the sound effects aloud. If the script calls for a knock at the door, rap your desk. If a telephone ring is

indicated, burr an “r” aloud. Hum some kind of music for transitions. In other words, “lift the script from the paper” as much as possible. When you have become an experienced director, you may find you can accomplish this with silent reading. Until then, reading aloud helps to give you a concept of the show as drama, and an estimate of its over-all time.

### ***YOU TIME THE SCRIPT***

The timing of the first reading is, of course, rough. But it will indicate whether drastic cuts must be made to fit the script into a quarter-hour period, or whether it will require substantial fill to bring it up to time.

You use a stop watch, even in this first reading, and as a check have your assistant time the reading on a stop watch of his own. Read straight through the script if you can; if you must stop your reading be sure to cut the time on your watch. At the end, note the over-all time of the script. Later, in rehearsal you will take a running time<sup>1</sup> but now it serves your purpose to know that in your first reading the script ran 14:10 or 28:30.

### ***YOU REREAD AND ANALYZE THE SCRIPT***

This is the point at which you produce the show on paper. It is the stage at which you will try to

<sup>1</sup> Running time refers to the timing of a script in sections. Thus, at the end of a music cue on page 3 you might mark a time of 4:40, or 4 minutes and 40 seconds. If on the broadcast your watch reads 5:10 when you arrive at this point, you know that the show is “running long,” and consequently will speed it up. Many directors mark the running time every 30 seconds throughout a script; some mark as often as every 15 seconds.

anticipate and analyze all the problems of direction that may arise when you begin your rehearsals in the studio. First, and most important, you must capture the mood and spirit of the script. Is it a satire, a fantasy, broad comedy, a documentary, a straight drama? Is it an adaptation of a novel? Then read at least a few chapters of the novel. You will probably get an important insight into the significance of a few lines of narration in the script which may summarize several chapters of the book. Or you may meet a fully developed character in the novel who has only a few lines or a short scene in the radio version of the story. With this information you will give much more effective direction to the actor taking those lines.

Now that you have established the mood of the show, proceed to break down the production into all its elements. How shall the show be paced? Where is the climax? The minor or subclimaxes? Should pause be used within a scene? Perhaps a pause should be substituted for sound or music cue? Sometimes a few seconds of dead air are much more dramatic than either sound effects or music.

If you are working with a student script and are able to consult with the script writer before your rehearsals begin, this is the time to do it. After a considered analysis of the script, you might bring to the author questions such as these:

"I'm not sure I understand this scene between Lincoln and his wife on page five. As I read it, the scene seems to end best on line eleven. But you've extended it to line fifteen. Will you clarify it for me, please?" "Is this sound effect necessary?" "Do you want the narrator to fade as he leads us into the various scenes?" "Do you want music (or sound) behind this entire scene on page seven, or should the music be out by line three?" "The script is long. Can we cut two minutes?"

It may be that the script writer will agree with all your suggestions. If he differs, you will want to try both ways in rehearsal and make your decision as the director. In any event, the author will appreciate having been consulted.

If the script writer is not available for consultation, it is still just as fruitful for you to raise all

these questions.<sup>2</sup> Raise them for yourself so that when you get your cast in the studio you can say concisely, "Let's try page five, first with sound behind the entire scene, and then with sound out after line three." In other words, start your rehearsals knowing from your careful analysis of the script what problems you face. In time you can solve many of them without studio experiment, but you save valuable rehearsal hours by recognizing these problems in advance. This is the purpose of your preliminary study, and may take several rereadings before your analysis is complete.

### **YOU GIVE THE SCRIPT TO THE TYPIST**

This is an unimaginative detail of your production, but a detail which, if properly handled, will save you no end of trouble. Indicate on the original of the script the number of copies you want mimeographed or "dittoed." Include a copy for each member of the cast, the control engineer, the musician, and one or more for sound. Then add at least five extra copies for filing purposes, for such emergencies as lost scripts or special requests for copies of it. Be sure that all details are on the original which you give to the typist. Check for the following: Title page in proper form, opening and closing announcements, blanks for proper crediting of all participants at the close of the script, title of any music fill that may be required. If a character's name has been changed, see that it is changed consistently throughout the script. Mark clearly any changes in sound, music, or dialogue. When the script finally goes to the typist, it should contain all changes except, of course, those that you will make later in the actual process of production. Give the original to the typist in time for her to have copies prepared well before your first rehearsal. Have her attach pages with clips, not staples, since the pages of scripts should be loose.

The scripts included in this manual are set up in accordance with one of the accepted formats. If you should want to make additional copies of

<sup>2</sup> See "Script Editing for Directors," pages 322-325.

any of these, few, if any, changes need be made before the script is given to the typist. If, however, you are using scripts written by students, any of the changes suggested above may be necessary before typing.

## YOU CAST THE SHOW

If workshop auditions have been conducted at some previous date, you will have on file cards similar to those described on pages 313-315 listing your available talent. You may not find among these cards the names of the right persons to play the parts in your production. You may have to look further, and hold auditions for certain of the roles. Do not be too easily satisfied. You may not be able to cast the perfect student actor for each role, but do not stop your search until you have found the best person available for the part.

Oddly, the best person may not always be the best actor. He will be a good actor, but because the radio audience meets actors only by voice, voice quality is an important factor in radio casting. Your script cast list often indicates needed quality: "John—gruff old Englishman"; or "Linda—young, soft-voiced, eager." The best character actor in your workshop group may have a fine English accent, but a voice which could never be roughened to John's gruffness. If John's gruffness is essential to his character, you may feel it would be better not to cast your best character actor in the part, but one a little less able and with a voice quality more suited to John's part. Say that Linda is the lead in your drama, and the finest young lead in your workshop group has a rich, brilliant voice quality. You may decide that Linda's character is immutably tied to a soft, almost breathless voice, and that another actress with somewhat less ability but the right voice will be better.

Of course, voice quality itself is not the deciding factor in the choice of a player for a given part. Plain ordinary acting ability ranks high, as do special qualifications for specific characterization. But voice qualities are important in the choice of the cast as a whole. Avoid casting students whose voices have similar qualities, especially if they are

to play opposite each other at any point in the script. Cast for voice contrast. Few scripts have more than four major roles, usually two male and two female. Choose a tenor and a baritone, a soprano and an alto, or other easily distinguishable combinations of voices. If one actor "doubles"—plays more than one part—be sure his two roles are not too close to each other, or the audience will recognize the similarity of voice in the two characters.

When you have balanced and weighed all these considerations—individual voice qualities, combined voice colors, acting ability, and special qualifications for certain parts—you can cast your show. You will probably dislike compromising on certain roles, but casting is often a series of unavoidable compromises.

Your casting sheet may be in any of a number of forms. A simple casting sheet is shown on page 11. It is important that the mechanics of filling out this sheet be followed carefully. First copy into the left-hand column of your casting sheet the list of characters indicated on the title page of the script. On the basis of your analysis of the script determine whether there is opportunity for doubling. If you have ample talent available and want to give as many students as possible a chance to participate, you need not double on any parts.

Indicate in the right-hand column the part or parts to be played by each member of the cast. This tentative casting may have to be altered later. In the actual studio rehearsal you may find that you get better results by having two members of the cast exchange parts. Or a single line when doubled by a good actor may be more effective than when it is delivered by a less talented person. But if they are made carefully, most of your decisions will probably hold.

Fix your rehearsal times and indicate at which rehearsals an engineer is needed in the control room. Notify members of the cast when scripts will be available.

At this point your assistant can take over. He will look up any telephone numbers of cast members which you have not already jotted down. He will phone or otherwise get in touch with all par-

## DIRECTING THE RADIO PRODUCTION

ticipants and notify you of any who are unable to come. After he has done this, he will post the casting sheet on the workshop bulletin board so that it can be easily consulted by anyone in the

show. Later, you will want to take the casting sheet to rehearsals as a convenient check on attendance, and, in case the names of all the actors are not well known to you, to refresh your memory.

## A SAMPLE CASTING SHEET

TITLE OF SHOW .....

CALL FOR SCRIPT ..... STUDIO ENGINEER

REHEARSALS .....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

ON THE AIR      TO BE RECORDED      (*Cross out one*)

CAST	ROLE	O. K.
I. ....	.....	
2. ....	.....	
3. ....	.....	
4. ....	.....	
5. ....	.....	
6. ....	.....	
7. ....	.....	
8. ....	.....	
9. ....	.....	
10. ....	.....	
II. ....	.....	
I 2. ....	.....	

SOUND ..... DIRECTOR .....

..... NOTES .....

MUSIC .....

# Chapter 3 · · · SOUND, MUSIC, AND LEVELS

The important roles played by sound and music in the radio drama are discussed on pages 53 and 77-80. Here we treat them as problems in direction. In the long run it is the same thing, but before you as a director can stand in the control room and cue in a delicate music transition or a climactic sound effect, holding it at its most effective level, you will have done a good deal of backstage production.

## ***YOU SELECT A SOUND OPERATOR AND SOUND EFFECTS***

After you have studied the script carefully and decided on the purpose and the nature of the sound cues indicated in it, you have the double problem of finding the right effects in your library and of finding a student who can manipulate the sound effects skillfully.<sup>1</sup>

If you have available a student who is an experienced sound engineer, or if the station over which you are broadcasting provides one, your sound problem is much easier. However, frequently you must rely on students who have little or no experience in operating the sound truck or sound turntable. No matter how simple the sound routines seem, schedule a separate rehearsal with your sound engineer.

In the ideal sound rehearsal you will have an engineer in the control room while your assistant reads in the studio on the cast microphone so that you can fix your sound levels just as if the cast were performing. But even if an engineer is not available, you can give your sound man a good

<sup>1</sup> A list of sound effects necessary for the exercises in this manual is given on page 326.

deal of practicing in the cuing and swelling and fading of sound. If he is inexperienced, he will need to develop an assurance with his sound tools, records or manual effects, before he joins the cast at the regular rehearsal. An extra rehearsal will give him this assurance and will also save the time and nerves of the cast later on. Remember to select several sound men if your sound routines are difficult.

If your student sound operator is not experienced, check with him to see that he has selected the best available sound effects in your library. You may have to test to decide which of two recorded sounds is the better, or whether a manual or a recorded effect is the more convincing. Make all such decisions before you try to integrate the sound into the cast rehearsal.

It is important to have both recorded and manual sound libraries accurately catalogued. If a record librarian is not provided by the station or workshop staff, place a student librarian in charge of sound and music records and materials. Caution your sound operator to treat all sound materials with the utmost care. See that he does not pile records on top of one another unless they are protected with folders. If the sound truck is not equipped with permanent needles, remind him to insert new needles into the turntable arms before each rehearsal.

## ***YOU SELECT MUSIC***

Whether your musical transitions are supplied by an orchestra, an organ, or records, your script will require long and concentrated study before you can select your music. In your analysis of the

script decide what purpose the music is to serve, and estimate the approximate length of each music cue. Determine whether a music transition should be cut before the scene it introduces, whether it should fade under the first line or two of the scene, or whether it should be used as a background for the entire scene. When you have clearly in mind what you want, meet with the musician in charge or, if you are scoring the show from records, begin your search for recorded musical bridges. If a workshop is obliged to use recorded music, it is helpful to have one or two students who make a special project of becoming thoroughly acquainted with transitions in various moods. These students can guide you in scoring your production.

If you have an extensive record library from which to select, the problem of scoring a show is somewhat simplified, though it is never a simple problem. It means only that you have a larger selection from which to choose until you finally find the right transition. A brief segment played by the violin in a symphony may have just the mood you want for one scene; a passage played by another section of the orchestra may provide the climax for another scene. These interludes can be found in many extended symphonies, but they are frequently short, lasting for only a few seconds. If you have or develop an intimate acquaintance with several symphonic works, you can build up a library of transitions that may serve you often in your productions.<sup>2</sup>

However, the scope and magnitude of a full symphony orchestra often is unsuitable for use as transition material in a drama of smaller proportions. For example, a symphony orchestra may not be congruous in a light comedy. Fertile sources for musical transitions can be found in recordings by ensembles smaller than the symphony orchestra, such as the orchestras of Morton Gould, Dave Rose, Russel Bennet, André Kostelanetz, and others, that play highly arranged versions of popular melodies. You may wish to add albums played by these and similar orchestras to your basic library of classical records.

<sup>2</sup> For workshops with limited funds, a few minimum albums are suggested on pages 326-327.

In choosing music for transitions, never select by title alone. The title may be an index to the mood or emotional tone of the selection, but more often than not it is misleading. Avoid using music so familiar that the listener will have an impulse to complete the melody in his own mind, unless the purpose of the cue is to borrow the associations of a particular selection for an emotional effect in the drama.

Scripts are usually written with the assumption that music will be live. And often it is impossible to find in recorded music the precise cue called for. In this case, it may be possible to omit the music cue entirely. If some kind of transition is necessary, you may be able to substitute a sound effect or a line of dialogue or narration.

Sometimes, in order to achieve motivation for a music cue, a normal procedure of the drama must be reversed. Ordinarily, the music cue should grow out of the drama and be motivated by the tag line or cue preceding the music. When recorded transitions are used, the line cue sometimes must be rewritten to give the music relevance and to make it fit more neatly into the production.

If you are working with a musician, see that he has read the script carefully before the two of you meet to work out the music cues. It is difficult to explain to him what you want if he is not acquainted with the story and with the mood of the script. In describing to him what you want it is always helpful if you can hum or otherwise specifically suggest the musical phrase. An imaginative musician will be able to improve on what you suggest, but he usually needs something to start with. Remember, however, that no matter how good a musician he is, you probably will have a better idea of the dramatic effect you want to achieve with each transition.

Suppose you are working with an organist. He may have a tendency to make the bridges longer or fuller than you wish. Have no hesitation in telling him just what you have in mind. But, on the other hand, remember that at this stage each tentative transition the organist plays for your approval represents an earnest effort on his part. Be courteous and encouraging in suggesting

changes in what he offers. Instead of saying impatiently, "No, that's not what I want," say, "That's close; try it a little faster and without the bass."

### *LEVELS IN THE CONTROL ROOM*

One of the most difficult problems for the novice director is that of learning to establish good levels. It is especially difficult since there are no constants in levels. Each actor's voice level is a comparative one, depending on the force of the person's voice opposite whom he is playing at the microphone. There are two ways of checking an actor's level to determine whether he should decrease or increase the volume of his voice. The first method is, of course, by listening to the loudspeaker and noting whether his voice blasts by comparison with that of the person playing opposite him. The other method of checking his level is on the control board dial. A zero level on the control board dial indicates a maximum level. If actor A's normal voice level "rides" beyond zero while the voice of actor B opposite whom he is playing "rides" a little below zero, it is clear that actor A is talking with too much force. In such a case it is likely that you will instruct this actor to speak more softly. You could also get a good balance in levels by having him back away from the microphone, but if you allow him to move too far back, the perspective will change so that he sounds as if he is some distance away from the person to whom he is talking.

To get a good balance between the levels of the

actors' voices and the sound effects, you will find it is advisable to have a separate sound microphone set up on the dead side of your cast microphone. By using two microphones you will have much better control of both your sound and your cast. Place your sound microphone two or three feet from the speaker of your sound truck or turntable. If you are using recorded sound, it is clear that there are two points at which the volume of the record can be regulated, since you have a volume control both on the turntable and in the control room. It is usually best to avoid riding the gain too high on the sound turntable in the studio. In following this procedure you are freer to regulate the balance of sound and cast in the control room.

What is true of sound is true of music. If you are using an ensemble or an organ, a separate microphone is advisable. If, however, the sound and music cues do not overlap, or if both of them can be ridden at the same level, a single microphone can be used for both sound and music. In the event that you are using recorded music, you will play it on the control room turntable. In this way it is easily possible to require no more than two microphones (one for cast and one for sound) in the studio.

If your production is a complex one and you are not limited in your facilities, there is, of course, no ceiling on the number of microphones you may employ. Many workshops, however, are limited in facilities, and may even be obliged to use a single microphone, doing the best they can to balance sound and cast on this single outlet.

# Chapter 4 • REHEARSALS AND BROADCAST

Weaving together sound, music, and voice into the fabric of the broadcast show is an intricate process that follows no rigid pattern. The individual sound and music rehearsals of Chapter 3 might fit under the title of this chapter. However, they are so much a part of sound and music selection that it seems unwise to separate them. And, in the actual production situation, they might be held at any time after the show is cast. Additional sound and music rehearsals are sometimes held right before the dress rehearsal as a director seeks to improve an unsatisfactory routine.

But there comes a time when the parts of the show are put together, when the entire cast meets for a reading and microphone rehearsals with sound and music. While extra individual rehearsals may be needed to help an actor conquer a difficult part, or straighten out a confused sequence, the director should schedule in advance what he expects to be the maximum number of general rehearsals for his production. He should plan each rehearsal so that it makes definite progress toward the ultimate production, and the moment when he raises his hand in the control room and tells his silent, waiting studio group, "Standby! This is it!"

## *YOU SCHEDULE REHEARSALS WITH THE TRAFFIC MANAGER*

If there is more than one student production in the same week, or if studio facilities are used by any other groups, it is particularly important to have a workshop traffic manager. It is the job of the traffic manager to schedule all rehearsals on a traffic sheet, indicating the time of rehearsal, the studio required, the name of the group, the di-

rector in charge, if and when an engineer is needed, if and when a recording is to be made. He will tell you whether a studio is available at a certain hour, or if another group has already signed for that time. Schedule through him, check times with him, and, through your assistant or by yourself, inform your cast of the rehearsal schedule. Before each rehearsal, see that all equipment is on hand and that the studio is set up.

## *YOUR CAST MEETS FOR THE FIRST READING*

Insist that everyone connected with your production attend the first reading. This will be your first opportunity to talk to the members of your cast as a group. You will want to make a general statement about the play, its mood and characters. Then begin the reading and time it with your stop watch, marking the running time on each page of your script.

The purpose of this first reading is to give your cast a notion of the movement of the show from beginning to end. For many of your actors it may be a sight reading. Consequently, do not at this point expect excellent interpretation or well-defined characters. Read right through with as few pauses as possible. There are, however, a few instances when it is advisable to interrupt the reading (and cut your time on the stop watch). An actor may miss completely the point of a character or of a line. Set him right quickly without going into too much detail. If someone mispronounces a word or a name, stop him in his tracks and correct it. This is the kind of error that often persists, and under the pressure of a broadcast situation, a per-

son easily reverts to an erroneous pronunciation which had been repeated two or three times before it was corrected by the director. You may find that the voices of two students playing opposite each other are almost indistinguishable. This may be so immediately clear that you will be prompted to make a switch in parts without waiting for the finish of the first reading. But by and large keep your comments to a minimum.

The fact that the first reading is frequently a sight reading makes it a natural opportunity for the actor who likes to clown. If the students are not too facetious, clowning usually is not harmful, but you will have to decide whether it interferes with the purpose of your first reading. With student casts it is generally well not to let horseplay get too much out of hand.

In order to keep your timing as nearly accurate as possible, and to help give the cast the feel of the show, it is a good idea to vocalize the various musical and sound cues. Simulate the sound effects and hum the music transitions. And after the reading is over and the cast is acquainted with the script, you can say, "Well, now you've got an idea of what it's all about. Let's take it around the mike."

Your test as a director comes when you enter the control room. From this point on, until the airing or recording of the show, all your judgments concerning the production will be made on the basis of what you hear in the control room.

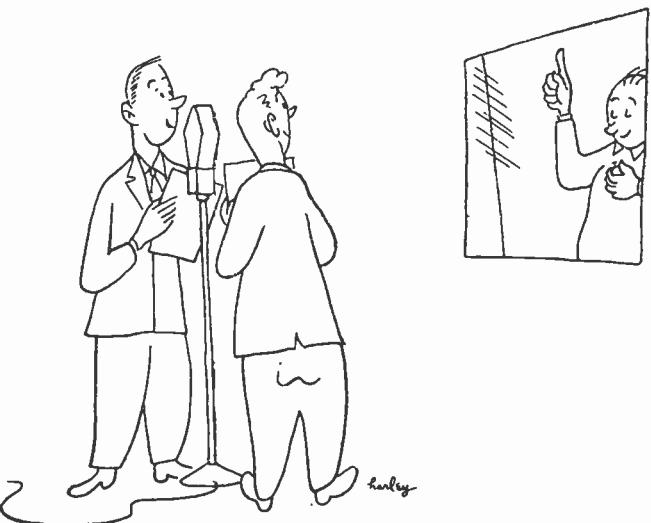
### **YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE ENGINEER**

In the control room you will find how completely you are at the mercy of the engineer at the controls. If he is alert and aware of what you are trying to do, you will not have to worry about his part in the production. See that he marks all his cues carefully. Whenever a voice, sound, or music cue appears on a scene instruct him to mark on his script the level at which it must be ridden. All music and sound cues especially should be circled or underlined just as members of the cast mark their speeches. If your directions are clear, the

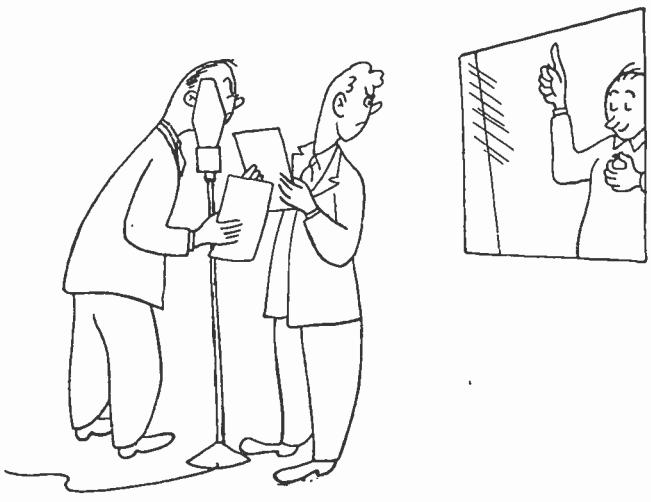
engineer will do his best to give you the effect you want. You can express your appreciation by giving him a by-line when credits are announced at the end of the broadcast.

### **THE MICROPHONE REHEARSAL**

Before beginning the microphone rehearsal, check the studio with your eye to see if your assistant has set up the equipment properly. The



*Place microphone like this . . .*



*not like this.*

cast microphone should be so placed as to enable an actor on either side of the microphone to glance up at you without having to turn completely around. In other words, a live side of the microphone should not be parallel with the control room. Be sure that the dead side of the sound microphone is facing the live side of the cast microphone. This arrangement will keep a loud sound effect from feeding over the cast microphone excessively.

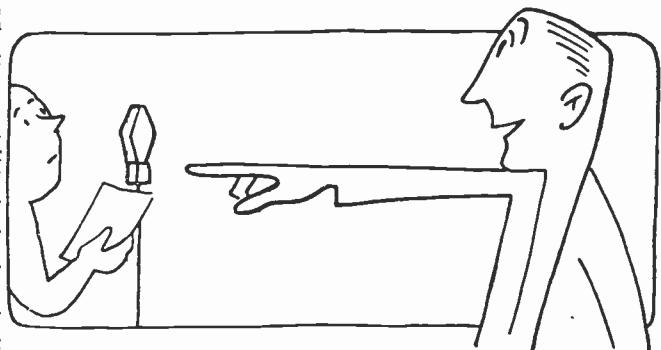
Absence of intimacy and a lack of appreciation of the value of pause are probably the two chief faults of much workshop acting. Instead of speaking as one person to another in an easy but clear conversational manner, students often project their voices as if they were on a stage. If there is a tendency toward this error in your cast, be sure that you establish clearly a sign-language symbol for "Be quiet." Place your index finger on your lips as if to say, "Sh-sh, baby's asleep," or use the standard sign illustrated on page 319. If a student is given to projecting his voice too strongly, he will probably revert to his habit during the broadcast. A glance at your signal in the control room, and he will be reminded of his error.

The effectiveness of pause is often not fully appreciated. Some of your actors may rush through from one thought to another without stopping to let the meaning of the first sink in. They may need to savor a word or an idea instead of speeding on to the next line.

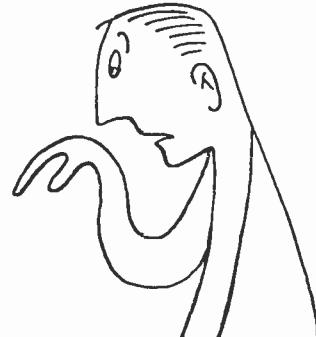
Another actor may sound as if he is obviously reading instead of speaking the lines of a character. Sometimes a key to clearing up this difficulty lies in the use of contractions. Tell him not to say, "I will go when I am through." Rather, "I'll go when I'm through." Not, "I do not want to," but, "I don't want to." Not, "You don't say," but "Y' don't say." Such use of contractions will help an actor to "take his lines off the paper" and make them sound real and convincing.

Have your cast go through each scene. After each scene is over, stop the show and comment. You may want to try it all over again after your comments. Make your directions definite and concise. Don't say timidly, "Would you like to take

that again?" Rather, "Try it again, please." Not, "Well, that's pretty good," but, "Not quite perfect yet; try it again, please. And John, be much more hushed and intimate this time." Signals should be clear and precise: definite cues with a straight fore-



*Point cues like this . . .*



*not like this.*

finger, no limp hands; definite fades and cuts, and "slow down" signals.<sup>1</sup>

Instruct members of the cast to use pencils generously. Tell them to mark their speeches, and all cues that might possibly escape their attention on the broadcast. There will be many instances after sound or music or pauses or board fades when the actor will have to wait for a cue from you before beginning his line. Have him write the word "Cue" or the letter "Q" boldly before such a line.

<sup>1</sup> A complete list of annotated illustrations of radio sign-language symbols is included on pages 316-321 of this manual.

Mark your own script the same way so that you will not forget to give him his cue at the proper time.

Do not hesitate to repeat a scene until you get what you want. If an actor does not seem to grasp the idea of a particular scene, you may have to let it go and see him later for a private rehearsal. If there is no time for one, and he seems unable to interpret the part, you may need to demonstrate for him. But try first every other way of letting him work out his interpretation himself.

Insist that your cast give you the full impact of dramatic episodes, and see that they understand just what you want in the way of pacing and climax. Encourage your actors and maintain an even temper and courteous attitude throughout your rehearsal. Be especially careful about taking advantage of the cast's time for rehearsing individual sound and music cues. As mentioned earlier, the sound and music must be prepared at separate rehearsals, either immediately before the general cast rehearsal or at some previous time. If this is done, then the rehearsal with cast requires only the integration of these sounds with the actors' lines. There are, of course, certain scenes involving the use of sound that must wait for the cast as a whole—for example, a live crowd scene with several voices near the microphone, to be wiped out with a board fade. This would require rehearsal with cast and sound truck to determine whether the studio crowd should be reinforced by a recorded crowd effect.

Perhaps you are obliged to hold cast rehearsals on two separate days, or twice in a single day at different times. A student workshop does not have the advantages of professional casts, but there is some compensation in the fact that it can have extended rehearsals without being obliged to pay AFRA overtime rates. You may schedule a first reading and a brief microphone rehearsal, dismiss the cast, and then work on sound and music respectively. The next day you may schedule microphone, cue, and dress rehearsal. In all you will probably want to use about three hours of rehearsal for a fifteen-minute drama, exclusive of the time you spend on the script by yourself and in

individual sound and music rehearsals. During at least two of these hours you will want an engineer in the control room so that you can direct from the control booth.

### THE CUE REHEARSAL

Too much rehearsal destroys a cast's zest for a show.

The cue rehearsal offers the advantage of going over all the difficult places in the script without taking the time to plough through the well-tilled soil of extended scenes that already have been sufficiently rehearsed. You will have to decide how thorough a cue rehearsal you want. If the play has a number of complicated music cues, you may wish to run through only the last line preceding each one and the first line following. Or, if the play includes many elaborate sound routines, you may want to spend the time reading lines preceding and following the sound cues. On the other hand, you may feel it necessary to run through every major cue in which a different actor, sound, or music bridge makes an entry, omitting only extended speeches and long scenes of dialogue.

This rehearsal need not be uninterrupted. If a particular cue does not run smoothly, stop and go over it again. After the cue rehearsal is over, you are ready for a complete dress rehearsal.

### THE DRESS REHEARSAL

For the dress rehearsal every person connected with the show must be in the studio and stay there until the play is completed. Prepare to take a careful running time check of the show, since this will be the closest to the actual broadcast of anything you have done up to this point.

Do not interrupt the dress rehearsal, but keep notes on a separate sheet of paper. Jot down the pages, line numbers, and a descriptive word or note covering a point on which you want to make suggestions after the rehearsal is over. Concentrate on the way the show sounds over the control room speaker. Listen critically.

## YOU COMMENT ON THE SHOW AFTER THE DRESS REHEARSAL

You should so schedule the dress rehearsal as to allow yourself ample time to review the production for the entire cast. Go into the studio and ask for everybody's attention. Consult your page of notes and make your suggestions and criticisms as specific and concise as you can. Your comments might run something like this:

"Steve, on page five, beginning on line three, you were too close to the mike. Glance at me more often to check your mike distance."

"Joe, you're still shouting too much. Keep it intimate."

"Mary Ann, on page three you were a little slow in picking up your cues. But you were fine in your last scene."

"Clayton, you didn't sound at all excited on page seven. Let's really get mad next time."

"Paul, I guess we caught you napping on page eight. Mark that cue and please watch it."

"Isabel, your sound cue on page ten was too loud, and it dropped out too suddenly. Take a much more gradual fade."

"Herb, you rushed your scene on page eleven. Take your time. Enjoy it a little more."

"Esther, watch me for a cue. We missed your first word on page twelve because you didn't wait for a cue after the board fade."

"Don, the organ behind the scene on page thirteen was too loud. I had your microphone cut completely and was picking up music on the cast mike, but it was still too strong. It obscured Paul's lines. About half that volume, please. Otherwise the music's beautiful."

These are just a few of the many kinds of comments that you may make. Make them without excitement and in as encouraging a manner as you can. If you are tense and concerned about the quality of the performance, don't let your anxiety be evident to the cast. If you do, your tenseness may be reflected in the final broadcast.

If possible, after the dress rehearsal, it is a good idea to give your cast an opportunity to relax for ten or fifteen minutes before the broadcast. Give

everyone a dead line of a few minutes before broadcast time when he must be back in the studio.

## YOU MAKE PROVISIONAL CUTS

If your original timing of the show was long after the first reading, you will have made specific cuts in the script to guard against running over time. The important thing to remember in cutting is that all members of the cast must mark the cuts carefully. To insure against any misunderstanding, have the actors whose lines are affected by the cut read aloud their lines as altered.

If, after the dress rehearsal, you find the show still runs overtime or so close to time as to give concern, make a provisional cut. A provisional cut is a tentative cut, toward the latter part of the script, which can be taken during the broadcast if the show runs long. Usually a production speeds up in the actual broadcast. When your show is on the air and nearing its conclusion, you may find that by comparison with your dress rehearsal time you are thirty seconds ahead of schedule. In this case give the signal to the cast to avoid the provisional cut. If, however, the show goes along at about the same rate as it did in the dress rehearsal, you will give no signal and the cast will take the cut as marked.

## ON THE AIR

Before going on the air, "take a level"—that is, check the voice and music levels with which your show opens. Have the announcer read his first line; play a portion of the music theme. Then give the stand-by signal, calling for absolute quiet in the studio. Before you cue in the announcer, give a clear direction to the engineer—"Mike," or "Give him the mike." Don't expect the engineer to switch on the microphone in response to your cue to the announcer. As soon as the mike is on, cue in the announcer. While the show is in progress, keep your script before you. You will find it easier to keep track of the pages if you arrange them in three stacks. The first stack contains the pages that have been read; these are turned face down. The

second is a single sheet; this is the page which the cast is reading at the moment. The third contains the pages that have not yet been read. Such an arrangement of script pages makes it easy to keep a page ahead of the cast and anticipate any difficult routines which are in the offing. But do not keep your eyes glued on the script in front of you. Use it only as a conductor uses a score which he knows thoroughly. Refer to it, but keep an eye-contact with your cast in the studio. When, after he finishes his big scene, an actor looks toward the control room with a questioning face, be ready to smile and nod approval. Use the sign for "Fine" or "OK" frequently. Let your face reflect assurance and encouragement.

If something goes wrong, try not to let it ruffle you. If you allow your face to show your feelings or begin discussing a boner with the engineer, another error is sure to follow. When an error is made, usually a wink will accomplish more than a scowl.

Watch your timing. If the show is running long or short indicate to your assistant that he should communicate that fact to the cast, who will then watch you carefully for speed-up or slow-down signs. Keep in constant contact with your assistant either through his earphones or by means of studio sign language.

### *AFTER THE PRODUCTION*

"Very nice work! Thank you, everybody!" This is the keynote of your responsibility when the show is over. Even if everything did not go perfectly, let the members of your cast know that you appreciate their efforts. Give special words of praise where they are deserved. This is not the time to be critical. Later, when the exhilaration and subsequent let-down both have passed, you can point out errors and comment helpfully. For now, the show is over. It was a cooperative enterprise involving your activities and energies and those of a number of other people. If it was good, your cast and crew deserve the credit. If it was bad, take the blame yourself. From beginning to end this has been your direction, your decisions—your show.

### *CRITICIZING THE PRODUCTION*

One of the most fruitful learning experiences in a workshop comes in the critical analysis of a production by the entire class after the show is over. These group discussions profit everyone, but particularly the director. In the analysis the director hears the judgment of the class as listeners, the final arbiters of any broadcast.

If your workshop is equipped with a recording machine, record the production and delay the group discussion of it for at least a day or two. By then the tenseness and excitement will have subsided, and you and your cast will be able to listen to a "play-back" of the show almost as objectively as members of the class who did not participate in it.

If you are unable to record, plan a half-hour discussion of the production immediately following the performance, while it is still fresh in everyone's mind.

Whenever you hold the critical session of the production—immediately after the broadcast or the next day or so with a recording—it is a good plan to follow a definite pattern in the discussion. Talk over, more or less in the order given, the following questions:

- 1) What was the general mood or spirit of the script? Was it straight drama, sophisticated comedy, broad farce? Did the director capture the spirit in his production approach?
- 2) Were the actors well cast? Well directed? In what parts of the production was the acting especially well done? Where was it inadequate? How were voice levels? Voice perspectives?
- 3) Were the sound routines well conceived? Were they skillfully executed? Which ones in particular? How were the sound levels and perspectives?
- 4) Was the music appropriate? Were the bridges the right length? Too long? Too short? Could music have been used more effectively? Was music well cued?
- 5) How about the general pacing of the show? Did it move along at a regular, monotonous rate?

Or did it accelerate in response to the mood of excitement in a particular scene? Did the show drag in any scenes?

6) Did the director exploit all the possibilities for conflict and contrast in the production? In the characters? In the music and sound? In the contrast of one entire scene and the next? Where did the climax and subclimaxes occur? Were these fully realized?

7) Was the script worth doing?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> This is a question which can be extended into an individual discussion, particularly if a script class or script teacher can participate. Directors alone, however, may pursue the question, using as a guide the standards set in the section in the Appendix entitled, "Script Editing for Directors."

When all these questions are answered, you will have received a fairly complete critical judgment on your show. And you will be able to use this criticism to improve your next effort at directing a radio drama.

Evaluating radio drama need not be confined to workshop productions. Make a habit of listening critically to broadcast radio plays at home. As you listen, try to visualize the production problems facing the director. On the following page is a chart helpful in guiding your listening. It would be interesting for several members of the class to fill out charts independently for the same shows, and then compare notes.

## EVALUATION CHART FOR RADIO DRAMA

NAME OF PROGRAM ..... SERIES .....

TIME ..... STATION ..... SPONSOR .....

DIRECTOR .....

TYPE OF PRODUCTION: (*Underline*) Mystery-Comedy-Straight Drama—Fantasy—Documentary

1. Describe opening routine of series. (List: Theme, announcer, music, etc.)
2. Time first three music transitions. 1. .... sec. 2. .... sec. 3. .... sec.
3. On the reverse side of this sheet, describe briefly, as a listener, one of the most effective scenes of the drama. Then, as a director, fill out the following chart for the scene:

CAST: ..... VOICE QUALITY: ..... NUMBER OF  
..... MIKES  
..... NEEDED:  
.....

SOUND EFFECTS NEEDED: ..... MUSIC: .....

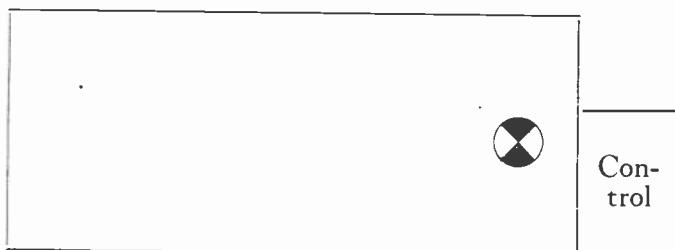
.....

5. Were there noticeable changes in tempo throughout the play? .....
- In pacing of actor's lines? ..... Music cues? ..... Sound? .....
6. On the diagram below, place in what you would consider their proper positions for the above scene all actors, sound men, musicians. Add microphones if necessary.

Draw microphones as below:



Shaded portions are live sides.



7. Were all sound effects in the show necessary? ..... Well executed? .....
- Were there any especially effective sound effects? .....
8. What device was used most frequently for transitions between scenes: Music? .....  
  Sound? ..... Narrator? ..... Combination? .....
9. In music transitions did music end before first word of following scene?  
  Was it faded under and out during the first few words of following scene?  
  Did transition sometimes become mood music, held under narrator or scene? .....
10. If you were rating this show with stars, would you give it 4, 3, 2, or 1? Why? Answer on back of sheet, commenting on script, acting, sound, and music.
11. If the performance you heard was the dress rehearsal and you were the director, what changes, if any, would you make in the show? (Use back of sheet).

## II

# Production Exercises

Divided into sections on the three basic elements of radio drama, these scenes and parts of scenes are planned to develop specific skills in radio drama production and to give practice to actors, sound men, and musicians' assistants. In the simpler exercises of each section, a single element makes up the scene, but in the more advanced exercises the elements are combined, giving directors a chance to meet the problems of balance and perspective and blending found in most radio plays. Use the exercises in whatever order best suits the needs of your class.

### ***NOTE TO THE DIRECTORS***

With each exercise is a Production Note, explaining what is wanted in the scene, which techniques are involved, and suggesting some methods of direction. The notes are addressed to the director, since in the regular production situation the cast and technical staff would receive their instructions from him. However, these exercises are for classroom or workshop use and they include direct advice to actors, sound men, and musicians, to be relayed by the director.

## Chapter 5 ·· AUDITION MATERIAL

To find out who can do what characterizations best it is a good idea to conduct auditions and set up a file of cast cards before producing the exercises. On pages 311-312 are suggestions for holding auditions, and on the next pages are copies of audition material for men and women.

No amateur actor is expected to read all the speeches well; in fact, few professionals could. But each student should try all of either the men's or the women's characters, to give a complete picture of his acting ability. "Complete picture" is misleading, really, because the most that can be expected from the audition are clues. But with a complete set of clues, listeners can hazard an estimation of an actor's ability, and the type of character he is most likely to portray best.

Look, then, for these things in the preliminary auditions:

First, of course, voice quality and color, and the other physical information indicated on the sample casting card (page 11).

Then listen for versatility of characterization, a change of manner as well as of interpretation in reading the old and the young parts, a sensing of the difference between a proud old Englishman and a casual young American. Many good actors are limited to one type of part, but it is important to know whether flexibility exists.

Look next for meaning. However clumsy the interpretation, if the actor reads with meaning, indicating that he understands the lines, making it possible for the listener to understand them, take note of him. He may serve as a narrator in a drama, or be a potential announcer. He may even be developed into an actor, or a reader for semi-dramatic shows. He will probably be easier to train, if he has any dramatic spark at all, than the

elocution-school actor whose reading is fluent, vivid, and makes no sense at all.

After meaning, watch for pacing and climax. The actor whose delivery of lines could be measured with a ruler, who gives each comma this much pause and each period that much, needs to be worked on for variety. Mark down as a good possibility the actor who seems sensitive to pause, who drops one line and picks up another, and generally reads the part as a whole rather than as a series of evenly spaced sentences.

Versatility of characterization, meaningful reading, and a sense of pacing and climax are general qualities that tend to show up in an audition. The audition copy will, of course, indicate many others, more specific. Any flair for dialect will be apparent from the speeches of Norah and Sir Frederic; ease and naturalness, the ability to be one's self, in those of Howard and Alice; a sense of humor in the reading of Alice's and Pinky's lines; the rare ability to portray youngsters in Pinky and Sally; dramatic strength through the interpretation of Sir Frederic and Matilda.

On the principle that it is better to judge an actor by what he can do than by what he cannot, we have made no listing of negative qualities that will show up in the audition. There is certain to be among beginners some overrestraint from fright; some jerky reading from nervousness; some wild flights into melodrama from overanxiety. Withhold judgment until the cause is sure.

The bad qualities will disappear with the fright and nervousness, if they are the causes.

Other bad qualities, almost certain to be apparent in beginners' radio auditions, are shouting—projecting lines as from a stage—inarticulate reading, bad diction, slurring, swallowing of words;

## PRODUCTION EXERCISES

explosive breathing and blasting of lines from standing too close to the microphone. These are errors of inexperience, overcome by training.

Then, of course, there is simple bad acting. It should be quite easy, in the first auditions, to separate the good actors from those who cannot act at all. The borderline cases are more difficult to place. Some will progress with experience; some

will be forever limited to Voice I. In the classroom, where the "star system" of casting can be avoided, the audition is not final, and the exercises provide ample opportunity for all students to act in front of the microphone and to demonstrate improvement with a second chance.

But here is the audition copy—the first chance.

*AUDITION COPY—Women*

MATILDA: (OLD, GENTLEWOMANLY) There wasn't anything I could do for her. She came here . . . late in the afternoon, as though . . . as though she were coming for tea. We talked . . . about everything . . . and . . . and nothing, and I knew all the time there was something she wanted to tell me. But I couldn't ask her, could I? It would have been prying, wouldn't it? (SLOWLY BREAKING INTO TEARS) Or should I have? Oh, why didn't she cry out "Help me!" instead of sitting there . . . as though she'd come for tea?

NORAH: (GAY) Sure, and you look at it that way, Shean, it's a trouble for us all. But there's many a black night we've come through, and the dawn's been the brighter for it. Give me your hand, lad . . . there. It's two of us now, taking the long road together, and it's a help we'll be to each other.

ALICE: (STRAIGHT) You've got the flowers, haven't you, Milly? Remember, you give them to her right away, before I've said the speech. Oh, I hope I remember it. I got mixed up twice last night on "It's a great honor for the community and for the Seekers' Club. . . ." Is my hair all right? Well, I suppose we ought to start.

SALLY: (LO) Aw, why do I have to do all the work around this house? You'd think Bud could help once in a while. Just 'cause he's a boy, everybody else has to look out for him. Golly, I wisht I was a boy!

*AUDITION COPY — Men*

SIR FREDERIC: (OLD BUT FIERY) So that's what's come of your plans, eh? Squashed . . . like that! Because you've had a bit of a setback . . . because everything didn't go just as you'd thought it might. Where's all the daring you had when you came to me last autumn? I've not forgotten your fine words then . . . no, nor your hot young heart. And I'm not going to let you forget them, either. By the great Lord Harry, I think you're a quitter! And I'll not have a son of mine called that by anyone but me.

PINKY: (ABOUT 16) Where'd you get it, sis? Tell me, honest, now, where'd you find it? You don't call it a hat, really, do you? (LAUGHING UPROARIOUSLY) You ought to think up a new name for . . . Hey! Don't get mad, sis! I'm just foolin' . . . hey! Lemme alone! Leggo!

HOWARD: (25, EASYGOING) I thought I'd let you know so that you and your wife could come along if you want. I'll write down the address for you . . . if I can find paper, somewhere. This old envelope'll do, I guess. Let's see now. You know where Clark Street is? O.K. The house is on Henry, just off Clark. (WRITING) 104 Henry. There. We'll see you around 8 then.

# Chapter 6 · · ACTING EXERCISES

## *WHY IT'S RADIO ACTING*

There would be no need of special courses in radio acting and production if techniques of the stage could be transferred directly to the studio. An actor is an actor but a radio studio differs vastly from a theater stage.

First of all, the studio is not a stage, but a carefully appointed room built to hold microphones and transmit voices to them. The microphone is not the stage, either, but a link between the actors' voices and the listener's ear. There is no need to shout into it, and actors must learn that when they shout into a microphone they are shouting into the listener's ear. In radio drama, conversational quality, intimacy of speaking replace the projection of the stage.

As the amateur radio actor shouts, so he usually portrays character with broad strokes, unaware of the nuances of sigh and tremor and pause that the sensitive microphone picks up. He marches up to the microphone and delivers his first line roundly into it, forgetting that the radio audience cannot see his entrance, but can only imagine it as his voice fades on. He cries or laughs unconvincingly because he depends in part upon visual gesture to describe his emotion. He must learn, by voice alone, to suggest his costume and make-up and to

describe his gestures and actions for an audience that sees him only with its mind's eye.

This much the actor learns, and this much he controls. But the studio, as we have pointed out, is not the stage of the radio theater. The actor's voice passes into the microphone and, with the other voices and sounds of the radio play, to the control room. There the director hears the blend of voices and sounds, modulates them as a group, and directs them individually.

The director's job has been outlined in detail in the first section of this book, and we add here only a caution to the actor: the director hears your interpretation as the listener will. If the director holds his finger to his lips to quiet you, motions you back, slows you down, speeds you up—whatever he suggests in rehearsal or on the air, you accept. If there is a stage in the radio theater, it exists in the listener's imagination, and the director in the control room is best able to direct your efforts on that stage. The director is attempting to create a picture in the listener's mind. The picture you and your fellow workers present in the studio may be quite unlike it. (See illustration, page 33.)

The exercises following are planned to develop specific radio acting techniques. You as well as your director will profit from study of the Production Notes, which describe what is wanted.



## *ACTING EXERCISE 1 — Conversational style*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

This is an exercise in straight dialogue reading for radio, to develop conversational style and intimate manner. Edward and Jane speak quietly; they are facing each other across the table of a small restaurant. At line 8, Jane becomes more spirited, but Edward remains always relaxed. Throughout, the dialogue is easy, the manner light and conversational.

- 1 EDWARD: You're the one who wanted to come here, Jane. I  
2 didn't.  
3 JANE: Don't make it sound as though I dragged you here with  
4 a rope. You didn't mind coming.  
5 EDWARD: Well, and I don't mind being here, either. I haven't  
6 seen anything odd, and I don't know why we can't have  
7 a good time now that we're here.  
8 JANE: A good time, when we're liable to be knifed any  
9 minute?  
10 EDWARD: (DISGUSTED) Oh, knifed! This is a perfectly ordinary  
11 restaurant, run by perfectly ordinary people, who put  
12 a lot of fancy costumes on the waiters and a lot of  
13 fancy prices on the menu and serve you plain roast  
14 beef by dim light on checked tablecloths.  
15 JANE: Beautifully expressed, Edward. Quite elegant. But I  
16 don't want to stay. Oh, please, Edward, I've got a  
17 hunch, I've . . .  
18 EDWARD: But Jane, dear. We've ordered our dinner, they'll  
19 bring it any minute . . . we can't just stand up and  
20 walk out because you've got a hunch.  
21 JANE: (LOW) Listen. Didn't you hear something?

22 EDWARD: Huh?

23 JANE: Didn't you hear something? (VERY TENSE) Edward, I  
24 heard someone scream back there. We've got to get  
25 out of here.

### *ACTING EXERCISE 2 — A simple fade on*

#### PRODUCTION NOTE:

The whole purpose of this exercise is to fade Arthur on scene, so that on line 9 his level is the same as Jeanne's and Dave's. He must not come on too quickly, or from too great a distance. By calling Arthur Alice, a woman can use his lines to practice fading on. As in Exercise 1, the scene calls for conversational style; here it is still more relaxed and easy.

1 JEANNE: We thought we'd never get here. Honestly, Dave, the  
2 roads are terrible.

3 DAVE: You made pretty good time, though, Jeanne.

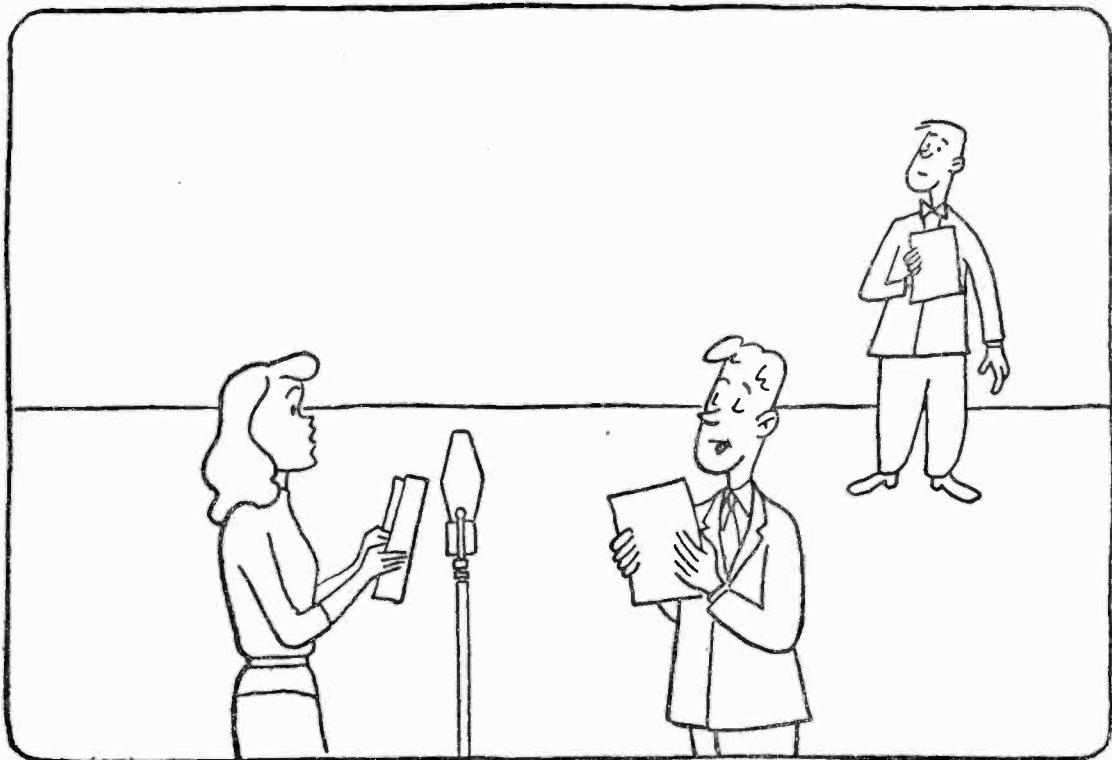
4 JEANNE: Arthur's a tremendous driver, you know. Don't tell  
5 him I said that. I always nag when we're on the road  
6 and it's good for him.

7 DAVE: I don't know, now. Sounds like a plot to me.

8 ARTHUR: (FADING ON) Hello, there, you two. What are you  
9 whispering about?

10 JEANNE: I was just telling Dave what a ghastly trip we had,  
11 dear!

12 ARTHUR: Don't you believe her, Dave. She slept the whole way.



*Ernie, Bill, and Martha (above) as they are in the studio; (below) as the listener imagines them.*

(Acting Exercise 3.)

### *ACTING EXERCISE 3 — Fading on and off*

#### PRODUCTION NOTE:

The actors fade from two levels to give the effect of two distances. The picture is of Ernie and Martha sitting on the grass, and Bill walking toward them from the road. The mike is with Ernie and Martha. When Ernie leaves to see if Bill is coming, he fades slightly, but his distance is less than Bill's. Bill fades on from farther off, shouting somewhat at first, but lowering his voice as he comes closer to Ernie and Martha. Martha is on mike throughout.

- 1 MARTHA: (LAZILY) This is wonderful, Ernie. I don't even mind  
2           the ants crawling over me.
- 3 ERNIE: I'd be a lot happier with a drink of water.
- 4 MARTHA: Don't grumble. Bill'll be coming back in a minute.
- 5 ERNIE: That's what you said half an hour ago.
- 6 MARTHA: Um hum.
- 7 ERNIE: The farmhouse is just down the road. I don't  
8           see . . . .
- 9 MARTHA: Grumble, grumble, grumble. (YAWN) He'll get here.
- 10 ERNIE: I'm going to look for him.
- 11 MARTHA: OK. I'm just going to sit here until someone shoves  
12           me.
- 13 ERNIE: (FADING SLIGHTLY) I'll be back in a second.
- 14 MARTHA: OK.
- 15 ERNIE: (SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE) There he is. Coming up the road  
16           as though no one wanted a drink. (SHOUTING) Hey,  
17           Bill! Step it up!
- 18 MARTHA: (HALF TO HERSELF) Bill's the slow, steady type.
- 19 BILL: (OFF MIKE) (CHEERFULLY) Hi! Want a drink?
- 20 ERNIE: (TO MARTHA) That guy! (CALLING) Sure! Hurry!

21 (FADING ON) You should see him, Martha, ambling along.

22 MARTHA: I know.

23 BILL: (FADING ON) I'm coming. If I walk faster the water'll

24 spill out of the pail! Boy, you two should have

25 come with me, it's swell down there! (ON MIKE) Here

26 you are! Water!

#### *ACTING EXERCISE 4 — Throwaway lines*

##### **PRODUCTION NOTE:**

"Throwing away" lines in a script may sound like utmost carelessness, but it is frequently good radio. Certain lines are written into a script to be tossed off lightly by the character, underplayed, spoken casually. These are lines that cover an action, and give time for it to occur, so that the audience, unable to see it, can imagine it. "Throwaway" lines may ease a scene, give it naturalness, or they may contain little items of description that add realism to a setting. Often, of course, they do all of this at once. Though they usually do not advance the plot, they are important. But to be effective they must be read as though they were unimportant -- they must be thrown away. If they are read as if their meaning is tremendously significant, they lose all meaning.

In the scene below, all the lines on the printed page seem to have equal value. But lines 9 to 15 are to be "thrown away." Line 17 is divided: it picks up the plot thread with "John's told the most absurd story," but "here, have an ash tray" is thrown away. "I'm fascinated with it" refers to the story but if "here, have an ash tray" is given the importance of the rest of the sentence, an audience might be misled into thinking Mary is fascinated with the ash tray.

1 MARY: (LAUGHING) Of course, there's nothing I'd rather do,

2 John. But you make it sound so utterly fantastic!

3 JOHN: (AMUSED) But I tell you, it's not. It's completely

4 sane.

5 MARY: (STILL LAUGHING) I'm simply not cut out for the Gallant  
6 Woman type, John. Here's Pete . . . let's tell him!  
7 (LIFT VOICE SLIGHTLY) Pete!  
8 PETE: (FADING ON) I'm coming, I'm coming! Don't be so im-  
9 patient. (ON MIKE) Hi, John . . .  
10 JOHN: Hello, Pete.  
11 MARY: Sit down, Pete.  
12 PETE: OK. (EFFORT AS SITTING) Aaah, solid comfort.  
13 MARY: I'm keeping the footstool.  
14 PETE: Go ahead. Mind if I light my pipe?  
15 JOHN: Not at all. Mary?  
16 MARY: Of course not. Pete! John's told the most absurd  
17 story and I'm . . . here, have an ash tray . . . I'm  
18 fascinated with it. It's about this strange old  
19 woman. . . .

## *ACTING EXERCISE 5 — Laughing and crying*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

This exercise and the following ones are to develop specific acting techniques desirable for radio. Laughing and crying both present the same problem: of giving the emotional effect without obscuring words, and of avoiding too much snuffly nose sound.

In crying, use intakes of breath and throat sobs. Don't speak a line on an intake, but after it. Use the diaphragm in sobbing.

1 SALLY: (CRYING) I went there . . . too late. He was al-  
2 ready . . . gone. I . . . I searched . . . every-  
3 where . . . (SOBS MOUNTING) Everywhere! (LONG-DRAWN-  
4 OUT GASP AND QUIETER SOBS) But I didn't find him. I  
5 didn't find him anywhere.

Laughing, like crying, should originate in the diaphragm. Avoid the "hee hee" sort of giggle expelled through the nose, and the feeble "ha ha" that lacks any resemblance to mirth. Don't laugh on lines, but break them with laughter. For gales of laughter, apparently fight for breath to speak.

1 BILL: (LAUGHING) The more I explained, the worse it sounded.  
2 And the worse it sounded the more I felt I ought to  
3 explain. And there were these two old ladies, staring  
4 at me. Finally, I said . . . (HELPLESS LAUGHTER) I  
5 said . . . (MORE HELPLESS LAUGHTER) Every time . . . I  
6 think of what I said . . . (CHOKED WITH LAUGHTER) I  
7 said . . . (LAUGH TO CLOSE)

## *ACTING EXERCISE 6 — Whispering and shouting*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

Whispering and shouting are problems in levels. The sensitive ear of the microphone can pick up an ordinary whisper; it is not necessary to use a stage whisper in broadcast. But frequently the actor

tends to lean forward toward the mike to whisper, and distorts the balance of the levels, since the mike accurately registers the change in distance. Sometimes it is better to vocalize the whisper slightly, giving it a little more body, but retaining the hushed tone.

1 MARILYN: If you promise to keep it a secret, then, I'll tell  
2 you. (WHISPERING) John asked me to go to the dance.  
3 (NORMAL) Isn't it exciting? (WHISPERING AGAIN) But  
4 don't tell anyone!

Shouting is primarily a problem in perspective. A shout full on mike distorts and blasts. A shout off mike will cut through far more than a normal voice off mike. Regulating a shout by the actor's volume is apparent to the audience since shouting alters the timbre of the voice. A man shouting at the top of his lungs on a hill a hundred yards away sounds considerably different from an actor shouting mildly two feet from the microphone. Pulling down the gain in the control room to adjust the shout may throw the scene out of balance. The solution is in the placement of the actor, which depends in large part upon the size, shape, and acoustics of the studio. It may be that an off-mike shout, of great volume and apparently from far away, is best placed at the dead end of the studio with the actor shouting away from the mike. Or it may be best if the actor faces the dead side of the mike. The director must try several placements and determine the best shouting distance for the specific scene and for his studio.

When a scene calls for an actor to shout from on mike, as though calling to someone far away, the actor steps back, turns his head, and shouts away from the mike. In the lines following, keep Emily on mike, but practice George's shouts from various distances.

1 EMILY: (ON MIKE) I'll call him. (SHOUTING) George! George!  
2 GEORGE: (OFF MIKE, SHOUTING) Just a minute!  
3 EMILY: Hurry, George!  
4 GEORGE: (OFF MIKE, SHOUTING) Coming!

## *ACTING EXERCISE 7 — Running and riding*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

Occasionally a story calls for an actor to speak while running or riding horseback. Actually, of course, he keeps his position at the microphone, with sound effects of horse's hoofs or footsteps accompanying his lines. If the actor talks normally with the sound effects he destroys the illusion. He must adjust his line reading to the sound. It is primarily a matter of breathing and breaking lines. Many actors find it helpful to run in place while talking as though running, at the same time breathing heavily between and within lines.

1 JIM: (AS RUNNING) I think we can make it if we hurry. Come

2 along. It's just around the bend. Follow me!

For speaking as though riding horseback, an actor can joggle his body in the rhythm of the horse's hoofs. There is no need to breathe heavily unless the horse is galloping wildly. The breaking of the lines, too, is unnecessary unless the horse is supposedly plunging away. A slight change in the rhythm of the lines will give the effect of normal riding. Practice the following scene as though the horse were cantering, galloping, and walking.

1 JOE: (AS RIDING HORSEBACK) We'll separate here. You two

2 take the east fork to Rattlesnake. I'll go ahead and

3 stop the train. (FADING AND CALLING BACK) Tell the

4 sheriff to git up a posse!

## *ACTING EXERCISE 8 — Reading and phoning*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

To give the effect of reading a letter or a part of a book in a radio play is difficult for the amateur actor because it demands that he simulate the characteristics he is trying to lose — awkward pacing, ragged rhythm, faulty inflection, lack of variety, monotonous pitch, and so on. But, if a character in a radio drama breezes through a passage in a book or letter too smoothly, he falsifies his character. How "bad" the apparently ad lib reading of a letter or a passage should be depends upon the character, of course. Try the following lines as though Edith and the Old Man are moderately well educated, barely literate, and finally, good public speakers or actors.

When Edith reads the letter, remember that she is at first looking for the section she wants, and more or less muttering to herself the preceding lines.

1 EDITH: It's here . . . in Hank's letter . . . (READING)  
2        "We went next to . . ." no . . . "On the hill  
3        was . . ." yes! Here it is! "On the hill was an  
4        old house. I cannot find words to tell you how  
5        awful it looked. You'll just have to imagine that  
6        part for yourself. But they had a dog. Just like  
7        Rags. And what was most surprising about the whole  
8        thing was the dog's name was Rags!" Can you  
9        imagine!

The Old Man is reading a passage he's marked in a book. He doesn't search for it, but speaks normally until he begins to read.

1 OLD MAN: Let me read you something that's brought me great  
2        peace in these years. (CLEAR THROAT) "No man is  
3        alone. He may be lonely, but he is not alone. He  
4        may have no friends, but he is not alone. He may

5 live separate from his fellows, but he is not alone.  
6 Over him, at all times, and in all places, is the  
7 spirit of man, the brotherhood of all men, the  
8 great company of the living and the dead."  
9 (SLIGHTLY EMBARRASSED) I . . . I . . . find great  
10 comfort in that.

Telephone conversations in radio plays fit the mood of the play and the characters of the actors. But all of them, if one-sided, need adequate pausing. It is simply a matter of giving the imaginary character on the other end of the line sufficient time to respond and contribute to the conversation. When both sides of the conversation are heard, there is no trouble, but the tendency of beginning actors is to rush through a one-sided telephone conversation speech without enough pause for realism. A good idea is to say silently during the pauses the minimum lines that the character on the other end of the telephone might be repeating.

1 FLORENCE: Oakwood 1126. Thank you. | Hello, Barbara? This  
2 is Florence. | Fine. How are you? What've you  
3 been doing? | Bet it was fun. | Hm? Oh, no, I just  
4 called. It's dead around here. I'd go to a show  
5 if you wanted to. | Uh uh. Oh. Well, I haven't  
6 anything on my mind. | No, really. | Well, I might.  
7 I dunno. I'll call you later, maybe. | Ok. Sure.  
8 Ok, then, Barbara. Goodby.

### *ACTING EXERCISE 9 — Accents and dialects*

#### **PRODUCTION NOTE:**

Accents and dialects in radio acting are a special problem and deserve special study. The following general suggestions are intended only to guide actors and directors in their use.

In a radio play an accent should be little more than a flick of the eyebrow, not a distorting

grimace. Words must be clear, with the accent emphasizing rhythm and inflection rather than mispronunciation. Most accents are made up of misplaced stress on syllables, a consistent change in the pronunciation of certain vowels and consonants, and a distinctive melody or pattern of sound. The "phony" accent, made up of obvious mispronunciation, retaining American rhythm and inflection, strikes a false note. An actor is better off giving a suggestion of difference in speech than speaking an incomprehensible jargon, or using one of the stereotype accents. The jargon cannot be understood by listeners; the stereotype makes a caricature out of the character. Moreover, the stereotype accent is usually incorrect, since it seizes upon one or two easily recognizable changes in pronunciation and uses or misuses them indiscriminately. Familiar examples are the overdone broad "a" supposedly representing British pronunciation; the interchanged "v" and "w" which, with a generous sprinkling of guttural sounds, purports to be a German accent; the changing of "th" to "z" and "i" to "e" for a French accent. Actors and directors should not be misled by such attempts at phonetic spellings on scripts. The spelling may or may not be accurate, but it is impossible to reproduce on paper the inflection and melody of the accent. In a good script, the dialogue will have been written with a sensitivity to the word choice and sentence structure of the accent required, may even approximate the rhythm. That makes the task of reading the lines with accent much easier, but it does not substitute for the true accent or dialect.

The problem, then, for the actor is to learn well a number of accents and dialects. For the director the problem is frequently one of determining if an accent is to be used. Sometimes directors, seeking variety, insert accent where none is required or desirable. Again it is a matter of stereotyping -- casting all policemen as Irishmen or all fruit sellers as Italians. Unless a script specifically calls for an accent or dialect it is best to use none.

But some radio plays ask for regional pronunciations. In a script whose scene is laid in, say, England or the southern part of the United States, presumably all characters will speak in the manner of the region. Suppose the director can cast his three major characters with good accents. Should he teach the accent to the minor characters, or let

them stumble through their lines with clumsy versions of it, or decide to have them use their normal speech? His only other alternative is to rule out accent for all the characters.

In the student production, time spent learning new accents is profitable. But if a student director must make a choice between rehearsal for accent and adequate sound or music rehearsals, he may decide that the show as a whole will be better with no attempt at regional pronunciations. Usually all characters in a regional play should either have accents or not have them, and no accent is better than some good and some ludicrously bad ones. The problem is for the director to solve on the basis of time available for rehearsals, ability of the cast to learn accents, and need of accents to carry the story.

To a lesser degree, the director meets the same problem in the play with a cast including one or two characters to be identified with a region or nation. He should cast with the need of accent in mind, and allot time for special rehearsal when necessary.

The student actor might well set himself the goal of learning well one or more of the accents listed below, thus improving his rating on any director's cast cards.

Regional United States: Southern, deep Southern,  
Middlewestern, "Brooklyn," Western, New England  
British: cockney, Oxford, general English  
British variants: Canadian, Australian, Irish,  
Welsh, Scottish  
Latin: French, Spanish, Italian, general South  
American  
Balkan: Greek, Turkish, general Balkan  
Middle European: German, Swiss, Austrian  
Slavic: Russian, Polish, Finnish  
Scandinavian: Norwegian, Swedish, Danish  
Oriental: Chinese, Japanese, Indian

The accents are grouped according to large general areas with regional subheads. It may be best to establish the pattern of the general area first. Sharp differences exist between each of the regional dialects or accents, but they are overlaid on a more or less similar pattern. Tune your ear to the pattern, and you may find it easier to reproduce

accurately the different regional accents. But remember, each accent is distinctive, and there is no short cut available for learning a "foreign" accent.

Probably no actor can do all these accents well, but the student might study them to understand their differences from one another and from ordinary American speech. Listen to people who naturally speak with an accent. Listen to them over the radio or in direct conversation. Decide what are the major differences in their pronunciation and inflection and rhythm. Chart these differences or list them for reference later.

### *ACTING EXERCISE 10 — The fast cue*

#### PRODUCTION NOTE:

Pacing gives a show its rhythm. A good radio drama usually includes several minor climaxes in addition to the major one toward which the show builds steadily. The minor climaxes come within scenes, and are often reached by fast cue pickup. The scene below demands split-second pickup of cues, but the lines should not be obscured by racing. In other words, hit the first word of the line quickly, immediately after the preceding line is finished. Do not feel that the words of the line must tumble out at that same speed. The audience must understand the line, and the sense of speed will come in the cue pickup. The line goes fast, but is completely intelligible. At the end, the characters should top each other so quickly that first and last lines almost overlap.

- 1 MARGE: I don't care. I'll see him whenever I wish!
- 2 FATHER: Not in this house you won't!
- 3 MOTHER: You two will never get anywhere that way!
- 4 MARGE: He's not fair! He's an old dictator!
- 5 FATHER: I won't be called a dictator in my own living room!
- 6 MOTHER: Why don't you stop shouting at each other!
- 7 FATHER: I'm not shouting!
- 8 MARGE: You are too!
- 9 MOTHER: Stop, both of you!
- 10 MARGE: Everybody's against me!

## *ACTING EXERCISE 11 — The pause*

### **PRODUCTION NOTE:**

As important to the pacing of the show as the fast cue is the properly inserted pause. Many scenes preceding and following have needed pauses, but here is an opportunity to experiment with length and number of pauses. The scene is a tense one, and its tenseness may be increased with pauses not only between lines but within them.

1 ELLEN: (LOW) Jane.

2 JANE: (LOW) Yes?

3 ELLEN: I heard . . . a stair creak.

4 JANE: So did I.

5 ELLEN: Do you think it's . . . oh, Jane!

6 JANE: Sh! Wait.

7 ELLEN: I'm frightened.

8 JANE: Ellen! Someone's coming up the stairs!

## *ACTING EXERCISE 12 — Narration describing action*

### **PRODUCTION NOTE:**

Narration in a radio drama may be no more than a few lines at opening and close and linking scenes together. It may be, on the other hand, the most important part of the show, carried by the principal actor as a large section of his part, or by an impersonal narrator bridging long gaps of time or creating mood. The following two narrations describe the same action, first by an impersonal narrator, and second by the character most intimately involved in the action.

In the first, the narrator may be male or female but is probably male. He is describing, rather than feeling, the action, and his intensity should come through pacing and restraint.

1 NARRATOR: Marie opened the door of the room quietly, and  
2 stepped in, not daring to let it close behind her.  
3 The room was dark. Only a streak of light from the  
4 street lamp outside the window showed her her way.  
5 It was enough. On tiptoe she walked to the desk,  
6 and gently, carefully opened the drawer where  
7 she'd seen Harold place the letter. It was  
8 there, and she drew it out without displacing the  
9 pile of papers under it. She stepped over to the  
10 window, and by the light of the street lamp, began  
11 to read. Her back was to the door and she neither  
12 saw nor heard anything until, almost at her side,  
13 came Harold's voice, (FADE) soft and amused. . . .  
14 HAROLD: You're an inquisitive little girl, aren't you!  
15 MARIE: (INTAKE OF BREATH) Harold! I . . . I . . .

When Marie herself is narrator and describes the action, she is feeling it, and can build to the emotional height she is on in her first dialogue line. Her narration is as much acting as story telling.

1 MARIE: I opened the door of the room quietly and stepped  
2 in, not daring to let the door close behind me.  
3 The room was dark, with only a streak of light  
4 from the street lamp outside the window to show  
5 me my way. But it was enough. I could see the  
6 desk, and I tiptoed over to it. As carefully as  
7 I could, I opened the drawer where I'd seen Harold  
8 put the letter. The letter was there, and I picked  
9 it up carefully without disturbing the pile of

10 papers under it. Then I went over to the window  
11 and read the letter by the light of the street  
12 lamp. I had my back to the door, and I didn't hear  
13 a thing, until suddenly, from right beside me came  
14 Harold's voice. . . .

15 HAROLD: You're an inquisitive little girl, aren't you!

16 MARIE: (INTAKE OF BREATH) Harold! I . . . I . . .

*ACTING EXERCISE 13 — Narration bridging time*

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Every narrator fits his style into the general pattern of the show. Presuming that the drama from which the following bit of narration is taken is a comfortable comedy, deliver the narration easily without dropping interest.

1 NARRATOR: And that's the way the story was told around  
2 Wilson's Fork the next few days. Everyone knew  
3 there was another side to the story and waited  
4 for it to come out. There wasn't any hurry . . .  
5 never is around the Fork . . . and most folks had  
6 their minds on potato planting instead of Mark  
7 Hanson's troubles, anyway.

8 And maybe they were the ones who were most shaken  
9 up when they heard the rest of what had happened  
10 that day on the hill. Shorty Dickinson told it.  
11 According to him, there'd been a high wind on  
12 (FADE) Prentiss Hill. . . .

13 SOUND: WIND IN FULL

## *ACTING EXERCISE 14 — Introspective narration*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

Here the actor is narrator, and the narration is more descriptive of emotion than of action. Over-played it will become melodramatic; with hushed intensity it may give the illusion of near-madness and searing pain.

1 HILDA: I began to wonder if I'd gone mad. Little things  
2 made so much difference to me. It was my being alone,  
3 and Morris gone, I knew. But explaining why didn't  
4 tell me whether . . . whether I was . . . mad. I  
5 made up little games . . . if I saw the number 14  
6 three times running in one day, Morris would call.  
7 If a certain song were played over the radio . . . oh,  
8 foolish, foolish games. And all the time, certain  
9 songs making me want to scream. The walk from my  
10 house to the river making me weep.  
  
11 Ophelia had gone mad with love. Had I? No, no!  
12 I shrieked it out at night, No! No! And the sound of  
13 my own voice shocked me. Great heavens, great merciful  
14 heavens, I prayed, send him back to me or make me  
15 truly mad that I may dream he's with me.  
  
16 And then it happened. He returned. I think.  
17 (FADING) It was a quiet afternoon. . . .

## *ACTING EXERCISE 15 — Factual narration*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

In the documentary type of drama, narration tells most of the facts and of the story, while the scenes are illustrative. Usually crisp, rather authoritative speaking is most effective, but again the general tone of the show determines the style of narration. The narrator, however, must be flexible enough to build to the climax, present the facts, and hold attention throughout.

1 NARRATOR: And so the Babcock butterfat test was devised by  
2 an earnest man in a humble laboratory. Enthusi-  
3 astically received all over the world, the Babcock  
4 test stimulated the dairy industry. Fat percentage  
5 of cream could be determined accurately, fairly,  
6 swiftly. Farmers tested their herds. Creameries  
7 established price scales according to butterfat  
8 contents, knew what they were purchasing, and knew  
9 their farmers were paid justly.

10 And today in Wisconsin, dairy farms place the  
11 state high on the list of contributors to the  
12 world's food supply. Last year 161,472,000 pounds  
13 of butter were produced in the Badger state.

14 161,472,000 pounds. Let's try to imagine it.  
15 Think of one pound now. One single pound. All  
16 right. Think of ten pounds . . . four piled on  
17 four and two on top. Got it? All right. Picture  
18 ten piles like that. Stack them all together.  
19 That makes a hundred pounds. Now try to imagine  
20 ten of those hundred pound stacks. A thousand  
21 pounds. But the butter produced in Wisconsin last

22 year was 161,472,000 pounds!

23 And where did it go? Listen!

### *ACTING EXERCISE 16 — Using filter and echo mikes*

#### PRODUCTION NOTE:

The filter and echo mike, both of which distort the quality of the voice, are used to create special effects in the radio drama. Neither is limited to use with voice alone; both music and sound are sometimes placed on filter or echo mike for specific purposes.

The filter device changes the quality of the sound transmitted through the microphone by cutting out frequencies. Audiences understand, when they hear a filtered voice, that the voice is coming to them over a telephone or through a radio speaker. They accept a filtered voice also as that of the conscience, of the inner self of a character, or as the voice of the dead speaking to the living.

The echo effect adds a hollow quality to the sound transmitted through the microphone. An actor speaking into an echo mike may sound as though he is in a lofty chamber or calling down a deep well. Fantasy characters are also put on echo mikes; audiences accept the hollow, echo mike voice as that of a giant or other legendary character. Again, too, the voice on echo mike can represent the conscience, inner voice, or voice of the dead.

Whether or not filter or echo is needed is a director's problem, but actors must learn to speak into both kinds of microphones. Since both distort quality, clarity of speaking becomes of paramount importance. On the filter mike particularly, the voice needs a sharper edge, a distinctness. On the echo mike, the voice must be firm and spaced slowly enough so that the echoes do not overlap and obscure meaning.

Both a filter and an echo require special equipment. Similar, though not entirely satisfactory effects can be achieved with substitutes. A telephone receiver can be used as a microphone to give a filtered quality. An ordinary microphone held under the raised top of a grand piano gives a partial echo effect. An echo-like effect can also

be obtained if a large waste basket is held to the side of the actor's face while he speaks into an ordinary microphone.

I

1 VOICE: (FILTER MIKE. AS OVER TELEPHONE) This is a warning.  
2 We have had enough. A letter giving you complete  
3 instructions will arrive. If you do not follow them,  
4 take the consequences. That is all.

II

1 VOICE: (ECHO MIKE) I am Tryge, son of the north wind, restless  
2 wanderer. Cold I blow, down the valleys of the north,  
3 down the ice-capped mountains, and over the snow-  
4 swept plains.

III

1 JEAN: There's nothing to worry about. I know there's  
2 nothing to worry about.

3 VOICE: (FILTER OR ECHO) But you're worried.

4 JEAN: (FORCED LAUGH) How silly. Everything's fine.  
5 Nothing will happen, at all.

6 VOICE: (FILTER OR ECHO) Why did you let him go? He won't  
7 come back.

8 JEAN: He will come back, I know he'll come back. There's  
9 nothing to worry about. I've got to stop this . . .  
10 I've got to . . .

11 VOICE: (FILTER OR ECHO) Won't come back . . . won't come  
12 back . . . won't come back . . .

13 JEAN: Stop . . . stop . . . stop! (WEEPS)

Appropriate use of filter and echo mikes, and of all other devices of radio production, can heighten effects in radio plays. But directors and actors should keep in mind a simple and elemental principle: no device will make a good actor out of a bad one, or cover up or substitute for clumsy production. Mastery of techniques and skills is secondary to sympathetic, evocative acting and direction.

## Chapter 7 ·· SOUND EFFECT EXERCISES

Sound effects in a radio drama are the stage settings and properties of the play. Like settings and properties in a stage play, they may be completely realistic, selectively realistic, or in degrees of the fantastic, depending upon the requirements of the play.

It is possible, of course, to list and define sound effects under numerous heads and subheads: sounds for transitions, symbolic sounds, sounds describing action, place, or time, sounds creating mood, effecting climax, and so on. But because the crash of thunder that sets a scene in one drama may create a mood in another, be symbolic or effect a climax in a third, it seems more accurate to consider sound effects in their general function of setting the stage and providing the properties with which dialogue is validated.

All the other definitions may be fitted into this broad one, but they are superfluous when it comes actually to selecting and operating sound effects.

For the director particularly it is important to remember the function of sound so that he will not overemphasize it. As the stage setting should not dominate the play, the sound effects should not dominate the radio drama. As the properties in the stage play should not call undue attention to themselves, so the sound effects supporting implied action should not overshadow the dialogue. When sound is important for itself alone—a fatal gun shot, for example—it must be handled as skillfully as an equally important property in a stage play. In the surrealistic, fantastic, or impressionistic drama, sound keeps its proportion, which may be a larger one than in the realistic play, but is no more predominant than the surrealistic or impressionistic set for the fantastic stage play.

With this approach as background the following exercises treat sound as a practical problem in production, involving the selecting and operating of sound effects, and the interpretation of sound cues.



## **SOUND EXERCISE 1 — *Operating manual sound effects***

### **PRODUCTION NOTE:**

Certain sound effects recur more frequently than others in the average radio script. Below are listed a few which a sound man should know how to handle. The director need not be expert in operating them, but he should be familiar with them, and understand the ways in which each can be used. Practice operating the sounds; then experiment with them to see the variety of effects you can create with them.

1. DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING (on mike; off mike; screen door; car door; ordinary door with squeaky hinge; slammed shut).
2. TELEPHONE RINGING (on mike; off mike; answered in the middle of a ring).
3. DOORBELL RINGING (on mike; off mike; imperatively; sharply).
4. HORSES' HOOFS (galloping; walking; halting; fading on and off mike; brought up short).
5. PAPER RATTLING (newspaper; letter; paper torn).
6. CLINK OF DISHES (china; glass; as wine glasses clicked together in toast; as dinner scene; being washed).
7. POURING OF LIQUID (wine into glass; milk into glass; water into pail; chemical experiment).
8. FIRE (bonfire; fireplace blaze; house afire).

## **SOUND EXERCISE 2 — *Operating recorded sound effects***

### **PRODUCTION NOTE:**

If you are working with a library of recorded sound effects, you as director or as sound man will want to know what effects you can create with each record.

In the appendix is listed a basic sound library which it would be desirable for any workshop group to have available. If you have this or a similar library of sound records, practice with them as you did with the manual sounds listed above.

First, work for skill in operation, so that you can place the head on the record without scratch or "wowing," and so that you can cue in the records at any point.

Practice fading the sounds in and out, slowly and fast. Develop skill in using two or more turntables, "cross fading" smoothly so that the sound on one record fades out as the sound on another fades in without pause.

Using a regular marking pencil, or an automatic spotter, learn to cue single sounds or effects on a sound record while controlling volume on another record. When you have gained some ease in handling the records and equipment, practice the following cues.

I

SOUND: CAR SPEEDING. FADE ON MIKE WITH SQUEAL OF BRAKES AS

TURNING CORNER, AND OUT FAST

II

SOUND: FACTORY NOISES UP FULL. CROSS FADE WITH CROWD, PUNC-

TUATED BY BOAT WHISTLE

III

SOUND: WIND UP. HOLD FOR A FEW SECONDS. ADD CRASH OF THUNDER

AND FADE OUT WIND AND THUNDER RUMBLINGS TOGETHER

IV

SOUND: AIRPLANE FADE ON, ESTABLISH. CROSS FADE INTO TRAIN,

FADE ON AND ESTABLISH

V

SOUND: CHURCH BELLS IN BACKGROUND. RAIN ON MIKE. WAGON

APPROACHING AND FADING OUT SLOWLY

### SOUND EXERCISE 3 — Timing sound with action and dialogue

#### PRODUCTION NOTE:

When sound is a property in the radio play, it usually requires careful timing with dialogue. Often the action is so fast that the sound man cannot wait for a cue from the director, but must take the responsibility himself for cuing in the sound properly. In the following exercises, work for accurate, precise cuing, remembering that a delayed sound effect, or one that anticipates action creates a comic effect, and drops the scene.

#### I

SOUND: (FADE ON) CAR AT HIGH SPEED, TO BE ON MIKE AT LINE 3

AS THOUGH JUST PASSING ED THEN

1 ED: (FARMER BOY) Hey, look out, Jim! Here comes a  
2 car . . . git off the road! Boy, bet he doesn't know  
3 that curve ahead! Lookit him go . . . lookit! Hey,  
4 he's not goin' to make it! He's . . .

5 SOUND: CRASH, AS OF CAR INTO TREE

6 ED: Jim! He's crashed! Come on!

#### II

1 CLARA: Here's your toast, Bill. It burned but I scraped it  
2 and it ought to be all right. We can't waste bread,  
3 times like these. Sometimes I just don't see how  
4 we're going to manage, with all . . . Oh, I forgot  
5 your coffee. (FADING SLIGHTLY AND THEN BACK ON NEXT  
6 THREE LINES) It's on the stove, waiting. I'll get it.  
7 I called you and poured it, and then when you didn't  
8 come I just left it on the stove I guess. Here. If  
9 it's cold, I'll warm it. Is it cold, Bill? Taste  
10 it. There. Is it cold?

11 BILL: It's OK.

12 CLARA: No, it isn't. I can see by your face it isn't. Here  
13 give me it, I'll . . .

14 BILL: It's OK, I tell you. I gotta get to the office,  
15 and . . . Don't grab it, honey, it's O . . .

16 CLARA: I'll get you some hot right away, I . . . Bill let go!

17 Bill!

18 SOUND: CRASH OF DISH ON FLOOR

19 CLARA: There, now, look what you've done!

### III

1 LES: What'd you say?

2 DIRK: You heard me.

3 LES: Take it back?

4 DIRK: No.

5 LES: All right then . . . you asked for it!

6 SOUND: BLOW ON FACE

7 DIRK: Why, you . . .

8 SOUND: SCUFFLE OF TWO MEN WRESTLING THROUGH

9 DIRK: (WITHOUT PAUSE) I'll show you . . .

10 LES: (BREATHLESS) You'll take that back . . .

11 DIRK: (BREATHLESS) I'll . . . say . . . it again . . .

12 LES: You can't call me names . . .

13 DIRK: I can and . . . Ugh!

14 SOUND: AS OF FALLING BODY

15 LES: (BREATHLESS BUT TRIUMPHANT) Now who's a sissy, huh?

## SOUND EXERCISE 4 — *Sound levels*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

The preceding two sets of sound exercises have been for practice in operating manual and recorded sound effects in the studio. But a sound effect is never heard by the audience as it is in the studio. It is balanced in the control room with the actors' voices and the music.

The director controls the level of any sound in two ways: by directing its volume in the studio and by riding gain on it in the control room. The use of a separate sound mike enables the director to control the level of sound independently from the level of the actors' voices. Usually the sound mike, sound truck, and manual effects are placed at a considerable distance from the actors' mike or mikes. Often, too, of course, there is an additional mike for music. Cast and sound crew both need plenty of room, and since their levels are ultimately regulated in the control room, the low whisper and the stealthy footstep can sound as though they were coming from the same place, though they are on different mikes.

The director sets the general level of sound in the studio, and regulates the delicate balance in the control room. Ordinarily, the control operator will have to adjust the level only slightly by gain riding. Most manual and almost all recorded sounds can be increased or decreased in volume in the studio.

Occasionally, however, a sound cue demands more regulation in the control room. For example, the following:

- 1 MARY: Two more minutes . . . only two more minutes.
- 2 SOUND: CLOCK TICKING. BRING UP SLOWLY AS THOUGH IT WERE
- 3 TICKING IN MARY'S HEAD, ALMOST THUNDERING. SEGUE
- 4 INTO MUSIC

The clock's tick cannot be increased in the studio; the director must ask the control operator to bring up the gain on the sound mike to create the effect of louder and louder ticking. The tick is supposed to segue into the music; that is, blend imperceptibly into it. In the cross fade, the tick would fade out while the music fades on; in the

segue the tick will not fade out but at a given moment become part of the music which replaces it. The tick then must be ridden abnormally high.

Whenever the sound required is inflexible, cannot be increased or decreased sufficiently in volume in the studio, the change must be made in the control room by a board fade.

Again, in a cue like the following, sound may have to be regulated principally from the control room.

1 SOUND: WAY OFF MIKE. EXPLOSION

2 JOHN: (LOW) There! They've done it!

The explosion may lose its intensity and color if it is ridden down enough on the sound truck to give the far away volume needed. It may be that for this cue the control operator will be directed to cut the sound mike completely, and let the explosion come through on the actors' mike. If the two mikes are fairly far apart the studio distance may help give the faraway effect. Or, with the explosion held up enough to retain its full rumbling the control operator may be able to ride down the sound on the sound mike.

The size, shape, and acoustics of the studio, and the placement of mikes will influence the decision in any case. There will always be exceptions, but the director can keep in mind the general principle: Establish the sound level in the studio. Balance it in the control room.

Sound man and director should practice the two sound cue examples given above, and the cues in exercises 1, 2, and 3, perfecting levels as well as operation.

## SOUND EXERCISE 5 — *Changing the setting with sound*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

When the transition from one scene to another is made with sound the director often finds it helpful to use the board fade since it gives him complete control of the sound level. In the following transition for example, the horse's hoofs would probably fade irregularly in the studio, and though they might give the effect of a horse galloping away, the director wants the effect of a horse galloping steadily from one town to another, with the fade indicating a lapse of time.

- 1 TEX: I'll meet them at Tug Hollow! Giddap, Star!
- 2 SOUND: HORSE GALLOPING. HOLD ON MIKE. THEN FADE OUT AND IN
- 3 AGAIN, COMING ON MIKE AND TO HALT
- 4 TEX: Kin you tell me, pardner, if any strangers besides
- 5 myself have come in to Tug Hollow today?

Try the transition with coconut shell and fist for horse's hoofs, and again with recorded horse galloping, using both studio fade and board fade.

In the next transition the sound fades out completely, there is a split second of silence, and the new sound comes in full. That means that if the first sound is board faded, the operator will have to pull up the gain on the sound mike to the desired level in the split-second pause. By marking the script with the exact decibel, or by using two sound channels, it can be done, but in this case the fade might work more simply from the studio. Try it both ways.

- 1 SOUND: CROWD UP, THEN FADING OUT COMPLETELY. AFTER BRIEF
- 2 PAUSE, CHURCH BELL STRIKING TWICE ON MIKE, BUT SOFTLY
- 3 KAY: We came back to the square that night.

## SOUND EXERCISE 6 — Montage of sound

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

When several fragments of scenes follow each other in quick succession, linked together by sound or music, the group is called a montage. In Chapter 8 the montage is discussed more fully, but this is a good time to practice the sound transitions of the montage. Here is a quick impressionistic sound montage of a journey.

- 1 GREG: I'm going to find John Albright if I have to search  
2 the ends of the earth!
- 3 SOUND: TRAIN WHISTLE ON MIKE, FOLLOWED BY TRAIN CHUGGING  
4 AWAY, PICKING UP SPEED, AND MOVING SWIFTLY. HOLD,  
5 THEN CROSS FADE INTO AIRPLANE. BRING UP, HOLD  
6 BRIEFLY, AND CROSS FADE INTO CAR. BRING UP, HOLD  
7 BRIEFLY, AND CROSS FADE WITH WAGON ROLLING SWIFTLY.  
8 BRING UP, HOLD BRIEFLY, CROSS FADE WITH FOOTSTEPS  
9 AND BREAKING OF BRANCHES AS WALKING IN JUNGLE.  
10 BRING UP ON MIKE. FOOTSTEPS STOP
- 11 GREG: (FALTERINGLY) Mr. Albright? Are you . . . John  
12 Albright?

Probably few directors will ever come across a sound routine quite so complicated, but it is a good one to practice on. It will take a minimum of three turntables, and three good sound men, as well as expert control room operation.

Simpler, and more likely to be duplicated in an actual radio drama, is the following montage, in which the settings are changed rapidly, but with intervening fragments of narration or dialogue.

- 1 NARRATOR: They traveled far that year. Through  
2 blizzards . . .
- 3 SOUND: STRONG WIND UP, UNDER FOR
- 4 ELIAS: (CALLING) Keep close together, and follow my tracks!

5 SOUND: WIND UP AND OUT UNDER

6 NARRATOR: Through the spring rains that followed the winter  
7 storms . . .

8 SOUND: RAIN STEADILY POURING, UP AND UNDER FOR

9 ELIAS: We'll stand in the shelter of this rock till the  
10 rain lets up a bit. Lean back and rest while you  
11 can.

12 SOUND: RAIN UP AND OUT UNDER

13 NARRATOR: And they reached the bitter dry heat of the desert  
14 just at summer.

Here the sound sets the scene, and with the narrator, bridges the time gap between the scenes. The wind and the rain are to be heard strongly and alone at first, then faded into the background as Elias speaks, to give a realistic picture of a man in a blizzard and in a storm. They come up again, not to indicate stronger rain or blizzard but to symbolize the continuance of the rain and blizzard. They fade under the narrator, way under and out. The narrator is not to be pictured as standing in either storm. To cut the rain and wind out fast before the narrator speaks would spoil the flow of the montage. The sounds must be faded out almost imperceptibly under the narrator. When each sound comes in after the narrator, it starts at a fairly high level, rises to establish itself, and fades to give the realistic picture with Elias' line.

Practice the montage so that the sounds preserve its unity.

Another type of montage, sometimes carried by sound effect alone, covers a series of scenes differentiated by time rather than by setting. In the following montage, the typewriter gives the scenes unity. As in the previous montage, the sound is realistic in the background of the dialogue, and becomes a symbol in the transition. If, as would probably be best, a real typewriter is used in the montage, the director will board fade it.

1 TOM: Take a letter, Miss Querl. To Miss Gloria Bowlder,  
2 Ridge Hill, New Jersey.

3 SOUND: TYPEWRITER BEGIN AS THOUGH WRITING ABOVE ADDRESS.

4 CONTINUE IN B.G. AS

5 TOM: (GOING ON OVER TYPEWRITER) My dear Miss Bowlder. I  
6 suppose it is your name that prompted me to write  
7 you. Why would a Bowlder pick a Ridge for a home?

8 (FADE) It seems to me . . . .

9 SOUND: TYPEWRITER UP, HOLD BRIEFLY, AND OUT AS

10 TOM: Er, Miss Querl. A last letter, if you please. To  
11 that Miss Bowlder . . . never mind a formal saluta-  
12 tion . . . .

13 SOUND: TYPEWRITER BEGIN AND CONTINUE AS

14 TOM: My dear Miss Bowlder: Your answer delighted and annoyed  
15 me . . . annoyed me because I can't keep from answering  
16 you. As a writer I have (FADE) an interest in the  
17 unusual and . . . .

18 SOUND: TYPEWRITER UP, HOLD, FADE UNDER BUT NOT OUT AS

19 TOM: My dear Gloria, you must understand that I (FADE) have  
20 no reason to object to . . . .

21 SOUND: TYPEWRITER UP, FADE UNDER BUT NOT OUT AS

22 TOM: Dear Gloria . . . (FADE) If we could meet and talk this  
23 over . . . .

24 SOUND: TYPEWRITER UP AND OUT FOR

25 TOM: Dearest Gloria. Since we have met, I can no longer  
26 dictate letters to you, and you have no idea how  
27 irritating it is to write with a pen. But (FADE)  
28 there's so much to tell you now . . . .

## SOUND EXERCISE 7 — *Interpreting specific sound cues*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

So far we have been talking about sound cues as though they existed quite apart from the rest of the script. But a sound cue is an integral part of the setting and action of the radio drama and must be interpreted in relation to the story and dialogue. In most scripts a sound cue is not a definition, but a suggestion of a desired effect.

Beginning directors and sound men often commit the error of accepting the sound cue as a prescription rather than a description. Here is a simple sound cue, frequently found in radio plays, which may call for any one of a number of interpretations.

### SOUND: KNOCK ON DOOR

This sound cue is meaningless without interpretation. What kind of door is called for? A thin one or a heavy, solid one? What sort of knock? Rapid, ominous, casual? A light tapping? A firm thumping? Is it on mike or off mike? Is it an essential part of action and cued to lines of dialogue? Is it to be timed so as to be heard alone? Is it simply necessary for realism in a scene? The script may indicate distance from mike and quality of knock, but if it does not you must decide.

You cannot decide, of course, until you see the section of script to which it belongs. Below are a few examples, each calling for a different interpretation of the same sound cue.

.I

1 ALICE: (FRANTICALLY) Let me in! Oh, let me in!

2 SOUND: KNOCK ON DOOR

3 ALICE: (CRYING OUT) For the love of heaven, let me in!

This is a rapid, frantic beating on a door. The sound is on mike, and should be cued to overlap the lines of dialogue, perhaps with Alice's second line.

II

1 MURIEL: Darling, sit down and tell me all about it.

2 I'm expecting Jim later, but he won't . . .

3 SOUND: KNOCK ON DOOR

4 MURIEL: Oh, mercy, that's probably he, now. I'll let  
5 him in. (FADING) Just a minute, I'm coming.

The door here is obviously off mike, since Muriel fades to answer it. The knock is probably a polite one, but it must be cued precisely to interrupt her on "he won't."

III

1 SIR WILLIAM: (SARDONIC) You have approximately a half-minute  
2 in which to decide, sir. The messenger is  
3 sitting in the anteroom by a candle lit at the  
4 same time that this one was. I told him when it  
5 had burned half way to knock, and I would give  
6 him your message for the king. What shall it be?  
7 Nay, do not seek escape! The windows are barred,  
8 and the door heavy. Will you give me your  
9 answer, sir?

10 SOUND: KNOCK ON DOOR

11 SIR WILLIAM: There! Your answer?

12 SOUND: KNOCK REPEATED

The door here may be slightly off mike, but the knock plays a climactic part in the scene. It adds intensity and builds up suspense. Because of this, and because the script describes the door as heavy the knock must have a fateful firmness, perhaps a slow rhythmic pattern.

Other manual sound effects have the same flexibility as the knock on door. Interpret the following sound cue as it might be following each of the lines below:

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS

1

MAN: Look out! Run! He has a knife!

2

JEAN: And over here is the conservatory. Will you follow me?

3

NARRATOR: And then it came again . . . the sound of someone limping about in the room above.

**SOUND EXERCISE 8 — *Interpreting general sound cues***

**PRODUCTION NOTE:**

A job shared by sound man and director is the choosing of sound effects for certain settings. The sound cue on the script may describe an atmosphere, designate a mood, indicate a place or an action. Sometimes the script gives specific directions for sound, but often the director and sound man must work out the details.

As we have said before, a sound cue is a description, not a prescription. With this in mind, turn to Exercise 1 (page 31) in the acting series. Add the following sound cue preceding the dialogue.

SOUND: RESTAURANT NOISES IN B.G. THROUGH

This sound cue means that you are to suggest restaurant atmosphere behind the dialogue, but held at a level that does not interfere with the dialogue. You probably found that the scene was most effective with the characters speaking in fairly low voices, and that, of course, means that your restaurant effects must be subdued.

If your sound record library includes a record of restaurant noises, try playing it behind the scene. But do not be misled into thinking that because you have a sound record whose title is similar to the sound cue it will necessarily be what you need.

Director and sound man must determine what sort of restaurant the scene indicates, and whether the sound record pictures the required atmosphere. If it does not, or if there is not a record of restaurant sounds in your library, what can you do?

Perhaps a record of a small drawing-room crowd will provide part of the background. Perhaps the director will feel the need of writing in extra background dialogue, such as:

WOMAN: (OFF MIKE) Waiter! Waiter!

This might come just before and overlapping line 6. At about line 9 another bit of dialogue could be inserted:

WAITER: (OFF MIKE, LOW, AND FADING OUT) This way, sir. The table in the corner.

The director may feel that one or two of these lines, plus an occasional clink of glass or china or silver will more clearly give the effect of restaurant background than any sustained recorded sound. The important thing to remember is that the sound cue is an indication of a desired atmosphere, rather than a definition of a required sound effect.

### **SOUND EXERCISE 9 — *Selecting sound effects***

#### **PRODUCTION NOTE:**

In the exercises so far we have been working on the principle that

A sound cue is an indication of a desired result, not a definition of a sound effect.

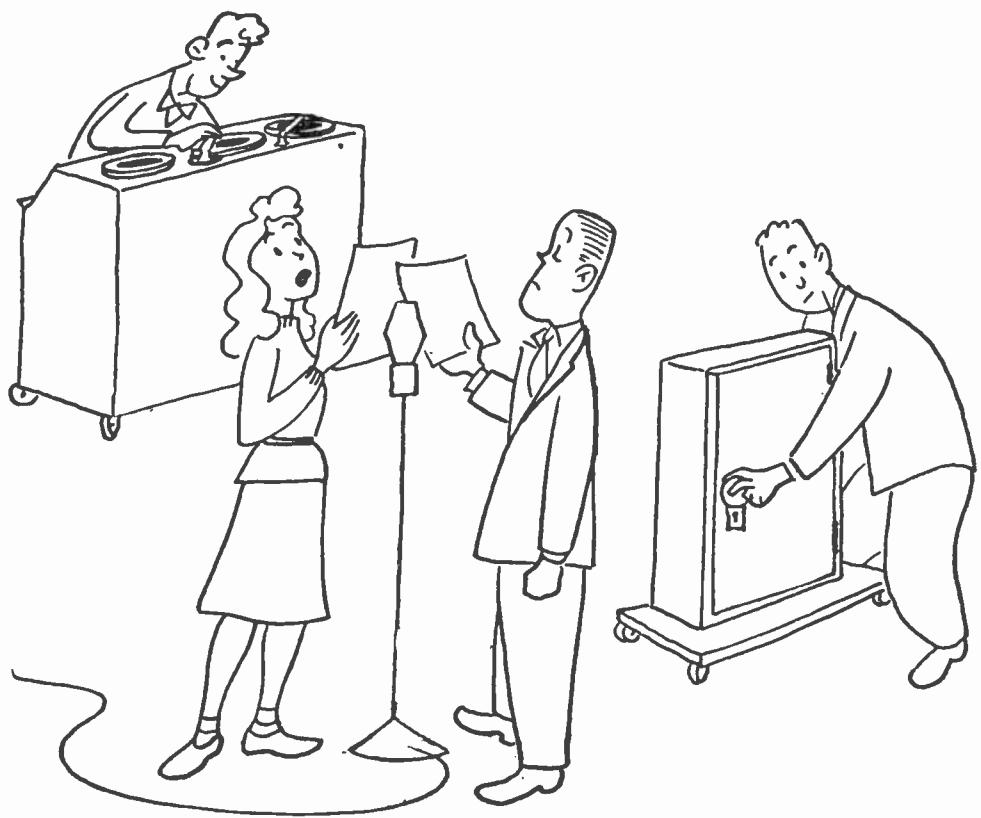
To that principle we shall now add another:

Good sound achieves the maximum effect with the minimum noise.

Let us see how that applies in an actual scene. Suppose you are directing a show in which there is a waterfront scene. At the beginning of the scene is a sound cue which reads:

SOUND: WATERFRONT AT NIGHT. EERIE. PERHAPS SOME OFF-MIKE

FOGHORNS



*What the listener imagines* (above). *Actors and sound men create the picture* (below). (Sound Exercise 9.)

The script writer has a picture in mind, and you as director must try to re-create it. Say it is a short scene, something like this:

1 SOUND: WATERFRONT AT NIGHT. EERIE. PERHAPS SOME OFF-MIKE

2 FOGHORNS

3 JUNE: (LOW) Whew! It's dark! You sure this is the right  
4 place, Shorty?

5 SHORTY: (TENSE AND NERVOUS) Sure I'm sure. And don't stand  
6 so close to the edge of the wharf. You'll fall in  
7 the river.

8 JUNE: Ugh. Maybe we ought to go nearer the shed. It'd be  
9 warmer, too.

10 SHORTY: I can see better from here.

11 JUNE: OK. Which way'll he come?

12 SHORTY: From the avenue. We'll see him under the street  
13 light when he turns up this way.

14 JUNE: What if he comes another way?

15 SHORTY: Can't. This is a dead-end alley. What's the matter,  
16 you getting nervous?

17 JUNE: It's been too easy. I don't trust him.

18 SHORTY: This is a fine time to think of that.

19 JUNE: I told you before we shoulda waited and . . .

20 SHORTY: Forget it! We're here.

21 JUNE: Why isn't he here?

22 SHORTY: We're early, is all.

23 JUNE: Maybe he's in the shed, listening and laughing.

24 SHORTY: Bah. Go see, if it'll make you feel any better.

25 JUNE: OK, I will. (FADING) I'm not scared, I'm just  
26 cautious.

27 SHORTY: (LOW BUT MORE INTENSE) Watch it when you open the  
28 door.

29 SOUND: OFF MIKE. DOOR SQUEAKS OPEN

30 JUNE: (WITH SOUND. OFF MIKE) I'm watching. I . . . .

31 SOUND: DOOR SQUEAK SHUT. OFF MIKE

32 SHORTY: (NERVOUSLY MOCKING) Satisfied?

33 JUNE: (FADING ON) Shorty. Come on. We gotta get out of  
34 here.

35 SHORTY: What's the matter?

36 JUNE: There's something in the shed. Looks like a body.  
37 Not him. Somebody else.

38 SOUND: OFF MIKE, FADING ON SLOWLY, POLICE SIREN

39 SHORTY: A . . . a body?

40 JUNE: Listen. Police. He got us here. Dead-end alley.  
41 Dumped the body in the shed. Called the police. He's  
42 tricked us, Shorty! We're trapped!

43 SOUND: SIREN ON FULL AND UP TO SEGUE INTO MUSIC

Let's see how sound man and director might choose sounds for this scene.

In the dialogue the picture is fairly clear. A dark wharf on the river, with an old shed at one end. A dead-end alley leading to the river from an avenue. A street light hanging over the juncture of alley and avenue. From the wharf one can see the light and the avenue. The illustration on p. 69 is a representation of the desired picture.

The mood of the scene is indicated by the word "eerie" in the sound cue. The tense dialogue and nervousness of the characters sustain the mood.

The script writer suggests foghorns off mike to locate the scene near water and provide an eerie sound. Are the foghorns best, or might other sounds more clearly identify location and set mood? The water is so close that June is in danger of falling in. One might hear the lapping water. She suggests it would be warmer near the shed. Perhaps there's a wind blowing. A boat might be chugging up the river, blowing its whistle. The shed door squeaks; perhaps a shutter on the shed windows swings crazily back and forth in the wind. June's and Shorty's footsteps might be heard at the opening of the scene as they come up to the wharf.

In other words, there are many possible sound effects for this scene. Suppose we strive for complete realism and use all of them:

- 1 SOUND: WATERFRONT AT NIGHT. EERIE. WIND BLOWS. WATER
- 2 LAPPING AGAINST WHARF. SWING OF SHUTTER IN WIND.
- 3 FOGHORN EVERY MINUTE. BEGINNING AT OPENING OF SCENE.
- 4 BOAT WHISTLE ABOUT LINE 12. FOOTSTEPS FADING ON AS

5 JUNE: (LOW) Whew! It's dark.

It is too much! The picture is cluttered with detail. The sound of the swinging shutter has no identification in dialogue, and though listeners might understand it, it is unnecessary. Imagine it, with the lapping water and the blowing wind. Try it! Then add footsteps, foghorn, and boat whistle on line 12. There will be a confusion of sound that pictures nothing. Moreover, too much background sound obscures the sound necessary for action, and might in this scene force the characters to raise their voices above the sound level. Part of the mood of the scene depends upon the low, tense voice level of the characters.

The good sound man and director use the artist's principle of selection of detail in choosing sound. Out of the dozen or more sounds which might reasonably be associated with a scene or location, they choose the one or two that will most quickly and vividly evoke the picture.

The waterfront scene may be best pictured with foghorns. Lapping water and a boat whistle may do it. The sound man and director should try out sounds or combinations of sounds to see which best achieves the purpose: To set the scene and mood with the minimum of sound.

## SOUND EXERCISE 10 — *Selecting background sound*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

Set the following scenes with a minimum of sound, remembering that the cues are only indications of desired atmosphere. Study the dialogue for further suggestion of mood, and use the questions following each fragment of scene as a check on your selection.

#### I

1 SOUND: STORM AT SEA

2 CAPTAIN: (AGAINST WIND) We'll stick it out, Hodgins.

3 HODGINS: (AGAINST WIND) We can't. Every man aboard knows  
4 we're done for.

5 CAPTAIN: I say we'll ride out the storm. To your post, sir.

6 (SHOUTING) All hands on deck!

Does a "storm at sea" record contain sufficient wind for dialogue cue? Might wind alone give effect? How may your selection of sound differ if the scene is complete as it stands, as an illustration in narrative? If it is the beginning of a scene several pages long?

#### II

1 SOUND: NIGHT NOISES. GENERAL PEACEFUL MOOD

2 DICK: The moon's brighter tonight.

3 LAURA: It seems brighter outside like this, I guess.

4 DICK: You never can tell from inside.

5 LAURA: No. (LAUGHING SOFTLY) When I was a little girl I  
6 used to be afraid of night. I never was allowed  
7 out after dark, and it always seemed that night  
8 was something dark and awful.

9 DICK: It really isn't. Not outside.

What are the sounds of the night? Does your sound record of night noises establish a peaceful mood? Lacking such a record could you devise night sounds -- insects, or a train whistle faintly heard at a faraway crossing?

III

1 SOUND: CARNIVAL. MERRY-GO-ROUND IN B.G. CROWD

2 BARKER: All right, folks, all right. Get your little  
3 girlie a kewpie doll! Right this way, folks,  
4 choose your kewpie doll, and take your chance.  
5 Only twenty-five cents, a quarter part of a  
6 dollar, for a game of skill and a chance to win  
7 a dollie for the girlie. Right this way folks!  
8 Step up. You, sir? All right. Everybody play!

What sound or music, other than that of a merry-go-round, might be blended with crowd sound to give a carnival effect? What crowd record will be best? Will a general hubbub in the background be enough, or will you want to add live laughter or lines?

IV

1 SOUND: SMALL CROWD, ABOUT TWENTY PEOPLE. GENERAL

2 TENSION. FOLLOWING LINES HEARD OVER MUTTERINGS

3 VOICE I: He went that way!

4 VOICE II: There were two of them!

5 VOICE III: What're we waiting for?

6 VOICE IV: Follow me!

Have you a record of as small a crowd as twenty people? Can you obtain the tense muttering effect better with eight or nine actors in the studio? Will your four voices be heard from similar levels, or as though scattered through a crowd?

V

1 SOUND: SMALL-TOWN STREET CORNER, DOWNTOWN

2 BILL: That's the courthouse, Mac. Post office's down ~~ya~~  
3 block; fire station up yonder. Not much more to  
4 the town, unless you count the Emporium, the big

5 store across the street. Folks here are nice,  
6 though, and I think you'll like it.

Does your record of traffic or street noises contain sounds not usually heard downtown in a place the size of that described in the dialogue -- elevateds, streetcars, taxi horns? Can you devise with an auto horn or two and a car starting and pulling away a reasonable interpretation of the sound cue?

### **SOUND EXERCISE 11 — *Interpreting cues and choosing effects for the fantastic***

#### **PRODUCTION NOTE:**

When the radio play is a fantasy or includes within it unrealistic scenes, the choosing of sound effects requires a good deal of imaginative interpretation. Usually music is used liberally in fantasy, and music for fantasy is discussed in Chapter 8, but we can experiment here with some fantastic sound cues.

The sound that is deliberately unrealistic and the sound that does not resemble what it is supposed to are completely different effects. In several of the preceding exercises, a realistic sound has been changed to a symbolic one by exaggeration. Some scripts call for sounds which must be devised since they are distortions rather than exaggerations of the real. Here is one, for example:

1 SOUND: AN UNDERWATER EFFECT, WITH BUBBLES

2 1st Mermaid: Bring him to the gate! We will see if the King  
3 of the Fishes will let him enter!

Blowing through a straw into a pan of water may give the effect of bubbles for this cue. Perhaps the director will find that blowing the bubbles on an echo mike will intensify the underwater effect. He may wish to put the whole scene, actors as well as sound, on echo, or on half-echo. Director and sound man will work together experimenting with effects to give the picture and set the scene.

The echo mike, by distorting the sound itself, sometimes creates a fantastic effect from an ordinary sound, making it hollow and ghostly. Try on echo mike any of the regular sounds in your

library to explore their possibilities. Try also reducing or increasing the speed of the sound truck turntable on sound records.

Let your imagination play with this cue for a moment:

SOUND: RHYTHMIC GROWLING, GRINDING OF ANGRY MOUNTAIN HEAVING

Hear mentally the sound desired -- heavy, probably fearsome, with a surge to it. Something slow and ponderous and rhythmical. Try a music record at half speed. Try at very slow speed a railroad train chugging away. Try factory noises at slow speed, riding gain on the volume to create the rhythmic effect. Try an explosion or a landslide at slow speed, again riding gain for rhythm if necessary. Experiment with other records of realistic sounds until you find the one which can be best used for the cue.

In the next sound cue, increasing the speed of a crowd record may give the high-pitched miniature crowd effect desired.

SOUND: CROWD OF DOLLS JABBERING

Again, experiment until you find the effect which can best be regulated or changed to picture the sound described.

In all sound selection, imagination is needed, though only the fantastic sound depends upon imagination alone. The recorded sound lists and catalogues, the filed descriptions of manual sounds are helpful. But in the last analysis, the director and the sound man interpret the sound cue to fit the script.

Whether the sound cue be realistic or fantastic, it is only a description, not a prescription. And no matter how important the sound may be to the script, the best effect will be that which sets the action, scene, or mood with the minimum sound.

## Chapter 8 ·· MUSIC EXERCISES

Music plays a number of parts in the radio drama. Its simple, most elementary function is that of curtain and overture—opening the show, and closing the scenes within it and the show as a whole. Frequently it takes over a function similar to that of lighting in a stage play, intensifying the mood and color of a scene and spotlighting action. As in any form of drama, it is sometimes a part of the action, an instrument played or a song sung by a character.

But perhaps in no form of drama is music as significant as it is in the radio play, where the listener is reached directly and individually through hearing. The separate functions of music have been so increased in stature that they seem almost

to have crossed a line and become something separate, a complex and unique feature of radio drama, for which scores are composed and orchestras rehearsed. In the best radio dramas currently broadcast, the musical score nearly equals the dialogue in importance and could not be removed without seriously damaging the effectiveness of the play.

The exercises in the section following give practice in selecting music for the simplest as well as the more complex functions. Keeping in mind factors which may limit use of music in many radio workshops, we have made cues general enough to fit recorded or live music. Directors may adapt the exercises to suit their own needs and equipment.



## **MUSIC EXERCISE 1 — Understanding the functions of music**

### **PRODUCTION NOTE:**

This is a listening exercise, planned to help you become familiar with the types of music used in radio dramas. Choose for yourself a listening schedule, to last at least a week, preferably much longer. It would be a good idea to extend this exercise through a number of the following ones. What shows you listen to will depend upon what is available in your listening area, but try to arrange a schedule including:

Comedy  
Mystery dramas  
Straight romance  
Documentary  
Something ambitious, similar to the Columbia Workshop dramas or the various series by Norman Corwin.

As you listen to each drama, pick the music apart ruthlessly and objectively. Identify for yourself the following:

1. Opening theme or statement
2. Between-scenes transitions
3. Climax-curtains within the drama
4. Background music behind narration and dialogue
5. Spotlight music, highlighting action or emotion in a scene
6. The final curtain

Try to answer these questions:

1. Does the music as a whole seem to follow a theme which begins with the introduction, is woven through the transitions, and builds to the climax?
2. Are there recognizable repetitions of phrases which become symbolic or which help identify a character or a setting?
3. Is there music behind narration or dialogue, and if so does it intensify the scene? If it seems unnecessary is it because of the kind of music?
4. Do stabs of music play a part within scenes? Do they seem intrusions or do they seem to reflect a character's thoughts or a general mood?
5. How effectively does the music between scenes make the transition from one setting or mood to another? How long are the best transitions?

In addition to these general questions, note kinds of orchestration, lengths of cues, and, if you can, what types of melodies or phrases seem most frequently used to foreshadow specific moods, such as fearful, comic, romantic, and so on.

## *MUSIC EXERCISE 2 — Choosing music to open a drama*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

With the opening music, the director states the spirit of the drama. Light comedy, puckish fantasy, straight love drama, significant documentary should be made clear. When the drama is a part of a regular series, the opening music is frequently the theme of the series, and blends inconspicuously into the musical phrase identifying the specific drama. Choose music themes which would introduce the following five shows:

1. An adaptation of one of the Jeeves stories by P. G. Wodehouse
2. An adaptation of Tolstoy's Anna Karenina
3. An original fantasy concerning a talking horse and the trouble he creates in a small town
4. A serious documentary on conservation
5. A straight mystery story

## *MUSIC EXERCISE 3 — Music transitions*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

If there is a rule about music transitions it probably concerns their length, and even that must be generally stated. A transition between scenes should be no longer than is necessary to adjust the listener to the change in time, place, or mood. General as the rule is, however, it is important. The director working with amateurs may detect a tendency on the part of his staff to consider the music as music alone, rather than as a part of the drama. A fragment of melody and two piercing chords may set a given scene better than a lovely, fully realized interlude. The longer interlude may unduly lengthen the show, or direct the listener's attention to itself rather than to its objective -- to set the coming scene.

Although there are stock transitions and accepted musical definitions of standard moods and settings, each music cue is individual. It carries a particular character to a particular place, covers a particular period of time, introduces a particular

mood or action. The cue may say only MUSIC: UP AND OUT but the music must be purposeful. In the following transition cues, the purpose is more clearly stated. Choose music to fit the cues, remembering that in actual production you would study the scenes themselves rather than just the cue and first and last lines of the scenes.

I

1 ELOISE: Oh, Jim, I'm frightened . . . But . . . I'll go.  
2 We have to take the chance!  
3 MUSIC: UP, EXCITED, BREAKING SUDDENLY FOR  
4 ELOISE: Jim! There's no one here!

II

1 CONNIE: ~~H~~ Oh, of course darling! Don't you see . . . I love  
2 you, too!  
3 MUSIC: SOFT AND ROMANTIC FADING UNDER AS  
4 MINISTER: And do you, Constance Hoyt, take this man to be your  
5 lawful wedded husband?

III

1 JIGGER: But listen, fellas, listen . . . You never said I  
2 had to give a speech. I was just supposed to pull  
3 the curtain! I can't go out in front of all those  
4 people in my swimming trunks! Please fellas,  
5 (FADING) Please! Oh, holy crow!  
6 MUSIC: IN FAST OVER FADE, UP WITH COMIC TURN, AND OUT  
7 QUICKLY FOR  
8 JIGGER: (MISERABLE) Ladies and . . . er . . . Ladies and  
9 gentlemen. I, er, I come before you a . . . un-  
10 prepared, as you might say.

IV

1 WILL: It's my last word to you. Either you fulfill your  
2 part of the bargain or I carry out my threat.  
3 Good day.

4 MUSIC: UP, OMINOUS AND FOREBODING, OUT FOR

5 WILL: I have come for my answer. What have you decided?

V

1 LILY: We're going! I can't believe it! I'm so happy  
2 I'm out of my senses! We're really, actually,  
3 going!

4 MUSIC: WHIRL UP GAILY AND OUT FOR

5 LILY: (LAUGHING) It's us! Are you surprised!

VI

1 BART: I must do what I know is right, Hilda. My people  
2 trust me. And you . . . you must understand me.  
3 Good-by, Hilda.

4 MUSIC: TRAGIC AND FULL. OUT FOR

5 HILDA: From that day on, I knew there was no hope.

## MUSIC EXERCISE 4 — *Music changing mood*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

In Exercise 3, the music transitions sustained single moods, changing only the time and setting. In the following exercises the music may change both time and setting and, in addition, the mood.

Again there is no general rule, except that the transition should be no longer than is effective. Since the mood is to change, and the transition therefore must accomplish more, it may be that these transitions will be longer than those in Exercise 3. The transition curtains the scene it ends and introduces the next scene. But a single chord may be sufficient curtain, and a trill introduction enough. Director and music staff should choose the transition that most effectively adjusts the listener to the change.

### I

1 MOTHER: (FRANTIC) Peter! Peter! Oh, my darling, where  
2 are you? Peter! Peter!  
3 MUSIC: IN FAST AND EXCITED, MODULATE INTO PEACEFUL MOOD  
4 PETER: (HAPPILY) I like it here, Mr. Crump. Tell me  
5 another story.

### II

1 CYNTHIA: Till tomorrow, then, Carl. Goodnight.  
2 MUSIC: ROMANTIC AND JOYOUS WITH THE MELODY CHANGING TO A  
3 MINOR, OMINOUS THEME BREAKING SUDDENLY FOR  
4 LANDLADY: Miss Cynthia? Here's a letter just come for you  
5 by special messenger. Said to give it to you  
6 right away.

### III

1 NARRATOR: And the mighty river winds on its majestic  
2 way . . . .

3 MUSIC: SNEAK IN UNDER LAST WORDS OF NARRATOR, FLOWING  
4 EFFECT FOR A FEW SECONDS CHANGING SUDDENLY TO  
5 TURBULENT AND TROUBLED. ESTABLISH QUICKLY AND  
6 FADE UNDER AS

7 NARRATOR: But its might becomes terrible and its majesty  
8 awesome in the time of the rains.

IV

1 HERBERT: (WITH FEEBLE DEFIANCE) I'll do it, I tell you.  
2 You don't believe me, but I'll do it! I'll do it  
3 or my name's not Herbert Perkins!  
4 MUSIC: BUTTON SCENE, AND GIVE A FEW COMIC TWISTS FOR  
5 MRS. WEILL: Ah, Mr. Perkins! Did you want to see me? Why,  
6 Mr. Perkins, whatever is the matter? You're all  
7 flushed!

V

1 PATIENCE: I sent him away, and my heart with him, and  
2 thought I'd never have the two of them back again.  
3 MUSIC: UP IN GENTLE MELANCHOLY. SURGE INTO STRONG  
4 DRAMATIC THEME OUT FOR  
5 PATIENCE: (PROUDLY) But I was wrong.

**MUSIC EXERCISE 5 — Music levels and timing**

**PRODUCTION NOTE:**

After music transitions and other cues are chosen, the director rehearses them with sound and cast to integrate them and establish levels and time. Although the preceding exercises give only a partial picture of the job of choosing music for a radio drama, this is a good place to talk about and practice with music levels and timing. From

Exercise 6 on you will be expected to produce the cues completely, from selection through timing and establishment of levels. This exercise is mainly explanatory, and uses Exercises 3 and 4 for examples.

In his read-through and timing of the script as a whole, the director estimates the length of the music cues, allotting so many seconds to each one. In the music rehearsal, after the cues have been chosen, he revises his estimates and marks the actual time for each cue. If the script runs long, sometimes a few seconds can be picked up by shortening music cues, and of course a script can be lengthened by padding the music cues. However, lengthening music cues may spoil their effectiveness, and it is best to pad only the opening and closing themes. Once a cue is set in rehearsal it should not be extended on the air. Accurate timing of the production as a whole should guarantee that no more time will be needed to lengthen the broadcast than can be reasonably cushioned in the closing theme.

Levels in music are similar to levels in sound. Music behind dialogue or narration should not be so loud as to obscure words or make the listener strain for understanding. Volume of a transition should be tempered by its mood and purpose. The cue usually indicates strength or softness, crash chord or thin, high trill. But no matter how triumphant and climactic the theme, the listener should never be jarred by it or tempted to turn down his radio volume. The level should remain within the range of comfortable listening.

Music usually cuts through most radio receivers with greater volume than speech, and the director should keep this in mind when he establishes his music level. He should establish it in relation to speech and sound levels, setting it in the studio and regulating its finer gradations in the control room. Both operator's and director's scripts should be marked with the decibel reading for any music cue which will come in at much greater or less volume than the speech or sound immediately preceding it, or which may need to be ridden up or down in the control room.

Using the music you have selected for Exercises 3 and 4, produce the cues, timing them accurately, and adjusting the music and voice levels.

## MUSIC EXERCISE 6 — *Music in the montage*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

In this exercise, music is the tie that binds the fragments of scenes together. Since the montage is a series of telescoped scenes with a single purpose and mood, the music linking them usually follows a single theme. It surges up between the fragments of scenes, and frequently supports them like a gently sustaining hand. As the scenes mount in intensity, the music keeps pace, reaching a decided climax at the end of the montage. In a montage like the second one of this exercise, the music drops behind the last few lines only enough to ensure that the lines be heard, and builds to its climax almost independently. In the first and simpler montage, the music cues are transition cues between scenes similar in mood.

In either kind of montage, the problem is basically the same: to choose music which holds the scene fragments together, carries them to their climax, and gives them unity as a whole. Choose a melody or rhythmic pattern of tone which suits the mood of the montage, vary it and intensify it as the montage progresses, and build it to a climax at the end.

### I

1 NARRATOR: Do you remember how it was before? Do you  
2 remember young Bert Seeley, who wanted to marry  
3 Alice Hook, but had to have a job first? He didn't  
4 find one in Elmwood, where they knew him and his  
5 family pretty well, but he thought he might try  
6 the city. He took his qualifications and his  
7 recommendations and his high school diploma with  
8 him, and started out.

9 MUSIC: MONTAGE THEME IN AND UNDER FOR

10 BERT: (CHEERFULLY) I've had experience in practically  
11 every kind of work, aluminum salesman, janitor,  
12 ditch digger, iceman, but the last two years I

13                   worked I was an accountant, and I've got some  
14                   letters here . . .

15 MAN I:         (BRIEFLY) Sorry. Nothing open. Nothing at all.

16 MUSIC:         MONTAGE THEME IN STRONGER AND UNDER FOR

17 BERT:         I'd do anything, you understand, want to get  
18                   married and all, and even though I've got some  
19                   experience as an accountant, I'd be glad to start  
20                   out in the warehouse or . . . .

21 WOMAN I:       I'm sorry. There are no openings in any depart-  
22                   ment.

23 MUSIC:         MONTAGE THEME IN STRONGER AND UNDER FOR

24 BERT:         (INTENTLY) I think I could guarantee to increase  
25                   your sales enough to pay my . . . .

26 MAN II:        (BRISKLY) We're laying off salesman every day.  
27                   Sorry.

28 MUSIC:         MONTAGE THEME RISING AND UNDER FOR

29 BERT:         Part time, if that's all you have, or . . . .

30 WOMAN II:      Nothing for you, young man.

31 MUSIC:         MONTAGE THEME ALMOST TO CLIMAX AND UNDER AS

32 BERT:         (DESPERATELY) But there must be jobs for men like  
33                   me somewhere!

34 MAN III:       Get yourself an applecart, young man, that's all I  
35                   can suggest. We can't make our payroll as it is!

36 MUSIC:         MONTAGE THEME TO CLIMAX AND OUT FOR

37 NARRATOR:      So Bert Seeley went back to Elmwood.

II

1 SARA:         They talked about me, then, all the old women.  
2                   Talked about me as though I were deaf, dumb, and

3 blind and couldn't know what they were saying. I  
4 held my head high, and pretended I didn't  
5 know . . . but I heard every word, even when it  
6 was whispered a block away . . . .

7 WOMAN I: (WHISPERING) Do you know what I heard about Sara  
8 Blackstone? A diamond bracelet was missing at the  
9 (FADE UNDER MUSIC) Carter's ball, and they  
10 say . . . .

11 MUSIC: SWIRL UP OVER FADE AND UNDER

12 WOMAN II: (LOW VOICE) That's Sara Blackstone. Someone told  
13 me she stole a (FADE) diamond bracelet at the  
14 Carter's . . . .

15 MUSIC: SWIRL UP MORE INTENSELY AND UNDER

16 WOMAN III: Sara Blackstone stole a diamond (FADE) bracelet  
17 they say . . . .

18 MUSIC: SWIRL AND BARELY UNDER

19 WOMAN IV: Sara Blackstone . . . .

20 MUSIC: UP AND BARELY UNDER

21 WOMAN V: Stole . . . .

22 MUSIC: UP AND BARELY UNDER

23 WOMAN VI: Sara . . . .

24 MUSIC: UP TO CLIMAX SUSTAINING AS

25 WOMAN VII: (SPITTING IT OUT) Thief!

26 MUSIC: SHOCK CHORD. OUT FOR

27 SARA: And they finally said it to my face. They were  
28 wrong, but it would take time to prove it, and I  
29 waited.

## MUSIC EXERCISE 7 — *Background music*

### PRODUCTION NOTE:

Background music is a double problem. Choosing the music is fairly easy, but deciding whether to use it is often difficult. There are scenes in which the music background adds incalculably to the emotional tug or the vividness of the picture. There are other scenes in which music oversentimentalizes or overdramatizes the story. The director may decide in his own first reading of the script whether the background music is desirable, or it may not be until he has heard a scene in rehearsal that he can make up his mind.

The purpose of background music is to color and intensify a scene. If it colors it too highly or intensifies it too greatly, it may have the same effect that too brilliant or too rapidly changing colored lights would have on a stage scene. The music should be inconspicuous, guiding the listener's emotional response, not shouting it out. If in rehearsal a music background seems out of place, it may be because it is too melodic and too decisive. By and large, the best background music is full of gently modulated swells and soft sustained chords. Music which surges and breaks into a scene with agitated punctuation and dramatic climaxes is not considered here as background music, but is taken up in the next exercise.

For the following scenes, select musical background and decide in rehearsal if you wish to use it. Produce the scenes with careful attention to the level of the music.

### I

#### 1 MUSIC: IN SOFTLY BEHIND

2 NARRATOR: She stood at the door of the cabin, with her hand shading her eyes, watching him stride resolutely down the road. A woodpecker bit noisily into the tree beside her, the dog looked at her curiously, but she did not move. Even after Eric had passed the turn, and the road was empty, she stood where she was, with her hand stiffly over her eyes.  
9 Only when the baby inside the cabin began to cry

10 softly did she stir, and walked with the careful  
11 movements of a very old woman through the door.

12 MUSIC: SURGE UP TO CLIMAX AND OUT

II

1 MUSIC: IN ROMANTICALLY BEHIND

2 JIM: Welcome home, Mrs. Gregory.

3 DOT: I should say that, Jim, not you. Welcome home.

4 (TRYING TO BE GAY) It isn't much, but we call  
5 it . . . (BREAKING OFF) Oh darling, don't look like  
6 that! It is much. It's . . . everything. A whole  
7 room, and two windows, and . . . and see, there's  
8 a bookshelf, and remember, the landlady said the  
9 bathroom was just around the corner?

10 JIM: (HUSKILY) You're a good kid, Dot.

11 DOT: Mrs. Gregory, to you, please, Mr. Gregory.

12 JIM: (SOFTLY) Come here, Mrs. Gregory.

13 DOT: Yes, Jim?

14 JIM: This isn't exactly the home I'd planned to bring  
15 you to, Dot.

16 DOT: I know, darling, but you probably had it planned  
17 all backward. It's much better this way, because  
18 I can help you, and when we have it it'll be just  
19 what I want. And never say another word about it  
20 till I tell you you can.

21 JIM: Dot, you're . . . you're . . .

22 DOT: I'm Mrs. Gregory, and you haven't even kissed me  
23 since we got home. Oh, darling. . . .

24 MUSIC: UP TO SOFT CLIMAX AND OUT

III

1 MUSIC: IN BACKGROUND WITH FRAGMENTARY THEMES FROM

2 APPROPRIATE NATIONAL MELODIES AS

3 NARRATOR: (VIGOROUSLY) Look at them, then, the O'Donnells and  
4 the O'Shaughnessies taking the sun on the porch  
5 and watching their red-headed kids romp on the  
6 lawn . . . the Olsons and Swensens . . . with an  
7 "e" . . . striding across their wheat fields on  
8 their way to the Bethel Lutheran church . . . and  
9 nodding as they pass the Schultz's and the Roetters,  
10 taking their rosy-cheeked families to the Evangelical  
11 Lutheran church, around the corner and down the  
12 block.

13 Count them in and count in with them the black-haired di Salvos with the warm voices, and the Steins and the Baums, and the Skolskis, whose mothers' kitchens are spicy with garlic and peppers.

17 And don't forget those whose names you stumble over and whose former homes you'd find it hard to locate on a map . . . nor those whose names for obvious reasons are easier for you to spell and pronounce, nor Charles Lee, the laundryman, nor George Washington Jones who runs the newsstand on the corner of the square and comforts his youngsters by telling them about Paul Robeson and Marian Anderson.

26 Count them all in together, with their bond

27 pledges and the stars in their windows, and tell  
28 me which of them is better than another and why.  
29 Tell me which was your parent or grandparent . . .  
30 and why, if you add a "great" or two to your grand-  
31 parent who came here first, it makes you any better.  
32 Tell me, and then I'll tell you something about  
33 yourself.

34 MUSIC: UP AND SUSTAIN THE QUESTION AND BREAK

### *MUSIC EXERCISE 8 — Music as sound and symbol*

#### PRODUCTION NOTE:

In a radio drama, music can speak out as the wordless voice of conscience or fear or memory. It can be the echo of significant sound. It can, in fantasy, take the place of the sound itself, or in comedy underline or replace the sound. In dramas with long and strong narration, music frequently provides a counterpoint of reflection and interpretation, symbolizing sound effects and characters.

When music plays any of these major roles in a scene or show, it necessarily demands more time and attention. The director who has available a competent musician to score the entire drama is fortunate, for the music should be all of a piece. The director who works with an untrained music staff, however, can keep the unity of his music transitions and sounds and symbols by careful selection.

In the following very short scenes that problem does not arise, and directors can focus attention on suiting the action or reaction to music.

Because each scene presents a different form of musical sound or symbol, all are followed by brief explanation.

#### I

1 CHARLES: This way, Eva. We'll wait here, under the tree.  
2 (QUICKLY) Eva! Eva, come along!

3 EVA: I'm . . . I'm afraid.

4 CHARLES: But you're with me.

5 EVA: I . . . I . . .

6 CHARLES: Are you afraid of me, Eva?

7 MUSIC: SHARP, HIGH, SUSTAINED FEAR NOTE

8 EVA: (FAST, BUT UNCONVINCINGLY) No . . . oh, no,

9 Charles.

10 CHARLES: I told you if you trust me, you'll be all right.

11 You'll get back safely. And I've helped you

12 so far, haven't I?

13 EVA: Yes, But I . . . I . . . I'm tired.

14 MUSIC: REPEAT FEAR NOTE

15 CHARLES: (CLOSE MIKE) And afraid?

16 MUSIC: REPEAT FEAR NOTE AND HOLD UNDER IN B.G. AS

17 EVA: Don't look at me like that!

18 CHARLES: (STILL CLOSE MIKE) Why are you frightened of me?

19 EVA: Don't look at me so!

20 MUSIC: FEAR NOTE REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES RAPIDLY AND

21 THEN BLEND INTO EVA'S HYSTERIA AS

22 EVA: (WITH MUSIC) I don't know why I'm afraid but I

23 am! Leave me alone! Please, go away! (SOB-

24 BING HYSTERICALLY) Go away! I'll get back

25 by myself . . . only go away!

26 MUSIC: SWIRL WILDLY UP AND TO CLIMAX AND OUT

The music here symbolizes Eva's fright. Each time we hear it we should feel that she is shaken with fear, a fear that mounts to hysteria that overpowers her. In the music, hysteria finally dominates and closes the scene. The script writer

suggests a sharp high note. Try several that would fit that description, and try any others you think might carry the fear motif.

## II

1 MARTHA: (BUBBLING) Don, stop reading that old paper and  
2 let me tell you about what I saw downtown.  
3 It's just what we've always said we wanted.  
4 Striped, too. Don! Are you listening to me?  
5 DON: Hm? Oh. Sure.  
6 MARTHA: You didn't hear a word I said!  
7 DON: Striped! You said it was striped.  
8 MARTHA: (PETULANT) You don't even care.  
9 DON: (VERY INTERESTEDLY) Oh, but I do. What color  
10 stripe?  
11 MARTHA: (PICKING UP BUBBLE AGAIN) Sort of a . . .  
12 well . . . magenta and green. No. Not exactly,  
13 but . . . well it's just what we always say we  
14 want for the porch.  
15 DON: (NOW THAT HE'S IN IT) If it's really what we  
16 want, all right, Martha, but we were going to  
17 cut down, remember.  
18 MARTHA: Oh, I've been terribly clever with money, this  
19 month, Don. Honestly. I've hardly spent a  
20 penny, and that dress, why you might almost say  
21 I got it free . . . I mean if I'd paid all the  
22 household bills I'd never have . . . I mean  
23 . . . paying cash . . . like . . . that . . .  
24 I . . .

25 MUSIC: LITTLE TREBLE RUN WITH A "WOOPS" EFFECT

26 MARTHA: (TRYING TO COVER UP) But this striped material,

27 Don, it . . . .

28 DON: (BREAKING IN GENTLY BUT FIRMLY) Martha. Martha.

29 MUSIC: TREBLE RUN AGAIN WITH A WISTFUL TOUCH

30 MARTHA: Yes, Don?

31 DON: What is all this about a dress, and cash, and

32 the household bills?

33 MUSIC: TREBLE RUN IN MINOR

34 MARTHA: I, er, I was going . . . to explain. I was

35 going to talk it all over with you. But you're

36 always so busy with your old paper, we never

37 have a chance to talk, and it really saved me

38 about fifty dollars and I told all the merchants

39 I'd make it up next month and I'll cut down

40 next month, so we won't notice, and you really

41 don't have to think a thing about it. Don't

42 you want to finish your paper, dear?

43 DON: (CONTROLLING HIMSELF ADMIRABLY) Martha. Do I

44 understand that you took money from the house-

45 hold account in order to buy a dress?

46 MUSIC: THE RUN, BUT SLOWLY, RETARDING HOPELESSLY

47 MARTHA: (DISMALLY) Yes, Don. That's what I did.

The scene would continue, but the music has played enough of its part for practice. Here the music is Martha's conscience, first catching her in the midst of her give-away enthusiasm, then wistfully hoping it won't be so bad, then guiltily waiting for the worst, and finally causing her to admit her hopeless guilt. The cue-description is only suggestive; try many combinations of notes to reflect Martha's conscience. But remember that the scene is comedy, and the music must be light enough to fit the comic domestic tragedy.

III

1 PAUL: There's nothing to do but wait.  
2 CLAIRE: And if he doesn't come?  
3 PAUL: He said he would.  
4 CLAIRE: Oh, I wish . . . I wish he wouldn't. How can  
5 we talk to him? What will we say?  
6 PAUL: We'll have to . . .  
7 SOUND: (INTERRUPTING) HEAVY, FIRM RAP ON DOOR  
8 MUSIC: ECHO SOUND  
9 PAUL: There. There he is.

Again, the scene continues, but the fragment illustrates music echoing sound, and gives enough of the mood of the scene to help the producer choose music to fit. It should be fairly heavy, low, and probably ominous.

IV

1 MOTHER: (CALLING) Red!  
2 RED: (OFF MIKE) Yes, mom!  
3 MOTHER: Hurry, you'll be late for school!  
4 RED: (OFF, FADING PARTIALLY ON) OK, I'm coming!  
5 MOTHER: Don't run down the stairs!  
6 SOUND: RUNNING DOWN STAIRS FADING ON  
7 MUSIC: QUICK SPATTER ECHOING SOUND  
8 RED: (FADING ON REST OF WAY) I didn't hear you in  
9 time. (ON MIKE) G'by, mom! (FADING OFF) See  
10 you this noon!  
11 MOTHER: (CALLING) And don't slam the door!  
12 SOUND: DOOR SLAM  
13 MUSIC: ECHO SOUND, AND THEN INTO LIGHT-HEARTED TUNE  
14 UP AND OUT

In this scene, the music echoes the sound, appropriately gay and comic. After the second echo cue the music turns into a transition, in the same key, probably, as the echo, and as much as possible stemming from it. Music echoing sound frequently begins a transition, or at the end of a transition music may anticipate the sound. If a scene begins with a ring of a telephone, the transition may lead into it with its last note high-pitched and ringing. The transition which ties the first or last sound of a scene into the music gives a smooth continuity to the drama.

V

- 1 BILLY: But where's the man you told me about? The  
2 Lollipop Man?  
3 OLDEST MAN: Here he is! Comes a-runnin'!  
4 MUSIC: FADE ON LIGHT SKIPPING FOOTSTEP TUNE  
5 LOLLIPOP MAN: Here I am! Came running, I did.  
6 BILLY: Oh. But . . . where are the Lollipops?  
7 OLDEST MAN: (SHOCKED) He doesn't carry them with him!  
8 LOLLIPOP MAN: Oh, dear, no, I never carry them with me.  
9 (CONFIDENTIALLY) Too many of them, you know.  
10 BILLY: Oh, well, you're very nice, anyway.  
11 LOLLIPOP MAN: Thank you. Would you like a Lollipop?  
12 BILL: Yes, please.  
13 LOLLIPOP MAN: I take them out of the air . . . like this . . .  
14 MUSIC: A LIGHT WHEE SOUND  
15 LOLLIPOP MAN: One . . .  
16 MUSIC: LIGHT WHEE SOUND  
17 LOLLIPOP MAN: Two . . .  
18 MUSIC: LIGHT WHEE SOUND, CONTINUING AS  
19 LOLLIPOP MAN: There! Catch it, quickly, both my hands are  
20 full!

21 MUSIC: WHEE WAY DOWN AND PLOP

22 LOLLIPOP MAN: Oh, you let it fall, and it was a red one, too.

23 BILLY: I'm very sorry.

24 LOLLIPOP MAN: (BRAVELY) I guess it couldn't be helped.

25 OLDEST MAN: Of course it couldn't. Give him the lollipops,

26 and don't complain. You have plenty of them.

27 LOLLIPOP MAN: It's just that I don't like waste, don't like

28 it at all.

This portion of the scene shows music used for sound in the fantasy. This is fantasy for children, completely imaginary, with the music describing action. Music, consequently, is light and humorous and with a well-defined rhythm.

## VI

1 NARRATOR: It's a story too familiar, now. Not too  
2 familiar for repeating, but like sorrow or pain  
3 long lived-with, too familiar to hold its first  
4 terrible significance. And yet because we  
5 have heard it before, we must not call it mean-  
6 ingless; because it is ended, we must not think  
7 it cannot begin again.  
8 Begin as it did, with the midnight knock on  
9 the door . . .

10 MUSIC: MEASURED RHYTHM OF KNOCK ON DOOR

11 NARRATOR: The sharp command and the cruel shout . . .

12 MUSIC: RASPING AND BRISK AS A COMMAND

13 NARRATOR: And the marching away with the heavy-footed  
14 guard . . .

15 MUSIC: STEADY RHYTHMIC PLODDING MARCH RHYTHM WITH  
16 LITTLE MELODY UP AND FADING UNDER TO B.G. OF

17 NARRATOR: The marching away, not to return, never to know  
18 what happened to those weeping in the silent  
19 house. That was how it ended for some.

20 MUSIC: BRING MARCHING UP TO QUICK CLIMAX AND OUT

As in the fantasy, the music here describes action, but the action is real and the music the symbolic interpretation of it. In addition, the music intensifies the mood, and in the scene above would provide a sombre background to the spoken words.

It is in scenes like this, and most of those preceding, that music in the radio drama reaches its highest form. As radio writers and directors develop their medium, they seem to be forging a

new dramatic form, no longer so deeply indebted to the stage and the short story, using music with sound and voice to probe the listener's sensitivities, and exploit his quick imaginative vision.



### III

## Episodes for Advanced Direction

In the two scenes following, the director is given some specific problems to meet—problems more advanced than those in the exercises. Here the basic skills are assumed to have been mastered. Actors, sound men, musicians, and the director himself are expected to know their tools and to concentrate upon using them effectively.

The first scene is an experiment with the mood of fear; the second an adaptation of a comedy scene in *Pride and Prejudice*. Neither is a departure from the standard type of radio drama; they were selected precisely because they embody problems commonly found in radio scripts. Students of radio production should realize, however, that

broadcast drama has not stopped here. It is still broadening its horizons, each year pushing aside an old "rule" to make room for a new form of dramatic presentation. As directors and writers master their medium and toss away restrictions based on last year's successful series, they are creating new types of radio plays. Nobody today can predict what tomorrow's radio drama will be. But today's students may be tomorrow's directors, and they should feel the freedom to experiment. For this reason the production notes with the two scenes following are written rather generally and are designed to serve as guides rather than as directions.

## Chapter 9 ·· FEAR: A PROBLEM IN MOOD

## FEAR

CAST:	Announcer	SOUND:	Crackling of stepping on branch
	Narrator -- male or female, young		Crickets
	Man -- straight		Dull thud

MUSIC: To interpret and punctuate	Hoot owl Footsteps on ground and pavement Auto horn Car passing
-----------------------------------	--

1 ANNOUNCER: The Workshop Players present . . . an experiment  
2 in mood.

3 MUSIC: STAB AND UNDER IN MOOD OF FEAR AS

4 ANNOUNCER: We ask you for the next few minutes to put your-  
5               selves in our power . . . to share with us an  
6               experience you may find familiar. It is the terri-  
7               ble sense of unknown danger . . . the shocking  
8               sense of . . . Fear.

9 MUSIC: UP. SUSTAIN BRIEFLY, AND OUT FOR

10 NARRATOR: Someone was following me. Someone was following  
11 me as I walked through the woods to my friends'  
12 house. I was sure of it, though it was so dark I  
13 saw nothing when I looked around. But I could



1           hear. And I'd been hearing new, strange sounds  
2           ever since I left the avenue and struck out over  
3           the short cut to Harrison Street. Why had I  
4           taken the short cut . . . when I knew . . . the  
5           papers were full of it . . . that the convict  
6           who'd escaped from State's prison -- a few miles  
7           away -- was still at large. I'd taken this short  
8           cut many times . . . but never before had I heard  
9           that odd crackling noise behind me.

10 SOUND: CRACKLING IN B.G. AND STOP JUST AFTER

11 NARRATOR: There! I heard it again. And it stopped again.  
12           As though someone stepped on a branch in his  
13           path . . . and then waited for the sound to die  
14           away.

15           I hurried. But I was afraid to run. The woods  
16           ahead were too black. If I should stumble and  
17           fall . . . or if whoever was following me should  
18           see me run and run after me . . . faster than  
19           I . . . reach me before I came to the stretch of  
20           treeless flat ground between the woods and Harrison  
21           Street . . .

22           I hurried, silently.

23 SOUND: CRACKLING IN B.G. SUSTAIN SLIGHTLY LONGER THAN ON  
FIRST CUE. NO INTERRUPTION OF NARRATOR

25 NARRATOR: Behind came the crackling noise again . . . and it  
26           sounded to me as though whoever was following had  
27           begun to hurry, too. I walked faster . . . knock-



1                   ing against a tree and scratching my arm . . .  
2                   feeling the lash of a swinging branch against  
3                   my face . . . stubbing my foot on a twisted  
4                   root . . . and all the time hearing that noise  
5                   more clearly behind me. And then I began to run.  
6                   I couldn't help it . . . it was foolish . . . but  
7                   I couldn't be caught there . . . robbed . . .  
8                   slugged . . . maybe killed. I ran. (PANTING) And  
9                   the thing happened that I knew would happen . . .  
10                  I ran against a rock and fell over it and lay  
11                  breathless on the damp earth . . .

12 MUSIC:       FEAR STAB, UNDER AND OUT AS

13 NARRATOR: I lay there on the ground, listening. My ankle  
14                  throbbed. I didn't know for a moment whether I had  
15                  sprained it or only turned it, but it didn't  
16                  matter. The noise behind me was gone.

17 SOUND:       FADE CRICKETS ON SLOWLY, ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLY

18 NARRATOR: At first I heard no sounds at all . . . and then I  
19                  was conscious of the ordinary noises of the  
20                  night . . . crickets . . . a whisper of wind . . .  
21                  friendly sounds I'd heard many times. I sat up.  
22                  I told myself I was being foolish. There was no  
23                  one behind me. I'd let my imagination and the  
24                  stories in the newspapers frighten me. The pain  
25                  in my ankle was leaving. I'd only turned it, after  
26                  all. I stood up and began to walk again . . .  
27                  brushing my coat and feeling like a silly child.



1                   And then . . . then I heard a new sound . . .

2 SOUND: DULL THUD OFF MIKE

3 NARRATOR: A dull thudding sound, as though someone had  
4                   slipped on a rock and jumped to hold his balance.  
5                   And it was closer than the crackling had been . . .  
6                   so close I was afraid to turn around, to waste the  
7                   moment it would take to see what had made the  
8                   noise. But I was sure now . . . I could feel eyes  
9                   on my back . . . and I knew someone had been watch-  
10                  ing me all the time I lay on the ground . . .  
11                  watching, thinking I was unconscious . . . sneak-  
12                  ing slowly toward me in case I'd come out of it.  
13                  I was safe now only because I'd jumped to my feet  
14                  so quickly . . . and I'd be safe only so long as I  
15                  hurried. Now I paid no attention to branches or  
16                  tree trunks. Now I hurried with one purpose  
17                  only . . . The end of the woods was near. When  
18                  I came to it, I would run . . . run desperately  
19                  across the level ground to the street. It would  
20                  still be a lonely section, with no houses and the  
21                  road the length of a city block away, but I would  
22                  have a head start across it, and I could run  
23                  fast. I no longer bothered to listen to what . . .

24 SOUND: QUITE FAR OFF MIKE. HOOT OWL ONCE

25 NARRATOR: . . . sounds came from behind me. Once I heard  
26                  something that might have been an owl, or might  
27                  have been a wild laugh . . . but that was just



1 before I came to the edge of the woods, and it  
2 couldn't frighten me. I was out of the dark . . .  
3 ahead of me the moon shone on the blessed . . .

4 SOUND: RUNNING FOOTSTEPS IN RHYTHM

5 NARRATOR: . . . empty lots this side of Harrison Street. I  
6 began to run, and only then did I realize that I  
7 was a perfect target . . . a lone figure in the  
8 moonlight. I ran faster . . . with my breath  
9 coming in searing gasps . . . faster and  
10 faster . . . with the few houses at this end of  
11 Harrison Street seeming no closer. If there was  
12 someone running after me, the pounding in my ears  
13 kept the sound away.

14 SOUND: FOOTSTEPS TO STAGGERING HALT

15 NARRATOR: And then I'd made it. I was on Harrison Street,  
16 and half a block from me was the first house . . .  
17 and half a block beyond that the sane, sensible  
18 street lamp. I leaned against a tree, panting.  
19 Away in the distance I heard . . .

20 SOUND: OFF MIKE. AUTO HORN

21 NARRATOR: . . . a car horn. There in the dark at the far  
22 end of Harrison Street it had a comfortable sound.  
23 It made me feel normal, and I began to walk . . .

24 SOUND: FOOTSTEPS WALKING SLOWLY ON STREET

25 NARRATOR: . . . slowly down the street toward my friends'  
26 house. How I'd laugh with them over my scare!

27 SOUND: ADD SECOND SET OF FOOTSTEPS OFF MIKE



1 NARRATOR: That is, if I weren't too ashamed to adm- . . .  
2                   There were footsteps on the pavement behind me.  
3                   There could be no doubt of it. They had begun  
4                   sometime after I started down the street . . .  
5                   about the length of time it would take someone  
6                   who'd been following me to reach the street. And  
7                   the footsteps were hurrying . . . were catching  
8                   up to me . . .

9 SOUND: ONE SET OF FOOTSTEPS CATCHING UP WITH SECOND

10 NARRATOR: Why had I waited there under the tree, so confident  
11                   I was safe? I walked a little faster . . . I'd  
12                   turn in at that first house, that had seemed so  
13                   close and now seemed so far away . . . I would  
14                   knock on the door and make them let me in . . .  
15                   If I could make it. The footsteps were almost up  
16                   to me already. I began to run again . . .

17 SOUND: FOOTSTEPS RUNNING. SECOND SET START RUNNING

18                   IMMEDIATELY AFTER FIRST IS ESTABLISHED

19 NARRATOR: And whoever it was began to run, too. And  
20                   then . . .

21 MAN:           (OFF MIKE, CALLING) Hey, wait!

22 SOUND: ONE SET OF FOOTSTEPS STOP. SECOND FADE ON AS

23 NARRATOR: I gave up. The house I'd hoped to reach lay a few  
24                   steps ahead, but it was dark . . . empty . . . the  
25                   people gone. I was caught.

26 MUSIC: STAB

27 NARRATOR: And I waited while the man ran up to me . . .



1 MAN: I've been trying to catch you. I . . .

2 SOUND: SAME CAR HORN AS BEFORE BUT MUCH CLOSER, WITH CAR

3 FADING ON SLOWLY AS

4 MAN: I . . . I . . . Did you drop this? I found  
5 it . . . under that tree. (FADING OFF) I've been  
6 trying to catch you . . .

7 SOUND: CAR FADE ON AND OFF AS THOUGH PASSING, WHILE

8 NARRATOR: And he handed me a handkerchief, and turned and  
9 hurried away. I'd seen his face in the headlights  
10 of a car that passed by . . . a plain sort of man,  
11 nothing remarkable about him. Nothing . . .  
12 dangerous.

13 MUSIC: PUNCTUATE AND UNDER

14 NARRATOR: I went on down Harrison Street . . . in sight now  
15 of lighted houses. Safe. No longer afraid. But  
16 puzzled. It was my handkerchief the man had given  
17 me. But where had I lost it? Under the tree?  
18 Perhaps. More likely it had fallen out of my  
19 pocket when I stumbled and fell, there in the  
20 woods. And that would mean . . . but . . . the  
21 man had done nothing, said nothing alarming when  
22 he stopped me. He'd called "Hey" and then . . .  
23 then that car had come by. Had the car frightened  
24 him? Or had he really come from nowhere to find  
25 my handkerchief under a tree and run after me  
26 down a quiet street to give it back?

27 MUSIC: UP TO SUSTAIN QUESTION, TO CLIMAX, AND OUT FOR



1 ANNOUNCER: The Workshop Players have presented "Fear" . . . a  
2                   dramatic experiment in mood. \_\_\_\_\_  
3                   was narrator; \_\_\_\_\_ the man. Sound  
4                   was handled by \_\_\_\_\_ and music by  
5                   \_\_\_\_\_. Technical operator, \_\_\_\_\_  
6                   \_\_\_\_\_. The entire scene under the  
7                   direction of \_\_\_\_\_.

PRODUCTION NOTE:

This short scene is a challenge to everyone who takes part. The purpose of the scene is to maintain and build a mood of fear, and to make it so real that listeners will themselves be almost frightened. Since there is nothing supernatural, nothing even out of the ordinary in the scene, the purpose must be accomplished by convincing acting on the part of the narrator, delicate interjection of the sounds, skillful choice of music, and well-paced direction that gives time for the fear to be experienced but keeps the scene from staying on one level of intensity.

The principal character, the narrator, may, as indicated on the cast list, be a man or a woman. The interpretation of the part will vary somewhat depending upon which is chosen, and it may be easier for a woman to give a convincing performance of fear. In any event, the narrator begins on an intense note that builds to panic, punctuated by the first music cue. A brief change of mood, a chance to vary the tempo, comes when the narrator hears the crickets. Almost immediately, however, the tense mood of fear returns and builds to panic and desperation through the running across the bare stretch of ground. Again comes a brief relaxation of intensity and again it is shattered by a sound that sets off the mood of fear. This time the fear builds to despair, which turns quickly to bewilderment as the scene resolves. The scene will never rise above the narrator's performance, upon which depends most of its credibility and variety.

However, the scene can drop far below the narrator's performance if sound, music, or the second character is unequal to it. In the building of mood, everything that affects it is of the same



importance. One badly timed sound or music cue can destroy the whole illusion.

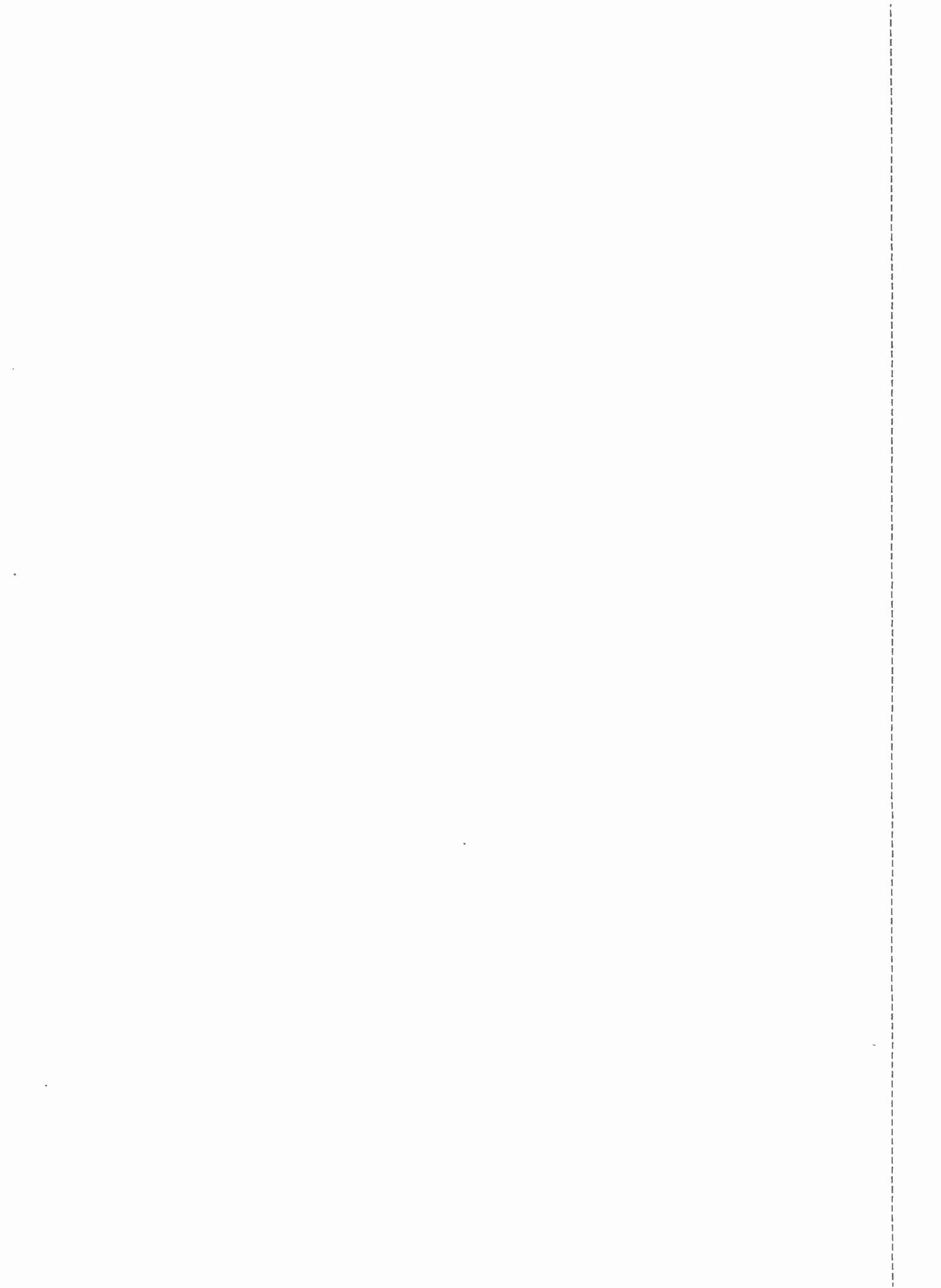
Sound must be not only perfectly timed but exquisitely modulated, so that the level is always that described by the lines. We hear the sounds as the narrator does; they intrude upon our consciousness as they do upon his. The crackling must seem to be a few feet behind us, the hoot owl back in the woods we have just left, the car passing down the street on which we stand.

Selection of sound is less difficult. All the effects are to seem natural, and, except for the car and the hoot owl, can be devised without use of records. Even the owl, since it is spoken of in the lines as similar to a wild laugh, can be simulated by a sound man or an actor.

Selection of music will offer more of a problem, though the script could be produced entirely without music. Well-chosen and well-timed music, however, will increase the mood considerably. It could, in fact, if done live, be scored throughout the scene, playing a counterpart to the narration, and fading either entirely out or into the faintest of backgrounds for the sound. As the script is written, the music punctuates the climaxes and provides the opening and closing theme. It should not be heavy or ominous so much as shocking -- intensifying the listener's awareness of the narrator's fear.

Though the second actor, the man, has only a few lines, his, too, is an important part. We never learn whether he was a stealthy prowler or a harmless bystander. His lines indicate that he is a little confused. Is it embarrassment? Haste? A sudden change of plans when the car drives down the road? We must be left to wonder, and the actor who plays the part must give us no decisive evidence one way or another. In other words, in a few lines, he must portray a character who might be an escaped prisoner, or might be only a kindly neighbor.

To the director goes the job of developing all these individual parts of the scene, and holding them together in one piece. The show should not break up into sections, divided by music cues. The changes in mood should flow into each other naturally; the relaxation of fear should serve only to sharpen succeeding terror; the whole scene should



build as a unit to the climax, and after it, when the fear is gone, sustain interest with the puzzle. For all its small cast and ordinary sound cues, the scene, to be effective, demands a high degree of skills from all participants.



# Chapter 10 ·· MR. COLLINS PROPOSES: A PROBLEM IN PACING

## MR. COLLINS PROPOSES

(from "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen)

CAST: Announcer

Mrs. Bennet -- a foolish, flighty, empty-headed woman  
Mr. Bennet -- her husband, resigned but not defeated  
Elizabeth Bennet -- their attractive, sensible daughter  
of twenty  
Mr. Collins -- a pompous young clergyman

SOUND: Door

MUSIC: Theme

1 MUSIC: THEME UP AND UNDER

2 ANNOUNCER: The Workshop Players present Mr. Collins Pro-  
3 poses . . . a bit of comic dialogue adapted  
4 from Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" . . .  
5 through which we invite you to meet a famous  
6 family, the Bennets.

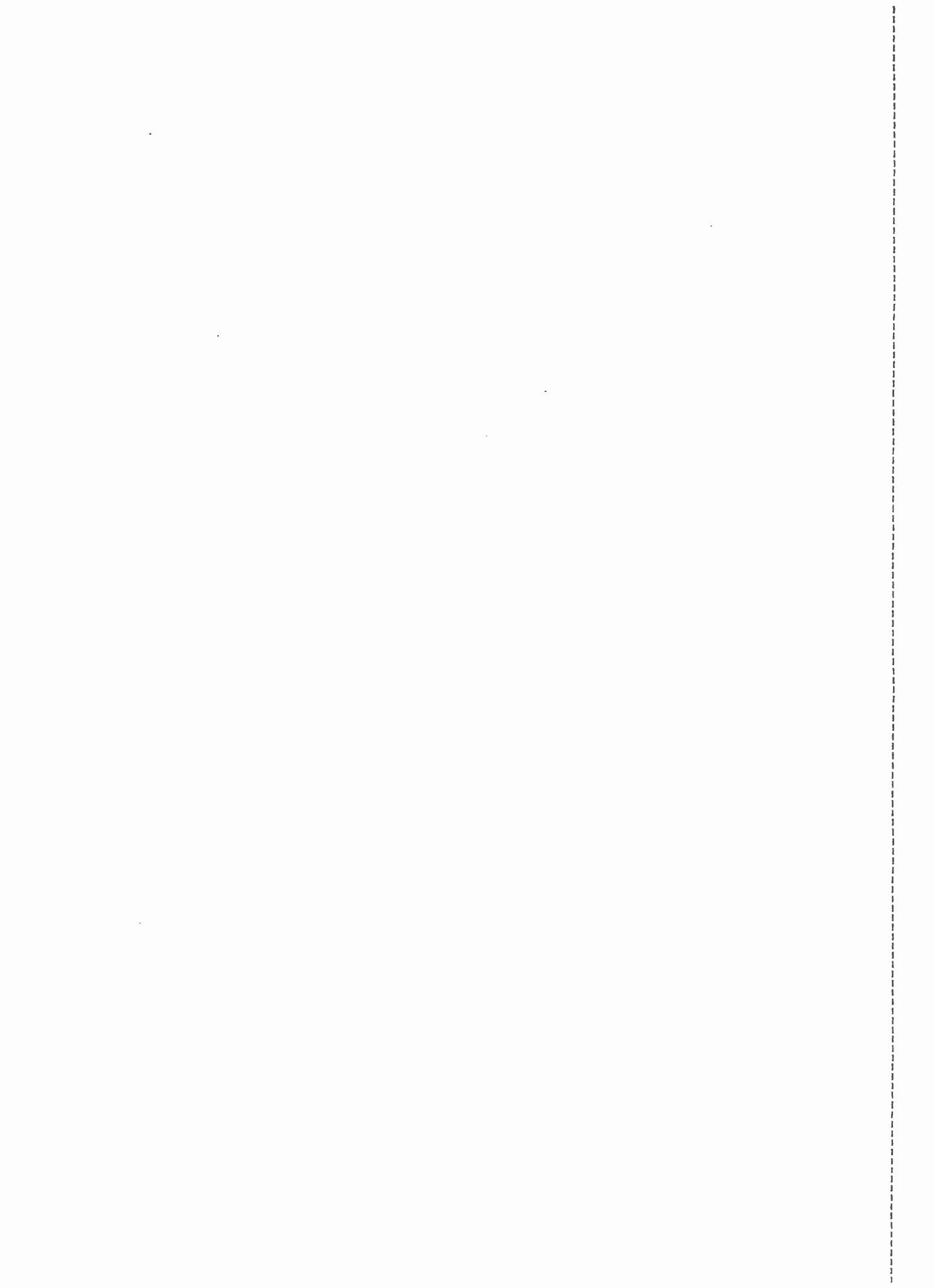
7 MUSIC: UP LIGHTLY AND OUT FOR

8 MRS. BENNET: I, for one, thought it was a lovely ball,  
9 Elizabeth, and I saw nothing out of the way in  
10 anything Mr. Collins said last night.

11 ELIZABETH: He was ridiculous.

12 MR. BENNET: It's his nose. It wriggles when he speaks.

13 ELIZABETH: If it were only that, father. But he took it



1                   upon himself to address the whole party and  
2                   explain why he, a parson, finds no harm in balls.

3 MR. BENNET: Very kind of him.

4 MRS. BENNET: He's an excellent young man, and quite right,  
5                   and I do think, Elizabeth, you might cease  
6                   making fun of a guest in our house. It isn't  
7                   polite, and besides he might come in here any  
8                   minute, and furthermore, under the circumstances  
9                   it isn't proper in you.

10 ELIZABETH: What circumstances?

11 MR. BENNET: He invited himself here. And besides he's walk-  
12                  ing in the garden, and furthermore -- further-  
13                  more, Mrs. Bennet, I thought you, yourself,  
14                  disliked him heartily.

15 MRS. BENNET: I do -- I did -- But now --. Oh, Elizabeth, my  
16                  dear daughter --

17 ELIZABETH: You're not being very clear, mother.

18 MRS. BENNET: Oh, please have pity on my nerves! Why shouldn't  
19                  I dislike a man who's going to turn us all out  
20                  of house and home?

21 MR. BENNET: Well, since it won't be before my death, I should  
22                  think Elizabeth could make fun of him until then.

23 MRS. BENNET: Mr. Bennet! Have you no perception? Oh, to be  
24                  married to a man who encourages his daughter to  
25                  mock the very man who'll inherit his estate . . .  
26                  who jokes about the time his wife and daughters  
27                  will live in want . . .



1 MR. BENNET: It may be some years yet, my dear. I'm still in  
2 tolerably good health. Which I'll try to keep  
3 now, by spending a quiet morning in my study.  
4 (FADING) Excuse me, my dears.

5 SOUND: DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE, SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE

6 ELIZABETH: (WITH SOUND) I think I'll go to my room now, too,  
7 mother.

8 MRS. BENNET: Oh, no, you mustn't. You must stay here in the  
9 drawing room with me, Elizabeth. I don't want  
10 to sit alone.

11 ELIZABETH: You won't. Mr. Collins has just turned in from  
12 the garden and is coming this way.

13 MRS. BENNET: Precisely why . . . Elizabeth! Come back!

14 ELIZABETH: (FADING SLIGHTLY) But I don't care to see Mr.  
15 Collins . . .

16 MRS. BENNET: Elizabeth! I command you.

17 ELIZABETH: (SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE) What difference . . .  
18 (FADING ON) Oh, dear, there's no escaping now.  
19 Here he comes.

20 MRS. BENNET: (RAISING VOICE) Mr. Collins? Do come in the  
21 drawing room and sit with us. (LOW) Look civil,  
22 Elizabeth.

23 COLLINS: (FADING ON) Ah, such a pleasure to observe two  
24 womanly females peacefully attending to their  
25 morning tasks! My dear Elizabeth, you're looking  
26 very well this morning!

27 ELIZABETH: Thank you.



1 COLLINS: And Mrs. Bennet.

2 MRS. BENNET: Do sit down, Mr. Collins!

3 COLLINS: Thank you. May I request a favor of you, Mrs.

4 Bennet?

5 MRS. BENNET: Of course.

6 COLLINS: I should like a private conversation with your

7 daughter.

8 MRS. BENNET: Oh, yes, yes! I'm sure Elizabeth will be very

9 happy. Excuse me, Elizabeth . . .

10 ELIZABETH: Don't go, mother! Mr. Collins can have nothing

11 to say to me that you can't hear.

12 MRS. BENNET: (FADING) No, no . . . I insist . . . excuse

13 me . . .

14 ELIZABETH: I was just leaving, myself . . .

15 MRS. BENNET: (SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE, PIERCINGLY) Stay and hear

16 Mr. Collins, Elizabeth!

17 COLLINS: Your modesty, Miss Elizabeth, adds to your per-

18 fections.

19 ELIZABETH: You mistake me, Mr. Collins.

20 COLLINS: Allow me to assure you that I have your mother's

21 permission for what I am about to say. And I

22 would presume that she has not left you totally

23 unprepared for my address.

24 ELIZABETH: And I assure you, Mr. Collins, that I have no

25 notion of what you may be about to say.

26 COLLINS: Dear Miss Elizabeth! You have natural delicacy!

27 Have you not known that almost from the moment



1 I entered this house I singled you out as the  
2 companion of my future life?

3 ELIZABETH: Mr. Collins!

4 COLLINS: I believe firmly that every clergyman should  
5 marry. I believe marriage would add greatly to  
6 my happiness. And I feel it my responsibility,  
7 nay, my duty, since I am to inherit this estate,  
8 to choose my wife from among your father's  
9 daughters.

10 ELIZABETH: (GROWING ANGRY) You're too kind, Mr. Collins.

11 COLLINS: Not at all, Miss Elizabeth. Never in all our  
12 years together will a single reproach pass my  
13 lips concerning the smallness of the dowry you  
14 will be given . . . I am aware that your father  
15 and mother have no great fortune. It is perhaps  
16 even better so, since you are then accustomed to  
17 making yourself useful and will fit the modest,  
18 though respectable position of a parson's wife.

19 ELIZABETH: Please, Mr. Collins . . . before you go on . . .  
20 Accept my thanks for the compliment, but under-  
21 stand that I must decline your proposal. There  
22 is no need for you to take pity on any of us.

23 COLLINS: If you had not interrupted me, Miss Elizabeth,  
24 I would have continued to tell you of the  
25 violence of my affections for you. Duty led me  
26 to this house, yes. But your amiable disposition  
27 and bright manner have done much to encourage



1                   my stay.

2 ELIZABETH:     Mr. Collins, by proposing to me you have dis-  
3                   charged your duty to our family. I thank you  
4                   again, but believe me, I am not the woman for  
5                   you, and I cannot marry you.

6 COLLINS:      I understand that it's customary for young ladies  
7                   to refuse a man on his first proposal, and so  
8                   I'm by no means discouraged, dear Elizabeth.

9 ELIZABETH:     If I had any intention of accepting you, I should  
10                  do so now, and not risk a change of heart in you.  
11                  Believe me I cannot and never will marry you.

12 COLLINS:     When I do myself the honor of speaking to you  
13                  again on this subject, Miss Elizabeth, I will  
14                  expect a more favorable answer.

15 ELIZABETH:    But I won't . . .

16 COLLINS:     (INDOMITABLE) You have given me hope today . . .

17 ELIZABETH:    I give you no hope. I assure you, there . . .

18 COLLINS:     (AS ABOVE) And although you are so attractive a  
19                  young woman as not to need to increase her worth  
20                  by holding a man in suspense, I respect your  
21                  desire to prolong the delight of courtship.

22 ELIZABETH:    Mr. Collins, can I speak more plainly? I will  
23                  not marry you. I am determined.

24 COLLINS:     You are charming!

25 ELIZABETH:    I beg you to . . .

26 COLLINS:     Hush! Here comes your mother. Shall we permit  
27                  her to felicitate us?



1 ELIZABETH: By no means . . . (RAISING VOICE) Mother!

2 MRS. BENNET: (FADING ON. DELIGHTED) Elizabeth! Oh, my dear

3 daughter!

4 ELIZABETH: Mother, will you please explain to Mr. Collins

5 that I can't marry him, that I'm honored by his

6 proposal, but I'm serious in my refusal!

7 MRS. BENNET: Not marry Mr. Collins! Why, Elizabeth!

8 COLLINS: Your daughter is genuinely modest, Mrs. Bennet.

9 She insists upon refusing my first proposal.

10 MRS. BENNET: Refusing? Oh, you headstrong, foolish girl!

11 She's always been like this, Mr. Collins . . .

12 there's no handling her at all.

13 COLLINS: She's stubborn, Mrs. Bennet?

14 MRS. BENNET: Like her father. And I thought . . . I waited

15 upstairs just long enough . . . came in to con-

16 grat . . . Oh, Elizabeth, you ungrateful . . .

17 ELIZABETH: I'm grateful, mother, but I can't marry Mr.

18 Collins.

19 COLLINS: I'm to believe then that this is not coquetry,

20 Miss Elizabeth?

21 ELIZABETH: If you propose to me a dozen times more my

22 answer will be the same.

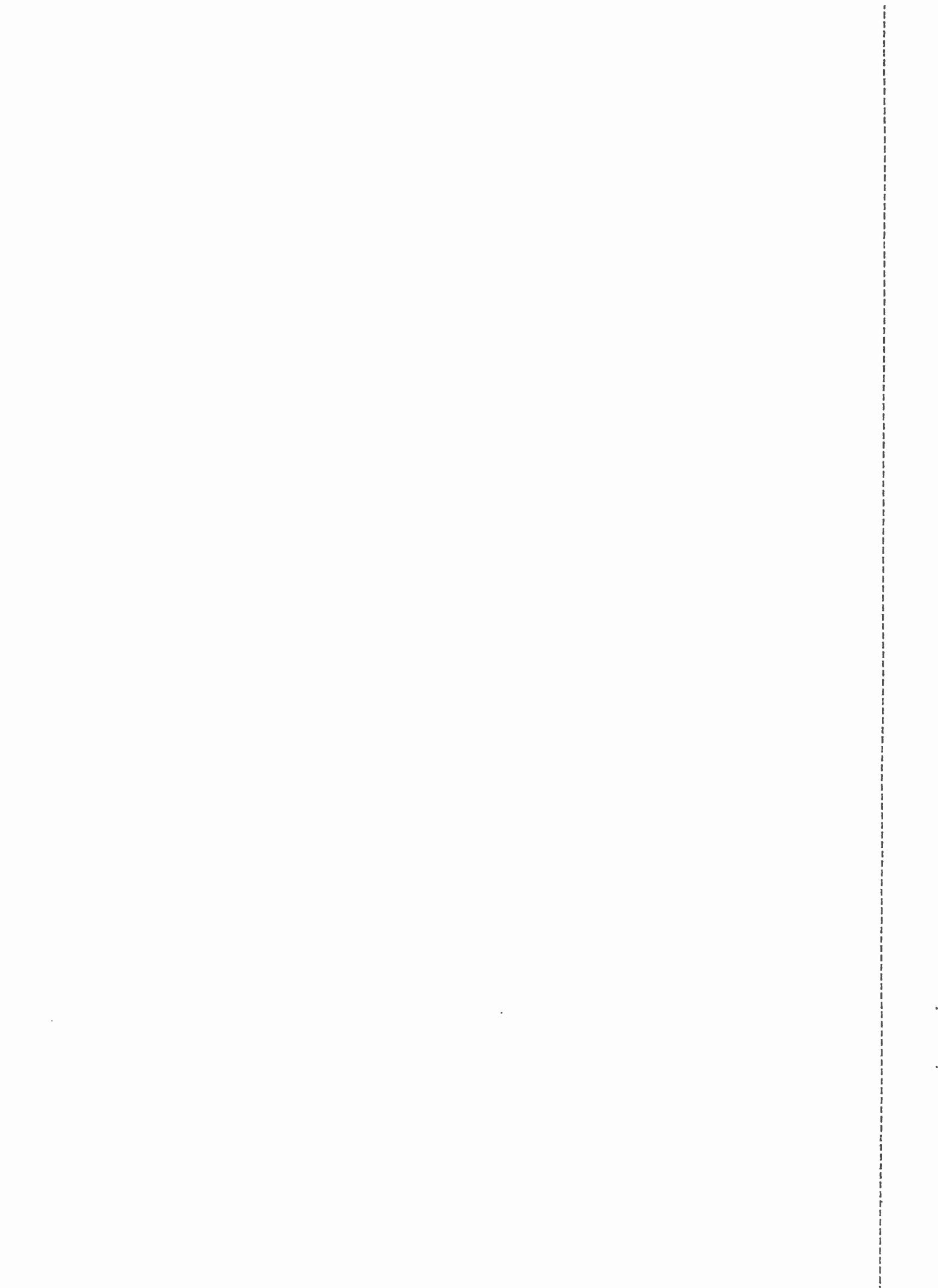
23 MRS. BENNET: (HALF IN TEARS) She's a willful, selfish girl,

24 Mr. Collins. But I'll make her listen to reason.

25 I promise you. I'll . . .

26 COLLINS: Wait, Mrs. Bennet! A clergyman needs a docile,

27 sweet-tempered wife. If Miss Elizabeth is



1                   not . . .

2 MRS. BENNET: Oh, but she is . . . the sweetest girl in all  
3                   matters except where she wants her own way.

4                   She's a . . . Oh, Elizabeth, see what you're  
5                   doing. Mr. Collins is leaving . . . Mr.  
6                   Collins!

7 COLLINS:       (FADING) I beg you both to excuse me. I must  
8                   have a few moments of quiet reflection.

9 MRS. BENNET: Oh, dear! Mr. Bennet! Mr. Bennet!

10 ELIZABETH:     Father's in his study, mother. There's no need  
11                  to shout.

12 MRS. BENNET: (FADING SLIGHTLY) Mr. Bennet, you must come out!  
13                  We are all in an uproar!

14 ELIZABETH:     Oh, mother, please . . .

15 MR. BENNET:    (FARTHER OFF, FADING ON PARTLY) If I could only  
16                  have a few hours to myself in the morning . . .

17 MRS. BENNET: (OFF) Oh, you're needed here. You must come and  
18                  make Elizabeth marry Mr. Collins, for she vows  
19                  she won't have him and if you don't hurry he'll  
20                  change his mind and not have her. (FADING ON  
21                  MIKE) Come speak to her at once.

22 MR. BENNET:    (FADING ON) I haven't the slightest notion of  
23                  what you're talking about.

24 MRS. BENNET: Elizabeth won't marry Mr. Collins and Mr.  
25                  Collins is beginning to say he won't have her.

26 MR. BENNET:    Then what can I do? It seems a hopeless busi-  
27                  ness.



1 MRS. BENNET: Speak to her!

2 MR. BENNET: Very well. Elizabeth?

3 ELIZABETH: Yes, father.

4 MR. BENNET: Mr. Collins has made you an offer of marriage?

5 ELIZABETH: Yes, father.

6 MR. BENNET: And you have refused?

7 ELIZABETH: I have.

8 MR. BENNET: And your mother insists upon your accepting it.

9 Is that right, Mrs. Bennet?

10 MRS. BENNET: Yes, or I will never see her again.

11 MR. BENNET: And I'm to resolve this unhappy situation?

12 MRS. BENNET: Make her see that it's our one ray of hope,

13 Mr. Bennet!

14 MR. BENNET: Elizabeth . . . a disagreeable choice lies before

15 you.

16 ELIZABETH: Yes, father.

17 MR. BENNET: From this day you must be a stranger to one of

18 your parents. Your mother will never see you

19 again if you do not marry Mr. Collins. I will

20 never see you again if you do.

21 MRS. BENNET: Mr. Bennet, what are you saying!

22 MR. BENNET: When you have made your decision, Elizabeth, you

23 may come to see me.

24 ELIZABETH: But I have made it, father. I will not marry

25 Mr. Collins.

26 MRS. BENNET Elizabeth!

27 MR. BENNET: Then may I ask that I be allowed to spend the



1                   rest of the morning undisturbed in my study?  
2                   (FADING) Excuse me, my dear daughter and wife.  
3 MRS. BENNET: Nobody's on my side . . . nobody takes part  
4                   with me . . . nobody feels for my poor nerves!  
5                   And I tell you what, Elizabeth, if you take it  
6                   into your head to refuse every offer of marriage  
7                   this way, you'll never get a husband at all,  
8                   and we shall all starve. Oh, nobody knows what  
9                   I suffer . . . but it's always so. Those who  
10                  never complain are never pitied!

11 MUSIC:        UP BRIGHTLY AND UNDER FOR

12 ANNOUNCER:    "Mr. Collins Proposes" was a Workshop presenta-  
13                  tion, adapted from a portion of "Pride and  
14                  Prejudice" by Jane Austen, and directed by  
15                  \_\_\_\_\_. Heard in the cast  
16                  were . . .

17 MUSIC:        UP AND OUT

PRODUCTION NOTE:

This ten-minute comedy scene offers several problems to the director. It is, in the first place, a comedy of situation and character, rather than of action. The situation lends itself to humor: a mother wishes her daughter to accept the proposal of a young man whom the daughter has no intention of marrying; the young man at first refuses to believe the daughter is serious in her rejection of him; the mother calls in the father to force the girl to accept the young man; the young man begins to wonder if his proposal was wise; the father refuses to give serious consideration to the matter at all. This is not in itself humorous; it could be written as straight drama or perhaps even tragedy. But because the mother and the father, the young man and the daughter are the characters they are, the situation becomes comic.

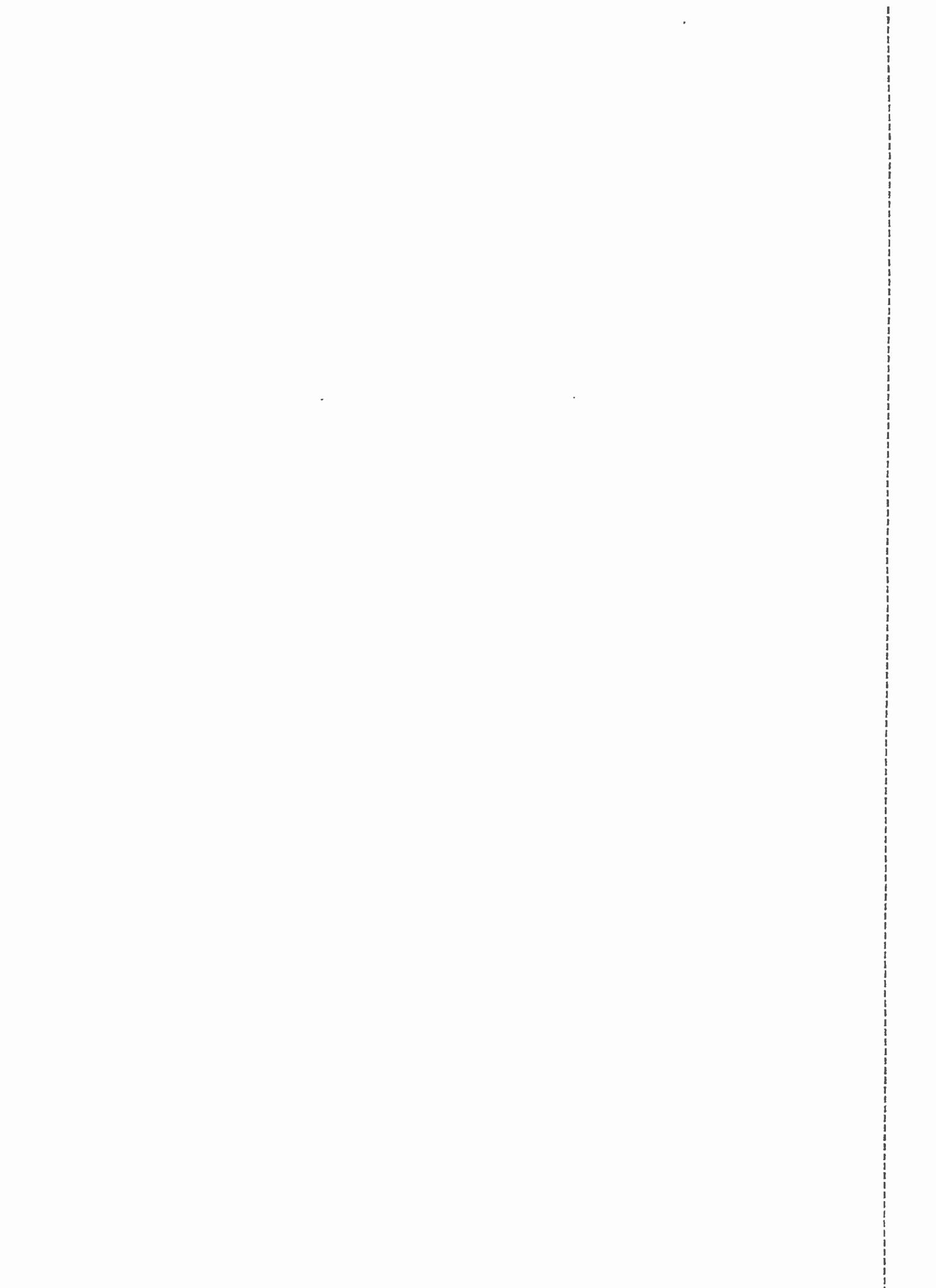


Thus the director must help his actors bring out every nuance and shade of comedy in the lines, developing the characters to their fullest possibilities of humor. When Mrs. Bennet ceases to be a fantastically foolish woman, or Mr. Collins a pompous young ass, or Mr. Bennet a dry spectator, the audience ceases to be amused.

In such comedy of character, pacing is of paramount importance. The scene must move from beginning to end, sustaining and building a single mood. Since there is no rapid succession of comic events, the humor lies in the mounting hysteria of Mrs. Bennet, the absurdity of the proposal and refusal, and the surprise of Mr. Bennet's decision. All of this is revealed in dialogue which must not be allowed to lag, but which, on the other hand, must not be rushed. Proper pacing will allow the audience to enjoy the full flavor of the lines without losing the continuity of the scene.

A third problem facing the director is to maintain the spirit of the novel from which the scene is adapted and at the same time present reasonable radio dialogue. The characters speak in a modified version of Miss Austen's prose, which belongs, as does the whole situation, to a more elegant age than ours. The situation would probably never occur today, so that it is necessary to preserve something of Miss Austen's England in the dialogue. Whether the actors speak with English accents is less important than whether they manage somehow to give their characterizations a feeling of the period. The director might well follow the advice concerning adaptations given in Part I: read at least a portion of the novel, and perhaps read to the cast the scene from which this part is taken.

The music that opens and closes the scene can help establish the period as well as the mood. A bright English air might do it. The sound effect of the door can be cut completely if necessary.



IV

Four Radio Plays



JANE EYRE

SCRIPT: Rome Cowgill Krulevitch

DIRECTOR:

DATE:

TIME: 30 minutes

CAST: Jane Eyre -- eighteen, straightforward, gentle, sometimes  
fiery  
Edward Rochester -- determined, moody, about forty  
Mrs. Fairfax -- aging housekeeper, sweet  
Adele -- ten, French accent  
Blanche Ingram -- arrogant, cold  
Richard Mason -- weak, thirty-ish  
Clergyman -- old  
Mrs. Rochester -- mad; only laughs wildly  
Landlord -- garrulous  
Mary -- a servant

SOUND: Galloping horse

Laughter and conversation of small crowd

Rapping on door; door open, close

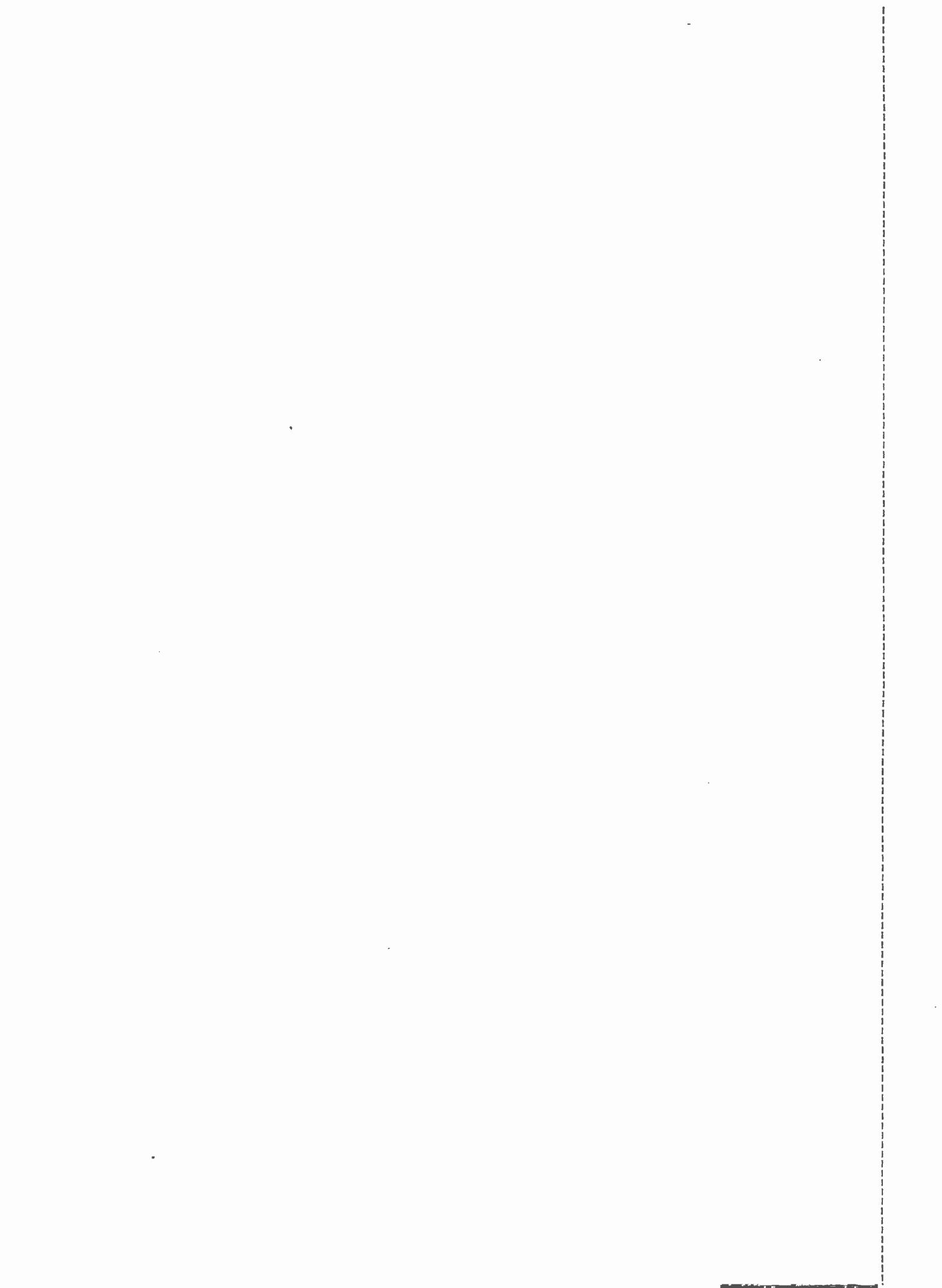
Small crowd in church

Carriage on dirt road

MUSIC: Transitions

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Though as a production the script may appear simple, it demands sensitive and perceptive direction of actors, upon whom the burden of the show rests. The few sound effects can be done manually, with the exception of the carriage, which could be omitted without interfering with the continuity of action. Music cues are mainly conventional, and could also be omitted, since Jane Eyre, as narrator, bridges scenes.



1 \_\_\_\_\_; sound by \_\_\_\_\_.  
2 Technical operator, \_\_\_\_\_.  
3 The entire production was under the direction  
4 of \_\_\_\_\_.



## THE DREAMIN' OF MICHAEL

SCRIPT: Rome Cowgill Krulevitch DATE:  
DIRECTOR: TIME: 15 minutes

CAST: Michael -- easygoing, happy, singing Irish  
Kathleen -- his hardworking, sympathetic wife  
Mrs. O'Brien -- landlady, kindly but no nonsense.  
Scornful in dream.  
Lady Larkin -- dream character, staccato, shrill  
Monty -- dream character, pompous, ridiculous  
Paper -- dream character, crackly  
Voices -- in dream, choruses of Guests and Clerks

SOUND: Rhythmic footsteps  
Marching feet  
Door  
Hissing of water from tap

MUSIC: Sad-happy Irish theme to be hummed by Michael  
Transitions if possible on same theme  
Tuning and sawing on violin  
Music to interpret sound (may be cut if necessary)

**PRODUCTION NOTE:**

As in most fantasies, music is important here, but cues marked "Music: Interpret" may be cut if they cannot be executed. A variation on a standard Irish song can be made to do for the theme. Directors scoring the show with records can then spot transitions from a recorded instrumental version of the song. Directors working with live music will be able to originate a fragment of melody for the theme and develop it into transitions.

Dream characters sustain the fantasy and should be interpreted with free exaggeration.

## 1 MUSIC: UP AND OUT FOR

2 ANNOUNCER: The Radio Workshop Players present . . . "The  
3 Dreamin' of Michael" . . . a fantasy in Kelly  
green.



1 MICHAEL: It's for my Kathleen and me.

2 O'BRIEN: Kathleen? Kathleen Kelly, that used to take

3 in washing?

4 MICHAEL: Sure, that's she!

5 O'BRIEN: A wee bit of a lass, was she?

6 MICHAEL: Yes. With a smile that danced like a will-o'-

7 the-wisp.

8 O'BRIEN: Start keenin' and mournin', lad! 'Twas too

9 hard she worked, with her man takin' his ease

10 all the while.

11 MICHAEL: She's never gone!

12 O'BRIEN: And lonely he stands now, with the songs all

13 gone from his heart.

14 MICHAEL: Oh, no . . . not Kathleen!

15 O'BRIEN: But what good's a song, with no one to sing

16 to? (FADING) What good's the fiddling if no

17 one can hear it?

18 MICHAEL: (OVER O'BRIEN'S FADE) Not Kathleen! Kathleen!

19 Oh . . . (THEME TUNE MOURNINGLY)

20 MUSIC: THEME TUNE BRIEFLY FADING OUT AS

21 MICHAEL: HUMMING CHANGE TO THE GROAN OF AWAKENING

22 UNDER:

23 KATHLEEN: Michael! Wake up! Your head's fallen half

24 off the chair. It's no wonder you're groan-

25 ing. Michael!

26 MICHAEL: (WAKING SLOWLY) No . . . Kathleen . . .

27 No . . . (AWAKE) Kathleen!



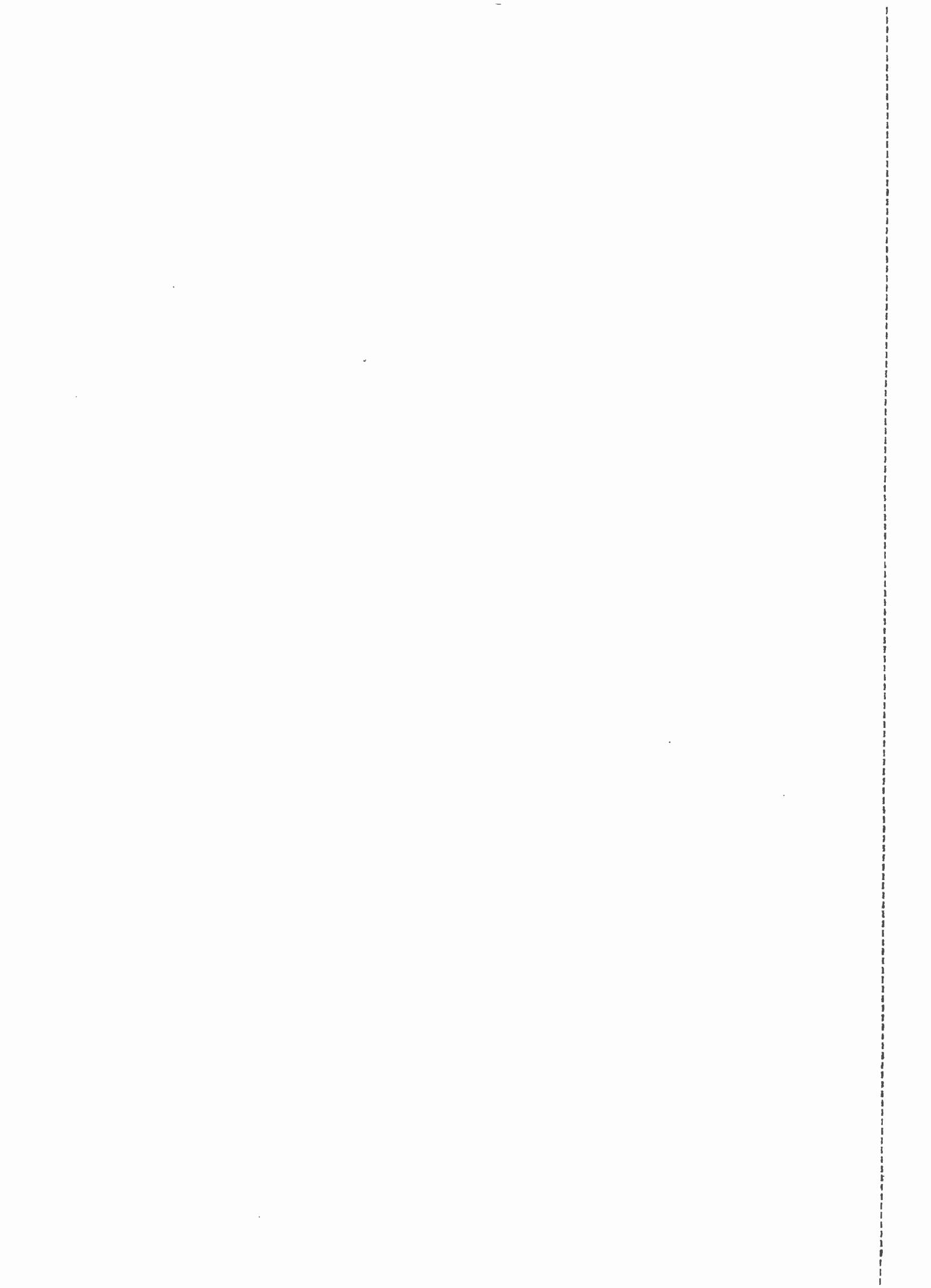
1 KATHLEEN: (LAUGHING) You've been tossing and muttering  
2 like the wild folk was after you! Oh, the  
3 look of you there in your chair!  
4 MICHAEL: You're here then, my darling!  
5 KATHLEEN: And where would you think I'd be going?  
6 MICHAEL: In my dreams Mrs. O'Brien . . . Where's Mrs.  
7 O'Brien?  
8 KATHLEEN: Have you forgotten? She left, bad cess  
9 to her.  
10 MICHAEL: Is she downstairs then?  
11 KATHLEEN: Now, Michael, you mustn't go taking her words  
12 so to heart!  
13 MICHAEL: She said she could find me a job.  
14 KATHLEEN: I'll not have you take it. Sweeping out the  
15 store on the corner! A fine kind of work for  
16 a man.  
17 MICHAEL: It is that, Kathleen! I'll start in the  
18 morning. 'Twas a fool I was before, but it's  
19 a man I am now. Tock a dream to make me see  
20 it, . . . and I'll never forget how it was.  
21 KATHLEEN: But your songs, Michael, and the  
22 fiddling . . .  
23 MICHAEL: And what good's a song with no one to sing to?  
24 That's what she said, and she's right. I was  
25 trying to sing all that time I was dream-  
26 ing . . . and the notes wouldn't come. Ah,  
27 Kathleen, Kathleen . . . it's enough to be







1 \_\_\_\_\_ Monty; and \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_ Paper. Music was directed by \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_; sound by \_\_\_\_\_.  
4 The entire production was under the direction  
5 of \_\_\_\_\_.  
6 MUSIC: SERIES THEME UP AND CLOSE



THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURE OF J. ERNEST TWOMBLEY

SCRIPT: Rome Cowgill Krulevitch  
DIRECTOR:

DATE:  
TIME: 30 minutes

CAST: Narrator -- gentle, dry humor, doesn't take it seriously  
J. Ernest Twombley -- bookkeeper, dreamer, ineffectual little man who has his moment  
Dinky -- cold gangster  
Horace -- rather stupid gangster  
Carol -- reckless, charming . . . the heroine of every Twombley's dream  
Girl -- weary department store clerk  
Floorwalker -- polite  
Joe -- smooth and not too smart  
Waiter -- obsequious  
Voice  
Mrs. Twombley -- a nag

SOUND: Small street crowd and traffic  
Car door  
Car starting, idling, driving off, stopping  
Car screeching around corners  
Footsteps on sidewalk  
House door open and close  
Phone ring  
Crash of lamp on floor  
Confusion of people running and bumping in dark room  
Small conversation crowd  
Boogie-woogie piano  
Gunshot

MUSIC: Theme and transitions

PRODUCTION NOTE:

To make the incredible adventure momentarily credible to the listener demands expert pacing. The opening and closing sections of Twombley as the "little man" should be pathetically real; the action between too exciting for questions of reality to occur. Characters are standard stock; direction emphasis will consequently be less on acting than on sound and music routines and, as indicated above, on pacing.



1 MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT FOR

2 ANNOUNCER: The Radio Workshop Players present . . . "The  
3                   Incredible Adventure of J. Ernest Twombley," an  
4                   original and moderately credible comedy.

5 MUSIC: UP AND OUT FOR

6 NARRATOR: Mr. Twombley sat at breakfast with Mrs.  
7                   Twombley, and scraping the burned part off his  
8                   toast, said . . .

9 TWOMBLEY: It's a funny thing, dear, but whenever anyone  
10                  looks accusingly at me I feel guilty.

11 NARRATOR: Mrs. Twombley poured her second cup of coffee  
12                  before she answered . . .

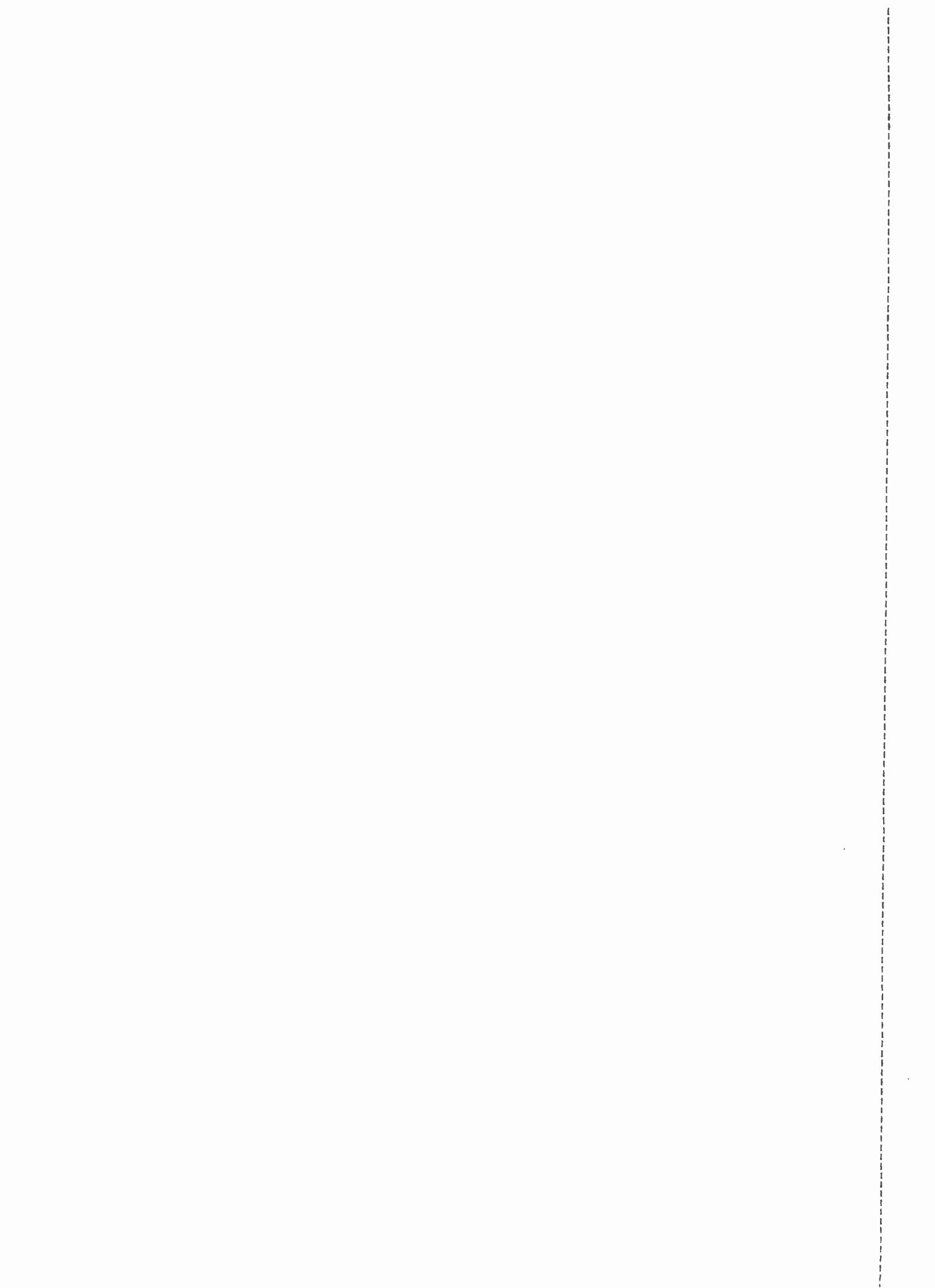
13 MRS.           Who looked at you accusingly?

14 TWOMBLEY: Oh, just the cop on the corner of Oak and First.  
15                  I guess he wasn't really looking at me accusingly,  
16                  but I felt as though I'd done something  
17                  wrong anyway. Isn't that funny, dear?

18 NARRATOR: Mrs. Twombley apparently didn't think so because  
19                  she didn't answer. Mr. Twombley ate his toast  
20                  crunchingly and thoughtfully, remembering the  
21                  policeman's stare. Actually, the policeman  
22                  hadn't been looking at Mr. Twombley at all, but  
23                  had only been trying to sneeze. But Mr. Twombley  
24                  recalled his guilty feeling and spoke again.

25 TWOMBLEY: I felt very guilty, and I even hurried up a  
26                  little to get by the cop. Very funny.

27 MRS.           Pass the toast.



1 TWOMBLEY: Here you are, dear. (AT IT AGAIN) Makes me  
2 wonder if in some other life . . . you know,  
3 reincarnation and all that . . . if some time I  
4 was a . . . a . . . pirate or an adventurer of  
5 some kind . . . did things that make me feel  
6 guilty now.

7 MRS. You an adventurer! (LAUGHS DIRTILY) That's a  
8 laugh!

9 TWOMBLEY: (DEFENSIVELY) I don't see that it's that funny.

10 MRS. Pardon me!

11 TWOMBLEY: (THOUGHTFUL AGAIN) You know how it is when you  
12 think I've done something wrong. I act as if I  
13 had, even if I haven't. It's really very funny  
14 when you come to think of it. I must look  
15 guilty, too.

16 MRS. My mother always said you had a shifty face.

17 TWOMBLEY: Your mother, my dear, was . . .

18 MRS. (UNREASONABLY) Leave my mother out of this!

19 TWOMBLEY: You were the one who . . .

20 MRS. (TRIUMPHANTLY) It's a quarter of! You're going  
21 to miss your bus!

22 TWOMBLEY: Oh, dear! (FADING) Where's my hat?

23 MRS. On the hall table. And listen . . . on your way  
24 home from work I want you to get me two spools  
25 of white thread and one of pink. (RAISING VOICE  
26 BECAUSE HE'S NOW AT DOOR) Get them at Bridges;  
27 can you remember?



1 TWOMBLEY: (OFF MIKE, CALLING BACK) Yes, dear. Two spools  
2 of white and one of pink.

3 MRS. (HALF SCREAMING IT) Number fifty!

4 TWOMBLEY: (OFF, CALLING BACK) Yes, dear! Good-by!

5 MUSIC: *105-B* DOOR CLOSE MUSIC, AND QUICK HURRYING AND ALL

6 : OUT IN A FEW SECONDS FOR

7 NARRATOR: (QUIETLY) And so began, quietly enough, the in-  
8 credible adventure of J. Ernest Twombley. He  
9 did not miss his bus, as it happened, but arrived  
10 at his office in good time, and spent a normal  
11 day there. In a cheerful frame of mind, he  
12 started home, hurrying a bit, to reach Bridges  
13 before closing time. He got there just as the  
14 clerks were beginning to whisk out their white  
15 covering cloths. Mr. Twombley hurried to the  
16 notion counter, and breathlessly asked the girl  
17 for thread . . .

18 TWOMBLEY: Two spools of white and one of pink, please.

19 GIRL: What shade of pink?

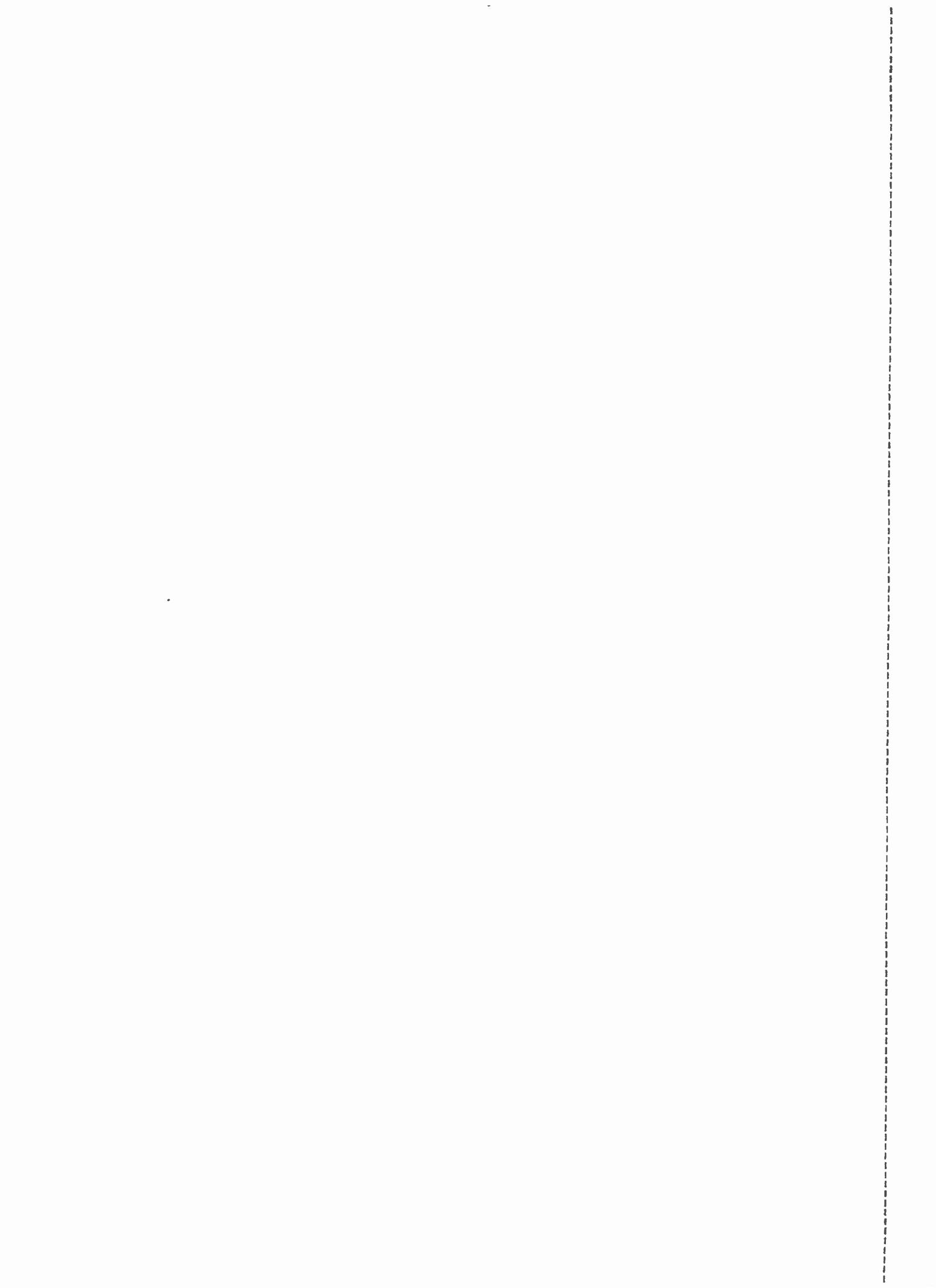
20 TWOMBLEY: She didn't say.

21 GIRL: Well, here's the tray of pinks . . . pick one  
22 out.

23 TWOMBLEY: Oh, dear. I . . . I'm afraid . . . Could you  
24 suggest a shade?

25 GIRL: I don't know what she wants it for. Try a pale  
26 one if you want . . . (HELPFULLY) or a dark.

27 TWOMBLEY: I just don't know . . .



1 GIRL: We're about to close.

2 TWOMBLEY: Yes . . . yes . . . Here. This one'll do, I  
3 guess. Is it . . . what number is it?

4 GIRL: What number do you want?

5 TWOMBLEY: Fifty. She said fifty . . . I think.

6 GIRL: Well, there's sixty and a hundred and . . .

7 TWOMBLEY: No . . . fifty . . . (NOT AT ALL SURE) I'm sure  
8 it was fifty.

9 GIRL: All right. Two white, one pink . . . That's  
10 thirty cents. Charge or cash?

11 TWOMBLEY: Cash. Here . . . I have change . . . Oh, no I  
12 don't . . . I'll have to give you a bill. Just a  
13 minute . . . I'm sure I have my wallet . . .

14 Yes. Here you are.

15 GIRL: Don't you have anything smaller than a five?

16 Oh. (FADING) All right, I'll get your  
17 change . . .

18 NARRATOR: (IN SOFTLY) The girl went to the far end of the  
19 counter, and Mr. Twombley, leaving his wallet on  
20 the counter, followed her. She gave him his  
21 change, the thread in a little gray paper bag,  
22 and bade him good evening with a scornful look  
23 on her face. She worked hard for her money and  
24 was in no mood to be kind to a man who came into  
25 the store five minutes before closing to buy  
26 three spools of thread. Under her scornful look,  
27 Mr. Twombley felt guilty for taking up so much



1                   of her time. He nervously thanked her, and  
2                   hurried down the aisle of the store, forgetting  
3                   to pick up his wallet. He was halfway to the  
4                   entrance of the store when the girl spied the  
5                   wallet lying on the counter. She called after  
6                   him . . .

7 GIRL:           (OFF IN B.G. CALLING) Mister! Oh, mister!

8 NARRATOR:       Mr. Twombley didn't hear her, and the girl  
9                   realizing this, handed the wallet to the floor-  
10                  walker, telling him to give it to the little  
11                  blond man with the small mustache and the hat  
12                  too big for him. The floorwalker ran after Mr.  
13                  Twombley, whom he recognized immediately from the  
14                  girl's description.

15 FLOORWALKER. (IN B.G.) Oh, sir! Stop sir! Your wallet!

16 NARRATOR:       (ON WALLET. WALLET MUST BE COVERED BY VOICE)  
17                  Mr. Twombley became aware of someone following  
18                  him, of people looking at him curiously, and  
19                  immediately became very much disturbed. His  
20                  feeling of guilt grew enormously and he began to  
21                  run toward the entrance.

22 FLOORWALKER: (IN B.G.) Stop that man!

23 NARRATOR:       (WITH FLOORWALKER) The floorwalker called out  
24                  something and a woman in a purple-flowered dress  
25                  reached out to stop Mr. Twombley. But he was too  
26                  quick and slid through the big revolving door  
27                  and out into the street.

1

1 SOUND: IN B.G. SMALL STREET CROWD AND TRAFFIC HOLD

2 UNDER

3 NARRATOR: There was a small crowd of people on the  
4 street . . . most of them hurrying to catch home-  
5 bound busses. Mr. Twombley sidled in and out  
6 among intent men and women, hoping to reach his  
7 own bus before anyone saw him. He was, however,  
8 only halfway to the corner when he heard . . .

9 VOICE: (QUITE FAR OFF) CALLING: There he is! That one!

10 NARRATOR: . . . a man shouting from the entrance to  
11 Bridges . . . Mr. Twombley thought for a moment  
12 of giving himself up . . . but at that precise  
13 second when he stood between the corner and the  
14 store . . . between embarrassing explanation and  
15 adventure . . . the incredible happened. Mr.  
16 Twombley heard a voice close to him . . .

17 DINKY: (CALLING IN A LOW HOARSE VOICE) Want a ride?

18 NARRATOR: The voice came from the mouth of a thin-faced  
19 man beckoning Mr. Twombley from a large shiny  
20 black automobile that was idling at the curb.  
21 Mr. Twombley, not quite himself at the moment,  
22 slipped into the car and slammed the door.

23 SOUND: DOOR SLAM. CAR IMMEDIATELY DRIVE OFF. KEEP IN

24 B.G. UNDER

25 TWOMBLEY: (AS CAR STARTS) I say, this is decent of you. I  
26 don't know quite what gets into me some-  
27 times . . .



1 DINKY: Can the talk and look behind you.

2 TWOMBLEY: I beg your pardon?

3 DINKY: Look behind you.

4 NARRATOR: Mr. Twombley looked behind . . . an chill fear  
5 shook him. In the back seat of the car, gagged,  
6 with her arms bound to her sides, sat a girl,  
7 staring pleadingly at him. Beside her sat a  
8 loose-lipped fat man holding a gun, which was,  
9 at that moment, pointing directly at Mr.  
10 Twombley.

11 TWOMBLEY: (SHRILLY) Who . . . what . . . I say . . .

12                   Mister!

13 MUSIC:         STAB AND UNDER FOR

14 NARRATOR: And Mr. Twombley fainted, falling gently against  
15                   the thin-faced driver.

16 (MUSIC: UP AND SEGUE WITH

17 SOUND: CAR DRIVING FAST UNDER

18 NARRATOR: When Mr. Twombley opened his eyes, he'd been  
19                   pushed to the other side of the front seat. Over  
20                   his mouth, half filling it, was a gag. His arms  
21                   were tied behind him. The car was speeding along  
22                   what seemed to be a country road, though it was  
23                   too dark by now for Mr. Twombley to recognize  
24                   any landmarks. It might have been just past  
25                   sunset . . . or close to midnight. Mr. Twombley  
26                   shook his head to clear it, and heard the man in  
27                   the back seat say . . .



1 HORACE: (LOW) Look out, Dinky. He's coming around.

2 DINKY: Keep him covered. How's the girl?

3 HORACE: Asleep, I think.

4 DINKY: Loosen her gag, Horace. The place is just around

5 the bend here. I'm going to stop the car and

6 have a talk with her.

7 SOUND: CAR STOP, IDLE ENGINE THROUGH

8 HORACE: I loosened it. Want me to wake her?

9 DINKY: Yeah.

10 HORACE: What's her name again?

11 DINKY: Carol.

12 HORACE: Hey, Carol, wake up. C'mon . . . wake up!

13 CAROL: MOAN SLIGHTLY AS THOUGH WAKING

14 HORACE: C'mon . . . time to get up.

15 CAROL: (STILL MOANING SLIGHTLY) Is it . . . morning?

16 DINKY: No. But it's time for business.

17 CAROL: Where are we?

18 DINKY: Just outside your house. I'm giving you one

19 more chance to fork over the money before I take

20 your uncle in there and show him the letters.

21 CAROL: (HALF WEEPING) But I've told you . . . he won't

22 pay you for them. Give me just a little more

23 time, please.

24 DINKY: That's what you said last week and the week be-

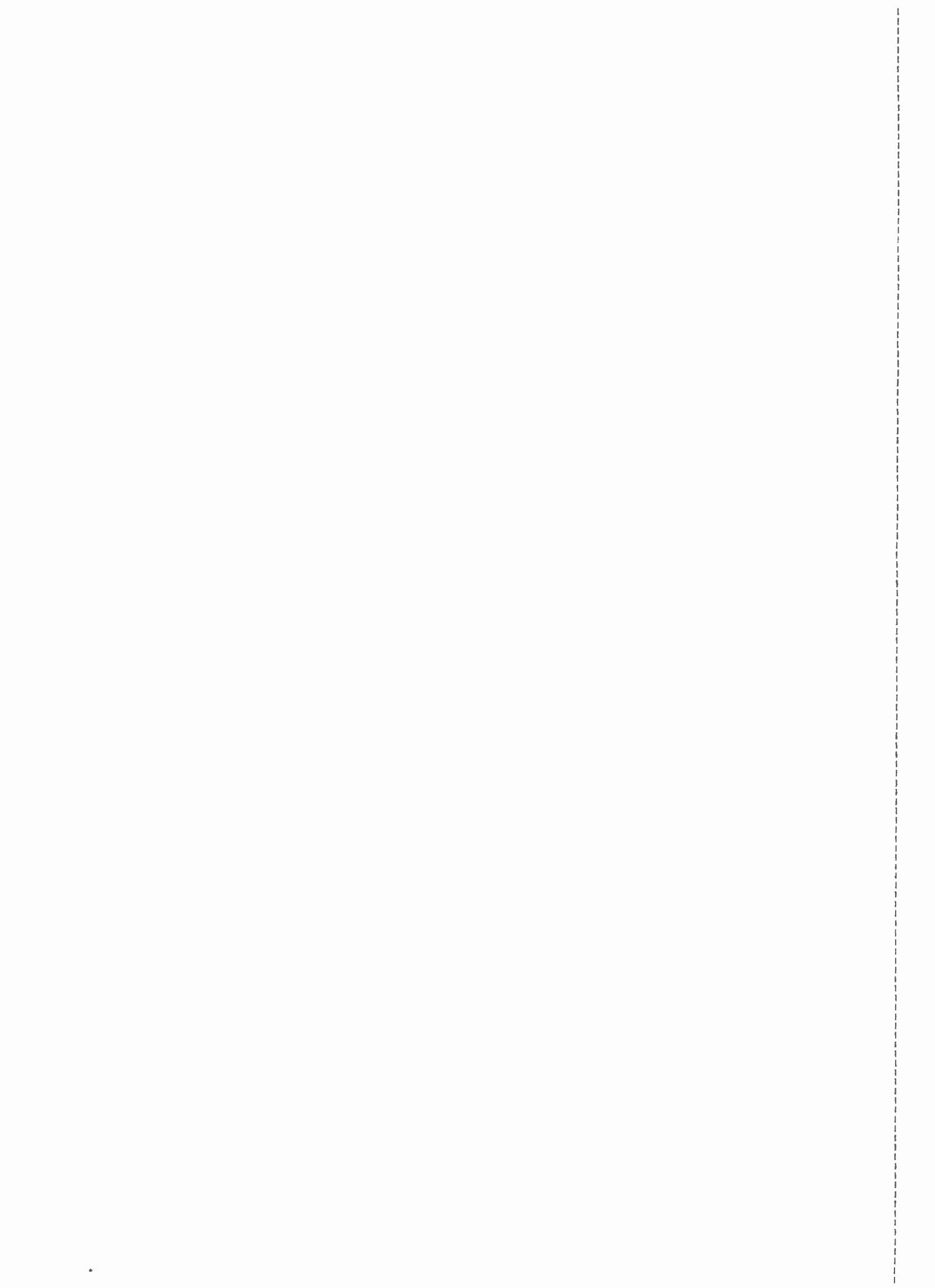
25 fore. We've given you all the time we're going

26 to.

27 CAROL: But Uncle Dan won't pay you. You can show him



1                   the letters but he won't pay. He'll just . . .  
2                   Oh, can't you imagine what he'll do to me?  
3 DINKY:           He won't do nothing to you if he doesn't pay. He  
4                   won't have the chance.  
5 CAROL:           What do you mean?  
6 DINKY:           Try to figure it out. Are you getting all this,  
7                   Uncle Dan? Hey, you . . . Uncle Dan. Have you  
8                   heard what we've been saying?  
9 TWOMBLEY:       (GAGGED AND SPEECHLESS WITH ASTONISHMENT) Uggle  
10                  glurg glumph.  
11 HORACE:         He's heard it, all right.  
12 DINKY:           Your niece wrote some pretty letters to a friend  
13                  of hers, see? And now she wants them back. But  
14                  they cost money. We want you to have a chance to  
15                  buy the pretty letters, get it? And all we ask  
16                  is fifty grand.  
17 TWOMBLEY:       (AS BEFORE) Iggle gung gloggle.  
18 DINKY:           Hold it till later. I just want you to have  
19                  something to think about while we drive up to  
20                  your house. And don't get the idea that there's  
21                  anyone in the house to help you. We took care  
22                  of the servants with a couple of phone  
23                  calls . . . and since rich folks like you have  
24                  to have a mile of yard around your house, there  
25                  ain't no neighbors.  
26 TWOMBLEY:       (AS BEFORE) Ogan grud goog.  
27 DINKY:           Hold it, I said.



1 CAROL: If you'd give me just a few more days . . .

2 DINKY: Nope, we get our money now. Watch them, Horace!

3 SOUND: CAR START UP AND DRIVE IN B.G. THROUGH

4 NARRATOR: J. Ernest Twombley sat in a sort of miserable  
5 horror while the car turned up a driveway and  
6 approached a magnificent, darkened house he had  
7 just realized was supposed to be his. Somewhere  
8 someone had made a terrible mistake. The  
9 niece . . . the girl named Carol . . . must know,  
10 must be planning to straighten it out as soon as  
11 they reached the house.

12 SOUND: CAR STOP. CAR DOORS SLAM IN B.G. FOOTSTEPS ON

13 WALK ALL IN B.G. CUED WITH LINES THROUGH

14 NARRATOR: (WITHOUT PAUSE) When the car stopped, the man  
15 named Dinky loosened Mr. Twombley's arms and  
16 pushed him roughly out, forcing him, with a gun  
17 in his back, to walk behind Horace and the girl  
18 up to the house.

19 SOUND: HOUSE DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE IN B.G., CUED WITH

20 LINES

21 NARRATOR: The girl opened the door with a key she took  
22 from her purse. And when the door had closed  
23 behind the four of them, she led them into a  
24 large book-lined room. She switched on a lamp,  
25 and then, while Mr. Twombley waited for her to  
26 explain that he was the wrong man, she looked  
27 directly at him, and cried . . .



1 CAROL: (DRAMATICALLY) Well, Uncle Dan! Here we are!

2 TWOMBLEY: (STILL GAGGED, BUT MANAGING A DESPERATE NOTE TO

3 HIS GURGLE) Gumph!

4 DINKY: Keep your gun on the girl, Horace. I'll cover

5 Uncle Dan, and take his muzzle off so we can

6 talk. (EFFORT) There. Now. You're a business-

7 man. We've made you a proposition. What's your

8 answer?

9 TWOMBLEY: I'm . . . You must . . . This is all a terrible

10 mistake.

11 CAROL: (QUICKLY) It's my mistake, Uncle Dan! Don't you

12 see? (DESPERATELY) Please understand . . .

13 and . . . play along with me just for a little.

14 I can explain it all . . .

15 DINKY: Yeah. It don't need much explaining, though,

16 once he sees the letters.

17 CAROL: (PLEADING) Uncle Dan . . . please . . . say you

18 will.

19 TWOMBLEY: (CONFUSED) I will?

20 CAROL: Be my sweet, dear Uncle Dan!

21 DINKY: You give us fifty grand . . . we give you the

22 letters. Or . . . the letters go into the papers

23 as part of the breach of promise suit a certain

24 young man will bring against your niece. Now do

25 you understand?

26 TWOMBLEY: But . . . but I don't have . . . I can't give you

27 fifty, er, grand.



1 DINKY: That won't go with us. We know you've got the  
2 dough.

3 CAROL: (QUICKLY, OVERDRAMATICALLY) Oh, you don't know  
4 what it's like to have a man like him for an  
5 uncle. Tight-fisted . . . grumbling . . . He'd  
6 rather the letters be printed than part with a  
7 penny of his millions.

8 DINKY: Maybe if he sees the letters he'll change his  
9 mind. I got them here. Don't look eager, miss,  
10 they're just copies. The originals are still  
11 with your friend. Listen . . .

12 CAROL: Don't read them aloud!

13 DINKY: But they're so pretty. (READING) "Dearest,  
14 darling, Joe . . . Where were you yesterday?  
15 I waited and wait . . ."

16 CAROL: Stop. Don't!

17 DINKY: You don't like that one? How about this?  
18 (READING. MAKING FUN OF IT) "When you're gone  
19 from me, the hours are like years. Everything is  
20 gray and white, like a picture without color.  
21 But when you come . . ."

22 TWOMBLEY: Stop that. It's not . . . not fair to read them  
23 like that.

24 DINKY: Think how they'll look in the newspaper, with  
25 photographs of your niece.

26 TWOMBLEY: Oh, no . . . no . . . you couldn't print them!

27 DINKY: That's our proposition.



1 TWOMBLEY: No decent newspaper would take them.

2 DINKY: If they're part of a breach of promise suit,

3 they will.

4 TWOMBLEY: This young man wants to marry Carol?

5 DINKY: That's the idea, Uncle, you're catching on fast.

6 Only she won't. So it's fifty grand . . . or

7 else.

8 CAROL: (PLEADINGLY) Would you let me speak to Uncle Dan

9 alone?

10 DINKY: You don't leave this room.

11 CAROL: If you step over to the fireplace you can watch

12 us while we talk.

13 DINKY: I don't want any funny stuff.

14 CAROL: But you do want your fifty thousand dollars.

15 And I think I can persuade Uncle Dan.

16 DINKY: O.K. (FADING) But we still got cur guns on you.

17 HORACE: (FADING) I'd think she could persuade him in

18 front of us.

19 DINKY: (OFF MIKE) Don't think so much. Just watch

20 them.

21 CAROL: (RAPIDLY, BEFORE END OF DINKY'S LINE. LOW VOICE)

22 I can't explain anything now but if you'll help

23 me, I can get us out of this.

24 TWOMBLEY: What can I do?

25 CAROL: Pretend to pay.

26 TWOMBLEY: How?

27 CAROL: A check. The checkbook's on the desk.



1 TWOMBLEY: But that's forgery.

2 CAROL: Sign Daniel P. Harris. Uncle's name is J. Daniel  
3 Harris. They don't know. And I have to get them  
4 out of the house before Uncle comes back.

5 TWOMBLEY: What if he comes before?

6 CAROL: Make a dash for it. My car's parked on the drive  
7 just outside this room. The key's in it . . . go  
8 out those French doors.

9 TWOMBLEY: But what good is all this going to do you?

10 DINKY: (OFF MIKE) O.K., now. You've had time enough.

11 CAROL: (RAISING VOICE) Just one second . . . (LOW) I'm  
12 going to get the letters myself. Then they won't  
13 dare present the check to Uncle. They'll have  
14 no proof of anything.

15 DINKY: (FADING ON) If you haven't made up your minds by  
16 now, you won't ever. So . . .

17 CAROL: (LOUDLY. SOBBING JOYOUSLY) Oh, Uncle Dan, I'll  
18 never forget this! I'll try somehow to repay  
19 you!

20 DINKY: Is he going to cough up the dough?

21 TWOMBLEY: I am. But I'll have to write you a check.

22 DINKY: Uh uh. No checks. Cash.

23 CAROL: Until you bring the real letters, you'll have to  
24 take a check. He'll have the cash ready.

25 DINKY: Then you better get it ready now. We can bring  
26 you the letters tonight.

27 CAROL: Tonight?



1 DINKY: Your pal's waiting with them now.

2 CAROL: Then go get them. Go now!

3 HORACE: We ain't leaving you two. You've got cash in

4 your safe. Give it . . .

5 SOUND: (INTERRUPTS HORACE) PHONE RINGS

6 CAROL: (GASP) I'll answer.

7 DINKY: Oh, no you won't. (FADING) Watch them, Horace.

8 (SLIGHTLY OFF)

9 Hello? Who? Yes, she's here, but she's busy.

10 I'm a friend. What? Who? Oh. I'll tell her.

11 Good-by.

12 HORACE: O.K. Now the money.

13 DINKY: (OFF) Hold it. (FADING ON) You two can start

14 talking . . . fast.

15 CAROL: What's the matter?

16 DINKY: That was your Uncle Dan on the telephone.

17 CAROL: Oh, no!

18 HORACE: Uncle Dan? But . . .

19 DINKY: He wanted to know why you didn't meet him at

20 Bridges the way you'd promised. O.K. Talk.

21 Who's this guy?

22 CAROL: I . . . I . . .

23 TWOMBLEY: I'm J. Ernest Twombley, a bookkeeper at the . . .

24 DINKY: (BREAKING IN. MENACINGLY) I've had enough of

25 your jokes. What's the game? Are you a dick?

26 TWOMBLEY: No . . . I told you. I'm J. Ernest . . .

27 DINKY: (ACCUSINGLY) You're a dick, and this is a trap.



1 HORACE: Look at his face! It's written all over it.

2 DINKY: (THROUGH HIS TEETH) You'll not get away with  
3 this.

4 CAROL: (SCREAM) Look out!

5 SOUND: CRASH OF LAMP. RUNNING FEET AND GENERAL CON-  
6 FUSION

7 HORACE: Hey, the lights! She threw the lamp!

8 CAROL: Run, Twombley! To the car.

9 SOUND: GUN SHOT

10 DINKY: Don't let them get away!

11 HORACE: (FADING) I can't see where they are.

12 DINKY: (OFF AND FADING) Shoot in the dark, then.

13 SOUND: BRING RUNNING FEET UP ALONE THROUGH

14 NARRATOR: J. Ernest Twombley heard the men shouting at  
15 each other as he ran to the car. He found it  
16 where the girl had said it would be and climbed  
17 in, panting . . .

18 SOUND: FEET OUT. CAR-DOOR SLAM. CAR START. CUE WITH  
19 LINES

20 NARRATOR: The ignition key dangled from the dash . . . he  
21 switched it on . . . felt the car tremble and  
22 roar powerfully under his touch. He was about to  
23 start down the drive when in the glare of the  
24 headlights he saw Carol running toward him. He  
25 waited. Breathless, she climbed in beside him,  
26 and he stepped on the gas, feeling for the first  
27 time in his life, exhilarated and strong.



1 CAROL: Turn left at the end of the drive. They'll  
2 follow us, but we can beat them if we hurry.  
3 TWOMBLEY: (A NEW- JOYOUS TWOMBLEY) Hold on, then! Here we  
4 go!  
5 SOUND: CAR ZOOM FORWARD. TURN CORNER WITH SCREECH.  
6 HOLD IN B.G. THROUGH, CUING WITH LINES  
7 CAROL: I'll show you a short cut into town. They may  
8 not know it, and maybe we'll be able to lose  
9 them. Turn right at that side road up ahead.  
10 TWOMBLEY: O.K!  
11 CAROL: If we get to Joe before they do, I think we can  
12 get the letters back.  
13 TWOMBLEY: You really loved him, didn't you.  
14 CAROL: At first. Here's the turn . . .  
15 SOUND: BIG SCREECHING TURN AND ZOOM AHEAD AGAIN  
16 CAROL: Wow. You can drive, mister.  
17 TWOMBLEY: How do you expect to get Joe to give you the  
18 letters?  
19 CAROL: Tell him I'll marry him after all.  
20 TWOMBLEY: Oh. I see car lights in the mirror. Is it they?  
21 CAROL: (FADING AS SHE TURNS HER HEAD) There's a car  
22 behind us. I don't know . . . it's coming pretty  
23 fast.  
24 TWOMBLEY: I'll give her all she's got.  
25 SOUND: CAR PICK UP SPEED  
26 TWOMBLEY: Do you want to marry Joe, now?  
27 CAROL: No. He doesn't want to marry me, either.



1 TWOMBLEY: Then how . . .

2 CAROL: At first we both wanted to get married. Uncle  
3 Dan wouldn't permit it. You're Uncle Dan for  
4 tonight. You'll tell Joe you give us your bless-  
5 ing.

6 TWOMBLEY: But . . . won't he know?

7 CAROL: He's never seen Uncle Dan.

8 TWOMBLEY: There's a crossroads up ahead.

9 CAROL: Turn left, then right at the next road . . . it's  
10 not far. Takes us to the south side of town.

11 SOUND: CAR TURNS . . . GOES STRAIGHT . . . TURNS . . .  
12 GOES STRAIGHT IN B.G. OF LINES FOLLOWING

13 TWOMBLEY: How'd you know I'd be at Bridges?

14 CAROL: I didn't. The men . . . kidnapped me. I was to  
15 tell them when Uncle Dan came out of the store,  
16 looking for me. When you came rushing out they  
17 asked me if you were Uncle Dan and . . . I said  
18 yes. I . . . thought it'd give me a little time.

19 TWOMBLEY: I don't see headlights any more.

20 CAROL: Go as fast as you dare, anyway. The men may  
21 guess where we're going.

22 TWOMBLEY: Where is it?

23 CAROL: The Red Flamingo. Joe plays piano there.

24 TWOMBLEY: What if he says he'll marry you.

25 CAROL: He won't. But you keep insisting that he should,  
26 and let me do the rest of the talking.

27 TWOMBLEY: What about the letters?



1 CAROL: I'll get them. If only we can do it all before  
2 Dinky and that fat man get there.

3 TWOMBLEY: We're at the outskirts of town. Which way do I  
4 go?

5 CAROL: I'll direct you. Straight ahead for awhile . . .  
6 and hurry!

7 SOUND: CAR ZOOM, UP, SEGUE INTO

8 MUSIC: TENSION. OUT FOR

9 SOUND: CAR SLOWING TO STOP. CAR DOORS SLAM

10 CAROL: This is the place. It's a dump, but the music's  
11 good.

12 TWOMBLEY: Let me get that door . . .

13 SOUND: DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE

14 *10:57.2* BOOGIE-WOOGIE PIANO IN B.G.

15 SMALL CONVERSATION CROWD IN B.G.

16 CAROL: (LOW) Remember . . . I do the talking.

17 WAITER: (FADING ON) Good evening, may I . . . Ah, good  
18 evening, Miss Harris!

19 CAROL: Is Joe around?

20 WAITER: He's playing now, miss. In the lounge.

21 CAROL: Tell him I'm here, will you?

22 WAITER: Yes, miss. Do you want a table while you wait?

23 CAROL: We'll stay here in the bar. Thank you. Tell  
24 him to hurry.

25 WAITER: (FADING) Right away, miss.

26 TWOMBLEY: They know you here.

27 CAROL: Yes.



1 SOUND: BOOGIE-WOOGIE PIANO STOP

2 TWOMBLEY: (NO PAUSE) I've never been in a place like this

3 before.

4 CAROL: You're just as well off.

5 TWOMBLEY: Would you like something to eat . . . or . . .

6 CAROL: There's no time. I keep expecting to see those

7 men come in.

8 TWOMBLEY: So do I.

9 CAROL: If they do, we'll run for it. Through that side

10 door.

11 TWOMBLEY: There's a tall young man coming this way. Is it

12 Joe?

13 CAROL: Where? Oh . . . (RAISING VOICE SLIGHTLY) Joe!

14 JOE: (FADING ON) What did you come here for, Carol?

15 CAROL: (OVERDOING IT A BIT) Joe, darling. The most

16 wonderful thing has happened!

17 JOE: Yeah? Who's he . . . ?

18 CAROL: That's the wonderful thing, Joe! (PROUDLY) Uncle

19 Dan, I want you to meet Joe. Joe . . . your new

20 uncle.

21 TWOMBLEY: How do you do.

22 JOE: I don't get it.

23 CAROL: You're a naughty boy, Joe, and I ought to be

24 cross with you. But I'm not. Because it's all

25 turned out so beautifully! Those men came to see

26 us with the letters tonight . . .

27 JOE: (WARILY) Yeah?



1 CAROL: And when Uncle Dan read them, he said . . . if I  
2 really love you so much . . . we can get married.  
3 JOE: (SCEPTICAL) Yeah?  
4 TWOMBLEY: That's right . . . er, son.  
5 CAROL: And after we've been married a year and shown him  
6 that we're really meant for each other . . . he's  
7 going to start my allowance again . . . a little  
8 at a time.  
9 JOE: (SCORNFUL) Yeah?  
10 TWOMBLEY: Young man, can't you say anything but "Yeah?" I  
11 think I'm being very generous.  
12 JOE: I'm not having any.  
13 CAROL: But Uncle Dan wants us to get married.  
14 TWOMBLEY: In fact, I insist.  
15 JOE: It's too late, see? And I don't like that good-  
16 behavior clause in the contract.  
17 TWOMBLEY: I insist that you marry my niece!  
18 CAROL: (INTENTLY) You were going to sue me, Joe. With  
19 those letters as proof. If you're not going to  
20 marry me, you'd better give me back the letters.  
21 JOE: Oh, no!  
22 CAROL: I'll stand up here and make a scene, Joe. I'll  
23 shriek at the top of my lungs that you're jilting  
24 me. There'll be a dozen witnesses.  
25 JOE: There's something fishy here.  
26 CAROL: Give me those letters.  
27 JOE: It don't seem like . . .



1 CAROL: Uncle Dan, have you a handkerchief? I'm afraid  
2 I'm going to have hysterics.

3 TWOMBLEY: In my pocket, somewhere.

4 JOE: Wait, now, Carol. I gotta figure . . .

5 CAROL: (LOUDLY) Joe! You promised to marry me! You're  
6 jilt . . .

7 JOE: Shut up! Do you want me to lose my job?

8 CAROL: (INCREASING VOLUME) You're jilting me! You  
9 promised . . . (WEEPS LOUDLY)

10 TWOMBLEY: (CHIMING IN) I insist that you . . .

11 JOE: (OVER THEM) O.K! Take them. Here. And get out,  
12 will you? People are looking . . .

13 CAROL: Are these all the letters? One, two, three . . .

14 JOE: Get out, will you?  
*Run!*

15 CAROL: Six. C'mon, Uncle Dan! (GASP) The back  
16 way! Quick! They're here!

17 DINKY: (OFF MIKE, CALLING) Joe! Stop them!

18 TWOMBLEY: Run!

19 CAROL: This way! No, no . . . this way?

20 MUSIC: SNEAK IN ABOVE, EXCITING AND FAST, BUILD AND  
21 BREAK FOR

22 NARRATOR: But Mr. Twombley ran the other way, through the  
23 kitchen and out the back door he knew would be  
24 there. No one paid any attention to him . . . a  
25 small man with a blonde mustache and a hat too  
26 big for him.

27 The adventure had ended for him when he reached



1           in his pocket for his handkerchief, and found the  
2           package of thread. As his fingers touched it, he  
3           remembered Mrs. Twombley, waiting for him at  
4           home.

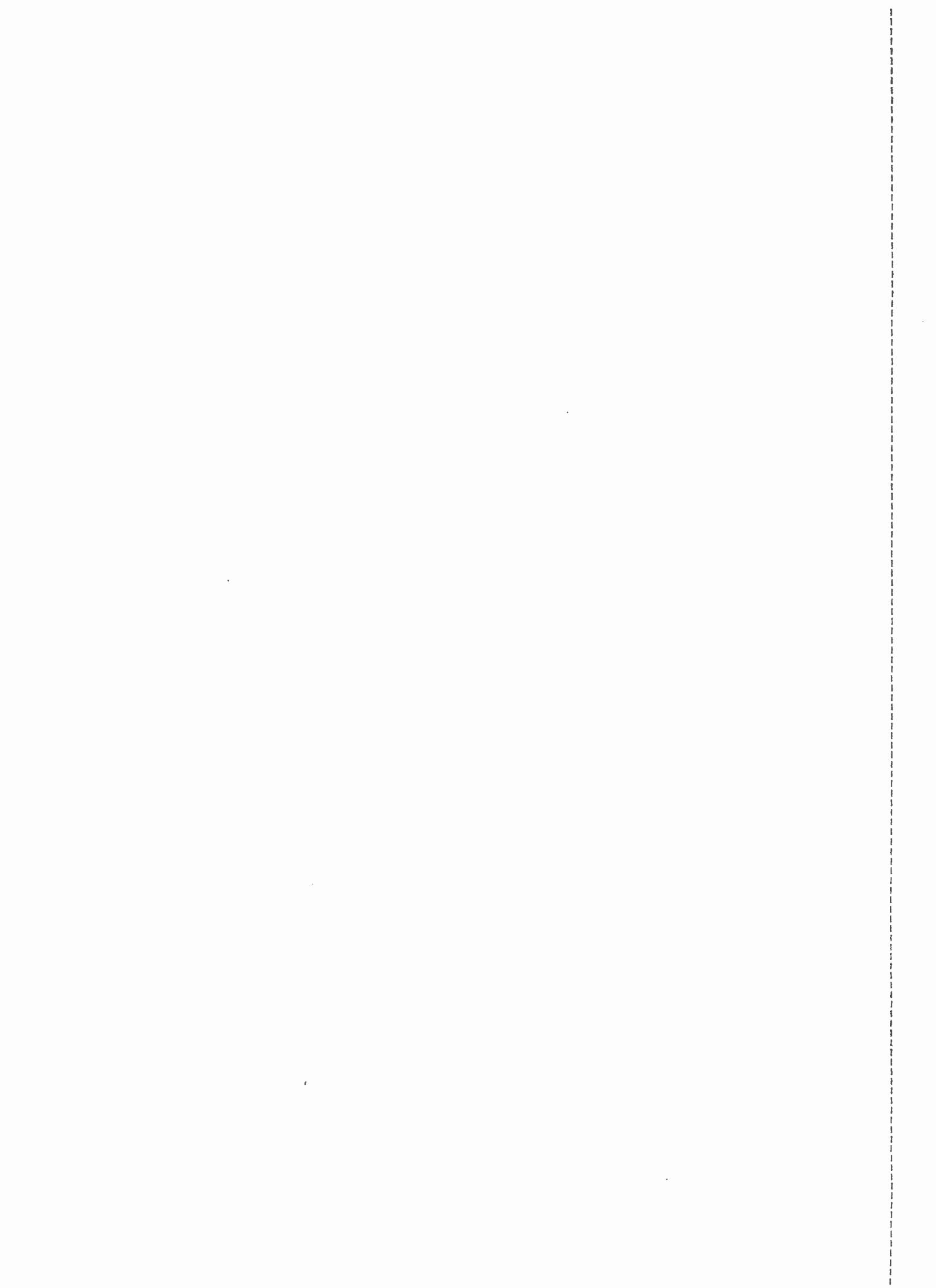
5           He ran all the way to the bus line, and when  
6           his bus came along, paid his fare out of the  
7           change the girl at Bridges had given him. When  
8           he walked into his house his wife was sitting in  
9           the living room waiting for him. She was very  
10          angry.

11 MRS.       (IN A ROARING RAGE) So! This is when you walk in  
12          for dinner! What have you got to say for your-  
13          self?

14 NARRATOR:   (LOW) What could he say? That for an incredible  
15          few hours he had been a man who could write  
16          checks for thousands of dollars? A man who  
17          rescued women in distress from gun-shooting  
18          gangsters? An adventurer himself? He no longer  
19          believed it, so how could he ask belief from her?  
20          He looked at the brown plush davenport, the row  
21          of small china animals on the whatnot, the neat,  
22          safe, tan curtains, and shrugged his shoulders  
23          helplessly.

24 MRS.       I suppose you think I haven't guessed what you've  
25          been doing. I suppose you think you can keep it  
26          from me?

27 NARRATOR:   He closed his eyes for a minute. What could she



1 have guessed?

2 There was guilt on his face, he knew, and what-  
3 ever she accused him of he'd have to admit. He  
4 opened his eyes, and waited for her to tell him  
5 what he'd been doing.

6 MRS. They called me from Bridges, you see. So I know  
7 you left your wallet there. And you've been  
8 walking up and down the streets looking for it,  
9 because you couldn't even remember where you'd  
10 lost it. I don't know why I let you have more  
11 than a dollar at a time. I don't know why I have  
12 to be the only woman in this block whose husband  
13 (FADE UNDER NARRATOR) comes home at all hours of  
14 the night . . .

15 NARRATOR: She talked for quite a while then and Twombley  
16 listened. She reviewed all his shortcomings, and  
17 painted him to himself as he was, and, except for  
18 the past few hours, as he had always been. When  
19 she had finished, he knew himself again, and  
20 could speak to her.

21 MRS. (FADING ON UNDER NARRATOR) Well! What have you  
22 got to say for yourself?

23 TWOMBLEY: (THE OLD TWOMBLEY AGAIN) I'm sorry, dear. It'll  
24 never . . . happen again. But I did remember  
25 your thread. I wasn't quite sure of the shade  
26 of pink, but if it isn't right I can change it  
27 tomorrow when I pick up my wallet. Here . . .

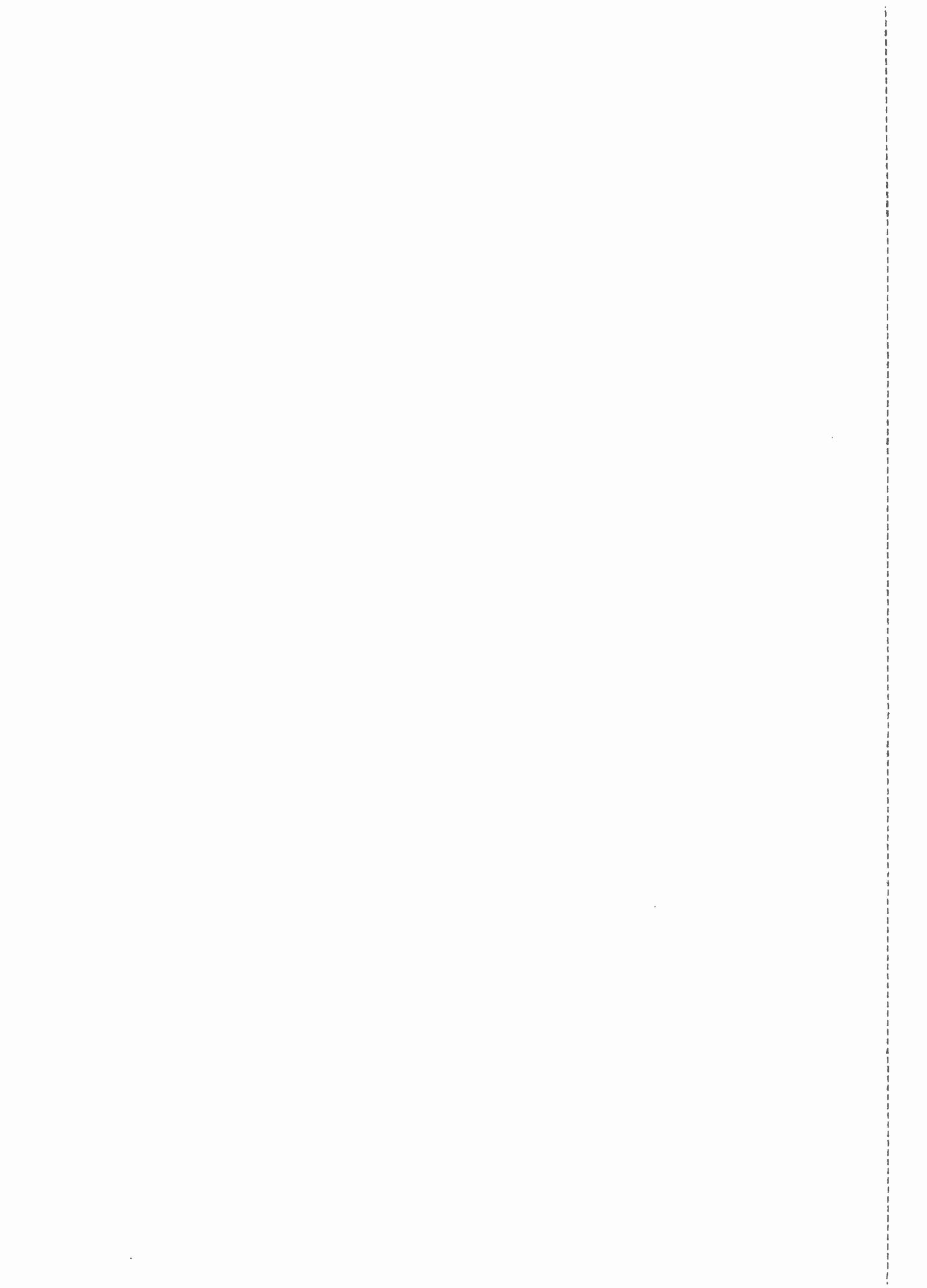


1 it's been in my pocket the whole time!

2 NARRATOR: And he gave to his wife the thread from  
3 Bridges . . . his last tangible link with his  
4 incredible adventure.

5 MUSIC: *1051* UP TO CLIMAX, CLOSE, AND OUT

6 ANNOUNCER: The Radio Workshop Players have presented an  
7 original comedy . . . "The Incredible Adventure  
8 of J. Ernest Twombley." Heard in the cast were  
9 \_\_\_\_\_,  
10 \_\_\_\_\_,  
11 \_\_\_\_\_,  
12 Sound by \_\_\_\_\_. Music by \_\_\_\_\_.  
13 \_\_\_\_\_. The entire production was under  
14 the direction of \_\_\_\_\_.



MR. SAM ADAMS OF BOSTON

SCRIPT: J. Helen Stanley  
DIRECTOR:

DATE:  
TIME: 15 minutes

CAST: Town Crier  
Patrick Henry  
Sam Adams  
Paul Revere  
Speaker  
Rider  
Messenger  
Parker  
Major  
Voices

SOUND: Crowd  
Troops  
Gunshot  
Horse's galloping  
Big bell  
Indian war cries

MUSIC: Theme and transitions

CONTROL: Echo mike

PRODUCTION NOTE:

The dramatized narrative, in which the dialogue scenes illustrate a story or information presented principally by the narrator, is frequently used for educational broadcasts. Many directors seem to feel that such a script should be produced with a gravity befitting its high purpose; consequently they turn out a dull show. Quite to the contrary, the informational dramatized narrative achieves its purpose only when its drama is exploited to the fullest. There is only one restraint -- everything in the production must be brilliantly clear. This is not so much a restriction as a challenge to precision. If the script is produced for classroom listening, the challenge is greater, since the broadcast competes with normal distractions of school routine.

For classroom listening, however, there is no need to change any regular production techniques which do not interfere with clarity. There is no need to condescend to youngsters, either in narration, acting, or production approach. Most children today are accustomed to listen to adult radio plays and expect their classroom broadcasts to match them in vividness, variety, and dramatic intensity.

1 ANNOUNCER: The Radio Workshop Players present . . . "Mr. Sam  
2 Adams of Boston" . . . the story of a gentleman  
3 from Massachusetts who helped to write an impor-  
4 tant chapter in the Story of America.



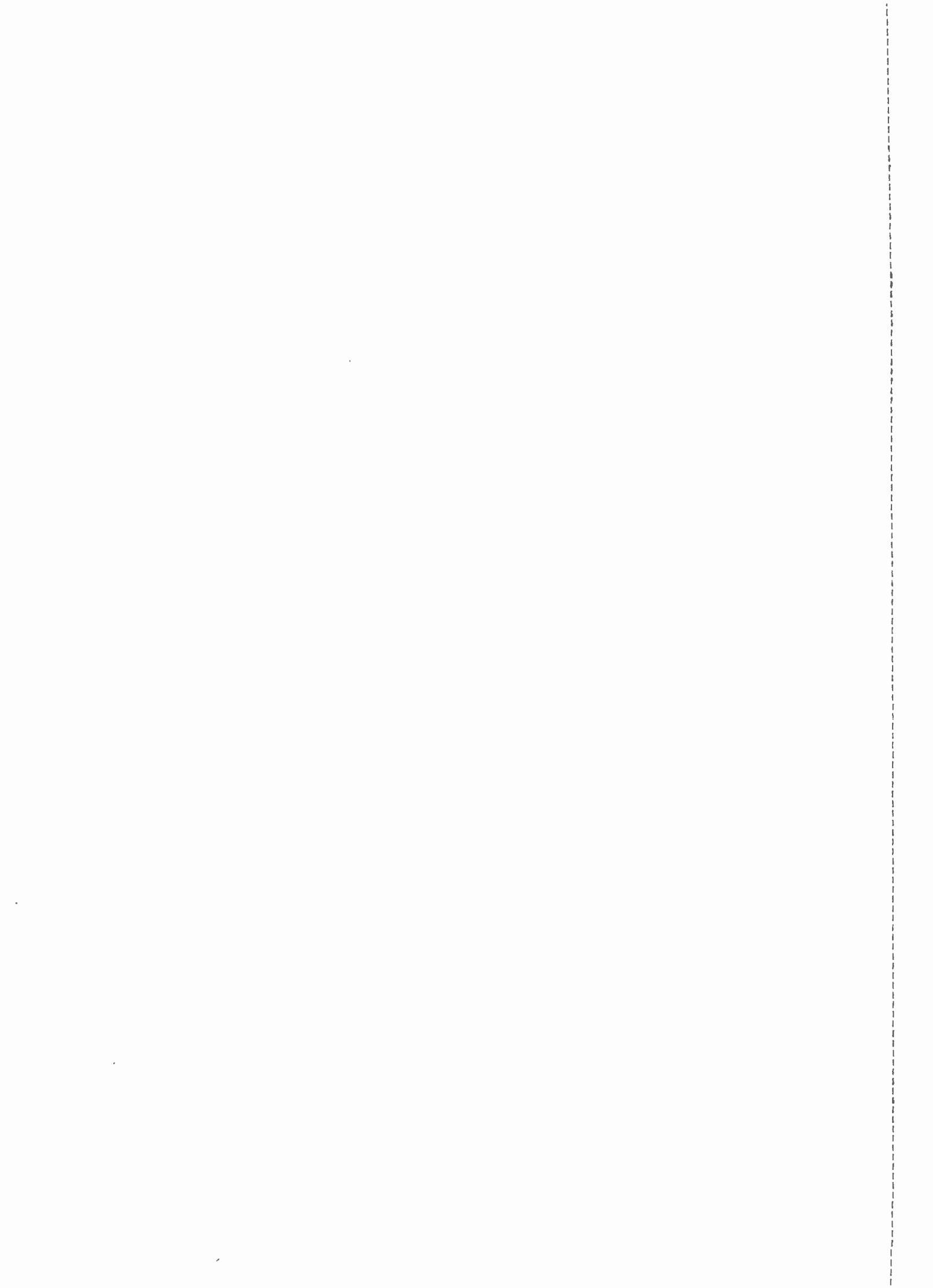
1 MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT FOR

2 NARRATOR: Hello, everybody! This is a story of Sam Adams,  
3 yes, and of a couple of other men whose names are  
4 heard whenever the story of America is told --  
5 Patrick Henry and Paul Revere. It's a story that  
6 begins when the French and Indian wars had ended,  
7 and England was master in the new world. British  
8 redcoats had helped the colonists defeat their  
9 enemies and the colonists were grateful. But a  
10 new danger faced them. Somebody had to pay for  
11 the war. And King George of England pointed to  
12 the colonies. Men were plowing fields, cutting  
13 forests, and harvesting riches in the colonies.  
14 They had shipyards and seaports -- bustling busi-  
15 ness in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and  
16 Charlestown -- let them pay for England's war!

17 With an iron hand, King George of England wrote  
18 a series of new laws for the colonies. From Bos-  
19 ton to Georgia the proclamations rang . . .

20 TOWN CRIER: (SHOUTING, SLIGHTLY BACK) Hear ye, hear ye, the  
21 law of King George! All colonial goods must be  
22 carried in English ships . . . you must sell your  
23 lumber and grain and tobacco only to English  
24 merchants . . . you must buy your hats and cloth  
25 and iron goods only from English merchants . . .  
26 (FADE) Hear ye, hear ye, His Majesty the King.

27 NARRATOR: Angry crowds gathered through the colonies. So



1           England would hamper trade, would she? Put chains  
2           on their ships and drag them all to England? Tell  
3           folks from whom to buy and to whom to sell? A  
4           fine state of affairs for loyal British sub-  
5           jects . . . was King George to make slaves of his  
6           colonies?

7           Of course, the colonists wriggled under the  
8           laws. They began to sneak their trade in and out  
9           of the country, and Yankee sea captains turned  
10          outlaws and smugglers. King George sent out  
11          another law to the colonies.

12 TOWN CRIER: His Majesty's proclamation -- Ships of the King  
13           shall patrol the coast to seize the ships of  
14           smugglers . . . British officers have the power  
15           to search your homes for smuggled goods . . . the  
16           British Navy will punish offenders, they'll have  
17           no trial by jury . . . (FADE) Hear ye, the law of  
18           the King.

19 NARRATOR: So now it was search and seize, was it? The  
20           colonists fumed at the King's new law. What right  
21           had the officers to break in the doors and search  
22           without warrant wherever they pleased? And to  
23           take away rights to a trial by a jury! These were  
24           not laws for Englishmen -- and worst insult of  
25           all, the colonies were taxed to pay for the laws,  
26           for the revenue cutters and British officials who  
27           enforced the King's command. The colonies



1                   smoldered with anger . . . but only smoldered.  
2                   Not until 1765 did resentment really burst into  
3                   flame. That year a Stamp Tax was laid on everyone  
4                   by the English Parliament overseas.

5 SOUND: MUTTERING CROWD SNEAK IN

6 NARRATOR: To a man, the colonies muttered protests. As-  
7                   semblies gathered . . . merchants, farmers, rich  
8                   men, poor men. In Virginia a young lawyer made a  
9                   great speech!

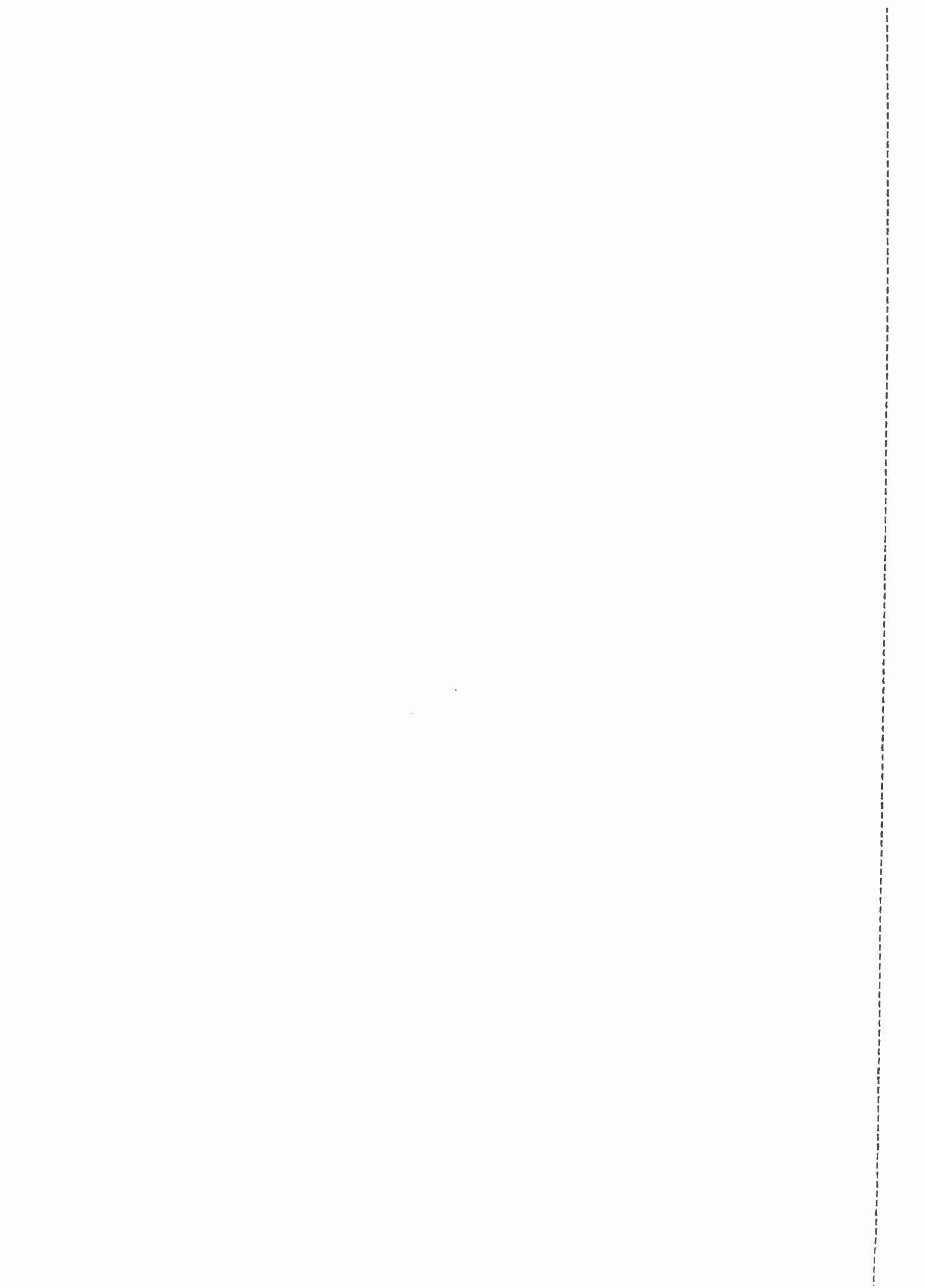
10 SOUND: CROWD UP. SUBDUE FOR

11 HENRY: (ECHO) The Parliament of England is not the  
12                   legislature of the colonies. We have no one there  
13                   to speak for us, and vote for us. Our assemblies  
14                   alone have the right to tax us. Gentlemen, his-  
15                   tory points the way of tyrants -- Caesar had his  
16                   Brutus; Charles the First, his Cromwell; and  
17                   George the Third, King of England, may profit by  
18                   their example. If this be treason, make the most  
19                   of it.

20 SOUND: SHOUTS UP. SOME FOR, SOME AGAINST. FADE OUT

21                   UNDER

22 NARRATOR: That was a man from the back hills of Virginia --  
23                   a man nobody had ever heard of, whose name was  
24                   Patrick Henry. His cry, "No taxation without  
25                   representation!" echoed throughout the colonies  
26                   till it shook the seats of Parliament itself, and  
27                   British statesmen repealed the law. But though



1                   the Stamp Tax was taken away, more taxes were  
2                   piled on in its place. Tax on glass . . . tax  
3                   on paper . . . tax on lead and painter's colors  
4                   . . . tax even on a pound of tea! Rage flamed in  
5                   the colonies -- the secret Sons of Liberty sprang  
6                   up -- built bonfires, marched in torchlight pa-  
7                   rades, and rioted in the streets -- until in the  
8                   Assembly of Massachusetts a leader arose -- a man  
9                   to unite the colonies.

10 ADAMS:         (SLIGHT ECHO) Gentlemen! Our safety lies in  
11                  numbers. Alone we can do nothing. Let the  
12                  colonies stand together . . . form committees of  
13                  correspondence in every town and province . . .  
14                  send letters and news by special messenger, and  
15                  keep constantly in touch with leaders everywhere.  
16                  A crisis is at hand. We must be ready!

17 VOICES:         AD LIB. EXCITEMENT

18 SPEAKER:       Order! Order! Gentlemen, come to order! You  
19                  have heard the proposal to form committees of  
20                  correspondence. Those in favor say "aye."

21 VOICES:         Aye! Aye! (HUBBUB)

22 SPEAKER:       Opposed? (PAUSE) None. Very well. Motion is  
23                  carried. But we must have a leader. Sir, will  
24                  you yourself undertake the task which you have  
25                  proposed to us? It means time and work -- it may  
26                  interfere with your personal business --

27 ADAMS:         Personal business? Sir, I am a poor man, I have



1           little business. But such as I am, I'll work for  
2           the rights of freemen -- Sam Adams of Boston,  
3           gentlemen . . . at your service.

4 MUSIC:     SALUTE HIM AND OUT FOR

5 SOUND:     GALLOPING HORSE UP THROUGH

6 NARRATOR:   Sam Adams of Boston . . . Sam Adams of Bos-  
7           ton . . . Sam Adams . . . Sam Adams . . . the  
8           name beat through the colonies on horses' hoofs,  
9           as riders carried messages to the committees of  
10          correspondence. And in March, 1770, Sam Adams  
11          had terrible news to send out.

12 SOUND:     HORSE UP, SLOWING DOWN, STOP

13 RIDER:     Whoa! Whoa, there -- (SLIGHTLY UP) Greetings, Mr.  
14           Adams -- reporting back, sir --

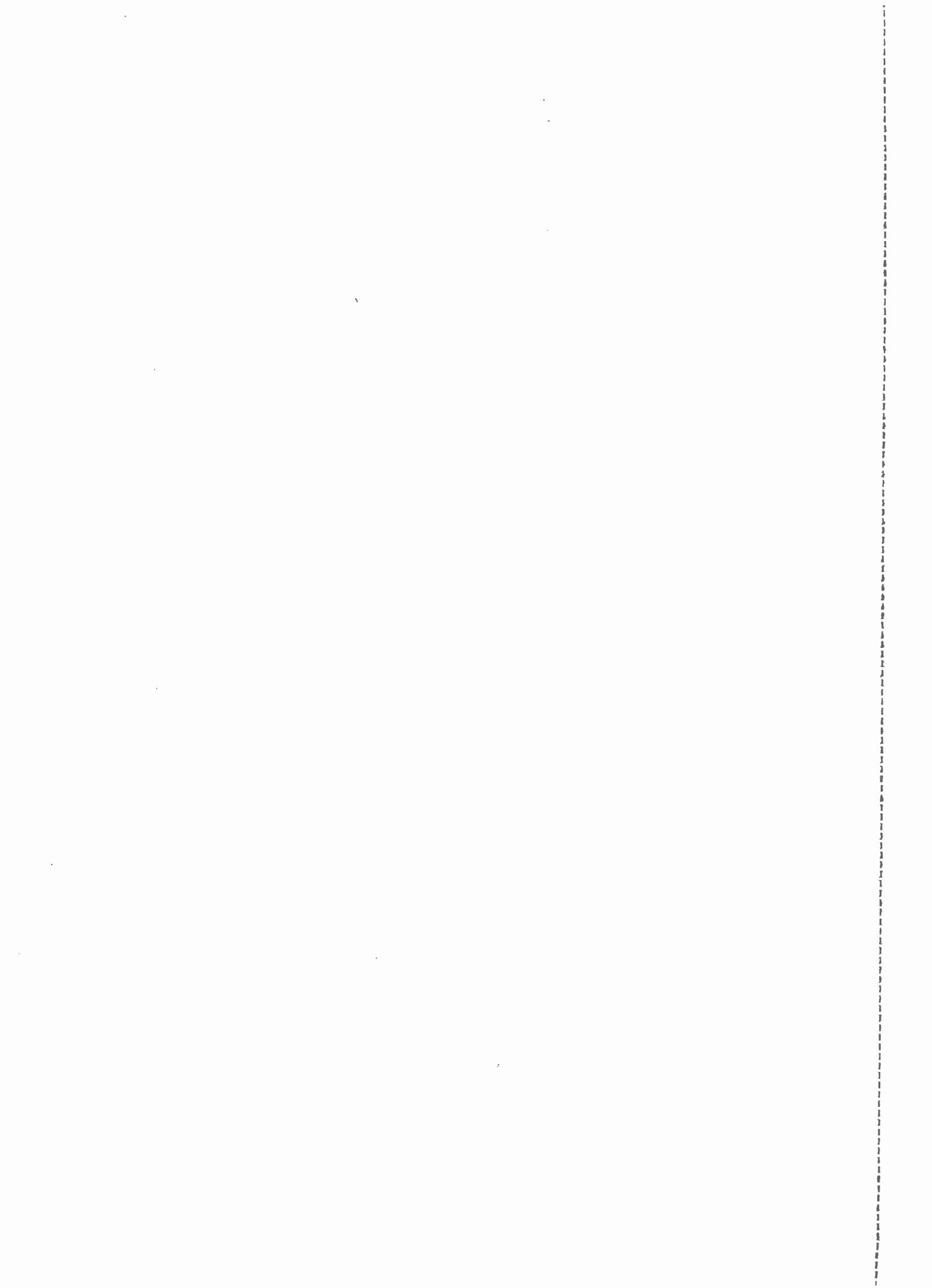
15 ADAMS:     Don't dismount . . . I know you just returned  
16           from New York, but I'll have to send you out  
17           again . . . go to the stables and get a fresh  
18           horse . . . it's urgent -- hurry!

19 RIDER:     What's happened? What's the news since I left?

20 ADAMS:     Massacre. Four men killed on the streets of  
21           Boston just last night. British soldiers fired  
22           on them -- the crowd was making fun of the red-  
23           coats.

24 RIDER:     The dirty scoundrels! It's murder, killing simple  
25           folk!

26 ADAMS:     Aye, but I daresay the whole town of Boston will  
27           be punished by the king. Crowds on the streets



1                   are forbidden, you know. I've letters written  
2                   here to the other colonies -- they've got to stand  
3                   by us if there's trouble -- quick, now -- get you  
4                   another horse and head for Philadelphia!

5 SOUND:         HORSE'S HOOFS STEADY UNDER

6 NARRATOR:      But the Boston Massacre was only the beginning.  
7                   In autumn of 1773, Sam Adams had still other  
8                   news . . . English ships with cargoes of tea were  
9                   bound for the chief colonial ports. Tea which the  
10                  colonists had to buy, but tea with the hated tax  
11                  upon it. Messengers rode along the coast -- from  
12                  Charlestown, Philadelphia, and New York -- word  
13                  came to Mr. Sam Adams of Boston.

14 SOUND:         HORSE UP AND OUT

15 RIDER:        (OUT OF BREATH) The committees send you word --  
16                  patriots in every town -- Say they won't buy the  
17                  tea -- They'll send it back to England -- there's  
18                  talk of mobs -- tar and feather the captains --  
19 ADAMS:         It's worse here in Boston . . . the town's in an  
20                  uproar. (MUSING) I wonder how tea would mix with  
21                  salt water?

22 RIDER:        What's that, Mr. Adams?

23 ADAMS:        Never mind, we have a plan. One ship is already  
24                  in Boston Harbor -- and there's a meeting in the  
25                  Old South Church today . . . Spread the news to  
26                  everyone -- (FADE) the meeting will decide what's  
27                  to be done.



1 SOUND: FADE UP CROWD -- HUBBUB OF AD LIBS., ETC.

2 <sup>4</sup>ADAMS: Order! Order! The meeting will come back to  
3 order!

4 VOICES: SUBDUED AND OUT AS

5 ADAMS: Friends of Boston, the time is growing short . . .  
6 this meeting has been patient for several hours,  
7 in the hope that the British governor would send  
8 us word that the tea would not be unloaded here.  
9 It is growing dark . . . the candles have been  
10 lighted . . . but I ask that you wait a little  
11 longer -- the governor will surely answer us  
12 soon --

13 VOICE I: (BACK) Here's the messenger now --

14 VOICE II: Here he comes -- make way --

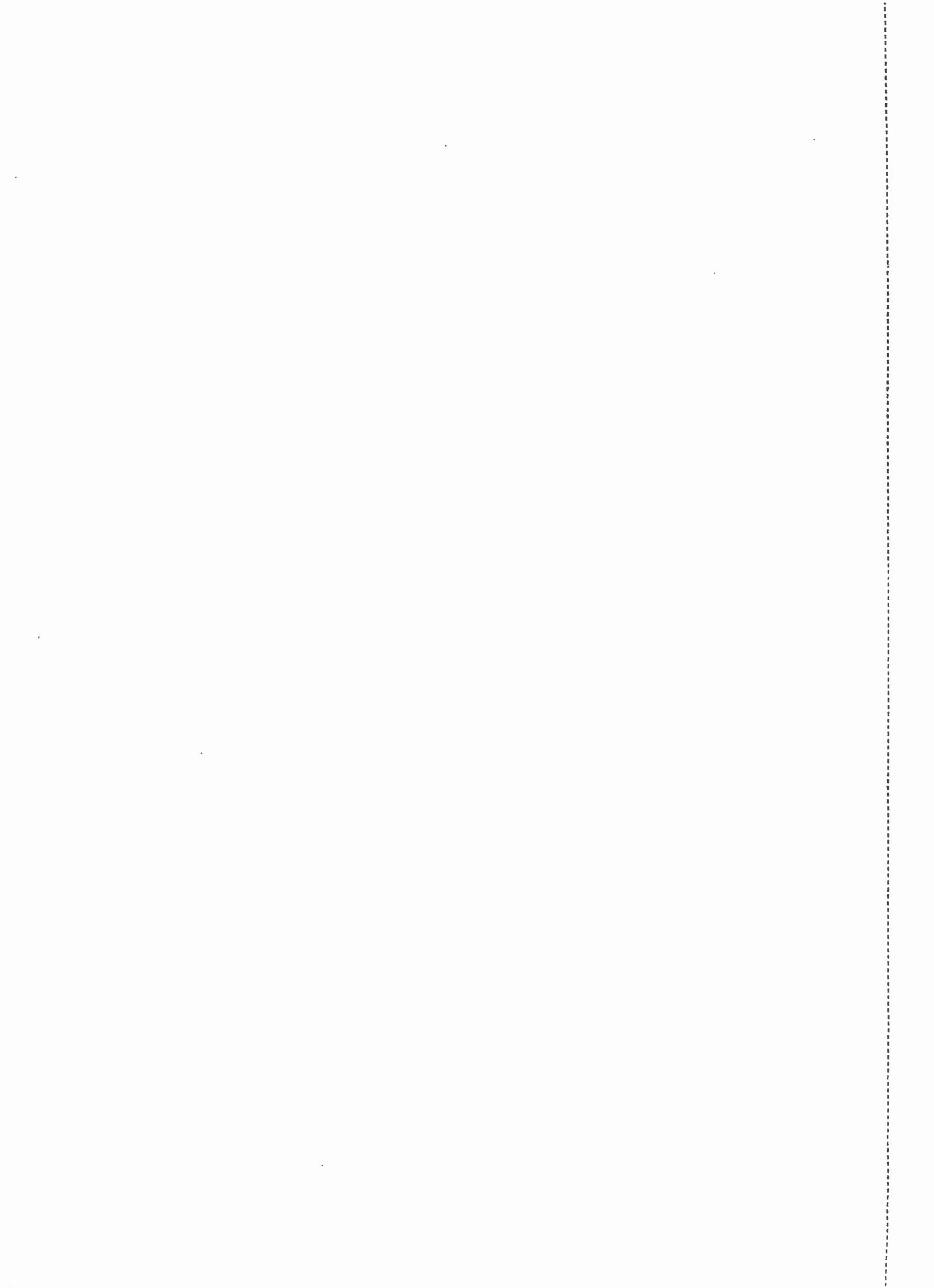
15 VOICES: What's the word? What's he say? Speak up --  
16 what is it?

17 ADAMS: (OVER VOICES) We had almost given up. Well, sir,  
18 what's the message? What does the governor have  
19 to say?

20 MESSENGER: His Excellency replies that the tea was sent from  
21 England to be unloaded at the port of Boston.  
22 Those are orders; the tea cannot be returned.  
23 That's all, Mr. Adams . . . the governor had noth-  
24 ing more to say.

25 ADAMS: Very well. (UP) My friends! This meeting can do  
26 no more to save the country!

27 VOICES: That's the signal! To the harbor! The ship!



1                   The ship!

2 SOUND:          INDIAN WARWHOOPS DROWN OUT VOICES . . . UP AND

3                   FADE OUT IN DISTANCE

4 MESSENGER:     (OVER WHOOPS) Mr. Adams! Mr. Adams! The street

5                   is full of Indians! War paint and feathers!

6                   With tomahawks! What is it, Mr. Adams? Where're

7                   they going?

8 ADAMS:          White-skinned Indians, under that paint. I be-

9                   lieve the Sons of Liberty are having a tea party

10                   . . . yes, a tea party in Boston Harbor, at the

11                   expense of King George the Third!

12 MUSIC:         CURTAIN AND OUT

13 NARRATOR:      Terrible was the punishment of Boston for the

14                   famous tea party that night. Because the King's

15                   cargo was thrown in the harbor, the port of Boston

16                   was closed to shipping, and the people were faced

17                   with starvation. The Massachusetts Charter was

18                   taken from the colony, and more troops of soldiers

19                   were quartered in Boston. Once more the Com-

20                   mittees of Correspondence had news -- representa-

21                   tives of all the colonies were to rally in Phila-

22                   delphia and plan a way to unite more closely.

23                   And in Virginia the young Patrick Henry spoke

24                   again. This time his words were blazed in his-

25                   tory!

26 HENRY:         (SLIGHT ECHO) Gentlemen may cry peace, peace --

27                   but there is no peace. The war is actually be-



1 gun. The next gale that sweeps from the north  
2 will bring to our ears the clash of arms. Why  
3 stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen  
4 wish? Is life so dear or peace so sweet, as to  
5 be bought at the price of chains and slavery?  
6 Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course  
7 others may take, but as for me, give me liberty,  
8 or give me death!

9 MUSIC: SWEEP IN. OMINOUS MARCHING THEME. UNDER AND  
10 OUT AS

11 SOUND: SOLDIERS MARCHING

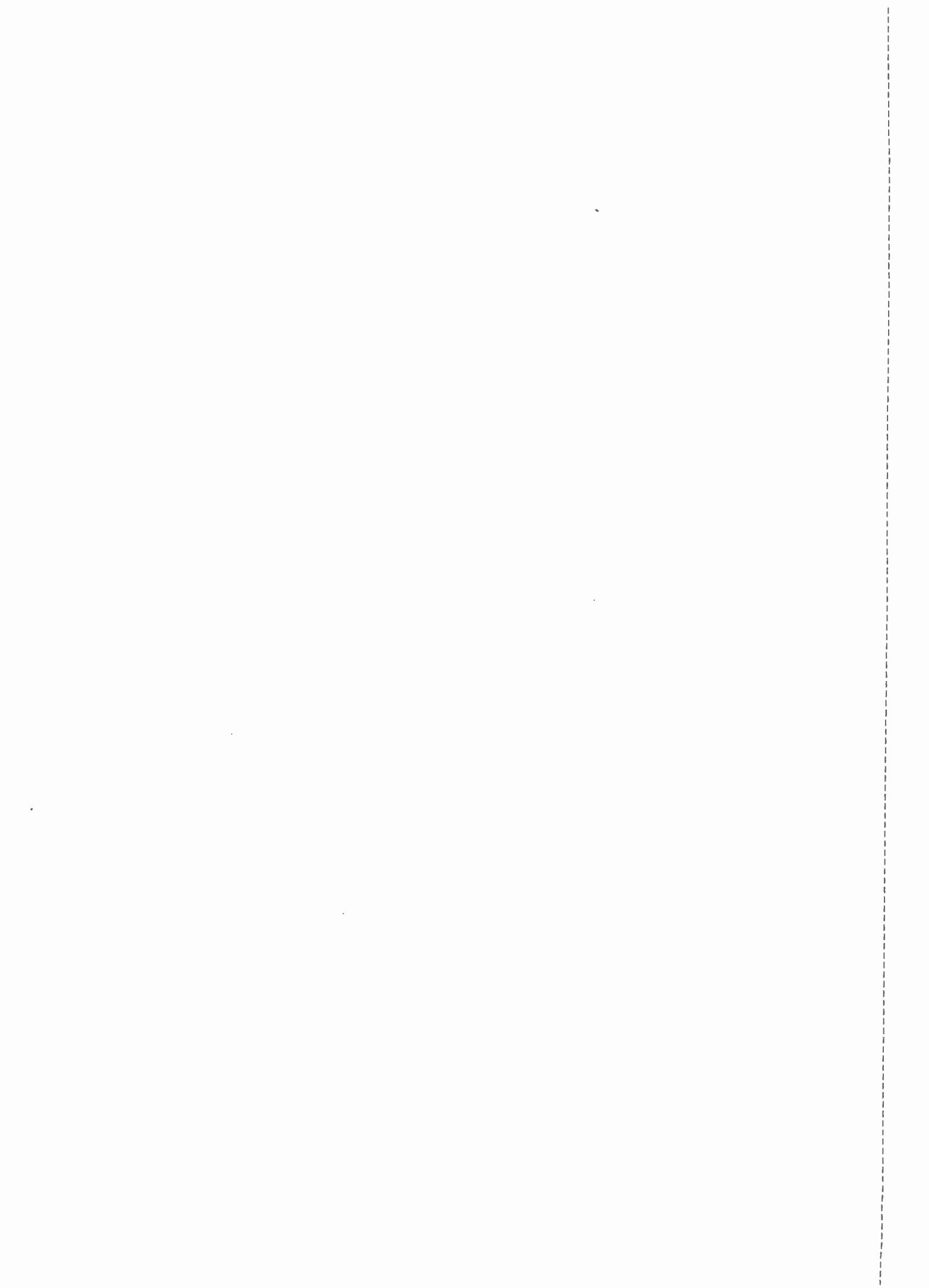
12 NARRATOR: And there in the north, as the colonies united,  
13 a redcoat troop marched out of Boston . . .  
14 Marched on the road to Lexington and Concord, to  
15 arrest Sam Adams, the colonies' leader. Their  
16 muskets flashed in the sun, their uniforms  
17 glittered . . . a thousand soldiers to get Sam  
18 Adams . . .

19 SOUND: HORSE'S HOOFS, RAPID, WIPE OUT SOLDIERS

20 NARRATOR: But a rider speeds swiftly ahead of the  
21 troops . . . his horse is covered with flecks of  
22 foam . . . he rides through the night and into  
23 the dawn, and he stops at the farmhouses to cry at  
24 the windows --

25 REVERE: (BACK) To arms! The redcoats! To arms at Lex-  
26 ington!

27 NARRATOR: And then he speeds on to arouse the countryside.



1 SOUND: HORSE FADES OUT, CROSS FADING WITH TROOPS

2 MARCHING

3 NARRATOR: The redcoat troops draw near to the town, but  
4 already Sam Adams is warned and has escaped. In  
5 his place there's a gathering on the green. More  
6 than sixty men in shirt sleeves, jackets, and  
7 caps . . . farmers with muskets at their sides  
8 . . . silently watch the soldiers advance.

9 PARKER: Stand your ground, men. Don't fire unless we're  
10 fired upon. But if they mean to have war, let it  
11 begin here!

12 SOUND: TROOPS OUT

13 NARRATOR: The British troops sight the little band of  
14 minutemen. An officer gives a command --

15 MAJOR: (BACK) Disperse, rebels -- out of our way!

16 SOUND: GUNSHOT

17 NARRATOR: A shot rings out -- and the battle is on!

18 MUSIC: UP FAST. OUT FOR

19 NARRATOR: Eight minutemen, dying on the village green at  
20 Lexington . . . two hundred redcoats, killed in  
21 ambush, on the march back to Boston. A brave  
22 beginning in a brave cause! But the colonists  
23 faced long years of suffering before the war for  
24 liberty would end. On July 3rd, 1775, a vast  
25 crowd of volunteers assembled in Cambridge.  
26 Mechanics, farmers, boys, and old men . . . men  
27 without uniforms, armed with old rifles . . .



1           these were now the American Army. George  
2           Washington sat on horseback beneath a great elm,  
3           and received the title of command. Was it possi-  
4           ble that this army could save the colonies? Not  
5           Samuel Adams nor Patrick Henry nor Washington  
6           himself could say . . . .

7           But we'll find out before our broadcasts of the  
8           story of America are over. And I'll give you a  
9           clue to our next adventure -- it's not a man's  
10          name or any particular place -- it's just  
11          this . . . listen . . . .

12 SOUND:     BIG BELL CHIMES

13 NARRATOR:   . . . a bell -- a bell that tells a whole story in  
14           itself -- one of the most famous bells in the  
15           world. Try to guess what it is before next week!  
16           Our story for then is called -- "We Hold These  
17           Truths." Goodby until then!

18 MUSIC:      UP. UNDER FOR

19 ANNOUNCER:   The program, "Mr. Sam Adams of Boston," is part of  
20           the Story of America series, designed to supple-  
21           ment the study of United States history in the  
22           intermediate, upper grades, and high schools. The  
23           script was written by J. Helen Stanley and di-  
24           rected by \_\_\_\_\_. Heard in the cast  
25           were: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
26           \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.  
27 MUSIC:       TO FILL



# V

# Appendix



## SUGGESTIONS FOR HOLDING AUDITIONS

Good acting is basic to a successful production, and depends ultimately upon good actors. Complicated sound and music routines and intricate microphone setups will not compensate for an inadequate cast. Obviously, the more prospective actors you test in auditions, the larger the group you will have from which to cast. It is a good idea, therefore, to hold school-wide or community-wide auditions, depending upon your production situation, well before your drama schedule gets under way.

Let all prospective directors listen to the tryouts. There are few better ways of sharpening critical perception than by trying to determine why one reader is effective and another not. School-wide auditions supply a workshop class with an extensive file of possible student performers, and give student directors an opportunity to judge a large and unselected group of performers.

Within the workshop class itself an audition may be conducted as early as the first or second meeting; it will serve as an excellent way of acquainting all workshop students with the talents of the other members of the group.

An assistant will be helpful in conducting an audition. First have him pass out audition cards to all persons interested in trying out. Make general announcements about the information you wish to have on these cards and give candidates time to fill them out.

Next, pass out audition material and indicate how many of the speeches you want each person to read. Explain for those who have not spoken over a microphone that they should avoid coming any closer than a foot and a half from the mike. Instruct everyone to give his name before he begins reading and again after he is through.

Then retire to the room where you will listen to the auditions over a loudspeaker. This may be another studio, an office, or simply the control room. If some of the candidates are prospective student directors, invite them to listen to the auditions with you over the loudspeaker.

Your assistant divides the candidates into groups of fives or tens, depending on the number of persons trying out. Rather than wait for volunteers, have your assistant take students in the first group into the studio and have them count off, one through five, instructing them to read their auditions in that order. He arranges the cards correspondingly, and brings them to you in the proper sequence. Your assistant instructs the candidates to read in rotation, the second student beginning immediately after the first has been seated.

If you are listening in a control room and have a talk-back over which to communicate with the candidates, you may ask a promising actor to repeat a section of the audition copy. Otherwise, you may simply keep in a separate pile the cards of all those students you want to hear again at a later date.

As the student reads his audition, make key comments about his reading in the blanks provided on the audition card. Do not rely on your memory. The card will be your only guide when you make your criticism to him later on. And if fifty students are trying out, by the time you have heard number forty, you probably will have forgotten number five.

It is likely that you will have your most objective reactions to a student when you hear him read for the first time. From them on, after you get to know him better, your knowledge of him as a person will color your judgment. If you listen

critically, this first impression probably will be fair and objective.

When times allows, it is a good idea to schedule a conference with each student for individual criticism of his audition. But even if you have time for such conferences, plan also to hold a mass critical session immediately following the audition. Such a session can be a significant learning experience for the candidates as both actors and prospective directors. Besides hearing a criticism of his own reading, each person has an opportunity to hear an evaluation of other auditions.

If at a general audition involving scores of students there is not time even for such a mass critical session, be sure that you announce this before the auditions begin. Explain that while there is not time for criticism now, anyone who wishes may come to talk to you about his audition privately.

Frankness is essential in criticizing auditions. At the same time a respect for the feelings of the student dictates that you make an effort to point the way to improvement instead of discouraging with adverse criticism. Even the most disagreeable qualities have something about them that is "interesting" and "unusual." Your comments may run something like this:

"Ernie, . . . Very good voice quality. Nice vigor and enthusiasm. You did your best on number four. But you were 'read-y.' You gave each word and each idea the same value. Clearly there are some subordinate words and some ideas that are less important than others. Suppose you put the idea of the lines into your own words for me

now." (The student will give you the general drift of the speech in his own words.) "Exactly! Now the words have a natural and convincing impact. Notice how you changed your pace and retarded when you pretended to write down the address. Apparently you're quick to take suggestions. With a little hard work, if you won't be a great actor, you'll certainly read lines acceptably. I think you'll be effective on straight narration."

Or you may say . . .

"Joan. Nice spirit, good meaning, and good sense of pacing. You see the possibilities of all the speeches and of the first one in particular. The chief comment I'll make is that you're a little too earnest, too intense. Instead of listening to what you're saying, we find ourselves conscious that you're using a technique for effect. Relax a bit. Not quite convincing on the Irish dialect. You need some work on the tune of the language. Excellent voice range. I have no doubt that if you cultivate a little restraint and learn to relax, you'll do some good acting."

If you wish to hold auditions for an individual production, have no qualms about rejecting any candidate who does not satisfy your idea of the part. You are being perfectly honest and at the same time you avoid offense if you state simply that this student's voice is a bit heavy for the part, or that student sounds too much like another member of the cast. Offense is given only when you appear unsure of your judgment and a student feels that his reading has not been fairly evaluated.

## A SAMPLE AUDITION CARD

Audition

WNYE

Report

Board of Education Station

City of New York Municipal Broadcasting System

File No. ....

HISTORY OF THE RADIO CANDIDATE

Date .....

(To be filled in by the Candidate)

---

1. Name (print) .....
  2. Address .....
  3. Telephone No. ..... 4. Date of Graduation .....
  5. High School ..... 6. School hours and other hours when you are occupied .....
  7. Age ..... 8. Sex ..... 9. H. S. Dramatic Director .....
- 

### EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING

1. What experience have you had in speech or drama? (Give dates, parts played, and names of productions.)  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
  2. What foreign languages do you read or speak fluently? .....
  3. What dialects can you do? .....
  4. Can you sing? ..... What type of music? .....
  5. What instruments can you play well? .....
  6. What impersonations can you do? .....
  7. What effects can you produce with your voice? (e.g., baby's cry, a dog's bark, etc.) .....
  
.....  
  8. Can you typewrite fairly well? .....
  9. What other qualifications do you possess? .....
-

## AUDITION RESULTS

(Do not write on this side of the card)

- I. *Straight* (Indicate by "E" for excellent, "F" for fair, and "B" for bad.)

1. Child .....  
3. Juvenile or ingenue .....  
5. Aged .....
2. Boy or girl .....  
4. Mature .....

- II. *Announcing* (Use key above.)

1. Straight .....  
3. Music .....
2. News (Places, names) .....  
4. Ad lib. ....

- III. *Character parts* (Give types, such as "impudent boy," "gracious old lady," etc.)
- A. Native

1. Child .....  
3. Juvenile or ingenue .....
2. Boy or girl .....
4. Mature .....

- B. Foreign (Give nationality, type, and age; e.g., French-Canadian trapper, mature.)

- C. Caricature (e.g., clever lisp, nasal twang, etc.) .....

- IV. *Voice quality*

- A. Check voice defects

1. Accent .....  
4. Pronunciation .....  
6. "Readiness" .....
2. Colloquialism .....  
5. Artificiality .....
3. Disconcerting quality .....
7. Pace .....

- B. Indicate quality by using above key—"E," "F," or "B."

1. Interpretation of character .....  
3. Contrasting voice .....
2. Dramatic quality .....
4. Distinctive quality (Nature of, such as "husky.")

5. Modulation .....  
7. Sincerity (Convincingness) .....
6. Articulation .....
8. Regional characteristics (e.g., Southern drawl.) .....

- V. *Voice Defects* (Describe)

- VI. *Title or source of any special material presented.*

- VII. *Impression:* Remarks and rating on a 1-10 basis.

Auditioned by .....

## A SAMPLE AUDITION CARD

CASTING FILE						1 2 3 4
NAME .....						CLASSIFICATION .....
ADDRESS .....						TELEPHONE NO. ....
HOME ADDRESS .....						
Class Schedule						(Do not fill out)
8	M	T	W	T	F	
9						Voice quality: .....
10						Errors: .....
11						.....
1:30						.....
2:30						Comments: .....
3:30						.....
4:30						.....
7-10						Use for: .....

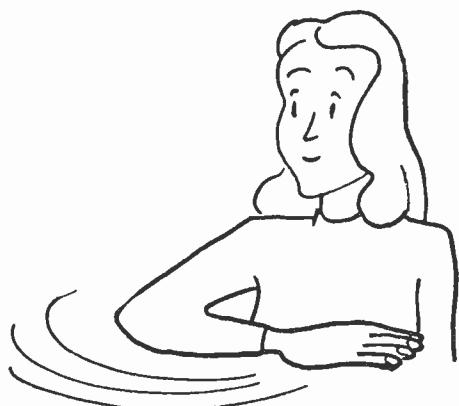
The numbers at the upper right-hand corner of the card are a rating key. Rank the candidate by circling or checking one of the numbers.

The candidate fills out the class schedule by marking an "x" or a check at the times when he is busy.

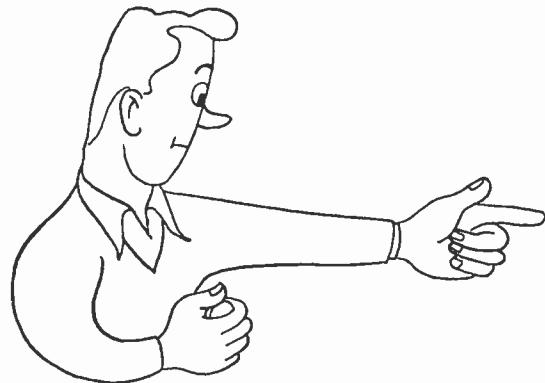
# STUDIO SIGN LANGUAGE

If your production is well rehearsed, it should run almost by itself in the final performance. However, even in the best rehearsed show an actor may forget a direction he followed in the dress rehearsal. As the director, you will have to correct immediately any deviation from the design of the production as you planned it. And once the show is on the air you must rely on sign language.

A studio sign language has grown up in radio which serves as a ready vocabulary. It is important that you be fluent in its use so that in the split second when a cue must be given, you supply it almost instinctively. In turn, persons in the studio must learn to recognize the meaning of the signals as promptly as they would a spoken direction. The following annotated signals should be ample sign-language vocabulary to direct almost any production.



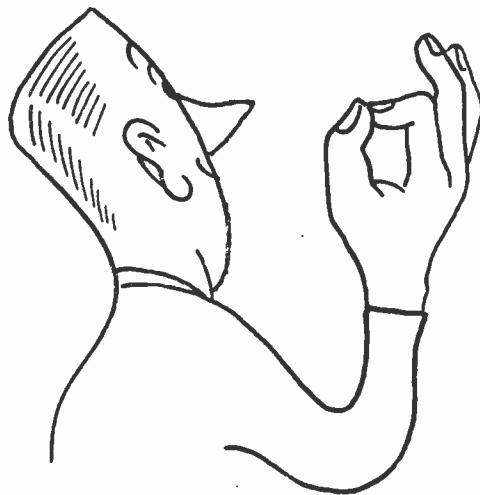
**LET'S HAVE A LEVEL.** Open hand, palm down, and cut air sidewise. This signal is usually directed at the announcer and musician (or person playing recorded music) just before the start of the production. Its purpose is to give the engineer in the control room an opportunity to get a final check on the volume level. If you have a talk-back microphone in the control room, you will not have to use this signal since you can call for a level over the microphone.



**CUE.** Point a rigid index finger directly at the member of the cast taking the cue. There are a number of accepted ways of pointing a cue, ranging from a wrist snap to an elbow snap, extending the entire arm. All of them have in common the extended index finger and a precision that leaves no doubt in the mind of the actor that the cue is a terse direction for him to begin immediately.



**CUT.** Draw the index finger across your neck as if slitting your throat. Be sure to execute this signal with precision, since it is meant to inspire absolute silence.

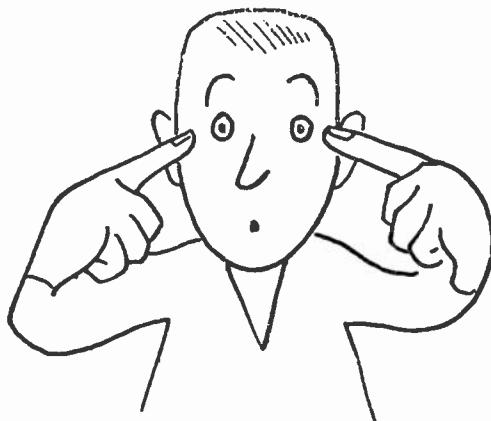


*STAND-BY FOR CUE.* Hold up your hand, palm outward in readiness for pointing a cue. This sign is most frequently used at the start of a production. Sometimes there is occasion to use this signal in the middle of a show. You may have instructed an actor to wait for a cue following a long dramatic pause. By holding up your hand you reassure him that you are staying with him through the pause, and he will take your cue immediately when it is pointed.

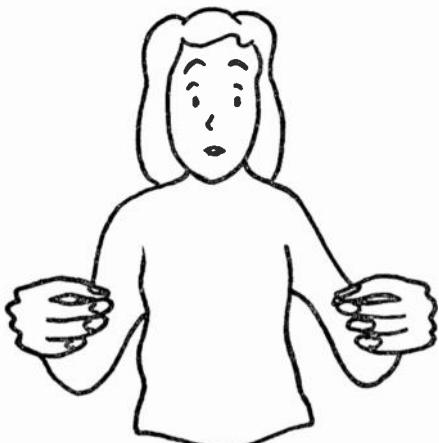


*HOW IS THE BALANCE?* This question might be signaled by your assistant in the studio. He would touch his ear, and then balance with both hands, palms down. Some directors prefer to balance with palms up.

*OKAY, FINE, VERY GOOD.* Form circle with thumb and forefinger. If time does not allow you to raise your hand to execute this sign, a smile and an affirmative nod of the head will serve. Make a point of using this sign whenever it is warranted. It gives an encouraging lift to any member of your cast at whom it is directed.



*KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE DIRECTOR.* *WATCH DIRECTOR FOR CUE!* Point a stiff index finger at your eye. If special emphasis is desired, point both index fingers at both eyes. You may have to use this sign frequently throughout a production for the students who persist in keeping their eyes glued on their scripts or on some interesting activity in the studio.



*SLOW DOWN. STRETCH IT OUT.* Draw hands apart as if stretching a rubber band. Students frequently have a tendency to read in a headlong manner, not savoring their lines so as to give full value to words and phrases. You may have to slow them down often.



*MOVE CLOSER TO THE MIKE. YOU'RE TOO FAR AWAY.* Face palms toward each other and move hands inward. When you indicate in this manner that an actor should move toward the mike, he will probably move forward and then look at you questioningly. Be sure that you respond to his glance by signaling that his distance is now "okay."

Some directors give this direction by moving one hand, palm inward, toward the mouth.



*SPEED IT UP.* Rotate hand clockwise. Sometimes your production plays more slowly in the broadcast than it did in the dress rehearsal. In this case you will have to speed up the show toward the close to avoid running overtime.



*MOVE BACK FROM THE MIKE. YOU'RE WORKING TOO CLOSE.* The reverse of the above. Face palms toward each other and move them apart. Here again, indicate when the actor's distance is satisfactory.

Some directors give this signal by pushing the palm of one hand away from the mouth.



**LOWER THE VOLUME.** Push palm downward. This signal may be supplemented profitably by the customary "Sh-sh" sign, index finger in front of lips. This signal would ordinarily be directed at the sound operator in the studio. Or it may be used to tone down an actor who is projecting his lines too forcibly. It is a signal required often since a natural conversational manner does not come easily to many students. Even though they have been coached beforehand, under the tension of the actual performance they may revert to their original habits.



**INCREASE THE VOLUME.** This is the reverse of the above. Raise palm upward. Frequently both hands are used in the signals for raising and lowering volume.

**FADE AND WIPE OUT SOUND.** Duplicate signal for lowering volume, allowing the movement of your hands to indicate the rate at which the fade should be executed. When you reach the point where you want the sound faded out entirely, give a "cut" signal so that the sound operator is assured the sound is definitely out and over with.

If you wish an actor to fade back from the microphone or toward the dead side, simply wave him in the direction you want him to go.



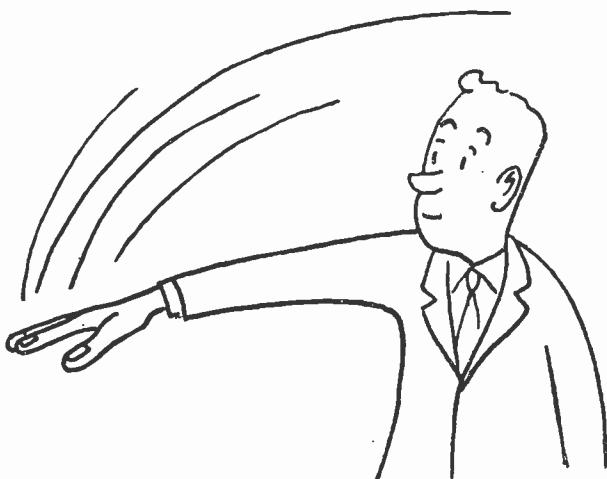
**YOU'RE OFF THE BEAM. YOU'RE ON THE DEAD SIDE OF THE MIKE. GET BACK IN THE LIVE AREA.** Spread your fingers, palm down, and pretend to be screwing a large cap. Turn your hand clockwise or counterclockwise depending on the direction you want your actor to move.

Some directors give this signal by facing palms a few inches apart at mouth level.



*ON THE NOSE. WE'RE RUNNING ON SCHEDULE.* Touch nose with finger. If your assistant, or an actor, wants to know if the program is timing out all right, he may touch his nose questioningly.

naled by a sweeping 180-degree arc. A board fade can be used to advantage when you want to fade out a live crowd mixed with sound and narration, or any similar pattern where the individual elements in the studio could not be faded uniformly. Such a board fade should be followed by a "cut" sign, so that after the fade-out all sound in the studio is cut before the mike channel is opened again. Many directors prefer to execute a board fade without a specific hand signal which can be observed by the actors in the studio. In this case, the director gives a verbal direction to the engineer in the control room, indicating the rate of the fade. When the scene is completely faded out, the director signals his cast in the studio for absolute silence with a cut sign. Members of the cast have the words "board fade" marked on their scripts and simply continue the scene, watching the director, until the cut signal is given.



*BOARD FADE.* A scene faded out by the engineer in the control room is called a board fade, sig-



*PLAY THEME.* Form the letter "T" with index fingers. Such a signal is frequently necessary at the end of a show. If the production is short, indicate to the musician to play the theme to fill time.



*AVOID PROVISIONAL CUTS.* Interlock fingers of both hands. If your show seemed long in rehearsal and you have made a tentative cut toward the end of the script, this signal will tell your cast that there is plenty of time to include this section without running overtime.

Many directors feel that the only safe way to signal a direction on a provisional cut is for the director or his assistant to be in the studio to indicate the direction. In this case, the director stands next to the actor and points to the provisional cut in question. If the section is to be cut, he gives a "cut" signal. If it is to be included, he gives the familiar signal for "okay." Here, as in all studio sign language, there is nothing rigid about the specific signal.

*GIVE STATION BREAK.* Break an imaginary stick downward with clenched fists.

If you are using an organ or an orchestra on your production, the following signals will be required:

*TAKE FIRST ENDING AND REPEAT CHORUS.* Hold one finger vertically.

*TAKE SECOND ENDING AND CONCLUDE.* Hold two fingers vertically.

*TO CONCLUDE WITH CHORUS.* Clench fist.

*TO START AT THE BEGINNING OF A MUSICAL NUMBER.* Point up.

*TO PLAY FANFARE.* Salute smartly.

# *SCRIPT EDITING FOR DIRECTORS*

Script writers are not necessarily directors nor are directors script writers. However, each should understand the other's problems. Though a professional script writer seldom makes common errors in production, such as asking for impossible sound effects or sound sequences, popping characters in and out of scenes without identification or fade, failing to locate scenes or to name characters, and putting in unnecessary music cues, the amateur script writer frequently does. Often it is up to the director to correct the errors written in a script.

The amateur director may not recognize the errors on his first reading, and he may find himself in rehearsal wondering why a scene does not play right. The professional director can spot at first glance the ordinary script mistakes, and can rewrite the scene or edit the line before rehearsal. The more aware you, as a director, are of these errors, the more likely you will be to catch them. The exercises following point out a few of the most frequent ones. Edit the scenes, keeping in mind these points:

- 1) The location of a scene should be clear from the first line.
- 2) Characters should be identified easily from the first speech of each.
- 3) A character coming in or going out of a scene needs a line or so to fade on, so that he does not seem to leap from place to place.
- 4) A character doing some action needs lines to cover and identify the action, if it takes place on scene; he must have time to accomplish the action if it takes place "off stage."
- 5) Action which takes place "on stage" must be clearly identified, given sufficient time to take place, and made as vivid as possible to the audience. Sometimes sound helps, but sound alone is seldom enough.
- 6) Finally, and most important, *the listener must understand what is going on*. No matter how excellent the production as a production, if the script is not clear the result will be chaos and confusion! Or, to put it more realistically, the result will be that the perplexed listener will turn off his radio, unable to follow the action of the play.

## I

1 BERT: Lord, I'm hungry. Don't you feed your guests, Jane?

2 JANE: We ought to have something to eat in the house.

3        Jimmy, look in the refrigerator and see if there isn't

4        a loaf of bread or a piece of cheese.

5 JIMMY: (SCORNFUL) Bread in the refrigerator! Very likely

6        around here. I'll see.

7 JANE: (CONFIDENTIALLY) Jimmy's getting to a perfect dear  
8 around the house, Bert. Of course he has quaint no-  
9 tions but . . .

10 BERT: (AMUSED) And you don't?

11 JANE: Me? Why, I . . .

12 BERT: Hush . . . here he comes.

13 JIMMY: The bread was, of all odd things, in the bread box.  
14 I made us some sandwiches . . . not cheese, the mice  
15 had been there first, but here's a peanut butter . . .  
16 and a lettuce for you, Jane, and some cookies. Eat,  
17 Bert, my hungry friend.

## PRODUCTION NOTE:

If the scene is produced as written, listeners will have no way of knowing that Jimmy has gone until on line 12 Bert announces Jimmy's return. However, if Jimmy fades out on the latter half of line 5, listeners will know he has left the room. When he returns, on line 13, he should fade on, even though Bert indicates Jimmy's coming. If "Hush . . . here he comes" and Jimmy's first words on line 13 are spoken at the same mike level, Jimmy will seem to have padded into the room or leaped from the doorway. The listener "sees" his entrance in terms of his mike distance.

A more serious error is the lack of time allowed in the script for Jimmy to have accomplished all the actions he describes himself as doing during his absence -- finding bread, cookies, lettuce, peanut butter, and making two kinds of sandwiches. In the few seconds elapsing between lines 7 and 13 he could not have done all that. Either give Jane and Bert more lines to cover Jimmy's off-stage action, or rewrite Jimmy's lines from 13 to 16, indicating in them that he did no more than bring from the kitchen a box of cookies or a bowl of fruit -- some action which he might reasonably carry out in the length of time.

## II

1 JOE: C'mon, let's wrap up this package.

2 BILL: OK.

3 JOE: There! That ought to hold. Now we'll address it.

## PRODUCTION NOTE:

Joe has, of course, wrapped up the package too quickly for realism. Write in lines to cover and identify his actions in the scene.

## III

1 MUSIC: UP AND OUT FOR:

2 MARCIA: Darling, the best news! Aunt Ida's coming.

3 TED: Aunt Ida? Who's she?

4 MARCIA: Oh, I must have told you about her . . . my mother's

5 grand aunt, that is, my mother's second cousin,

6 or . . . well, Aunt Ida's father was a brother-in-law

7 of . . .

8 TED: Hey, wait, now . . .

9 MARCIA: No . . . he was married to my mother's cousin . . .

10 the one with the beard . . .

11 ALICE: That's not Aunt Ida. That's Aunt Louise. Aunt Ida is

12 related through Grandfather Hurly . . .

13 MARCIA: No, no, she isn't!

14 TED: Alice, you go ahead and explain.

## PRODUCTION NOTE:

Insufficient identification of characters, not only of Aunt Ida, would make this scene confusing to listeners, who have not the advantage of seeing characters' names on the side of the paper. Marcia's first line leads us to believe she is speaking to one person; when Alice then comes in .

- on line 10 we are not prepared, have no notion whether she was there all the time, or has "popped up" from nowhere. When, on line 13, Ted addresses Alice, listeners will not know to which girl he is referring, since neither has been named before.

Edit the scene to make clear how many people are present from the beginning, and what their names are.

If errors like these were the most serious offenses of amateur script writers, editing would be easy. Harder to detect and to rewrite are the following errors in basic script structure.

- 1) The slow opening scene which fails to catch attention, set mood, or start the plot rolling.
- 2) Development of plot impeded by unnecessary scenes; unimportant scenes dragged out by the writer's fascination with the sound of his own words; lack of climax within scenes.
- 3) Major climax not built up, or not pointed up sufficiently.
- 4) Extended ending of drama, carrying story too far beyond resolution of plot.
- 5) Unnecessary sound and music cues.

Directors, in their first reading of a script, should be on the lookout for these offenses. The more experienced the director the more quickly he can tell whether the show will catch attention in the first minute; whether the plot line follows a single, easily understood thread or is complicated by un-

important action and scenes; whether a given scene can be played to build to a climax; whether the show goes on for a minute after it has ended, and so on.

Best procedure is to call in the script writer, point out defects in script structure, and ask him to make appropriate changes. If the script writer is not available, the director should try to make the changes as simply as possible himself, before first rehearsal. It may be only a matter of cutting out or condensing narration and lines. It may mean shortening one scene, and lengthening another. If there seems to be too much editing necessary, the script is probably not worth producing. It may not be worth producing, of course, even if it does not violate any of the principles of radio. It may be technically excellent but of low literary or story value. Directors who can choose their own radio plays for production should learn to evaluate them on paper, for no broadcast rises far above its basic script.

# *LIST OF SOUND EFFECTS AND SOURCES*

There is no limit to the number of sound records it is desirable to have in a workshop library. Usually any limitations are those of the budget. The exercises and dramas in this manual call for a rather extensive library of recorded sounds, but a great deal can be done without having a record of every sound indicated. Below is a list of manual and recorded sounds which will serve all the dramas in the manual and many of the exercises. As your workshop uses new scripts, their sound requirements can serve as a guide for adding to your library of sound records. There are several companies from which such records can be ordered.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Columbia Recording Corporation, 779 Seventh Avenue, New York.

Gennet Records, 67 West 44th Street, New York.

Major Records, 1660 Broadway, New York.

Speedy-Q Records, 1344 South Flower Street, Los Angeles, California.

Standard Radio, 6404 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, California.

Victor Sound Effects, RCA, Victor Division, RCA Manufacturing Company, Inc., Camden, New Jersey.

## MINIMUM ESSENTIALS FOR SHOWS AND EXERCISES

<i>Recorded</i>	<i>Manual</i>
Airplane	Cocoanut shells (for horses' hoofs). You may prefer to use hands on chest.
Auto horn	Door
Bell (big)	Paddle or rattan whip (for gunshot)
Car door slam, starting, idling, driving, stop ping, screeching brakes.	Platform or boards (for footsteps)
Carriage on dirt road	Small branches
Crowd	Tank (metal or canvas) with tap for running water
Fog horn	Telephone
Rifle shot	Traffic background (small)
Marching feet	Wind and rain
Night noises	
Telephone	
Traffic background	
(small)	
Wind and rain	

# *RECORDED MUSIC SUGGESTIONS AND SOURCES*

Ideally, musical transitions and backgrounds for a radio drama are part of an original score composed specially for the production in which they occur. Any imposing of ready-made bridges is a second-best alternative. Nonetheless, some effective transitions can be selected from recordings by an imaginative student director. The following

are representative albums of classical music frequently used for transitions:

Copeland, Aaron: Music for the Theatre, Victor M-744

Debussy, Claude: La Mer, Victor AM-643

Holst, Gustav: The Planets, Victor M-929

MacDowell, Edward: Indian Suite, Columbia, M-373

Moussorgsky, Modeste: Pictures at an Exhibition, Victor, AM-706

Strauss, Richard: Til Eulenspiegel, Columbia, MX-210

Stravinsky, Igor: Firebird Suite, Victor, M-291

Taylor, Deems: Through the Looking Glass, Columbia, 350

Walton, William: Façade Suite, Victor Records 12034, 12035

Examples of albums played by other than symphony orchestras from which music bridges may be selected are:

After Dark, played by Morton Gould and orchestra, Columbia, C-107

Broadway Hits of Today, played by Russel Bennett and Orchestra, Sonora, MS-68

Morton Gould Concert, Columbia, C-96

Night Music, played by the Moodmasters, Victor, P-31

Operetta Potpourri, played by Marek Weber and Orchestra, Columbia, MC-100

Each major transcription service<sup>2</sup> has a few discs of mood music prepared especially for use in scoring radio dramas. These transcriptions, however, are part of an entire library and are not available individually. Recently Standard Transcriptions has issued two albums of mood music which can be played on a regular 78 RPM turntable. Undoubtedly similar albums will be issued by other transcription companies before long.

<sup>2</sup> Associated Music Publishers Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York.

Langworth Feature Programs, Inc., 420 Madison Avenue, New York.

Standard Transcriptions, 6404 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, California.

Thesaurus Transcriptions, Merchandise Mart Building, Chicago, Illinois.

World Broadcasting System, Inc., 711 Fifth Avenue, New York.

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