FELIPE: What are you talking about, Dad? What are they reflecting? All that talk about stuttering and being pedantic; speaking too loud or too soft—that's all crap, isn't it, Dad? That has nothing to do with it, does it, Dad? I'm no psychologist, but I'm not stupid either: those "snakes" are reflecting your own snaky behavior, aren't they Dad? Isabel tried to tell me so many times, and I wouldn't listen! The reflection is the reality: "Medusa" is showing you yourself!

OTIS: If I kill one, I'm afraid I'll kill the other!

FELIPE: [*Following with one finger, first, the path of one of the tubes from OTIS' nostril to an oxygen tank; then, tracing another tube in his arm to where its stems from an intravenous drip bottle]* I'm afraid that's literally true, Dad. Those tubes are keeping you alive!

OTIS: *[Resolutely]* Well, if that's life, I don't want it! *[Suddenly grabbing a fistful of tubes]* Are you going to help me or not?

FELIPE*:* *[Alarmed, noticing OTIS is about to tear the tubes from his head and body]* Not! No! I can't!

OTIS: Then get out of my way! I've got to kill these snakes!

FELIPE: Dad! Stop! They're not snakes! You said I could trust you!

OTIS: Be brave, son! Be a man! *[Begins tearing tubes, left and right, from his nose, his head, his chest, his arms, his penis.]* Ah!

FELIPE: [*Hopelessly*] Dad! Please...! [*Yelling*] NURSE! HELP!

OTIS: Traitor! Get out of my way! *[Jumping up, he grabs the triple-pronged stand that holds bottles of plasma and sugar water, their tubes now dangling uselessly. Wielding it as a spear, he stabs the screen of his heart monitor directly in the center of it's "eye."]*

There! Gotcha! Try to catch me now, you big blind bastard*! [Noticing the TV screen]* There's another one! *[OTIS Lunges at the TV, shattering the screen with his "spear" just as NURSE enters]* Bullseye!

NURSE: Hey! What's going on here?

OTIS: We had to blind these Cyclopes so we can get out of here!

NURSE: Cyclopes? What you talking about? "We"? [*Indicating FELIPE]* You mean he was helping you? [*Yelling and pushing button on intercom simultaneously]* ORDERLY! ASSISTANCE, PLEASE!

FELIPE: No! I was the one who called you! I couldn't stop him!

OTIS: He's lying! It was his idea! I wasn't going anywhere. He was the one who reminded me of my mission.

FELIPE: Dad!

OTIS: He's taken to calling me that, but he's no son of mind!

NURSE: Who is he, then? He looks kind of like you. Is he the one who untied you?

OTIS: Coincidence. He just came out of nowhere and offered to help.

NURSE: *[To FELIPE]* Is that true? Did you untie him?

FELIPE: Of course not! He's my father. I came to check up on him. I had no idea he was this crazy! [*Starts to leave]*

NURSE: [*Restraining him*] Hold it right there! You've got some questions to answer! *[ORDERLY enters. NURSE turns FELIPE over to him*] This guy just untied our patient! Please take him in for questioning.

ORDERLY: Gladly! Good work! [*Exits with FELIPE]*

OTIS: I knew it! He does think I'm crazy! Just like the rest of them!

NURSE: Well, tearing out tubes—you'd be surprised how common that is! If that's crazy, there's a lot of crazy people around here! But smashing TVs and heart monitors! That's something else!

OTIS: You're taking his side? I thought you cared for me! Why am I not surprised?

NURSE: Well, I'm not a psychologist, but my guess is part of you thinks you're crazy too.

OTIS: Oh, OW! That hurts!

NURSE: Here, sit down. I got something for the pain. Give me your arm. This will help.

OTIS: It's not my arm. It's my side.

NURSE: [*Injecting him quickly with a tranquilizer*] This will help your side too.

OTIS: OW! What's that? Oh no! The lotus flower! But I don't care about that! All my men... I forgot... What the Hell? I hear you, but it doesn't matter. Nothing matters. You are very attractive!

NURSE: *[Coaxing him to lie down*] All right, now, let's see if we can get you back to bed and clean up this mess before the doctor gets here. We're gonna need an another orderly—or two!

OTIS: An orderly?

NURSE: I hope you got good insurance! Cloth napkins cost twenty-seven-fifty. Imagine what a heart monitor's gonna cost you! A TV? Flat screen—

these days? You didn't think of that before you went on your rampage, did you?

OTIS: [*Yawning*] It's not about the money... Could you rub my neck a little bit?

NURSE: [*Beginning to rub his neck]* For your types, it never is. Try living on a nurse's salary!

OTIS: My type?

NURSE: I seen your tweed coat and your Panama hat. Them that got it don't care about it!

OTIS: [*Indifferentlyl*] I care about it. [*Relaxing*] Ahh!

NURSE: Yeah—long as somebody else fix it!

OTIS: What do you know? There's things...

NURSE: I know. I know my family got moved 'cause somebody decided the waterfront was too valuable—never mind we lived there forever.

OTIS: There is no forever!

NURSE: Not for you there ain't, 'specially you don't let me hook you up here the way you s'posed to be! [*Fussing with the disarray of tubes*] What a mess!

OTIS: "S'posed to be." Who says?

NURSE: Doctor says.

OTIS: Oh yeah, I remember. Where's my wife?

NURSE: I don't know. She prob'ly be back soon. She gonna wish she didn't when she see this mess you made she gotta pay for!

OTIS: I'm paying for my own messes.

NURSE: [*Touching his side gently*] I reckon you is!

SCENE FIVE

[Room 116 in the hospital. OTIS is sleeping. NURSE is holding his hand. There's evidence of a concerted cleanup—brooms, dustpans, cleaning products, disinfectants, sponges, a trash can with a fresh plastic bag, etc. The broken TV has been removed; a ladder awaits the ORDERLY just returning to install a new TV.]

ORDERLY: [*Climbing ladder with TV; to WOMAN]* This should only take a minute. Then, I'll be out of your way.

WOMAN: You're not in my way. And I really don't need that TV. I stopped watching TV a long time ago.

ORDERLY: Hospital policy, mam. Every room gets a television. Besides, there's another patient in here, in case you haven't noticed! He may be a trouble maker, but he still has a right to watch television!

WOMAN: He doesn't need one either.

ORDERLY: I must say that's a bit presumptuous!

WOMAN: My roommate indicated he has little use for one as well.

ORDERLY: OK, but it's immaterial—hospital policy, as I said! *[Finishing the hookup; he leaves his wrench on the top of the ladder; after descending from ladder, he opens curtain partially]* So I take it you don't want me to turn on the TV?

WOMAN: [*Formally*] That's correct!

ORDERLY: [*Leaving curtain ajar, he prepares to leave]* OK, I guess I'm outta here then. [*Sarcastically*] Enjoy your crocheting! *[Picks up ladder; wrench falls to floor, making a loud clack, which wakes up OTIS]*

OTIS: *[Sitting up with a start]* What was that? Are they throwing boulders?

NURSE*:* *[Patting his hand]* It's all right. It's just the orderly. He dropped a tool.

OTIS: "Orderly"... orderly... orderly... That's suitable. I see! *[OTIS sees WOMAN through the partially opened curtain]* Oh, hello! Who are you? What happened to your face?

WOMAN: Oh, it's nothing. I burned it, but it's healing well—lot's of aloe vera!

OTIS: It doesn't look like nothing! But your eyes look good. If fact, they're quite pretty, like my wife's.

WOMAN: Your wife has pretty eyes?

OTIS: She does.

WOMAN: How pretty?

OTIS: Very pretty.

WOMAN: And you love your wife?

OTIS: I do!

SCENE SIX

[Nighttime in Room 116. Darkness except for the glow of night lights near each bed. Curtains are drawn. Otis is asleep. WOMAN rises from bed, walks to OTIS' bed and carefully climbs on top of him. OTIS wakes up in horror, mistaking WOMAN for Charon, coming to ferry him across the River Styx to Hades.]

OTIS: Ah! You ugly bastard, come for me at last! You should be in Hades yourself, with a face like that!

PALOMA: No, Otis, it's me, Paloma!

OTIS: What? How could it be? What happened to your face*? [She begins undulating on top of him*] Just like the patient in the other bed! Uh! Ah! You are...Uh! Ah!... the patient in the other bed! What are you doing? Ah! Oh! Oh! Paloma, is that really you? Quick! Untie me, will you?

PALOMA: [*Continuing her gyrations]* No! No way! I've got you just where I want you! I'm totally in control now! You may as well enjoy it!

OTIS: All right—Ah! Oh! But at least take off that ghastly mask! You look like a mummy!

PALOMA: I am a mummy. I'm your mummy, don't you know that?

OTIS: Ah! Mummy! Mummy! Oh! Ah! This is unbelievable! Where have you been?

PALOMA: Never mind, I'm here now, darling! I'm here to stay. [*Pulls most of bandages off as they both collapse in orgiastic ecstasy]* Oh! Ah! Oh!

OTIS: Oh! Ah! Oh!

PALOMA: That was fantastic!

OTIS: It was! Now, untie me!

SCENE SEVEN

[Waiting Room. PALOMA, looking in mirror, is removing the last bandages from her face; NURSE enters]

NURSE: Oh, excuse me, do you mind if I look?

PALOMA: *[Turning around*] Of course not! Help yourself!

NURSE: That's a miracle!

PALOMA: What's that?

NURSE: I've never seen a burn victim heal so quickly!

PALOMA: *[FELIPE enters in the middle of MOTHER'S explanation]* That's cause I wasn't really burned.

NURSE: You what?

[ORDERLY enters with a ladder to change a light bulb]

PALOMA: I was pretending to be a burn victim so I could look out for my husband.

[ORDERLY, overhearing, drops a light bulb, which breaks on the floor]

You klutz!

FELIPE: Mom! You've been spying on my Dad! How could you?

PALOMA: No, I...

NURSE: So you think your husband and I...?

PALOMA: No, I just wanted to be near him in case he needed me.

FELIPE: Why didn't you just ask the hospital to let you sleep near Dad?

PALOMA: *[Indicating ORDERLY]* Ask this man here, son. The hospital has its "policies," right?

ORDERLY: That's right. We do. Have to! *[To FELIPE]* And you, of all people, ought to appreciate that! If it weren't for the leniency of the administration, your ass would be in jail right now!

FELIPE: [*Enter ISABEL]* Isabel, why didn't you tell me what Mom was up to?

ISABEL: 'Cause you would have tried to stop her! Look, Felipe, what's done is done! And if you can't forgive mom for what she did out of "loving kindness," how you going forgive your father for what he did out of "itchy glitchy"!

FELIPE: "Itchy glitchy"?

ISABEL: All right—Lust! There, I said it!

FELIPE: OK, so Dad's lusted and been busted! Now what are we gonna do?

PALOMA: We're gonna continue to love him, without sacrificing ourselves for him—there are limits!...

ORDERLY: I can agree with that!

NURSE: Nobody asked you!

PALOMA: ...but we're not gonna let him sacrifice himself either. We're gonna remember that [*Quoting an African sage]*"those who love you are not fooled by the mistakes you've made, or the dark images you hold about

yourself. They remember your beauty when you feel ugly; your wholeness when you're broken; your innocence when you feel guilty; your purpose when you're confused." And we'll remember who we were before we were wounded and who we can be afterwards—all of us!

ORDERLY: Good luck with that!

ISABEL: What's that supposed to mean?

[Suddenly, OTIS enters, holding a cluster of tubes aloft in his left hand, some of them dripping fluid, and brandishing his "sword," the trident-like plasma stand, in his right.]

OTIS: I'll show you what this means! Take that! *[OTIS lunges at ORDERLY, who picks up the aluminum ladder and wields it like a lion tamer, effectively deflecting OTIS' "spear." OTIS spins and parries impressively, knocking the ladder from ORDERLY'S hand.]* Nice try! But most unsuitable! Now die! *[OTIS lunges again, but the ORDERLY, recovering, springs back into action: grabbing a long florescent light bulb, he breaks the end of it against a table, and thrusts it at OTIS. One step ahead of him, OTIS pulls the metal cover off a trash can and, using it as a shield, deftly blocks the ORDERLY'S blow, shattering the light bulb in the process.]*

OTIS: [Triumphantly] This is Achilles' shield! You're history! *[OTIS aims his trident at the ORDERLY'S head, but this time NURSE is ready for him: she jabs him in the back with the tranquilizer needle. Simultaneously, three uniformed security guards enter.]*

OTIS: Here they are! All suited up! The bastards! I'll kill them all! [*To ISABEL]* Athena, I pray you, help me!

ISABEL: No, Dad! No!

[*The SECURITY GUARDS rush at OTIS, who impedes them, one at a time, first with his "sword" and "shield" and, finally, by flinging the mesh of tubes at his assailants, before—knees buckling by the effects of the tranquilizer—he is subdued.]*

OTIS: *[To FELIPE]* Telemachus! Help your father, for God's sake!

FELIPE: No, Dad! No!

OTIS: *[Rolling toward PALOMA; desperately]* Paloma! Help!

PALOMA: No, Otis! No! *[Then, gently, solicitously]* For God's sake, Otis, remember who you are!

OTIS: *[Collapses; nestles in her arms]* I'm... I'm... home at last!

CURTAIN