

ACT 1
Scene 1

SETTING:

We are in Omonoia square in Athens. It is dusk and foot traffic is at another daily peak. Cars continue to hoot, people wait in the square or sit in cafes and drink coffee - it is just another day in the square. Curiously, on several of the phone booths around the square appear red and gold curtains, concealing the booth interior. Occasionally someone will approach a booth and pull back the curtain, peeking inside before continuing their path.

AT RISE:

A man stands on the telephone at a phone booth in the square, pulling back the curtain to reach the receiver. He is looking around trying to make eye contact with people while he mumbles into the receiver. Suddenly he catches the eye of a passer-by. And turns his body and outstretches an arm as he speaks.

MAN

Excuse me, um, do you speak English?

PASSER-BY

(hesitant, looking from side to side)

Eh... yes, little bit.

MAN

And do you speak Greek?

PASSER-BY

No, no Greek

(the passer-by continues walking)

(the MAN turns his body slightly and continues to mumble into the receiver. Again, he tries to catch someone's eye, looking around. After a short while he is successful.)

MAN

(holding the receiver closed with one hand)

Excuse me, do you speak English?

R

Yes, I do.

MAN

I have a phone call for you.

(With one hand the MAN gestures R to come nearer and with the other he offers the receiver, extending the metallic tether to its maximum.)

R

(looking from side to side)

Uhm, okay

(R takes the receiver)

Hello?

VOICE

Yes, hello. How are you?

R

Sorry, do I know you?

VOICE

I don't think that you do no, but, I would like to propose something to you, would you like to hear?

R

(smiling uncertainly)

Okay, sure.

VOICE

So, well, I want us each to make a scene for the other, of where we are right now. Where are you?

R

Uhm, okay, I am actually in Omonoia square of Athens, close by Athinas Street.

VOICE

And what do you see or hear?

R

I see a... well, there's some taxis close by me, and with traffic going behind. There's a café but no one really is sitting, it's busy only inside. It's just pigeons where the people normally sit.

(R gestures increasingly while speaking, somehow frustrated, taking many pauses.)

You understand? Where are you?

VOICE

Yes sure, I understand, thank you. It's beginning to be clear for me. Okay so I am on Quartz Street in Johannesburg, in South Africa.

R

(surprised)

Ah... really, Johannesburg? And what's it you see?

VOICE

Okay I'm in an Ethiopian restaurant now, which is on the first floor up from ground floor in a building... And I can see some market on the other side of the street, and one woman, closest to me, is selling cigarettes and hair combs. And, if I look up on the buildings across from me I can see one flag of Angola, and one of Ethiopia.

R

Okay, that is sounds interesting. Actually there is also one flag here, of Greece, but is... well, advertising for Greece... and... well, is some how can be ironic because actually, it's a lot of people saying this square is not safe.

(R fumbles increasingly with the telephone cable; general interest is dissipating.)

Okay well, its nice, and well, okay, thank you. I have to go now, okay, bye.

VOICE

Thank yo-

(The line closes as R hangs up, cutting off VOICE. R abruptly shuffles away from the telephone booth, allowing the curtain to slip closed, and moves off back into the square.)

- END -