

Woman in the White Jogging Suit

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Scene One : Morning

AT RISE:

Early morning. SUNRISE is stretched over a tree stump downstage right. Roses are at her side. She dressed in the white robes associated with some religious and spiritual groups.

MAGDA dressed in her white jogging suit circles the area, then stops by a park bench and begins to exercise.

MAGDA

Hello. Good to see you out there too. Yes yes, it is beautiful out here this time of the morning, makes you feel really alive. Yes, of course it used to be a lot easier, but when we were young wasn't everything. I can remember when I didn't even have to think about touching these toes. Now I just pray I can get through these exercises without coming apart. Enough! I am finished.

(MAGDA stops and pulls out a pack of cigarettes, now aware of SUNRISE)

Yes, yes, I know it isn't very good for me, but I fool myself and only smoking in this park -- in the morning -- and when I get home I tell myself I will quit for good. Yah, we all have our weaknesses.

(MAGDA coolly turns offering SUNRISE a cigarette as SUNRISE offers MAGDA roses)

Would you like cigarette?

SUNRISE

Won't you take a pretty flower?

MAGDA

What did you say?

SUNRISE

I don't smoke. No one should.

MAGDA

Thank you for the health warning. I only asked because you were watching me. You were watching me.

SUNRISE

I thought you might like some flowers.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Ah, roses, they are my favorite.

SUNRISE

Take one. They yours.

(MAGDA eyes her robes curiously, puts the cigarette back in the pack and reaches out to take the flower, then stops abruptly.)

What's wrong?

MAGDA

Roses have thorns.

SUNRISE

Oh! Of course. Let me pick one out for you.

(Pricks her hand)

Ouch!

MAGDA

I warned you. Now, let me see. Ah, nothing serious here, nothing serious at all. Just suck on it.

(SUNRISE stares at her)

Believe me, it'll make it feel better.

(SUNRISE puts her finger in her mouth)

Now isn't that better?

SUNRISE

Uh-huh.

MAGDA

Yes, roses are very beautiful, and very, very dangerous. Obviously much too dangerous for you. I'm surprised your mother lets you out alone. (walking away)

SUNRISE

MY MOTHER IS THE SOLAR SYSTEM!

MAGDA

Really! (stops) And your father?

SUNRISE

My father is the--

MAGDA

No, no, no don't tell me. You're father is the Cosmos!

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

Exactly.

MAGDA

Exactly.

SUNRISE

I knew you'd understand.

MAGDA

I don't understand at all, my dear child, I was just simply making a joke.

SUNRISE

I'm not a child.

MAGDA

No, obviously you are not. Please accept my apology Miss..?

SUNRISE

Sunrise.

MAGDA

Sunrise...what?

SUNRISE

Just Sunrise.

MAGDA

Of course. And why would you give me such a lovely present?

SUNRISE

I'm an Eastern Celestial and I was hoping that you might be one too.

MAGDA

An Eastern what?

SUNRISE

An Eastern Celestial, you know, in harmony with the greater consciousness of the universe.

MAGDA

No, no, I'm afraid you've made a terrible mistake. I am many things -- as both my friends and my enemies would be attest to -- but being an Eastern Celestial is not one of them.

(MAGDA starts to leave but SUNRISE follows)

SUNRISE

But if you're not an Eastern Celestial...

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Which I am not.

SUNRISE

What are you?

MAGDA

A "Western Survivor" I suppose. What possible difference can it make?

SUNRISE

I think what you are makes a big difference. And I don't think it's funny.

MAGDA

That makes two of us.

SUNRISE

I'm serious.

MAGDA

Anyone can see, my dear, that you are quite serious, but tell me, my dear -- did they make you give up your sense of humor when you joined them or did you do it willingly?

SUNRISE

I think I have a wonderful sense of humor.

MAGDA

That makes one of us.

SUNRISE

And they don't make us do anything we don't want to do.

MAGDA

Then you should be more careful. Just going up to someone in the park can be very dangerous. Terrible things can happen here even in the daylight

SUNRISE

I'm not afraid.

MAGDA

Then you are a serious fool as well as a -- what did you call yourself?

SUNRISE

An Eastern Celestial.

MAGDA

Yes, yes, an Eastern Celestial. Your mother is the solar system and your father is the cosmos?

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

Exactly!

MAGDA

Exactly, and you take this all very seriously, whatever this is, though I'm sure you're about to explain that to me too.

SUNRISE

If you're really serious.

MAGDA

I have nothing against being serious since everything in life is very serious, except death, of course, which is merely inconvenient...

(looking at the cigarette and tossing it to the ground)

and inevitable.

(stomping out the cigarette)

SUNRISE

Not inevitable if you're an Eastern Celestial -

MAGDA

(overlapping) Eastern Celestial, of course! I should have expected that.

SUNRISE

But it's true.

MAGDA

What's true? That you've found some way to explain death.

SUNRISE

We don't need to explain it.

MAGDA

To eliminate it then.

SUNRISE

We can't do that either.

MAGDA

Then what do you have us do with it.

SUNRISE

We don't need to eliminate it, since, for us, death has absolutely no meaning.

MAGDA

How appealing.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

Our Holy Mystic, the most benign leader, Mansa Poor-na, has revealed to us that death is to be welcomed like the coming of spring.

(SUNRISE freezes like a tree a la Isadora Duncan)

MAGDA

But then you must have a high suicide rate?

SUNRISE

I thought you were serious.

MAGDA

I admit I don't understand very much of this business --by the way -- was that a tree you were becoming just now?

SUNRISE

No.

MAGDA

Good.

SUNRISE

It wasn't a tree.

MAGDA

Because it didn't look like a tree.

SUNRISE

It was the embodiment of life.

MAGDA

Oh, but you must admit that nothing embodies life quite so well as -- life itself, and nothing makes life quite so precious as the spectre of our own mortality. But mortality -- or immortality, wouldn't interest you anymore and I find that a loss for you and your -- what did you call him?

SUNRISE

Mansa Poorna.

MAGDA

I'm afraid your Mansa has eliminated more than the fear of death.

SUNRISE

What do you mean?

MAGDA

He has eliminated the very reasons we need to go on living.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

But that's not true. You just wait and let it happen when it will happen.

MAGDA

A good insurance policy to be sure.

SUNRISE

Against what?

MAGDA

Pain. Fear. Disappointment.

SUNRISE

What's so great about pain.

MAGDA

It helps define pleasure. Or has your Holy Mystic done away with that too.

SUNRISE

What kind of pain are you talking about?

MAGDA

I don't know.

SUNRISE

Something physical?

MAGDA

That might part of it.

SUNRISE

That's easy then.

MAGDA

Good.

SUNRISE

It would mean nothing.

MAGDA

Nothing?

SUNRISE

Actually, it would mean less than nothing.

MAGDA

I didn't know there was such a category. But obviously there is much I don't know anymore.

SUNRISE

Are we through with the pain thing?

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

But then not all pain is physical. What about the mental and emotional pain?

SUNRISE

Same answer.

MAGDA

But they're not the same.

SUNRISE

Less than nothing.

MAGDA

How can you answer the same way when they are obviously quite different?

SUNRISE

They are the same for me.

MAGDA

Disappointment?

SUNRISE

Meaningless.

MAGDA

Love?

SUNRISE

The Mansa says --

MAGDA

Is love worth dying for?

SUNRISE

Why are you so interested in what I'm willing to die for.

MAGDA

How about your family? Your country? Your work?

SUNRISE

This is my work.

MAGDA

Coming to the park and giving out flowers to strangers may fill up your day but it is not work.

SUNRISE

I thought you would understand.

MAGDA

What? I'm a very patient woman but I don't understand--

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

(interrupting) This is my life now.

MAGDA

This may be your life now, but sometime you must have dreamed of something else -- of being someone other than whatever it is you are now.

SUNRISE

Why can't all of you see that this is all I need now. I have every reason I need right here in this little book. All I have to do is accept it

MAGDA

I'm afraid all this acceptance is too much for this old lady.

SUNRISE

You're not so old.

MAGDA

Tell that to my undertaker.

SUNRISE

You take very good care of yourself.

MAGDA

I admit my weakness for flattery. But you may still keep your Holy man. I need all of those things that your Mansa would tell you are not worth having.

SUNRISE

I admire how you come out here and exercise.

MAGDA

Taking care of myself is my own small contribution toward warding off that disease called Death that you have so conveniently eliminated.

SUNRISE

The Mansa says that our bodies are the storehouses of our sacred auras. And that we must take care of them while they wait to pass on to their futures.

MAGDA

Whatever that may be.

SUNRISE

It's very important to keep yourself in good order.

MAGDA

Obviously your Mystic's not over seventy yet.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

For a healthy body is the result - and the protector - of a healthy soul.

MAGDA

Stop!

SUNRISE

What's wrong?

MAGDA

Go back.

SUNRISE

Where.

MAGDA

To what you just said before. What did you just say -- exactly.

SUNRISE

That the healthy body a person has, is the result --

MAGDA

Of a healthy soul.

SUNRISE

Exactly.

MAGDA

And you believe that.

SUNRISE

Yes.

MAGDA

Just the way you said it?

SUNRISE

Yes.

MAGDA

Then you must believe in its opposite.

SUNRISE

What opposite?

MAGDA

The language is very important.

SUNRISE

Is this a game?

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

You are the one who has said that having a healthy body is the result of having a healthy soul.

SUNRISE

And its protector.

MAGDA

And its protector. You obviously think this is true.

SUNRISE

I do.

MAGDA

Then clearly it must also have its opposite.

SUNRISE

What do you mean, its opposite?

MAGDA

You seem quite clever enough.

SUNRISE

This is a trick. Right?

MAGDA

Think about it. In your world that old man who sleeps in the park and smells like rotting flesh must have a rotting soul too -- but perhaps he is the one with the pure soul and I am the one you should fear.

SUNRISE

You're not listening.

MAGDA

But you see I am -- much more than you will admit. You and your Holy Man can't have them both at the same time. Your rules are too absolute. While this has all been very enlightening...

SUNRISE

Forget it.

MAGDA

And entertaining.

SUNRISE

(Overlapping) You haven't been listening to me at all.

MAGDA

Some of us actually have to work.

(MAGDA starts to leave and SUNRISE follows)

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

I'll just take my money now and leave.

(MAGDA stops abruptly and turns angrily)

MAGDA

What?

SUNRISE

My money.

MAGDA

For what?

(MAGDA stalks her.)

SUNRISE

For the flowers and the book.

MAGDA

You gave me the flowers, didn't you?

SUNRISE

Yes, but--

MAGDA

--and I have no book.

SUNRISE

You've mixed me all up and I forgot to give you this. Here.

(SUNRISE thrusts a small book at MAGDA who keeps from touching or taking it at all costs)

MAGDA

No.

SUNRISE

Take it.

MAGDA

No!

SUNRISE

You have to.

MAGDA

I don't have to.

SUNRISE

You took the flowers.

MAGDA

I like flowers, especially roses. I don't want that book.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

You can't have one without the other.

MAGDA

Obviously I can.

SUNRISE

That's not the way it's done!

MAGDA

And just what do you want this money for?

SUNRISE

I told you - for the flowers and the book.

MAGDA

Separately?

SUNRISE

Together!

MAGDA

I think I'm the one who should be paid.

SUNRISE

That's ridiculous.

MAGDA

Believe me, my dear, you have not been that entertaining.

SUNRISE

(SUNRISE recites as if rehearsed)

We make our money through the spreading of our good works and the inspiration that people receive from the sweetness of our flowers and the knowledge revealed to them in our books which will lead them to a greater harmony with the universe.

MAGDA

(applauds) Very well done, I'm impressed. You're very good. But I still won't give you any money.

(turns to leave)

SUNRISE

Are you so sure you're right.

MAGDA

Are you so sure I'm not.

SUNRISE

Why won't you read this book.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

You said they didn't make you do anything you didn't want to do, didn't you?

SUNRISE

No one should be forced to do anything they don't want to do.

MAGDA

Well I don't want to read that book.

SUNRISE

Are you afraid to read it?

MAGDA

Afraid? Of what?

SUNRISE

Words can change your life forever. Some people don't understand that.

MAGDA

I understand that perfectly -- but no, I'm not afraid of those words.

(SUNRISE holds out the book and MAGDA pushes it back to her)

You explain it to me.

SUNRISE

What?

MAGDA

You say that words can change my life and so I ask you to change my life.

(SUNRISE pauses, and then repeats her litany)

SUNRISE

It's not the individual that counts but the universe as a whole that matters. Not our individual desires or ambitions, but the letting go of all those individual desires and ambitions that we thought mattered--

MAGDA

--again this nonsense--

SUNRISE

--but which by their selfish nature only keep us from becoming one with the greater consciousness of the Universe--

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Stop!

(MAGDA gets up and shakes her to stop)

Don't you hear what foolishness you're saying!

SUNRISE

What am I saying? Why are you hurting me.

MAGDA

I'm sorry.

(MAGDA releases SUNRISE)

SUNRISE

You were twisting my arm.

MAGDA

I didn't mean to hurt you. I just wanted to make you stop --

SUNRISE

Well I stopped. Now what happens?

MAGDA

I just wanted to make you understand.

SUNRISE

Pain!

MAGDA

I said I'm sorry about that.

SUNRISE

You think pain is so wonderful?

MAGDA

And you only want to avoid it.

SUNRISE

It's easy.

(MAGDA takes out a bill and presses it in
SUNRISE's hand)

MAGDA

Here. Take this.

SUNRISE

What for?

MAGDA

You asked for money.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

You want to give me this?

MAGDA

Isn't it enough?

SUNRISE

No one gives me this kind of money.

MAGDA

Then let me be the first.

SUNRISE

No.

MAGDA

Yes.

SUNRISE

No.

MAGDA

Keep it.

SUNRISE

I can't.

MAGDA

Of course you can. You didn't rob me. I won't have you arrested. I promise. It's yours free and clear. Take it.

SUNRISE

No!

MAGDA

Ach, so after all of this -- you do have your own rules.

SUNRISE

You have to give it willingly.

MAGDA

I did.

SUNRISE

You have to believe.

MAGDA

No I don't have to believe. I'm perfectly content to let you believe for both of us.

SUNRISE

It's not suppose to be this way.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Then your Mansa has not taught you everything because nothing is the way it's supposed to be. Certainly you don't believe that everyone who gives you the money you ask for believes in what you say.

SUNRISE

They're supposed to.

MAGDA

People lie. To themselves to you. No, they might say they believe but I think there are as many reasons to give as there are to ask.

SUNRISE

What's yours?

MAGDA

My reason?

SUNRISE

For giving me this money. What do you want from me?

MAGDA

I admit.

SUNRISE

What?

MAGDA

I am curious.

SUNRISE

Then you'll read the book.

MAGDA

Not about the book -- I'm curious about you. Who are you?

SUNRISE

I told you. My name is Sunrise.

MAGDA

Of course. (Pause) Well, go on.

SUNRISE

There's nothing more to say.

MAGDA

Who are you really?

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

There's nothing else.

MAGDA

What is so terrible that you choose to forget who you are.

SUNRISE

It's not important.

MAGDA

I don't believe that and you shouldn't either.

SUNRISE

Mansa says.

MAGDA

Forget the past.

SUNRISE

Yes.

MAGDA

No one is interested in the past. It is always the first casualty in any war.

SUNRISE

There isn't any war.

MAGDA

There is always the war for our minds, our hearts and our souls. And you are willing to clear our your memory banks>

SUNRISE

Yes.

MAGDA

Like a new baby.

SUNRISE

Exactly .

MAGDA

You don't really believe it's that easy, do you?

SUNRISE

Mansa says...

MAGDA

Mansa may say or believe whatever he or she wants...Mansa is not here right now. You are. I am looking into your eyes. I am asking you how you really feel?

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

I want to believe.

MAGDA

There is something more in there.

SUNRISE

No.

MAGDA

You speak well even though you speak gibberish. You're not stupid. What are you hiding?

SUNRISE

There's nothing.

MAGDA

I am willing to pay for one human being. You took the money.

SUNRISE

Leave me alone.

(MAGDA takes SUNRISE's hand)

MAGDA

See these fingerprints. They're yours and nobody and no one can take them away.

(turns her wrist over)

What's this scar? What happened to you? Who did this to you? What is so terrible that you need to forget?

SUNRISE

You think you're so great just because you get up here and do a few little exercises. You know they're watching you, and you love it having them thinking how wonderful you look in your little white jogging suit. Well, I'd filled the world with music for two hours before you'd even hit the showers.

MAGDA

You're a musician!

SUNRISE

I was a musician.

MAGDA

What did you play?

SUNRISE

The violin.

MAGDA

It's a beautiful instrument.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA (cont'd)
(SUNSHINE does not answer)

You can choose to remember.

SUNRISE
(Pause) It happened in the subway. Three years ago next month,

MAGDA
You fell?

SUNRISE
I was pushed.

MAGDA
Oh, no.

SUNRISE
Oh yes. Right in front of the train as it was coming into the station. The boys didn't even know my name.

MAGDA
So that's where the scar comes from.

SUNRISE
My badge of honor. Cut my hand clean off they said.

MAGDA
How terrible.

SUNRISE
They said that too. But it doesn't change anything.

MAGDA
But you're alive.

SUNRISE
So what.

MAGDA
You can go on.

SUNRISE
To what? After I came home from the hospital my parents were so happy. They thought everything would be just like it was before. Of course I wouldn't be going back to the conservatory. Of course. But everything would be just fine otherwise. Like I had a life otherwise.

MAGDA
You could still play.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

And be a freak? No thank you. They should have left me on the tracks.

MAGDA

You don't mean that.

SUNRISE

Yes I do. I played the violin before I could walk. I read music before I could talk. I played as if my life depended on it. No matter they say I'm dead. Inside. And it doesn't matter what I say cause I don't care what happens to me. When I was playing people would come up to me and they would have tears in their eyes. Like I was special. You know I used to be able to see exactly what my place in the world would be. Exactly what space would have my name on it. Now it's just empty space and no name. They say your life passes in front of your eyes when you're dying. The only thing I saw was my hand and when they found it on the tracks, it was still holding onto the violin case. At least that's what they told me when I woke up. I don't remember anything except what I've told you and I pray everyday I'll forget that too.

MAGDA

You could still play.

SUNRISE

I was going to be the best. Not some freak.

MAGDA

You can still be the best at something. You can still be somebody.

SUNRISE

I don't want to be somebody -- I want to be that girl.

MAGDA

I'm so sorry.

SUNRISE

I'm sorry too.

MAGDA

I wish I could have heard you.

SUNRISE

They said I was very good.

MAGDA

I'm sure they didn't lie.

SUNRISE

Everyone said I was.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

And you thought you were good?

SUNRISE

Yes. I think I could have been great. Really.

MAGDA

And you loved playing?

SUNRISE

It was my life.

MAGDA

It was your life.

SUNRISE

Are you some kind of shrink or something?

MAGDA

No. Not me. Not at all.

SUNRISE at?

'Cause I've been through all this over and over again and I still feel like shit!

MAGDA

Of course you do. It makes perfect sense.

SUNRISE

You really think so?

MAGDA

It is terrible to lose your dreams.

SUNRISE

You're not just saying that.

MAGDA

No.

SUNRISE

To make me feel better.

MAGDA

Yes, I am saying this to make you feel better --

SUNRISE

Then forget it.

MAGDA

But I really do understand.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

So you're not just saying this to make me feel better.

MAGDA

Maybe to make me feel better.

SUNRISE

Why you?

MAGDA

A very long time ago, the ice age to you -- I had an accident too. A small one, compared to yours, but I had dreamed of becoming a dancer, and yes, they said I was very talented. And yes, I thought it was my life. But that very small accident took away my dream and I never danced again.

SUNRISE

Then you do understand?

MAGDA

It was a long, long time ago.

SUNRISE

And you were really good.

MAGDA

Yes, I was good.

SUNRISE

I'll bet you were very good.

MAGDA

I have not stood on my toes for years.

SUNRISE

I can imagine you dancing.

MAGDA

One of the blessings of age is that I can no longer imagine it.

SUNRISE

But you didn't really forget?

MAGDA

There are many other memories now. But no, I still do remember.

SUNRISE

I'll never forget what its like to play.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Now you don't want to forget. But if you live to be an old woman like me, it will be just one more memory.

(MAGDA sways momentarily and SUNRISE catches her as she sinks to the bench)

SUNRISE

What's wrong? Are you going to be sick?

MAGDA

A little lightness in the head.

SUNRISE

You got up too fast.

MAGDA

That is also one of the blessings of age. A moment more.

SUNRISE

Should I call someone?

MAGDA

No!

SUNRISE

All right.

MAGDA

Don't move please. It usually passes quickly. (Pause) See! It's gone already. I'm sorry if I frightened you.

SUNRISE

Here. I have some candy.

MAGDA

Chocolate!

SUNRISE

We're not supposed to...

MAGDA

Another pleasure your Mansa would miss.

SUNRISE

I don't do everything I'm supposed to.

MAGDA

Good. Chocolate is my favorite.

(MAGDA and SUNRISE eat together)

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

Mine too.

MAGDA

How fortunate for both of us.

SUNRISE

My older sister Elizabeth always kept some hidden in our bedroom dresser. Right under her socks!

MAGDA

Is she a musician too?

SUNRISE

No. She's almost tone deaf. But she's a great history teacher. And she's a very good. Not like her sister.

MAGDA

Are you really so bad?

SUNRISE

It's just what they say. Elizabeth is sooo easy. Not like our dear little Cla---Not like me.

MAGDA

A problem I too can understand. But tell me.

SUNRISE

Were you easy.

MAGDA

No, I was not easy.

SUNRISE

So, I guess you do understand.

MAGDA

Tell me, was it after this terrible accident with the train that you found your Holy Mystic?

SUNRISE

What difference does that make?

MAGDA

I was just curious.

SUNRISE

I'm happy this way.

MAGDA

I was just wondering if you feel really alive now that you are an Eastern Celestial. It's a simple question. s?

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

They caught the boys who pushed me. They sent them away. To some school or something. They said because I wasn't dead it wasn't murder, so they'll get out soon, before me. I'll never get out. But they were wrong. It was murder. And they didn't even say they were sorry.

MAGDA

Would that have changed anything.

SUNRISE

Someone should say they're sorry.

MAGDA

You needed your music. If you give yourself a chance, you will need something else and perhaps, if you are very lucky and work very hard -- you will be even better at it.

SUNRISE

Where are you going?

MAGDA

I need to go to work because unlike you -- I am too old to live on my wit and good looks.

SUNRISE

I thought you might be retired or something?

MAGDA

You cannot retire from your work when it is your life. You just take longer to do it.

SUNRISE

Wait! You forgot your flowers.

MAGDA

Keep them.

SUNRISE

I don't even know your name.

MAGDA

My name? It's not so important. Not so important at all.

MAGDA walks out leaving her cigarette case behind. SUNRISE picks it up and reads the card, smiles and walks in the same direction as MAGDA.

BLACK OUT

(CONTINUED)

SCENE 2

AT RISE: TWILIGHT. Some months later.

SUNRISE is now dressed in jeans and a t-shirt. She is sprawled on the ground with her feet up on the bench reading Oedipus Rex when MAGDA jogs in. MAGDA does not immediately see her.

SUNRISE

You haven't been here for a while.

MAGDA

(surprised and disoriented)

What? Who's there?

SUNRISE

It's me.

MAGDA

I can't see your face.

(SUNRISE shines a flashlight on her face grinning like a Cheshire cat)

SUNRISE

Remember?

(SUNRISE does her imitation of LIFE tree pose)

MAGDA

No. Yes, yes, yes, how could I ever forget that terrible tree.

SUNRISE

It wasn't a tree.

MAGDA

No robes,

SUNRISE

No robes.

MAGDA

No roses

SUNRISE

No roses.

MAGDA

Roses are my favorite.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

And no Mansa.

MAGDA

No robes. No roses. No Mansa. Ah, but you do have a book. I'm almost afraid to ask what the girl is reading now. Oedipus? Do you change your ideas as often as you change your clothes?

SUNRISE

I thought you'd be pleased.

MAGDA

I am pleased unless you're planning to ask me for more money.

SUNRISE

No more money.

MAGDA

Then I am very pleased.

SUNRISE

You haven't been here for a long time.

MAGDA

I've been working.

SUNRISE

Cigarette?

MAGDA

My doctor has forbidden me to come back to see him while I'm still smoking.

(SUNRISE flashes the cigarette case)

Oh, so that's where my cigarette case has gone.

SUNRISE

It's beautiful.

MAGDA

It was a gift from an old friend.

SUNRISE

I wanted to return it.

MAGDA

And now you have.

SUNRISE

I'm in college now. Full-time.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

And how do you like your new life?

SUNRISE

Sometimes it seems a lot like being with the Mansa if you know what I mean.

MAGDA

Bravo. Your sense of humor has returned. But I can't say that I know exactly since I never went to college. Most women my age did not have such choices.

SUNRISE

Does everyone think they know the truth?

MAGDA

First music and now the truth. You are always an interesting woman. A woman with a mission.

SUNRISE

No, you had the mission.

MAGDA

Why do you say that?

SUNRISE

I just meant you seem to work very hard.

MAGDA

Work is a disease that in my case will be cured by death. What do you know about my work?

SUNRISE

Are you writing another book?

MAGDA

What do you know about my books?

SUNRISE

Another one about the African tribes. Don't tell me. The Mau...Maw....

MAGDA

The Maw-ee -- yes, but I don't remember talking to you about my books or is my memory failing me already.

SUNRISE

You didn't talk about your books.

MAGDA

Then how do you know --

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

I followed you.

MAGDA

You followed me!

SUNRISE

I told you I tried to return the cigarette case. You went into the bookstore on the corner and I waited outside. You were talking with a man. He was laughing and you took a book and signed it. Then you turned around and ran out of the store, right past me, into a cab and you were gone.

MAGDA

I was already late for my meeting. Why didn't you just come in and give me my case?

SUNRISE

I thought you might be someone famous. I wanted to find out.

MAGDA

And you were disappointed I'm sure.

SUNRISE

When I asked the man who you were he laughed and said you were the very famous Magda Schuller. (pulls out book from her bookbag) and I should have you sign this the next time I saw you.

MAGDA

He gave you this?

SUNRISE

I bought it with the money you gave me.

MAGDA

I don't know whether to be frightened or flattered.

SUNRISE

Will you sign it?

MAGDA

I don't have a pen with me.

SUNRISE

Here.

MAGDA

And who are you today?

SUNRISE

My real name is Claire.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

A beautiful name to be sure. (signs it) Here.

SUNRISE

"To Claire and her curiosity. May they continue always. Magda Schuller."

MAGDA

Curiosity can be very dangerous you know. You shouldn't have followed me. You shouldn't follow any stranger you meet in the park.

SUNRISE

You were different.

MAGDA

Strangers are always different.

SUNRISE

I wasn't afraid of you then.

MAGDA

And now?

SUNRISE

You were kind to me.

MAGDA

Some people would find that amusing.

SUNRISE

I hoped you would come here again. That I would see you.

MAGDA

I remember you gave me chocolates and roses -- and no book. We talked and you were very interesting...very young and very sad as I remember. What more could we say to one another? Or have you suddenly taken an interest in African tribes now too because I am on a new project already.

SUNRISE

It helped that you listened to me.

MAGDA

Gut!

SUNRISE

It made a difference in my life.

MAGDA

I am very happy I could help you but I don't see any reason why you should have followed me.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

I'm sorry.

MAGDA

I don't like people following me.

SUNRISE

I won't do it again.

MAGDA

I accept your apology.

SUNRISE

I promise. I just wanted to talk to you.

MAGDA

Talk to me about what? Or isn't this so innocent at all?

SUNRISE

I swear I just want to be your friend.

MAGDA

Do you work for some newspaper? A magazine, television! Are there cameras in those bushes over there waiting to capture the real Magda Schuller and put her on display like some curiosity because I won't be a party to any of it.

SUNRISE

There's no one but me. I just wanted to know who you are.

MAGDA

I'm sorry. It has not always been so easy or innocent, especially with strangers. I have grown used to keeping myself alone, cherishing a little anonymity which is difficult for an artist. I wave at the others in the park who know me only as the woman in the white jogging suit. I wave knowing I will not be invited them for coffee. I will be invited anywhere. There are many people who think they know who I am. I am sure by now you have read some of what has been written. So I ask you -- who do you think I am?

SUNRISE

I know you were born in Germany, that you were once a ballerina, a very promising dancer and then--

MAGDA

I had an accident yes, I told you that.

SUNRISE

You were an actress and then...a great filmmaker. I swear. It's all about your work.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

No, it's about me. You should understand that. Before we go any further. It will always be about me.

(starts to leave)

SUNRISE

Don't you even want to know if I liked the book?

MAGDA

If you like the book I shall be pleased and flattered and if you didn't -- The people are beautiful. That is why the work is beautiful. Everything is changing so fast now that soon my book will be all that is left of them and that will be the tragedy. Not me.

SUNRISE

You like your work, don't you?

MAGDA

More than most of the people I've met.

SUNRISE

But you don't work alone.

MAGDA

You saw the book. I don't work alone. I have an assistant for many years. He is talented and much younger.

SUNRISE

And your assistant --

MAGDA

And yes, you don't even have to ask me though everyone does - we are lovers. I am not ashamed of having love at my age.

SUNRISE

I meant he's not as talented as you.

MAGDA

Touche! You are clever, and so much more amusing without your robes.(pause) Life is funny. Work is serious. You must remember that.

SUNRISE

Stay for a while.

MAGDA

You must have studying to do. Your bag looks very heavy.

SUNRISE

Just a little while and I promise I'll go back to my work.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

A little while then. If you brought some of that chocolate!

SUNRISE

It's right here.

MAGDA

You have no shame.

SUNRISE

I brought some apples too.

MAGDA

No apples thank you.

SUNRISE

I love them,

MAGDA

Apples are good for you. Chocolate is just good. You have the apple. It's too late for me.

(They sit eating the chocolate)

SUNRISE

I lied before.

MAGDA

About which part?

SUNRISE

School.

MAGDA

What kind of a lie?

SUNRISE

I like it alot and it's really not like the Mansa at all. I mean sometimes a professor seems to think you have to answer his way -- there's not too many women -- but then I know it's only for this time and when I leave I can think what I want.

MAGDA

A good lie then. Your parents must be pleased.

SUNRISE

They wanted me to move back home. To live with them again and though I love them -- I think it's better I stay on my own.

MAGDA

They send you money?

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

They pay my tuition and I have a small job at the library. I didn't think I could no to moving back and have them pay for it.

MAGDA

It is difficult to take the money and be independent.

SUNRISE

Were you ever married?

MAGDA

Briefly.

SUNRISE

What happened?

MAGDA

Nothing! (laughing) That was the problem.

SUNRISE

You're making fun of me.

MAGDA

Just a little. I don't look back. I was married. I am not married now. That is enough for me and for my assistant.

SUNRISE

Did you love your husband?

MAGDA

It was a long time ago.

SUNRISE

During World War II.

MAGDA

People do fall in love during war.

SUNRISE

Was he a soldier?

MAGDA

For a while.

SUNRISE

Did he die?

MAGDA

No, he was wounded. Everyone was wounded. You've never been in a real war. I hope you won't. I hope, even if you have been wounded, you've been in love.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

Once, maybe, before the accident.

MAGDA

The accident. You measure your whole life in those few moments. I can see it in your eyes.

SUNRISE

What's in my eyes?

MAGDA

Still no room for love.

SUNRISE

It doesn't matter.

MAGDA

Give it time.

SUNRISE

What makes you so sure.

MAGDA

You loved your music with such passion.

SUNRISE

Music's was easy to love.

MAGDA

And it doesn't hurt.

SUNRISE

Exactly. I think I might be a writer. I don't know if I'd do it full time. I guess I'm not sure what I want to do full time yet, but I've been taking this creative writing course and I love writing.

MAGDA

Art doesn't disappoint us.

SUNRISE

Do you have many friends?

MAGDA

Only fools think they have many friends. I need people to hold up my head, not my hand. No, I'm afraid that I have never had many friends.

(picks up the book)

So, now it is Oedipus the King. Tell me, do you change your philosophy as often as you change your dress?

SUNRISE

Only fools stay the same.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Touche, but why Mr. Sophocles?

SUNRISE

You know him?

MAGDA

Not personally, but I read him when I was young.

SUNRISE

Did you like Oedipus?

MAGDA

Like him? I think I felt sorry for him.

SUNRISE

The tragic hero.

MAGDA

Yes, he was a tragic hero.

SUNRISE

Do you always feel sorry for murderers?

MAGDA

What?

SUNRISE

He was a murderer. Or did you forget that part.

MAGDA

He was more than just a murderer.

SUNRISE

Yes, he was also proud, quick-tempered, arrogant...and a murderer.

MAGDA

Didn't you forget the incest?

SUNRISE

That didn't bother me.

MAGDA

And you had absolutely no pity for him?

SUNRISE

Why?

MAGDA

There was the Oracle, the Gods, the times..

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

The weather!

MAGDA

Just when I thought you might be a lawyer you make a joke.

SUNRISE

I just don't get it. There's more to this story than just some tragic hero, like he didn't have any power over what he did.

MAGDA

But it was foretold by the Gods.

SUNRISE

No, that's not it.

MAGDA

What kind of power do you mean?

SUNRISE

Questions!

MAGDA

Questions?

SUNRISE

They never asked any questions.

MAGDA

I think you are looking at it from the point of view of 1975.

SUNRISE

It doesn't matter what year it was. Didn't he ever wonder if Jocasta had other children? Didn't she ever wonder why they called him "swollen foot"? Didn't he ever want to tell her what she'd done with that baby boy she sent to die?

MAGDA

Babies were often left to die.

SUNRISE

Didn't she ever notice those marks on his ankles when they were making love?

MAGDA

So you have been in love.

SUNRISE

I thought love was about telling the truth.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Love is also about the moment when you meet. The possibility that nothing else matters before that moment is very real. They began their lives and forgot everything else. It was their way of finally having happiness.

SUNRISE

Now that's very convenient.

MAGDA

They asked no one. They told no one. They simply did what they thought they had to do --

SUNRISE

To avoid the very thing they finally ended up doing.

MAGDA

You must be an interesting student to have in class.

SUNRISE

Don't you see, everything could have come out differently if they had just told the truth. From the very beginning. Just tell the boy there is this Oracle and they are all going to have to be very, very careful.

MAGDA

Ah, but the play is not about being careful.

SUNRISE

Maybe it should have been. Why are you smiling?

MAGDA

I envy you.

SUNRISE

You're making fun of me.

MAGDA

Life is so much easier from your side.

SUNRISE

I'm just saying that something's right or its not. And teaching this as some kind of tragedy doesn't seem completely justified.

MAGDA

No circumstances worthy of your pity?

SUNRISE

That's exactly the point.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

The point is that he didn't set out to kill his father. He set out to have a new life.

SUNRISE

I'm not talking about motive.

MAGDA

Ah, you have already traded in your white robes and your Mansa Poorna for your black robe, white wig and ten commandments.

SUNRISE

He killed him.

MAGDA

It was an accident.

SUNRISE

The facts show that he killed his father because he didn't get out of his way fast enough and that makes him a murderer.

MAGDA

He saved the city. Yes, I remember now, he saved the city with the riddle he solved. You must see something heroic in that.

SUNRISE

He killed a man because he didn't move fast enough. He killed his father because he got in his way.

MAGDA

He was running away. He was trying to keep from fulfilling the oracle.

SUNRISE

He was running from half the truth.

MAGDA

He didn't know his father was there at the crossroads.

SUNRISE

So?

MAGDA

He thought he was simply a stranger.

SUNRISE

And that makes it better?

MAGDA

Perhaps it does make him less guilty.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

Less guilty? That's like being a little bit pregnant.

MAGDA

It's not so simple.

SUNRISE

It's not so complicated.

MAGDA

You weren't there. Perhaps he felt threatened. Perhaps it was more a case of self-defense. Had you considered that? Perhaps he felt threatened by that old man and his bodyguards.

SUNRISE

It doesn't seem that way.

MAGDA

He blinded himself! Wasn't that enough punishment. He had to live with the knowledge of what he had done everyday of his life. And he lived a very long life.

SUNRISE

She hanged herself.

MAGDA

(pause) It was worse for her.

SUNRISE

Because she loved her husband's murderer or because she slept with her own son.

MAGDA

Your world is only black or white.

SUNRISE

And yours?

MAGDA

Mine?

SUNRISE

You forgive him?

MAGDA

My world is a great deal more grey. We're all human. We all make mistakes. I pity him. And her.

SUNRISE

But not everybody suffers.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

The Gods are not fair. You found that out already in that subway. He was a good King. That's what he was supposed to be and he did that as well as he could. None of us ever knows what choices we will make. What questions we will ask. At least we can agree that the playwright was still great.

SUNRISE

No matter what message he is sending to the audience?

MAGDA

What message?

SUNRISE

Don't you think the playwright is just giving the audience what they wanted. What he thought they needed.

MAGDA

What did they want. What do you think he said?

SUNRISE

The Greeks were at war. They came to the theater and the playwright told them they could feel pity for a murderer. They could kill and it was all right.

MAGDA

It was war. In war there are different rules and perhaps there are different artists.

(MAGDA takes out her cigarette case and looks for a match. She finally breaks the cigarette in two and reaches for another piece of chocolate)

Gone.

SUNRISE

I'll bring more the next time.

MAGDA

What makes you think we will meet again?

SUNRISE

Do you think Michaelangelo believed in God?

MAGDA

What does the girl ask now?

SUNRISE

Do you think that Michaelangelo believed in God!

MAGDA

I don't know. I suppose he did. What difference does it make?

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

But everyone who sees the Sistine Chapel assumes he must have been divinely inspired.

MAGDA

He may have been divinely inspired.

SUNRISE

But not necessarily by God?

MAGDA

Not necessarily by God as you or I define it. But one could look at inspiration as being divine. What drives us to make our work is certainly not always explainable from this life alone.

SUNRISE

Maybe he worshipped Toads.

MAGDA

Toads? I doubt that -

SUNRISE

-- or perhaps, he was a Jew!

MAGDA

A Jew! (Laughs)

SUNRISE

What's so funny.

MAGDA

The Pope wouldn't have hired a Jew.

SUNRISE

He would have lied.

MAGDA

And why would a Jew want to work for a man who would have despised him? Because that same Pope who could ask for angels on his ceiling was part of the inquisition too. You do understand that the inquisition forced Jews to convert, leave or lie.

SUNRISE

Sometimes to die.

MAGDA

Yes, also to die.

SUNRISE

Because Michaelangelo was a great artist. A gifted artist. He knew that painting that Chapel would be the greatest job he

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

could ever had. The biggest audience anyone could have. He knew he could do it better than anyone else and I think he might have done anything to get the job done.

MAGDA

I have to get back to work now.

SUNRISE

I thought we were having a good discussion. A good time. We can talk about something else if you want. Anything else.

MAGDA

I'm tired. I've been working very hard. I came here to take a pleasant evening walk, not to debate the character of Oedipus or the life of Michaelangelo. And though I am very pleased to see you looking so well and getting back to your life --

SUNRISE

What did I say to upset you so much?

MAGDA

Nothing.

SUNRISE

But I can see you're upset.

MAGDA

There is no reason for you to care one way or the other about me. I am nothing to you.

SUNRISE

I like talking to you. Arguing with you. You treat me like a real person. Like I won't break.

MAGDA

You are a real person. And no, you won't break. Remember that.

(MAGDA turns to leave)

Thank you for the cigarette case. (Stops) Claire?

SUNRISE

Yes.

MAGDA

Michaelangelo would have lied to work for the Pope because deep in his heart he would have believed no one else could paint that Chapel better than he could. (exits)

BLACK OUT

(POSSIBLE INTERMISSION)

(CONTINUED)

SCENE 3: EVENING

AT RISE:

The stage is now completely dark.
MAGDA comes on walking slowly, limping
with a cane. She carries a
flashlight and will use it to search
the area until she finds nothing.)

MAGDA

It is very dangerous here at night. The daylight makes it
seem quite innocent but at least you can always see what is
there. In the evening when it's dark the shadows can hide
anything. Everything.

(MAGDA goes to the bench and sits. She seems
older and more tired)

This is the most difficult time of the day to exercise. When
the body wants so much more to sleep. I twisted my foot a few
weeks ago and now I must use this cane. I hate it. I hate it.

(MAGDA lays back on the bench)

All day today I've had such a hard time breathing.

(SUNRISE appears from the shadows and takes
MAGDA's hand -- she is startled), feeling her
pulse. MAGDA does not fight her)

SUNRISE

It's just me. Claire.

MAGDA

Why are you here?

(MAGDA relaxes again)

SUNRISE

Your hand's cold.

MAGDA

You have become a nurse now?

SUNRISE

No.

MAGDA

Gut. I hate doctors and hospitals and illness.

SUNRISE

Are you sick?

MAGDA

I'm old. That's my only disease.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE
You work too hard

MAGDA
I'm not sick.

SUNRISE
You'll kill yourself.

MAGDA
The work keeps me alive.

SUNRISE
You're shaking.

MAGDA
Don't worry.

SUNRISE
I'll call emergency.

MAGDA
No!

SUNRISE
Let me help you get home.

MAGDA
A few minutes and I will be fine.

SUNRISE
Are you always so stubborn.

MAGDA
I've been called worse.

SUNRISE
I've been worried.

MAGDA
About what?

SUNRISE
You haven't been here.

MAGDA
I have a life beyond this place.

SUNRISE
You're walking with a cane.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

There's nothing to worry about. Gravity is my only enemy. These days my age and my blood get too confused to figure out which way to go. Sometimes I think I'll die from their forgetfulness. Gravity is not just a good idea.

SUNRISE

Did you break anything?

MAGDA

I am too stubborn to break.

SUNRISE

Or bend.

MAGDA

You shouldn't be here in the dark. I've warned you before.

SUNRISE

I'm not alone.

MAGDA

And if I had not come?

SUNRISE

But you did.

MAGDA

You think you're amusing.

SUNRISE

You're smiling.

MAGDA

You think you're immortal.

SUNRISE

No one will hurt us.

MAGDA

But you're just young and stupid.

(MAGDA rises unsteadily. SUNRISE moves towards her and reaches out to help her. MAGDA waves her away)

I'm fine. Nothing to worry about. Nothing at all.

(MAGDA takes her cigarettes)

They never told us these things could kill you -- but then, they never told us a lot of things. (Pause) When I was a young girl I use to sit in the cafes and watch the men smoking

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA (cont'd)

their dark cigarettes, talking their loud talk, sipping their warm brandy, and I thought it all looked so very important and so very romantic. The smoke swirling around their heads, the smell of their sweat mingling with the sweetness of the alcohol. Their dark voices rising up into the smoke and dying in the clouds. I don't really remember anymore when I started smoking -- but I can't forget why. Oh, the Greeks had such wonderful myths. So wonderful and yet so terrible. A closed system. Action...Reaction...Punishment.

(Closes her cigarette case)

What do you want from me?

SUNRISE

I only know what I've read about you.

MAGDA

Isn't that enough?

SUNRISE

Is it true?

MAGDA

Is what true?

SUNRISE

I'm not sure.

MAGDA

Come Claire, that is your name?

SUNRISE

Yes.

MAGDA

What do you want from me?

MAGDA

What makes you think there is more? Isn't making films for Hitler enough to condemn. It was certainly enough for them to keep me from making movies anymore. Enough to make me a pariah. I was surprised you came back that first day. . Aren't you afraid of me. Repulsed? Or just curious the old woman is still alive.

SUNRISE

I'm not sure what I think.

MAGDA

Suddenly the girl with all the answers is not sure what she thinks? What you want from me. Claire?

SUNRISE

I know you made movies.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

I made movies.

SUNRISE

Good movies.

MAGDA

Some say they were good. Even great.

SUNRISE

But --

MAGDA

The word "But" is always the beginning of the end of the conversation.

SUNRISE

You made them in Germany.

MAGDA

I am German.

SUNRISE

You made them during the war.

MAGDA

No. I made them before the war.

SUNRISE

You made them for Adolph Hitler.

MAGDA

I made them for myself. No one told me how to do my job. Not even Hitler. ARE we through now? Have you gotten what you came for? Or is there more.

SUNRISE

You were good to me.

MAGDA

So I couldn't possibly be such a bad woman? No that is not enough of an answer.

SUNRISE

I was afraid you wouldn't come back.

MAGDA

And I am surprised that you wanted to see me again. Surprised that you weren't sure I could be so much more of a villain than your Mansa Poorna could have ever described.

SUNRISE

Why are you doing this?

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Because whatever happens you must understand. Bad people love children, have pets and sleep well at night and some good people don't.

SUNRISE

I want to hear the truth.

MAGDA

Ah, they truth.

SUNRISE

I want them to know the truth from you..

MAGDA

Why?

SUNRISE

I'm willing to listen to you.

MAGDA

To be convinced.

SUNRISE

To understand.

MAGDA

If you want me to convince you I am a good person then you might as well leave now because I will not grovel. I will not beg. Never.

SUNRISE

Just talk to me. Tell me your side of the story.

MAGDA

There is not my side of the story and their side. Not from that time. There will never be two sides. Only one. That has been decided. You either cooperated or you fought in the underground. You either stayed or you left. You were either very good or very bad. I am very bad at being very good.(Pause) I would answer your questions. As truthfully as I know how. I will talk about those times as I lived it, as I believed it and you can believe what you want. They can believe what they want.

SUNRISE

They will listen.

MAGDA

Some will.

SUNRISE

I promise.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Some won't.

SUNRISE

I'll be very fair.

MAGDA

Yes, I'm sure you will be. And so we will finally have our little talk.

SUNRISE

Now?

MAGDA

It has been long enough. You are ready?

SUNRISE

Yes.

MAGDA

You've done your homework?

SUNRISE

Yes.

MAGDA

Gut. Gut. You must be prepared or it won't work.

SUNRISE

I'm prepared.

MAGDA

Then we will get started.

SUNRISE

And you'll stay?

MAGDA

To the end. And you?

SUNRISE

To the end.

MAGDA

Gut! Now let's get on with it.

BLACK OUT

(CONTINUED)

SCENE 4

AT RISE:

There is a cacophony of military music, screeching trains and then the rhythmic beating of a drum as the sound of voices rise and fall. The park becomes a backdrop for a movie screen and the world is transported back to the 1930's, until the specific voices of Germany rise above the other languages. MAGDA sits and seems younger in the light. SUNRISE enters, wearing a black robe and perhaps a wig of the European judges. The atmosphere is highly charged, surreal and dramatic. This may be enhanced with audio visuals.

SUNRISE

Your name please.

MAGDA

Magda.

SUNRISE

First and last names please. We want to be as exact as possible.

MAGDA

Of course. As exact as possible. My name is Magda Schuller.

SUNRISE

A little louder, please, so they can all hear you.

MAGDA

My name is Fraulein Magda Schuller.

SUNRISE

That's much better. Thank you Miss Schuller and would you tell us where you were born?

MAGDA

In Munich.

SUNRISE

Exactly please.

MAGDA

Munich, Germany of course. Though I would prefer not to give the exact year of my birth if you don't mind.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

You don't have to give that exactly.

MAGDA

Everyone has their small vanities which always seem so much larger as the years pass.

SUNRISE

What was it like there?

MAGDA

What do you mean? It was many years ago and it was not like here at all. But it was a lovely time to be a child and a beautiful place to grow up. Then. Everything is very different now.

SUNRISE

So you had a good childhood.

MAGDA

I'm not sure what that means.

SUNRISE

Were you a happy child?

MAGDA

Oh, yes, I loved to play and I had many friends.

SUNRISE

Isn't it true you that you were quite a daydreamer?

MAGDA

Some of my teachers said that because I preferred to dance and draw instead of doing my studies. I wasn't a very good student to them because I was always asking questions which did not please them in the least.

SUNRISE

And your parents?

MAGDA

Oh, my parents were very good to me. They indulged me, particularly my mother who encouraged everything -- even my questions.

SUNRISE

And your father?

MAGDA

I can still remember how he taught me to swim. He simply took me down to the lake, made a belt from some water reeds and -- tossed me in.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

He just threw you in the water?

MAGDA

Don't look so surprised. I learned to swim immediately.

SUNRISE

Did your parents want you to be an artist.

MAGDA

My father liked sports but he didn't really want me to take anything too seriously, it wasn't the way then for girls. I liked gymnastics and joined a club in secret. I was quite good and when he finally saw me he was pleased.

SUNRISE

Then you wanted to be a gymnast?

MAGDA

When I was a child it was very appealing. But I wanted to study ballet and so I told my mother who was smart enough not to tell my father. He would not see me dance for many years and then he was never as happy about it as I was.

SUNRISE

Why?

MAGDA

Because I was already too serious. Women simply were not supposed to care so much for things ...for things.

SUNRISE

Did you often disobey your father?

MAGDA

Absolutely not. I was a very good girl about most things until I was almost twenty-one. I didn't want to contradict him, to keep secrets but I simply had to follow my passion and my passion was to dance.

SUNRISE

Then you thought you were very talented?

MAGDA

Some people said that.

SUNRISE

Did you enjoy performing?

MAGDA

Not at first, but later I enjoyed it very much.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

And did you feel you were talented?

MAGDA

Not in the beginning.

SUNRISE

But later?

MAGDA

Later I believed I had talent, but I also worked very hard. Talent isn't enough because there are many people with talent. No, you must also work very hard -- and sometimes that is not enough either. You must also dream. Big dreams. And sometimes that is not enough either.

SUNRISE

What did you dream?

MAGDA

That I would become a great dancer, that people would remember my name too -- like Pavlova or Isadora Duncan.

SUNRISE

And when you danced, how did you feel?

MAGDA

Oh, I loved the dancing.

SUNRISE

Was it like your dreams?

MAGDA

It was better. It was real.

SUNRISE

And were you successful?

MAGDA

I danced with the Rhinehard Ballet -- I danced alone in Paris to standing room only audiences -- I danced my heart out. And then it was over.

SUNRISE

The accident.

MAGDA

I had fallen many times in gymnastics, but this was worse. More permanent. I didn't even have to wait to hear from the doctors or see the x-rays. I could feel it in my bones.

SUNRISE

What could you feel?

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

That I would not dance anymore.

SUNRISE

Couldn't you have done something with the dancing?

MAGDA

No!

SUNRISE

I understand.

(MAGDA grows silent)

Miss Schuller? Magda?

MAGDA

What is the question?

SUNRISE

What happened after when you couldn't dance.

MAGDA

I went on to other things of course.

SUNRISE

Just like that.

MAGDA

Yes. We all have to go on no matter what happens.

SUNRISE

And what did you do.

MAGDA

I had already been seen by one film director and when he asked me to act in one of his films, I said yes.

SUNRISE

Would describe yourself as beautiful?

MAGDA

There were certainly others more beautiful than I. But I had learned early on about the secrets of the light.

SUNRISE

What secrets?

MAGDA

Ah, you see the light is very clever. It can help you look very plain, or it can make you look quite -- beautiful. My first screen test proved me quite...plain, almost ugly. The director was quite surprised too since we both thought I

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA (cont'd)

looked better than what was up there on the screen. It would not do he said -- and so he changed the light and shot me again. And to my surprise, voila! I was then, almost beautiful.

SUNRISE

He could do that just by moving the light?

MAGDA

It was my first lesson as an actress and a film director. The light is the law. I never forgot it.

SUNRISE

But it's true that by 1930 you were one of the most popular actresses in Germany.

MAGDA

Yes, but I worked very hard at my craft. I learned my craft well and I was willing to do anything. You should see those early movies. Climbing mountains, in the middle of an avalanche, we were crazy. I did it well and I was believable. It was more than just being beautiful.

SUNRISE

You were very convincing?

MAGDA

Yes.

SUNRISE

And then you started your own film company?

MAGDA

Yes I did.

SUNRISE

You must have been more than just convincing, Miss Schuller.

MAGDA

What do you mean?

SUNRISE

You must also have been quite confident.

MAGDA

Is that a crime?

SUNRISE

No.

MAGDA

Then yes, I was quite confident. I guess I've never been afraid of taking chances, if that's what you mean.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

But the economy in Germany in the 1930's wasn't that good.

MAGDA

It was a hard time.

SUNRISE

How would you describe those times?

MAGDA

I was an actress, not an economist.

SUNRISE

But you did know that people were standing in bread lines.

MAGDA

I was out of the country a great deal of the time in those early years.

SUNRISE

But you must have know how bad things were getting.

MAGDA

I knew times were hard.

SUNRISE

Did you stand in breadlines?

MAGDA

It doesn't matter whether I personally stood in a line. I saw people without jobs.

SUNRISE

But you didn't personally feel it?

MAGDA

We all felt it! It was everywhere. My own father was losing his business. It was everywhere.

SUNRISE

What was everywhere?

MAGDA

The suffering, of course. The discontent, certainly. And yes, the pain. And there was still that terrible sense of despair.

SUNRISE

Despair?

MAGDA

From the other war. The sense of loss had been enormous. Some people never recovered. You have no idea what it was like because you have never lost a war yet.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

But you were famous now.

MAGDA

I was an artist. I did what I did best, I made movies. Very simple, very nice movies. And people liked them. But I lived from movie to movie just like anyone else. There was never any security. Not even now.

SUNRISE

But you liked what you did.

MAGDA

Yes, I liked making movies and people liked seeing me.

SUNRISE

Was it more difficult for you because you were a woman?

MAGDA

Is anything easier because you are a woman?

SUNRISE

Did you have sisters?

MAGDA

One brother. But we were quite different. For instance, I loved airplanes and he could care less. They were still so new when I was young that in the summer when we were at our country house I would hear one and run outside. I watched very closely and when it disappeared I would run back into the house and draw it over and over until it was perfect. One day, when I was nine or ten, my father picked one of my drawings up and shook his head. "What a shame you are not the boy." I don't remember what he said after that, or if I answered him. But I'll never forget that look on his face.

SUNRISE

Was that why you didn't tell your father of your dream of being a dancer?.

MAGDA

I had to show him. To succeed. That he could understand. Dreams...I had to show him.

SUNRISE

What did your father say when he saw you in the movies?

MAGDA

He was actually quite proud.

SUNRISE

And your mother?

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

My mother was proud of everything I did.

SUNRISE

And people liked you?

MAGDA

Some people liked me. Others didn't. If you want to make everyone love you life will be very difficult.

SUNRISE

Aren't you being a little modest.

MAGDA

My enemies would say I have never suffered that particular disease.

SUNRISE

But your movies did attract the attention and admiration of some of the most powerful men in Germany.

MAGDA

As I said, some liked me and some didn't. I was not running for office.

SUNRISE

But they were.

MAGDA

Some were.

SUNRISE

And some of them were very important men.

MAGDA

I have discussed this over and over. You know that.

SUNRISE

Why did Adolph Hitler want Magda Schuller to make movies just for him.

MAGDA

He said I was an artist and he admired my work.

SUNRISE

And how did you feel about that.

MAGDA

There was always a difference in my own mind between Adolph Hitler the person and Adolph Hitler the politician. For me these were two entirely different things. It was only 1932. You must remember what the times were like then.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

What did the times have to do with making movies for Hitler?

MAGDA

They had everything to do with it.

SUNRISE

We are talking about Adolph Hitler Miss Schuller.

MAGDA

We are talking about 1932. You said you would be fair!

SUNRISE

(Pause) Would you tell us how you first met Adolph Hitler.

MAGDA

Before 1932 I was only interested in my work. I lived on the edge of collapse from my movies which were my life. I admit I knew little of what was happening around me.

SUNRISE

Would you tell us what was happening around you.

MAGDA

In the spring of 1932 I was on a film tour of Germany. I became aware that something was changing. My own father was afraid of losing our family business and they had already sold our summer home and were moving to a smaller apartment. Wherever I went people were arguing -- some still about the War -- the first War, of course, but many were now talking about the same person. Some loved him, others hated him and some simply laughed at his little mustache. I decided that I must go to see this man myself. Hear him myself. A few weeks later I went to Sports Palace. It was so crowded I simply sat there until I heard this voice. It filled the stadium like nothing I had ever experienced before. I had not even seen him but I already felt paralyzed by this voice that was holding all these people in his grasp. I ran from the stadium, my head splitting open, half understanding what he had said but knowing something was happening. I could not even feel the cold. My mind was racing. I just stood there there watching the people leave. Looking at their faces I saw a kind of hope and I wondered.

SUNRISE

Wondered about what?

MAGDA

If this man could actually save Germany?

SUNRISE

You thought he could?

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

I didn't know what to think. I believed in Socialism. But I wasn't sure of anything else. so I spoke with a friend of mine who was a newspaper editor. He was a Jew and when I asked him what he thought of Hitler he replied that he believed Hitler was quite brilliant, and perhaps a little dangerous. But it seemed then that those theories were simply harmless campaign rhetoric.

SUNRISE

Harmless?

MAGDA

It was still very early.

SUNRISE

You still haven't explained how you came to be asked to make the movie for the Party Congress.

MAGDA

I wrote Hitler a letter with the intention of meeting him myself and finding out who he really was? And then I forgot about it.

SUNRISE

You wrote Hitler a letter and then you forgot about it?

MAGDA

I was leaving to begin a new movie and I didn't think if the letter got there at all -- that I could possibly receive an answer before I left Germany.

SUNRISE

Do you remember what you wrote in this letter?

MAGDA

Oh yes. I have had many opportunities to quote this letter and I remember it well. It was sent on May 18, 1932. Dear Herr Hitler, for the first time in my life I attended a political rally. I must confess that I was impressed by you and by the enthusiasm of the crowd for you. I would like to meet you personally. Unfortunately I am leaving Germany in a few days to begin work on a new film so a meeting now might be quite difficult. I am not even certain that this letter will ever reach you, but I will be glad to receive an answer from you, Cordially, Magda Schuller.

SUNRISE

How did you know where to send it?

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

I had seen the address of the Party headquarters in the Nazi Party newspaper, though the article said he was away campaigning, I sent it there anyway.

SUNRISE

And you did hear back from Hitler personally?

MAGDA

One of his aide's contacted me and said Hitler wanted to see me immediately. I laughed and told him that was impossible since I was leaving the country the next day to begin filming. He did not laugh but said arrangements had been made to pick me up at the railway station and drive me to meet with the Fuhrer for the day. Arrangements would also be made to take me wherever I needed to go after the meeting.

SUNRISE

And you went?

MAGDA

Yes, that was the point. To meet him face to face.

SUNRISE

You met alone with Hitler.

MAGDA

Yes.

SUNRISE

So.

MAGDA

So?

SUNRISE

You must realize how curious we all are.

MAGDA

About what?

SUNRISE

Hitler. Not everyone can say they met with him face to face.

MAGDA

There were many others who knew him much more intimately than I did.

SUNRISE

What was he like?

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

An ordinary man in a dark blue suit. He certainly didn't seem like --- a dictator.

SUNRISE

What did you talk about?

MAGDA

He told me that when he came to power he wanted me, Magda Schuller, to make his films.

SUNRISE

Those were his exact words?

MAGDA

As much as I can remember, yes.

SUNRISE

What did you think?

MAGDA

I was shocked that he even knew who I was.

SUNRISE

Did you say yes?

MAGDA

I said no.

SUNRISE

You told Hitler no.

MAGDA

I told him "No". I made it quite clear I had recently turned down a similar request from the Catholic Church. I told him I could never follow someone else's ideas. I was quite emphatic about why it had to be my film or I was not interested because I was not for sale.

SUNRISE

What did he say?

MAGDA

He was quiet. In that silence I also said I would never become a member of his National Socialist Party and I never did.

SUNRISE

You were very outspoken.

MAGDA

It has not always been to my advantage but I wanted it clear.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

How you felt.

MAGDA

How I felt about certain issues. I wanted no misunderstanding.

SUNRISE

And did you think he understood.

MAGDA

When he finally spoke he said he never believed in forcing anyone to belong to the National Socialist Party, but he hoped when I became older and more mature -- I would change my mind.

SUNRISE

That was it?

MAGDA

No. I also told him I was concerned that if I had been born an Indian or a Jew he would not even be speaking to me much less asking me to work for him and I wondered if I could ever consider working for someone with such prejudices. Why are you looking so surprised?

SUNRISE

You told Hitler he was a bigot?

MAGDA

I told him unless he changed his mind it was a point that would always come between us. Then he thanked me.

SUNRISE

He thanked you for what?

MAGDA

For my directness. He told me he always wanted the people around him to feel free to speak their mind. Then he took my hand in his and told me how seldom he had the chance to talk to a real artist. He said he had once also dreamed of such a path, but his life had taken a different path. Then he asked, no he insisted I spend the night as his guest, that he would have a lovely dinner together and we could talk. I said yes and when he returned from the rally he was so so animated -- like the man I had seen in the stadium that night all over again. We talked for hours about music and art. I can't remember what we ate, but later he took my arm and we walked in the garden. There he suddenly stopped and looked into my eyes and said he had been called to save Germany and he would not -- could not refuse his mission. Then he drew his arms around me, his eyes so intense, so full of excitement, but when I failed to respond, as a woman, he turned away and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA (cont'd)

stood alone in the moonlight. I sat quietly until he put out his arm to escort me back to where we were staying. When we reached my door he took my hand and kissed it, and I suddenly blurted out that he must be careful about assassination. I don't even know what made me say such a thing. I had never thought of such a thing before. He dropped my hand and turned quite serious. "I will never be a victim of an assassin's bullet." Then he left me at my door and said good night.

SUNRISE

Was that when you decided to work for him?

MAGDA

No.

SUNRISE

But you finally did decide to make the movie of the National Party Congress.

MAGDA

Yes.

SUNRISE

Why did you change your mind?

MAGDA

It's not easy to explain.

SUNRISE

But it's important. Please. Try.

MAGDA

It is very clear to me, of course.

SUNRISE

He kept asking you.

MAGDA

Yes.

SUNRISE

He wouldn't take no for an answer.

MAGDA

He rejected anyone I would suggest -- and I did suggest other people.

SUNRISE

It must have been hard to keep saying no.

MAGDA

He was insistent that it had to be me and no one else.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

You must have been flattered.

MAGDA

Flattered?

SUNRISE

That he you were so talented.

MAGDA

Flattered? I'm not sure that I would use that word.

SUNRISE

I'am just trying to understand how you changed your mind from saying no to saying yes to someone you didn't totally think of as a politician but as a man!

MAGDA

I never slept with any of them.

SUNRISE

I didn't say you did.

MAGDA

No, this is not about love. When Hitler put his arms around me I turned from him. And when Goebbels threw himself at my feet begging me to become his mistress -- I turned him out and I never looked back even though it meant I would never have another moment's peace.

SUNRISE

Goebbels wanted you to be his mistress?

MAGDA

Whore of the Reich! Hitler's mistress. That's what they said you know. As if I had no talent at all. One doctor, right after the liberation, an American, looked me straight in the eye and asked me to tell him what Hitler's private parts really looked like or was the Fuhrer really impotent. As if I knew. Or cared. As if there could not possibly be any other reason. .

SUNRISE

I will repeat my question. What finally made you decide to make the Party Congress film for Adolph Hitler.

MAGDA

What was the question?

SUNRISE

What finally changed your mind about making the movie.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

I had not made up my mind and so I decided to go to another rally.

SUNRISE

Was this rally different from the first one you went to?

MAGDA

Yes.

SUNRISE

How did it change your mind?

MAGDA

It began as before, but then Hitler started to speak of the need for personal sacrifice. He believed we could save our country if each of us would put aside our personal desires and work together for Germany. I was surprised at how his words touched me.

SUNRISE

Could you describe how you felt?

MAGDA

It frightened me actually. It made me feel things. I was not stone. I knew many people were suffering, even my own parents, and I was still making movies. I did believe in Socialism and I thought that perhaps if this movie it could make a difference...

SUNRISE

You felt you could do something.

MAGDA

Yes. Maybe it was all I could do. He was a very persuasive man. He made me uneasy in a way no one else did. I think he would say the same of me.

SUNRISE

Uneasy?

MAGDA

Yes. Uneasy.

SUNRISE

So you accepted the challenge to make the documentary.

MAGDA

Yes, I relented.

SUNRISE

He agreed to all of your conditions?

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

I was assured no one would bother me. That I would have complete control over the artistic content of the film. Total independence even from Goebbel's who now hated me for spurning him. But no one could tell me what to shoot, not even the generals. They would all be my films, my projects, no one else's. I would be completely free.

SUNRISE

But if you had done something they didn't like.

MAGDA

I merely recorded events in the most artistic way possible.

SUNRISE

Of course. but you must have considered the source.

MAGDA

We had an agreement and we both honored it.

SUNRISE

You said you had suggested other directors.

MAGDA

Yes, there were many good directors.

SUNRISE

Were they making movies?

MAGDA

Some were. What do you mean?

SUNRISE

Was it a good time to make movies in Germany?

MAGDA

It has always been very difficult to make movies. Some continued and others left.

SUNRISE

Why did the others leave?

MAGDA

Making movies has never been easy. There's money to raise, technical problems, the weather.

SUNRISE

I thought you were serious.

MAGDA

Some left to make movies in Hollywood. I could have gone too. Sometimes I wonder how my life would have changed if I had.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

So some of these people left because it was difficult?

MAGDA

Some were also more political.

SUNRISE

Communists?

MAGDA

That too.

SUNRISE

So, all the filmmakers you knew who left were either having a difficult time, or had a better offer -- or they were communists. (Pause) Miss Schuller?

MAGDA

Yes.

SUNRISE

Were there any other reasons that your colleagues may have left Germany.

MAGDA

You know why.

SUNRISE

Tell us.

MAGDA

Some of them disagreed.

SUNRISE

You mean you couldn't disagree?

MAGDA

Later. There were threats.

SUNRISE

No other reasons?

MAGDA

There... they...some of them..were....

SUNRISE

--undesirable?

MAGDA

I had nothing to do with that! Those were their words. I only wanted to work. To do what I could to help. Was that such a crime?

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

SIT DOWN PLEASE!

MAGDA

I told Hitler right from the start I never believed any theories of race and he never mentioned one word about the Jewish problem again.

SUNRISE

Or you would have said something.

MAGDA

Exactly. He knew how I felt. He saw the notes I had written in the margins of his book. "No, no" or "Doesn't agree" and he read them. They all knew how I felt. No one controlled my images, ever.

SUNRISE

Why don't you tell us about your agreement.

(MAGDA regains composure and sits again)

MAGDA

I've told you everything.

SUNRISE

Could you be more specific?

MAGDA

I had an agreement with the Fuhrer that I was to be left completely alone in my work and he agreed.

SUNRISE

This was in writing?

MAGDA

No, but everyone understood that if he gave his word.

SUNRISE

So you believed you would be free to do your work.

MAGDA

My work about the National Party Congress and then I return to my own work.

SUNRISE

Who suggested the movie about the Olympics then?

MAGDA

That was not Herr Hitler but the leaders of the Olympic committee.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

But I thought that you didn't want to make movies for other people.

MAGDA

They insisted. They had seen the movie on the Party Congress which had already won many prizes and they thought it was very artistic. No one had ever created a good movie about the Olympic competition but they believed I could. And I did.

SUNRISE

And Hitler approved of this?

MAGDA

Goebbels thought it was a terrible idea and Hitler thought it would be boring.

SUNRISE

So it was your own project.

MAGDA

I would have to fight for it, yes, but in the end it would be my film alone.

SUNRISE

And you got what you wanted.

MAGDA

I wanted to make a beautiful movie - an incredible tribute to the human body and the human spirit.

SUNRISE

The Spirit of Competition.

MAGDA

Then you have seen it!

SUNRISE

Over and over. It's beautiful

MAGDA

Yes, it was beautiful.

SUNRISE

A tribute to the human body and the human spirit.

MAGDA

Exactly.

SUNRISE

Excellence of competition.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

Yes!

SUNRISE

Of speed and grace. Excellence of the body over all possible odds. A true masterpiece.

MAGDA

Yes, yes, all of that.

SUNRISE

And no one interfered.

MAGDA

(rising) No, I was free! FREE!

SUNRISE

Free?

MAGDA

Completely.

SUNRISE

Just as free as the masses smiling as they lifted their arms in salute of their Fuhrer?

MAGDA

It had started with so much hope.

SUNRISE

Just as free as those who chose to leave their country rather be part of the madness?

MAGDA

I didn't even know about Kristallnacht. I was already in America when they broke all of those windows.

SUNRISE

When who broke all those windows.

MAGDA

It was that demon Goebbels delivering speeches behind Hitler's back. They told me that when I returned.

SUNRISE

Not Hitler.

MAGDA

Goebbel's was a hateful man. He was always plotting against me because I wouldn't sleep with him. He even tried to confiscate my cameras during the Olympics just to ruin my film. Hitler was very loyal to Goebbels as he was to everyone he cared about.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

Like he was loyal to you.

MAGDA

Exactly. He always kept his word with me.

SUNRISE

Just as he did to Goebbels.

MAGDA

And I was free to do my work as he had promised me.

SUNRISE

Just as free as those sent off to camps from which they could never return, or did you really think they were all just going off to the seashore! Tell me, tell them that you really didn't know all o f that was going on. Tell me that you have renounced this all. That you are ashamed of it.

MAGDA

You've seen the films. That is the only truth that I should be judged by. That is the only reason I did anything. Nothing else could ever matter as much as they did. And so when he told me he would let me make my films just the way I wanted, and no one would interfere, I listened. And when he gave me everything I needed to make the most glorious work that the world had ever seen, there was no question that I must say Yes. Yes, YES. I never thought of hurting anyone. I swear I never killed anyone. It was only to do the work.

SUNRISE

But Magda, who did you save?

MAGDA

What?

SUNRISE

You could have saved people too.

MAGDA

I was an artist. I wasn't involved with them. Not that way. You can see that in my movies.

(MAGDA seems stunned and silent)

SUNRISE

I will repeat the question.

MAGDA

No.

SUNRISE

Please, answer the question.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA

I never killed anyone!

SUNRISE

I must ask you one more time....

MAGDA

No! That is not the right question. It can't be the right question.

(SUNRISE starts to take off her robe and MAGDA makes one last appeal to her personally)

I wanted to work and I did good work, beautiful work, like the Sistine Chapel or a classical symphony. Something people would remember long after I had turned to dust. Long after they all had turned to dust. There are so few times in a person's life when the moments to create go beyond even your own dreams. I had such visions! I had to do it. Those small little men might pay my way, but in the end, the work would live beyond us all. I had to believe that. It couldn't matter to me that I mattered to them! Does it matter to you that the pyramids were built with the blood of slaves? That the Roman Coliseum used human flesh as game bait? Could Michaelangelo really have turned down his bloody Pope? You know what it is to love your work!

SUNRISE

(turning away) I have no more questions.

MAGDA

Don't leave me...not yet! There must be one more question you would like to ask. One more question I could still answer. Think. One more.

SUNRISE

(pause) Would you do it again?

MAGDA

What?

SUNRISE

If you could take it back. All of it. Knowing what you know now, would you do it all again?

MAGDA

You must understand.

SUNRISE

It's a simple question. It needs a simple answer.

MAGDA

I told you once that the world is not black or white.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

I am not asking about what happened then.

MAGDA

I was not political I told you that.

SUNRISE

What is your answer?

MAGDA

It was beautiful work, you said it yourself.

SUNRISE

I read everything I could about you. That day we first met I didn't know who you were. But you were kind to me, you gave me hope. Tell them you're sorry. That if you could, you would change it all.

MAGDA

Take the work back?

SUNRISE

Tell them you wouldn't have done it again.

MAGDA

I have telegrams that called my Olympic film a work of peace.

SUNRISE

Tell me please.

MAGDA

You can see they didn't tell me what to do because it's the American runner who is the hero. It's the black man. Not the German.

SUNRISE

Magda?

MAGDA

I am artist.

SUNRISE

Tell them you wouldn't have worked for them again.

MAGDA

What.

SUNRISE

Tell them before it's too late. (Pause)
(leaving her robes behind and walking off)

MAGDA

You said no one would leave until it's over.

(CONTINUED)

SUNRISE

It is over.

MAGDA

But you can't leave me alone.

SUNRISE

There are no more questions.

MAGDA

I've told you the truth.

SUNRISE

I know.

MAGDA

See for yourself. Turn on the films. My films and then they will understand.

(Scenes of beautiful bodies swimming, competing in sports are in a montage)

See. It was good work. Beautiful work. And I made it all for you. I never killed anyone. You can see that. You can see it all there. You know I'm right. I was not political. I was an artist. I only wanted to make beautiful work and I was making it all for you.

(Suddenly the screen switches to the war, Hitler, soldiers, death camps MAGDA throws herself in front of the pictures.)

No! Not those pictures! I had nothing to do with this. That was all their work. I was an artist. I believed in nothing but the art!

*

(MAGDA stands frozen as the last slides of the Pyramids, Coliseum and Sistine Chapel wall fall on her outstretched body)

BLACK OUT

PLAY ENDS

REVISED 10/1