

Suramo Excerpt

Act I Scene i

GERARD, seated alone in a small chamber, presumably a cell.

The part of GERARD may be played by either one or two actors. Should two actors be utilized, one will be identified as “Actor,” the other as “Narrator”

GERARD

The same questions keep racing through my mind. Over and over like the melody of some infernal music hall song, or the organ of a carnival chimpanzee: Why did I do this? Was I just a fool? Could I have been mad? Was it madness from the start to think...to think what? To think at all, I suppose. Could it have been avoided? I suppose. But to have avoided it would have meant never to have come here at all, to this...this what? This paradise. This hell. This glory. This emptiness. This void. This golden state. This stationary state. This state of stasis. This...Hell...

(He stands.)

My surroundings—this dark wet cube eight by eight by eight, lit only by the firelight that seeps in through the grate. How much time has passed, what day this is, the month? The only thing I’m certain of is the year. 2002. I know an entire year has not passed yet. But perhaps not as bleak as all that. For, the meals are fine. Well prepared. And on these special days, those days on which they allow us to frolic on the sands and luxuriate in our nakedness upon rocks as soft as pillows underneath the foam trees that grow on those days and form branches made of colored light, those days when water tastes like water and fire burns like fire, on those days when all wishes are granted for the two of us and all happiness is assured, when the oceans are as green as cat’s eyes and calm and smooth as the skin of a snake, on those days you can look out across the ocean and there you can see the warm firelit glow that emanates from the capital of the Golden State.

LIGHTS UP FULL.

GERARD (Cont’d.)

To begin with, I would like to state for the record that I never had any great desire to travel. The drudgery of it. The nausea. The days inside those darkened globes—twirling for days upon days upon days, only to arrive at some godforsaken land—to dine, to tour, to sleep only to be whisked away in that same fool disk, and to wake up one morning to realize that nothing had changed, nothing had come to pass. Only time. I had little imagination. I had few interests. I had no outstanding schooling of which to speak. I had little interest in adventure, little interest in the

arts, in politics, in women or men. To my credit, I only had my memory for minutiae and my overriding lack of any particular morality—all of which qualified me for little other than a career in journalism.

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