

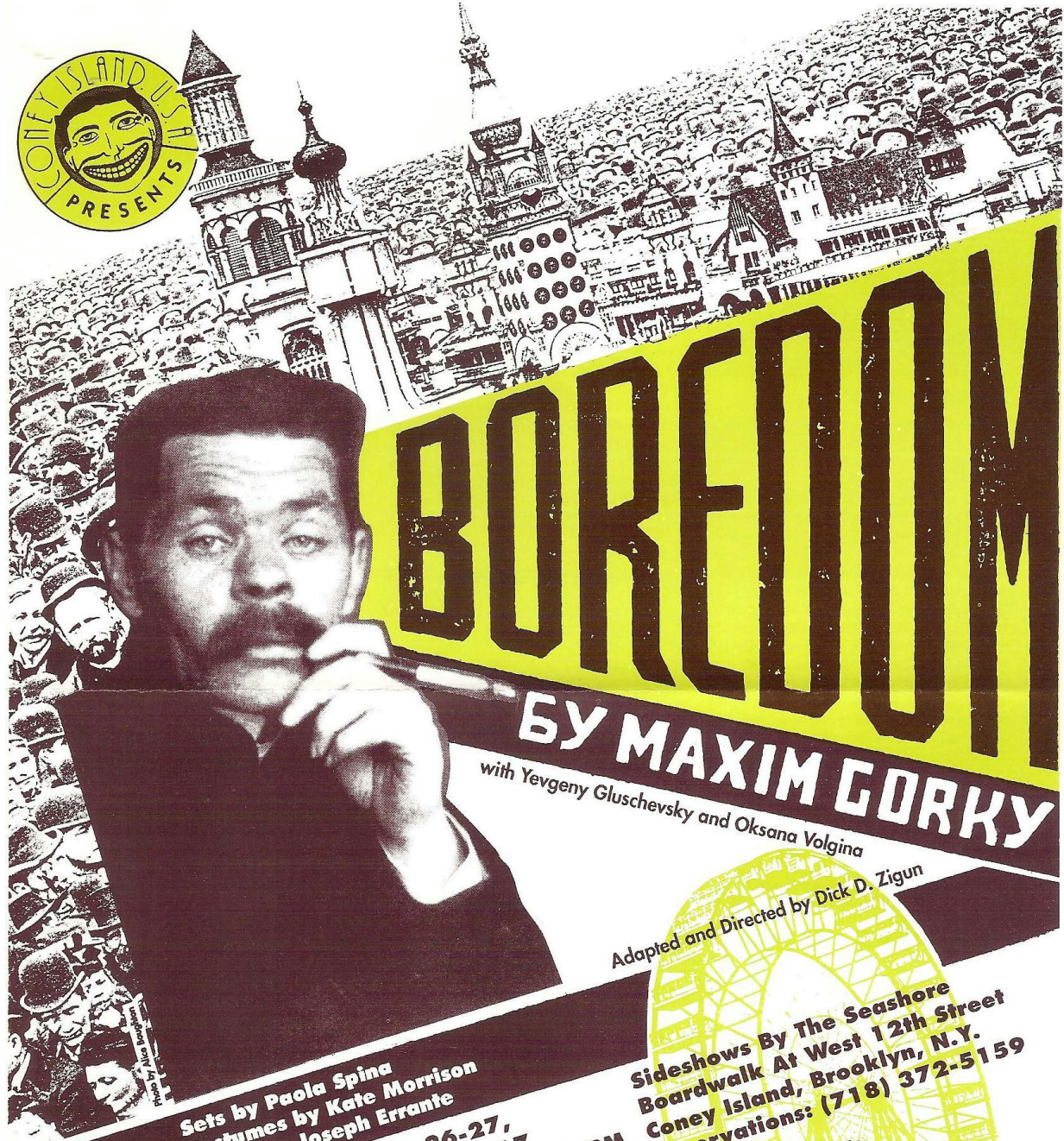
BOREDOM

by MAXIM GORKY (1905)

Adapted by DICK D. ZIGUN (1992)

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C/O CONEY ISLAND, USA, INC.  
1208 Surf Avenue  
Coney Island, N.Y. 11224  
(718) 372-5159



# BOREDOM

BY MAXIM GORKY

with Yevgeny Glushevsky and Oksana Volgina

Adapted and Directed by Dick D. Zigun

Sets by Paola Spina  
Costumes by Kate Morrison  
Lights by Joseph Errante

December 19-20, 26-27,  
January 2-3, 9-10, 16-17  
Saturday & Sunday at 2 and 6 PM  
\$7.50 Cheap!

(December 27 at 6 PM \$10 Gala)  
Funded, in part, by The National Endowment For The Arts, New York State  
Council On The Arts and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Subway: B,D,F,N to last stop  
Car: Exits 6 or 7 South, Belt Parkway  
Design by Valerie Heller

Sideshow By The Seashore  
Boardwalk At West 12th Street  
Coney Island, Brooklyn, N.Y.  
Reservations: (718) 372-5159

BOREDOM was originally produced by Coney Island USA by Sideshow by the Seashore in 1992, directed by Dick Zigun with the following cast:

Yevgeny Glushevsky as Maxim Gorky

Oksana Volgina as Andreyeve

Tony Ferero as Carpenter

Designers:

Sets by Paolo Spina

Costumes by Kate Morrison

Lights by Joseph Errante

Set Design Ideas for Boredom by Maxim Gorky:

Podium with Victorian image of Funny Face and union seal of "Amusement Park Workers Union Local 105

Paper Mache Props:

Model of a boat (Columbus' Nina or Pinta or Santa Maria)

Spyglass telescope

Magnifying glass

Group of self-standing dolls: women, children, men, perhaps a dozen

Devil mask for Gorky, perhaps pitchfork

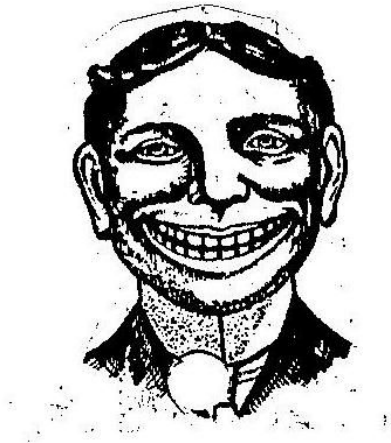
Handsome angel strung up by wire with wooden trumpet covered with gilt paper between his teeth????? (optional)

Darwinian chart showing Man and Monkey and Theory of Evolution

General set dressing: World map, retro American and Communist flags, miscellaneous storage of amusement park objects, dress table with tablecloth from the meeting hall.

Miniature skyline of Coney Island for upper balcony platform. Skyline with white Christmas lights. Lots and lots of little lights.

Funny Face:



MAXIM



BLACK  
JACKET-TUNIC  
OVER  
BLACK  
PANTS,  
BLACK  
SHIRT  
(WITH  
OFF CENTER  
PLACKET)  
LIKE  
PHOTO

MARIA

BASIC

SILHOUETTE:

LATE 'TEENS  
POST REVOLUTION  
CLOTHING RE-  
FORM MOVEMENT:

TAKE HER  
AWAY FROM 1906  
PICTURE - NO  
SHAPE - GIVE  
THE WOMAN SOME  
STYLE - PLAY ON  
"ACTRESS" LOOK.

JACKET OVER  
BLOUSE & SKIRT.

BLOUSE IS A  
PEASANT-Y  
NUMBER FROM  
THE TILKE BOOK:

FOLK-Y EMBROID-  
ERY! COULD BE  
A SALVATION  
ARMY 70'S  
THING.

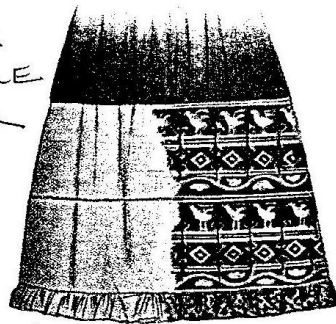


FROM 'REVOLUTIONARY COSTUME'  
(SWANK RIZZOLI) BOOK ON POST-  
REV. SOVIET TEXTILE & CLOTHING  
DESIGN.

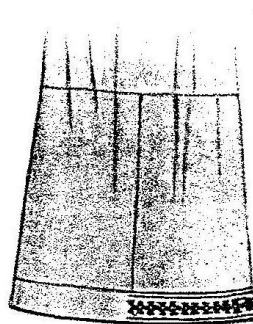


*N. Lamanova,  
original models  
photographed in her  
studio, 1923-24.*

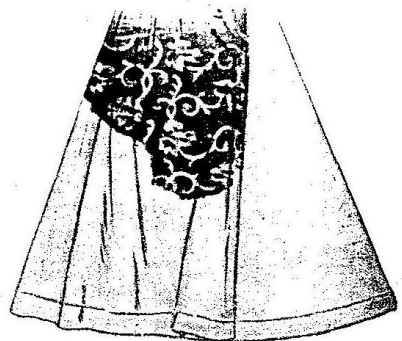
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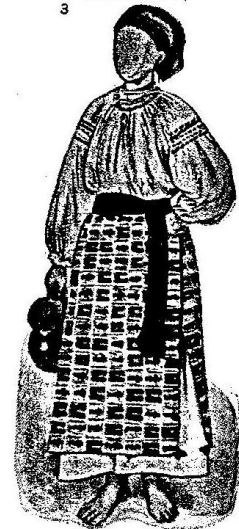
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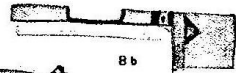
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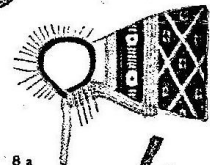
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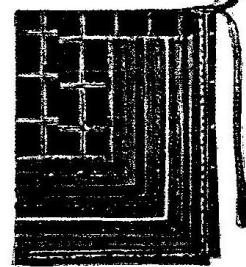
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9

CENTRAL AND WESTERN RUSSIA 10  
Little Russians and White Russians  
ZENTRAL- UND WESTRUSSLAND

RUSSIE CENTRALE ET OCCIDENTALE  
Petite et blanche Russie  
RUSSIA CENTRALE E OCCIDENTALE

[LIGHT CUE: Lights up on stage and podium]

[TONY enters.]

TONY THE CARPENTER

Hey there, folks. Nice turnout. Sit down. Sit down. A lot of you people already know me...for those of you who don't... I'm Tony. I was the head carpenter when we built Dreamland Amusement Park two years ago... and this year I'm out of a job! And I bet a few of you are out of a job! My dear, dear working class brothers and sisters... cashiers and carpenters of Coney Island... welcome to the December meeting of Amusement Park Workers Union Local 15. It warms my heart to see such a strong turnout in frigid December. Our rich bosses: Tilyou-Thompson-Dundy-and Reynolds are all out of town; off on vacation. What mischief we might make if we were better organized in Coney Island, yes? I call this meeting to order! I make a motion to dispense with the minutes! Etc., etc., pay you union due, etc. Thank you very much. This month we were going to plan the organization of the 300 midgets living in the Lilliputian Village but we'll do that next month...because tonight we have special guests! Maxim Gorky, the famous Russian writer, the heroic Bolshevik revolutionary, as you know is visiting New York this year with Maria Andreyeva, a good woman revolutionary and an actress with the Moscow Art Theatre. As you know, they were recently kicked out of their hotel room...they've been staying at a good comrade's house out on Staten Island...they've been bored out of their minds...I invited them out to Coney Island...I asked him to speak...we've been goofing around with papier mache for some props...etc., etc. without further introduction I am honored to welcome Maxim Gorky and Maria Andreyeva!

[GORKY and ANDREYEVA enter. He mingles with the audience. She stands at the podium. She taps a baton.]

GORKY

We must begin now. I will sign more autographs later.

ANDREYEVA

All of a sudden: Abracadabra!

[GORKY wanders the audience with a toy boat]

## GORKY

God whispers to little Gorky, "He thinks he is Columbus discovering America."

## ANDREYEVA

When night falls a fantastic city of fire rises from the ocean and reaches for the sky. Thousands of glowing sparks glimmer in the darkness-

[LIGHT CUE: Christmas lights]

-tracing the outlines of fairytale castles, palaces and temples against the black sky. It is like a cobweb spun of gold, quivering in the air - a translucent pattern of flames, hanging motionless, admiring its own beauty in the sea. This city of fire is enchanting, it is magic, it is incomprehensible; it burns but it is never consumed. If you could only imagine the heavens, the ocean, the city of fire! The sky above glowing in red, the waters below reflecting its brilliance...it all merges, it blends, it all melts into a fantastic caldron of rich molten gold. Strange thoughts fill the mind at the sight of these lights. In the halls of these magic castles there must be weird music.

[SOUND CUE: Weird heavenly music]

Soft music. Proud music. Floating music the likes of which no man ever heard. I imagine waves of melodies collecting the best thoughts on earth and then throwing out shooting stars-

[LIGHT CUE: Mirror Ball]

-dazzling sparks, dancing with one another, giving birth to new flames and new thoughts. It must be here, near this velvety darkness, that I imagine a huge cradle woven of gold thread and flowers and stars. The giant cradle rocks gently on the breast of the ocean. Here, in the city of fire, the sun itself sleeps until dawn.

[GORKY ditches boat]

[LIGHT CUE: Blackout]

[SOUND CUE: Sound out]

All of a sudden: Abracadabra!

[GORKY reveals a spyglass and GORKY and ANDREYEVA are now passengers on the boat]

This is real Gorky! The sun slaps a man in the face with the true facts of life! Daylight turns the city of fire and the magic castles into a handful of flimsy white buildings. The blue fog of the ocean mixes with grey smoke from New York City...the white buildings are enveloped in a transparent veil... it all becomes a mirage. It beckons alluringly, the mirage quivers — and promises something splendid and smooth.

All of a sudden: Abracadabra!

[SOUND CUE: Industrial city]

I hear a hum in the background. The city sounds fill the air with a loud, hungry roar. This is a raucous noise, it agitates both the air and the soul. An endless bellow of industrial iron. The ugly sound of New York. The constant crushing sound of life after life being ground down by the power of gold — the cold, cynical whistle of the Yellow Devil — this is the sound that chases people away from an earth befouled by the stinking body of the city. And so the American people run and they flee to the beach by the sea where they have built beautiful white buildings that promise them rest, that promise them peace.

[ANDREYEVA turns her back. GORKY continues in Russian.]

It cannot be translated!

[GORKY goes to her and proposes marriage in Russian]

...I am seized with a desire...he is seized with a desire...we are seized with a desire...I am seized with the desire to live on this island. I long to go and touch the fabric and textures, to stretch out in the luxurious folds and feast my eyes on the wide horizon where the white birds dart about swiftly and noiselessly, where the ocean and the sky take a nap in the tanning rays of the sun...it sounds like a honeymoon...This is Coney Island...

GORKY

This is Coney IS-Land!

[They cross to the desk. She hands him a newspaper and a magnifying glass. ]

ANDREYEVA

Every Monday the New York newspapers run headlines that proudly announce something like:

GORKY

"Three Hundred Thousand People Visited Coney Island Yesterday. Twenty Three Children Were Lost"...there must be something doing there...

[He lights a cigarette. She steals it, she puffs it, she puts it out and tosses the cig into the spittoon. He retrieves it.]

It's very expensive!

ANDREYEVA

He's a savage!... he's my savage... It's a long journey... it is a very, very long ride by trolley car through the dusty and noisy streets of Brooklyn before one sets eyes on the dazzling splendour of Coney Island. And, indeed, from the very first moment a man stands before the entrance to this city of fire, he is blinded.

[LIGHT CUE: Spinners]

The eye is assaulted by hundreds of thousands of cold white lights and for a long time you cannot make out a thing for all this sparkling dust round about. Everything whirls and dazzles, everything blends into a whirlwind of fiery foam.

[LIGHT CUE: Pulsing Lights]

The tourist is stunned, his mind is erased by all this brilliance, all thought is driven out of his head and he becomes a little speck in the crowd. People wander aimlessly, devoid of will, intoxicated by light. A dull white fog penetrates their brain, a feeling of greedy anticipation envelopes their souls. Hypnotized by the glitter, the crowd of people pours, like a dark stream, into the dark frontiers of the night.

[GORKY stands on a chair and plays with the hanging light]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights stop pulsing]

Everywhere you go, electric light bulbs shed a cold, garish gleam. Light bulbs are attached to the poles and the walls, to the window frames and roofs of the buildings, they outline the tall chimney of the power station, they burn every cornice, they poke the eye with a sharp needle of indifferent sparkle. The people blink and, smiling stupidly, drag themselves along the ground like the heavy links in some tangled chain...

[GORKY climbs the steps to the balcony.]

[LIGHT CUE: Christmas Lights]

A man must make a great effort not to get lost in this crowd, not to be overwhelmed by his amazement – an amazement in which there is neither joy nor delight. But if a man has the will to individualize himself, he discovers that these millions of bulbs cast a dismal, denuding light that, while hinting at the possibility of beauty, only illuminate the stupid, dismal ugliness all around. This magic city, a dreamland from afar, is revealed to be an absurd jumble of straight

lines in wood, a cheap, hastily constructed dollhouse for the amusement of children. There is only an ugly variety to these many white buildings, and not one of them with even a suggestion of beauty. They are all built of wood, and all smeared over with peeling white paint, which gives them all the appearance of suffering from the same skin disease. The tallest towers and the low colonnades stretch in two deadly even lines insipidly pressing upon each other. Everything is stripped naked and robbed by the impartial glare of the lights; the glare is everywhere and there are no shadows. Every single building stands like some gaping fool with his mouth hanging open. People eat, drink and smoke but the human voice is not heard. The air is filled with the hissing of the arc lamps, ragged fragments of music, the whistle of the peanut stands and the constant sputtering of sausage counters. All these sounds mingle into an irritating hum; as of some invisible chord. And when a human voice invades this endless chord, it sounds like a frightened whisper. Everything glitters, everything is insulting, everything dismal ugliness...

[GORKY lights a match.]

[LIGHT CUE: Blackout except podium and balcony]

The soul is seized with a desire for a living, beautiful fire, a sublime flame, that would deliver the crowd from their slavery to glittering boredom that deafens their ears and dazzles their eyes. One would wish to set fire to all this prettiness, one wishes to burn and to dance and shout and sing and revel in a voluptuous feast of destruction of this deadly city of spiritual poverty...

[LIGHT CUE: Blackout]

[SOUND CUE: Riot]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights up]

[TONY THE CARPENTER jumps up on stage and waves a red flag.]

GORKY

Three hundred thousand people...three hundred thousand people...three hundred thousand people...

## ANDREYEVA

Hundreds of thousands of people cram into this city. They swarm into the cages of the rides like black flies.

[GORKY begins to pantomime. ANDREYEVA plays with dolls.]

Pregnant women push on despite the weight of their bellies. Children walk about silent with their mouths hanging wide open, so wide-eyed, so dazzled. They look around them so intensely, so seriously upon this ugliness that they mistake for beauty that my soul aches with pity. The men are all clean shaven, not a mustache, they look strangely alike and are all serious and fat. Most of the men bring their wives and their children along. They regard themselves as the benefactors of their families for they provide the family not only with bread but also take them out to the magnificent shows. The men themselves enjoy all the glitter but they are too serious to crack a smile, they keep their thin lips pressed together. They squint and they frown with the air of persons who cannot be impressed. Yet behind this mask of the man who has seen it all, one feels a burning desire to taste all the pleasures the town has to offer. And so these serious men, the benefactors of their families, trying very hard to mask the gleam in their eyes, clip up onto the backs of the merry-go-round horses-

[SOUND CUE: Carnival rides]

-and carved elephants and dangle their feet, swing their legs, in excited anticipation of the wild pleasure found in flying over the rails. With a loud whoop a ride will toss them up to the top and with a whistle they drop down again and whirl through the air. This particular bumpy journey completed, the men stretch the skin tight on their faces again and move the family on to sample new pleasures...

[LIGHT CUE: Weird light]

The rides are without end. There on the top of an iron tower two long white wings slowly flap up and then down. At the very end of each wing hangs a cage, and in these cages are people. When the wings soar heavenly skyward, the faces of the people in the cage grow painfully serious. With identical frightened expressions, they stare in round

eyed silence as the earth shrinks beneath them. When the wing flaps down to the ground, all the faces blossom in smiles. There are always squeals of joyful delight. The sound reminds me of the merry yelp of a puppy dog when he is dropped onto the floor after having been held up in the air by the scruff of the neck. Boats fly though the air around the top of another tower; a third revolves and sets in motion some sort of iron balloon; a fourth and a fifth - they all move, they all glitter, they all beckon the people with the silent shout of their lights. Everything swings, squeals, booms and bellows turning the heads of the people this way then that. They grow dizzy, they grow dull, their nerves are exhausted and tortured by the maze and the motion of lights.

[LIGHT CUE: Illuminate the lip of the steps]

Wide eyes grow wider as if the brain were turning pale, drained of blood by the weird turmoil of all this white, glittering wood. The end result is a boredom, the boredom that crawls out from under the rock of self-disgust, whirling round and around in a slow circle of agony. It drags into its melancholy dance tens of thousands of faceless lost people and sweeps them up as the wind sweeps the rubbish on the streets...a random will-less heap over here...and then scatters them apart...only to sweep them together once more together again...

[LIGHT CUE: Blackout]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights up]

#### ANDREYEVA

On the inside of the buildings the people seek even more pleasures; but these are serious pleasures; inside, everything is supposed to be educational. And what is the people's favorite attraction?

#### GORKY

Let's go to HELL!

[He opens a trap door in the stage. Red ribbons of fire blow up from beneath the floor.]

...educational terror...educational punishment...do not break the Ten Commandments!

[He puts on a Devil's mask]

ANDREYEVA

Hell is made out of papier-mache and painted dark red. Everything in Hell is on fire-

GORKY

Paper Fire!

ANDREYEVA

And the whole place stinks with the dirty odor of grease.

GORKY

Hell is very badly done! The village idiot should demand his money back!

ANDREYEVA

Hell is found in a cave...a cave scattered with rocks...the room is quite dark with a red light here and there.

GORKY

On top of the biggest rock sits SATAN who is wearing scarlet tights. He is contorting his red face into grimaces. He is rubbing his hands together like a man who has just brought off a good business deal. I am thinking: he must be very uncomfortable sitting on top of a paper rock that is cracking and bending underneath him...but SATAN is a good actor and pretends not to notice. He concentrates on his band of devils below who are getting ready to torture the sinners.

[ANDREYEVA puts on her hat and looks at herself in a hand-mirror]

ANDREYEVA

Over here is a young girl who has just bought herself a new hat and admires herself in the mirror. A couple of small and apparently very horny devils sneak up on her from behind and seize her by the arms! She cries out! "Help me! Help me!"

[ANDREYEVA steps into a second trap door and is also in a pit of Hell with red ribbons of fire]

GORKY

But too late!

ANDREYEVA

The horny little devils throw her into a trap door and she slides down a chute into a pit in the middle of the cave. The young girl, along with the mirror and the new hat, all burn in Hell!

GORKY

A young man drinks a glass of whiskey—

[He goes off stage and grabs a drink of Vodka]

ANDREYEVA

And those little devils grab the drinking man and down he goes through another trap door in the floor of the stage.

[Both Gorky and Andreyeva stand in trap doors]

It is stuffy in Hell. The actors who play the devils are skinny and stupid. They are worn out and exhausted. The hours are long. The script is obvious. They waste no time playing any scene with the sinners. Sinner after sinner just tossed through a trap door like so many logs of wood onto the fire. A few minutes of watching this educational show and an intelligent man want to shout:

GORKY

Enough of this bullshit! Why don't you go out on a strike, boys!

[LIGHT CUE: Out on trap doors and Hell]

[They climb out of the trap doors]

ANDREYEVA

But the Coney Island public watches this horror in silence with serious faces. A hefty young fellow with curly hair and wearing a priest's collar delivers a harangue in a deep voice of doom. Pointing to Hell on the stage he declares that if boys do not want to fall victim to the bowlegged Satan in the red tights, they should not kiss girls to whom they are not married, because then the girls might become...bad women.

GORKY

Prostitutes!

ANDREYEVA

You cannot say "prostitutes". You cannot shout "bullshit".

GORKY

Prostitutes! Hypocrites! America! Ten commandments! Yellow devil! It is a sin to kiss young men without the blessing of the church because little boys and girls may be born as a result! It is a sin for prostitutes to steal money from the customer's pocket! Why? Why not? It is a sin to drink whiskey or vodka or liquids in general that get juices flowing! Thou shalt not visit saloons! Go to church! Church is better for the soul...and church is cheaper...hypocrites!

[He takes another drink of vodka]

[Improvisation about the American newspaper called THE WORLD which denounced Gorky and Andreyeva living together without being married]

ANDREYEVA

The actor who plays the preacher talks in a weary monotone. He himself does not seem to believe in the kind of life he has been instructed to preach. An intelligent man is tempted to find the owners of this educational amusement called Hell and tell them:

GORKY

Gentlemen! If you wish your morality play to have an effect of men's souls, at least equal to the effect of castor oil, you must pay your preachers and actors more money!

ANDREYEVA

All of a sudden:

[LIGHT CUE: On ANGEL's entrance]

[She claps twice. An angel crosses the stage on a clothesline]

At the conclusion of this terrible performance, a disgustingly handsome angel appears from a corner of the cave. Strung up by a wire, it moves through the air across the entire cave holding a wooden trumpet between his teeth that has been pasted over with gilt paper.

GORKY

Catching sight of the angel, SATAN dives like a fish into the pit with the sinners. A crash is heard, the papier mache boulders roll down one against the other, and the actors playing the devils run off as fast as they can to take a coffee break. The curtain falls. The audience stands and they leave. A few, the brave ones, they can laugh. The majority are very serious. Perhaps they are thinking: "If Hell is so horrible...maybe it isn't worth sinning.

[LIGHT CUE: Hell out]

ANDREYEVA [Strolling]

We move on. In the next building we are shown THE WORLD BEYOND THE GRAVE.

GORKY

Badly dressed ghosts of the dead roam about aimlessly. You may wink at them but you must not pinch them...some of the ghosts have bad coughs, some ghosts chew tobacco and spit yellow saliva on the ground...many of these ghosts are clearly suffering from rheumatism.

ANDREYEVA

We move on. In another building we see THE FLOOD.

GORKY

Did you know that THE FLOOD was sent to punish the people on Earth for their sins...this building, that building, all the shows in this city have one purpose: to instruct the people how they will be punished after death for their sins...to teach them to live on this Earth and be humble and meek...obey the laws...obey the church...obey the Czar...thou shall not! Thou shall not! Three hundred thousand people in Coney Island...thou shall not realize that the overwhelming majority of the public are the working people!

[LIGHT CUE: Desk only]

[Andreyeva goes to desk and removes hat]

ANDREYEVA

But it is necessary to make money, Maxim...in every corner of this city of fire, in every corner on Earth...the greed laughs at hypocrisy and lies. Of course, the greed is hidden and, of course, it is dull but the greed, it is also for the people.

GORKY

For the people?

ANDREYEVA

The amusement park is organized as a profitable business, as a means to extract a working man's pay from his pocket. The business has a passion for gold...

GORKY

It is repulsive...it is despicable...it is a slimy marsh of glittering boredom.

ANDREYEVA

The people feed on it.

GORKY

In America, the amusement parks are the opiate of the people. The buildings on the right terrorize them with the horrors of eternal damnation: Do not sin! It is dangerous! The spacious dance hall on the left features young single women waltzing in slow circles and here, everything about this establishment urges:

ANDREYEVA & GORKY

Sin! For sin is pleasant!

[Gorky kisses Andreyeva passionately. They dance.]

ANDREYEVA

Blinded by the lights...tempted by the cheap but dazzling luxury...intoxicated by the noise...the people swing in a slow dance of weary boredom...swing to the left and we sin with the merchants of vice...swing to the right and we repent with the preachers of virtue...

[LIGHT CUE: Podium only]

[Gorky sings a song as they dance]

GORKY

Life is organized so that people shall work six days in the week and on the seventh day, sin...and pay for their sins...and then confess...and then pay for the confession...and that's all...

[LIGHT CUE: Blackout]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights up on Gorky at the podium. The rest of the stage is in darkness.]

GORKY

I have dream this same night about a circus in Coney Island. Thousands of snakes in the grass...the sky swarming with flies...insects and serpents come through every door of the circus...and turn into audience...is dream, please excuse. Before show, audience loiters in front of the animal cages...chews tobacco...and spits!

[He spits into the brass spittoon]

[SOUND CUE: Surreal circus music]

Music...ringmaster...spotlight. In circus dream, the Russian actress Maria Andreyeva is strong lion tamer...with chair...whip...with gun!

[SOUND CUE: A loud gunshot]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights come up on Andreyeva with smoking gun and with chair in her hands]

ANDREYEVA

In Gorky's dream, Gorky is a big Indian tiger...roaring and snorting...teeth gnashing...paws slashing...ready to leap into the air and sink his claws into the flesh of Andreyeva with her whip...to tear her to pieces...to destroy her...

[LIGHT CUE: Lights out on Andreyeva]

[Gorky leaves the stage runs into the audience]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights out on stage and lights up on Gorky sitting in audience]

GORKY

The audience waits...the audience wants to see blood and is waiting for blood...not out of a desire for vengeance...but out of curiosity...the audience desires blood...but the audience is

afraid...it both wants it and does not want it and in this dark struggle with itself...it experiences a pretty good time...the audience lives...

[LIGHT CUE: Lights down on the audience]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights up on Andreyeva on stage with the chair]

ANDREYEVA

Andreyeva cracks her whip and shouts like a madwoman! Gorky retreats to the back of the cage. He is sweating and relieved that in his dream he has survived...he smiles...he bows as to an idol.

[LIGHT CUE: Lights up on the podium]

[Gorky back on stage at the podium]

GORKY

The audience shouts and claps its hands and sighs – is it relief or is it regret? The audience melts into a slimy marsh or boredom. In Gorky's dream...Gorky has had too much to drink and Gorky goes to the bathroom.

[He exits the stage and goes to a corner of the theater and pisses in a bucket. He yells out his lines, in Russian, from the toilet. Andreyeva translates.]

ANDREYEVA

Wouldn't it be a comic relief to see a drunk with a funny face come rolling along, singing, shouting. happy because he is drunk and sincerely wishing all good people the same from the bottom of his heart?

[Gorky flushes the toilet and returns, drunk, wishing everyone Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah, Happy New Year]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights up on desk]

GORKY

In my dream I am Santa Claus, ho, ho, ho, conducting the band at the circus. The music is bad...the band is tired and worn out...I am swinging a baton over the heads of the musicians who do not pay any attention to me...we are making music by beggars for the amusement of slaves...I rip the big tuba from the hands of its player and blow a blast long and loud and so terrible that all the snakes, all the insects run out of the prison driven by the horror of my wild sound...

[Andreyeva leads Gorky to the desk. He sits underneath it.]

ANDREYEVA

Not far from the orchestra is a cage with the bears. One of the bears, a fat, brown bear with little crafty eyes, sits in the middle of the cage and shakes his head as if he were thinking: "I can accept this as rational only if I am shown that it has all been arranged deliberately in order to blind, deafen and deform the people. In that case, of course, the end justifies the means. But if the people sincerely come here to be amused...I have lost all faith in the mental sanity of three hundred thousand people!"

[LIGHT CUE: Lights on his "cage" under the desk only]

GORKY

In my dream there are other bears in my cage. A momma bear and a poppa bear sit opposite each other and play chess. The baby bear expects nothing of this life and he has decided to go to bed. We are performing bears. The eyes of the audience loiter in front of my cage. I chew tobacco and spit. People silently poke sticks through the bars and jab me in the stomach and side, curious to see what will happen. In my circus dream I am a performing bear. I do impressions of Lenin and Mark Twain...the Czarina and Rasputin...of President Teddy Bear Roosevelt.

[LIGHT CUE: Podium only]

ANDREYEVA

And the people, in Gorky's dream, perhaps do a double take and then walk away to another attraction in Coney Island saying: "That's a dull animal..."

[LIGHT CUE: Blackout]

[In the blackout the podium has been moved from the center of the stage]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights up on Gorky and Andreyeva clutching each other center stage]

[SOUND CUE: Organ grinder monkey music]

GORKY

In front of the musicians is a post to which a pair of organ grinder's monkeys are tied by a thin chain.

ANDREYEVA

It is a mother-

GORKY

-and her child. The infant clings to his mother's breast-

ANDREYEVA

-the mother holds the baby in a tight embrace with one arm while the other is stretched out warily with the fingers crooked, ready to seize, to scratch, to strike. The mother's eyes express a despair, an anguished expectation of unavoidable insult and injury...a weary anger and resentment.

GORKY

The infant, cheeks pressed against the mother's breast, looks out of the corner of its eyes at the people. Apparently the infant has been filled with dread from the very first day of its life and fear has petrified within it for the rest of its days.

ANDREYEVA

The mother bares her white teeth. Not even for a second does she remove the arm that holds his small body next to hers, yet with the other arm, she wards off continual sticks and umbrellas poked at her by the witnesses of her suffering.

GORKY

There are so many of them, these white-skinned savages, men and women, in straw hats and hats with feathers, and they all find it so frightfully amusing to see how skillfully mommy defends her child from the blows.

ANDREYEVA

There are so many of them, and each one of them is so anxious to strike, to pinch, to pull the monkey's tails, to jerk the chain around the neck, that we cannot manage them all.

GORKY

Now and again one of the musicians turns the stupid, brass bellow of his trumpet at the monkeys and overwhelms us with a deafening noise. The people laugh and nod to the musician in approval. A minute later he repeats his performance.

ANDREYEVA

There are women among the spectators. Some of them mothers, no doubt. But not one of the women utters a word of protest against this cruel fun. They enjoy it.

ANDREYEVA &amp; GORKY

The torments of the mother monkey and the wild horror of the child.

[LIGHT CUE: Light change. They reveal a mock Darwinian evolution chart with drawings of monkeys and men]

ANDREYEVA

Next to the monkeys and the bears and the lions is the cage of the elephant, an elderly gentleman. He watches the public and being a wise and sensible animal. He is thinking:

[SOUND CUE: Animal sounds]

GORKY

Of course, of course, this is scum that has been swept together by the filthy broom of boredom. This species will mock their own prophets, so I have heard the old elephants say. But I am sorry for the monkey, anyway. I have also heard that these human beings, like the jackals and hyenas, sometimes tear each other to pieces...but that's no solace for the monkey...for the lowly human...for the pig...animals...forgive them...they know not what they do...

[LIGHT CUE: Blackout]

[SOUND CUE: Boat and water sounds]

[LIGHT CUE: Lights up on boat railing]

[Gorky and Andreyeva both appear near the railing at the back of the theatre with the toy boat]

GORKY

Well, well...bon voyage...dos vedonya...the boat is leaving...

ANDREYEVA

And so not so suddenly...abra cadabra...when night falls - the fantastic city of fire blazes up from the ocean. It glows for a long time...its beauty...its brilliance...

GORKY

Its tens of thousands of grey people with colourless eyes creeping along like like on the ragged clothes of a beggar!

[They continue to sail the boat, slowly, back to Europe. They speak in Russian only. Her words are soft. His are harsh. As the lights begin to fade on the actors, the lights outlining the miniature city come up one more time. One last comment for Gorky:]

One thing there is good for a man like me in this city of fire...you can drink in hatred to your soul's content...hatred sufficient to last a lifetime...hatred, my dear people, hatred of the power of stupidity!

[LIGHT CUE: Blackout]

[SOUND CUE: Exit music]

[END OF PLAY]

THE INDEPENDENT, 63 (8 August 1907)



## Boredom

BY MAXIM GORKY (1906)

[The following article is a remarkable proof of the trite saying that what is seen depends upon the eye which sees it. To most people Coney Island, the playground of the metropolis, seems a place of gayety and comparatively innocent tho somewhat vulgar amusements. But to the man who has assumed the name of "Gorky," "The Bitter One," it only affords further evidence of the stupidity and depravity of the human race and of the tyranny of capital. When Maxim Gorky was in this country last summer he seemed to find life and its conditions everywhere as bad as in darkest Russia. Finally, to cheer him up, his friends took him to Coney Island, and this is the impression it made upon his sensitive mind. After reading it one knows better how to interpret his pictures of Russian life.—  
Editor.]

WITH the advent of night a fantastic city all of fire suddenly rises from the ocean into the sky. Thousands of ruddy sparks glimmer in the darkness, lining in fine, sensitive outline on the black background of the sky, shapely towers of miraculous castles, palaces and temples. Golden gossamer threads tremble in the air.

They intertwine in transparent, flaming patterns, which flutter and melt away in love with their own beauty mirrored in the waters. Fabulous and beyond conceiving, ineffably beautiful, is this fiery scintillation. It burns but does not consume. Its palpitations are scarce visible. In the wilderness of sky and ocean rises the magic picture of a flaming city.

Over it quiver the reddened heavens, and below the water reflects its contours, blending them into a whimsical blotch of molten gold.

Strange thoughts fill the mind at the sight of this play of fire. In the halls of the palaces, in the radiant gleam of flaming mirth, methinks, strains of music float, soft and proud, such as mortal ear has never heard. On the melodious current of their sounds the best thoughts of the world are carried along like sailing stars. The stars meet in a sacred dance, they throw out dazzling sparks, and as they clasp in a momentary embrace, they give birth to new flames, new thoughts.

I see a huge cradle, marvelously wrought of golden tissue, flowers and stars rocking yonder in the soft darkness, upon the trembling bosom of the ocean.

There at night rests the sun.

But the sun of the day brings man nearer to the truth of life. Then the fiery magic castles are tall white buildings.

The blue mist of the ocean vapors mingles with the drab smoke of the metropolis across the harbor. Its flimsy white structures are enveloped in a transparent sheet, in which they quiver like a mirage. They seem to beckon alluringly, and offer quiet and beauty.

The city hums with its constant, insatiate, hungry roar. The strained sound, agitating the air and the soul, the ceaseless bellow of iron, the melancholy wail of life driven by the power of gold, the cold, cynical whistle of the Yellow Devil scare the people away from the turmoil of the earth burdened and besmirched by the ill-smelling body of the city. And the people go forth to the shore of the sea, where the beautiful white buildings stand and promise respite and tranquillity.

The buildings huddle close together on a long, sandy strip of land, which, like a sharp knife, plunges deep into the dark water. The sand glitters in the sun with a warm, yellow gleam, and the transparent buildings stand out on its velvety expanse like thin white silk embroidery. The effect is as of rich garments thrown carelessly on the bosom of the island by some bather before plunging into the waters.

I turn my gaze wistfully upon this

island. I long to nestle in its downy texture. I would recline on its luxurious folds, and from there look out into the wide spaces, where white birds dash swiftly and noiselessly, where ocean and sky lie drowsing in the scorching gleam of the sun.

This is Coney Island.

On Monday the metropolitan newspapers triumphantly announce:

"Three Hundred Thousand People in Coney Island Yesterday. Twenty-three Children Lost."

"There's something doing there" the reader thinks.

First a long ride by trolley thru Brooklyn and Long Island amid the dust and noise of the streets. Then the gaze is met by the sight of dazzling, magnificent Coney Island. From the very first moment of arrival at this city of fire, the eye is blinded. It is assailed by thousands of cold, white sparks, and for a long time can distinguish nothing in the scintillating dust round about. Everything whirls and dazzles, and blends into a tempestuous ferment of fiery foam. The visitor is stunned; his consciousness is withered by the intense gleam; his thoughts are routed from his mind; he becomes a particle in the crowd. People wander about in the flashing, blinding fire intoxicated and devoid of will. A dull-white mist penetrates their brains, greedy expectation envelopes their souls. Dazed by the brilliancy the throngs wind about like dark bands in the surging sea of light, pressed upon all sides by the black bourne of night.

Everywhere electric bulbs shed their cold, garish gleam. They shine on posts and walls, on window casings and cornices; they stretch in an even line along the high tubes of the power-house; they burn on all the roofs, and prick the eye with the sharp needles of their dead, indifferent sparkle. The people screw up their eyes, and smiling disconcertedly crawl along the ground like the heavy line of a tangled chain.

A man must make a great effort not to lose himself in the crowd, not to be overwhelmed by his amazement—an amazement in which there is neither transport nor joy. But if he succeeds in individualizing himself, he finds that these mil-

lions of fires produce a dismal, all-revealing light. Tho they hunt at the possibility of beauty, they everywhere discover a dull, gloomy ugliness. The city, magic and fantastic from afar, now appears an absurd jumble of straight lines of wood, a cheap, hastily constructed toy-house for the amusement of children. Dozens of white buildings, monstrously diverse, not one with even the suggestion of beauty. They are built of wood, and smeared over with peeling white paint, which gives them the appearance of suffering with the same skin disease. The high turrets and low colonnades extend in two dead-even lines insipidly pressing upon each other. Everything is stripped naked by the dispassionate glare. The glare is everywhere, and nowhere a shadow. Each building stands there like a dumbfounded fool with wide-open mouth, and sends forth the glare of brass trumpets and the whining rumble of orchestricions. Inside is a cloud of smoke and the dark figures of the people. The people eat, drink and smoke.

But no human voice is heard. The monotonous hissing of the arc lights fills the air, the sounds of music, the cheap notes of the orchestricions, and the thin, continuous sputtering of the sausage-frying counters. All these sounds mingle in an importunate hum, as of some thick, taut chord. And if the human voice breaks into this ceaseless resonance, it is like a frightened whisper. Everything round about glitters insolently and reveals its own dismal ugliness.

The soul is seized with a desire for a living, beautiful fire, a sublime fire, which should free the people from the slavery of a varied boredom. For this boredom deafens their ears and blinds their eyes. The soul would burn away all this allure-ment, all this mad frenzy, this dead magnificence and spiritual penury. It would have a merry dancing and shouting and singing; it would see a passionate play of the motley tongues of fire; it would have joyousness and life.

The people huddled together in this city actually number hundreds of thousands. They swarm into the cages like black flies. Children walk about, silent, with gaping mouths and dazzled eyes. They look around with such intensity,

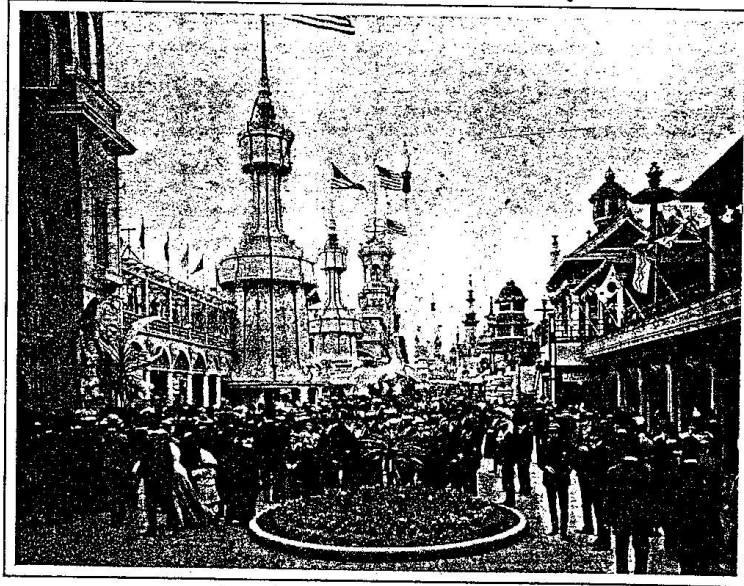
such seriousness, that the sight of them feeding their little souls upon this hideousness, which they mistake for beauty, inspires a pained sense of pity. The men's faces, shaven even to the mustache, all strangely like one another, are grave and immobile. The majority bring their wives and children along, and feel that they are benefactors of their families, because they provide not only bread, but also magnificent shows. They enjoy the tinsel, but, too serious to betray their pleasure, they keep their thin lips pressed together, and look from the corners of their screwed-up eyes, like people whom nothing can astonish. Yet, under the mask of indifference simulated by the man of mature experience, a strained desire can be detected to take in all the delights of the city. The men with the serious faces, smiling indifferently and concealing the satisfied gleam of their sparkling eyes, seat themselves on the backs of the wooden horses and elephants of the merry-go-round and, dangling their feet, wait with nervous impatience for the keen pleasure of flying along the rails. With a whoop they dart up to the top, with a whistle they descend again. After this stirring journey they draw their skin tight on their faces again and go to taste of new pleasures.

The amusements are without number. There on the summit of an iron tower two long white wings rock slowly up and down. At the end of each wing hang cages, and in these cages are people. When one of the wings rises heavily toward the sky the faces of the occupants of the cages grow sadly serious. They all look in round-eyed silence at the ground receding from them. In the cages of the other wing, then carefully descending, the faces of the people are radiant with smiles. Joyous screams are heard, which strangely remind one of the merry yelp of a puppy let to the floor after he has been held up in the air by the scruff of his neck.

Boats fly in the air around the top of another tower, a third keeps turning about and impels some sort of iron balloon, a fourth, a fifth—they all move and blaze and call with the mute shouts of cold fire. Everything rocks and roars and bellows and turns the heads of the people. They are filled with contented

*ennui*, their nerves are racked by an intricate maze of motion and dazzling fire. Bright eyes grow still brighter, as if the brain paled and lost blood in the strange turmoil of the white, glittering wood. The *ennui*, which issues from under the pressure of self-disgust, seems to turn and turn in a slow circle of agony. It drags tens of thousands of uniformly dark people into its somber dance, and sweeps them into a will-less heap, as the wind sweeps the rubbish of the

the thick, dirty odor of grease. Hell is very badly done. It would arouse disgust in a man of even modest demands. It is represented by a cave with stones thrown together in chaotic masses. The cave is penetrated by a reddish darkness. On one of the stones sits Satan, clothed in red. Grimaces distort his lean, brown face. He rubs his hands contentedly, as a man who is doing a good business. He must be very uncomfortable on his perch, a paper stone, which cracks and rocks.



MAIN PROMENADE, LUNA PARK, CONEY ISLAND.

street. Then it scatters them apart and sweeps them together again.

Inside the buildings the people are also seeking pleasure, and here, too, all look serious. The amusement offered is educational. The people are shown hell, with all the terrors and punishments that await those who have transgressed the sacred laws created for them.

Hell is constructed of papier maché and painted dark red. Everything in it is on fire—paper fire—and it is filled with

But he pretends not to notice his discomfort, and looks down at the evil demons busying themselves with the sinners.

A girl is there who has just bought a new hat. She is trying it on before a mirror, happy and contented. But a pair of little fiends, apparently very greedy, steal up behind her and seize her under the armpits. She screams, but it is too late. The demons put her into a long, smooth trough, which descends tightly into a pit in the middle of the cave. From the pit issue a gray vapor and

## BOREDOM

313

tongues of fire made of red paper. The girl, with her mirror and her new hat, goes down into the pit, lying on her back in the trough.

A young man has drunk a glass of whisky. Instantly the devils clutch him, and down he goes thru that same hole in the floor of the platform.

The atmosphere in hell is stifling. The demons are insignificant looking and feeble. Apparently they are greatly exhausted by their work and irritated by its sameness and evident futility. When they fling the sinners unceremoniously into the trough like logs of wood, you feel like crying out:

"Enough, enough nonsense, boys!"

A girl extracts some coins from her companion's purse. Forthwith the spies, the demons, attack her, to the great satisfaction of Satan, who sits there snickering and dangling his crooked legs joyfully. The demons frown angrily up at the idle fellow, and spitefully hurl into the jaws of the burning pit everybody who enters hell by chance, on business or out of curiosity.

The audience looks on these horrors in silence with serious faces. The hall is dark. Some sturdy fellow with curly hair holds forth in a lugubrious voice while he points to the stage.

He says that if the people do not want to be the victims of Satan with the red garments and the crooked legs, they should not kiss girls to whom they are not married, because then the girls might become bad women. Women outcasts ought not to steal money from the pockets of their companions, and people should not drink whisky or beer or other liquors that arouse the passions; they should not visit saloons, but the churches, for churches are not only more beneficial to the soul, but they are also cheaper.

He talks monotonously, wearily. He himself does not seem to believe in what he was told to preach.

You involuntarily apostrophize the owners of this corrective amusement for sinners:

"Gentlemen, if you wish morality to work on men's souls with the force of castor oil, you ought to pay your preachers more."

At the conclusion of the terrible story

a nauseatingly beautiful angel appears from a corner of the cavern. He hangs on a wire, and moves across the entire cave, holding a wooden trumpet, pasted over with gilt paper, between his teeth. On catching sight of him, Satan dives like a fish into the pit after the sinners. A crash is heard, the paper stones are hurled down, and the devils run off cheerfully to rest from their labor. The curtain drops. The public rises and leaves. Some venture to laugh. The majority, however, seem absorbed in reflection. Perhaps they think:

"If hell is so nasty, it isn't worth sinning."

They proceed further. In the next place they are shown "The World Beyond the Grave." It is large, and also made of papier maché. Here the souls of the dead, hideously garbed, wander in confusion. You may wink at them, but you may not touch them. This is a fact. They must feel greatly bored in the dusk of the subterranean labyrinth, shut up within rugged walls, in a cold, damp atmosphere. Some souls cough disagreeably, other silently chew tobacco, spitting yellow saliva on the ground. One soul, leaning in a corner against the wall, smokes a cigar.

When you pass by them they look into your face with colorless eyes. They compress their lips tightly, and shiver with cold as they thrust their hands into the gray folds of their rags of the other world. They are hungry, these poor souls, and many of them evidently suffer from rheumatism. The public looks at them silently. It breathes in the moist air, and feels its soul with dismal *ennui*, which extinguishes thought, as a wet, dirty cloth extinguishes the fire of a smoldering coal.

In another place again "The Flood" is displayed. The flood, you know, was brought on to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their sins.

And all the spectacles in this city have one purpose: to show the people how they will be punished after death for their sins, to teach them to live upon earth humbly, and to obey the laws.

Everywhere the one commandment is repeated:

"Don't!"

For it helps to crush the spirit of the

majority of the public—the working people.

But it is necessary to make money, and in the commodious corners of the bright city, as everywhere in the world, depravity laughs disdainfully at hypocrisy and falsehood. Of course the depravity is hidden, and, of course, it's a wearying, tiresome depravity, but it also is "for the people." It is organized as a paying business, as a means to extract their earnings from the pockets of the people. Fed by the passion for gold it appears in a form vile and despicable indeed in this marsh of glittering boredom.

The people feed on it.

The people are always constrained. As yet they have never acted as free men. So they permit the enslavement of their bodies and their souls; for this alone are they to blame.

They pour in thick streams between two lines of dazzlingly illuminated houses, and the houses snap them up with their hungry jaws. On the right they are intimidated by the terrors of eternal torture.

"Do not sin!" they are warned. "Sin is dangerous!"

On the left, in the spacious dancing hall, women slowly waltz about, and here everything cries out to them:

"Sin! For sin is pleasant!"

Blinded by the gleam of the light, lured by the cheap, but glittering sumptuousness, intoxicated by the noise, they turn about in a slow dance of weary boredom. To the left they go willingly and blindly to Sin, to the right to hear exhortations to Holy Living.

This aimless straying stupefies the people. But for that very reason it is profitable both to the traders in morality and the vendors of depravity.

Life is made for the people to work six days in the week, sin on the seventh, and pay for their sins, confess their sins, and pay for the confession.

The fires hiss like thousands of excited serpents, dark swarms of insects buzz feebly and dismally, and the people slowly wind about in the dazzling cobwebs of the amusement halls. Without haste, without a laugh or a smile on their

smoothly shaven faces, they lazily crowd thru all the doors, stand long before the animal cages and chew tobacco and spit.

In one huge cage a man chases Bengal tigers with shots from a revolver and the merciless blows of a thin whip. The handsome beasts maddened by terror, blinded by the lights, deafened by the music and revolver shots, fling themselves about between the iron bars, and snort and roar. Their green eyes flash, their lips tremble; they gnash their teeth in fury, and menacingly raise now one forepaw now the other. But the man keeps shooting straight into their eyes, and the loud report of the blank cartridges and the smart blows of the whip, drive one powerful, supple creature into a corner of the cage. All in a tremble of revolt, seized with the impotent anguish of the powerful, choking with the sharp pang of humiliation, the imprisoned beast sinks down for a moment, and looks on with dazed eyes, his serpentine tail writhing nervously.

The elastic body rolls itself into a firm ball, and twitches, ready to leap into the air, to bury its claws in the flesh of the man with the whip, rend him, annihilate him.

The hind legs of the animal quiver like a spring, his neck stretches, the green irises flash blood-red sparks. The watchful, waiting eyes that blaze in the vindictive countenance confront beyond the bars the dim, coppery blotch of a thousand colorless eyes, set in uniform, yellow faces, coldly expectant.

The face of the crowd, terrible in its dead immobility, waits. The crowd, too, hankers for blood and it waits, not out of revengefulness, but from curiosity, like a satiated, long-subdued beast.

The tiger draws his head in his shoulders and looks out sadly with his wide-open eyes. His whole body sinks back softly, and his skin wrinkles up, as if an icy rain had fallen on a surface heated by the passion for vengeance.

The man runs about the cage, shoots his pistol and cracks his whip, and shouts like a madman. His shouts are intended to fild his painful dread of the animals. The crowd regards the capers of the man, and waits in suspense for the fatal attack. They wait; unconsciously the primitive instinct is awakened in them.

## BOREDOM

315

They crave fight, they want to feel the delicious shiver produced by the sight of two bodies intertwining, the splutter of blood and pieces of torn, steaming human flesh flying thru the cage and falling on the floor. They want to hear the roar, the cries, the shrieks of agony.

But the brain of the throng is already infected by the poison of various prohibitions and intimidations. Desiring blood, the crowd is afraid. It wishes, yet does not wish. In this struggle within itself it experiences a sharp gratification—it lives.

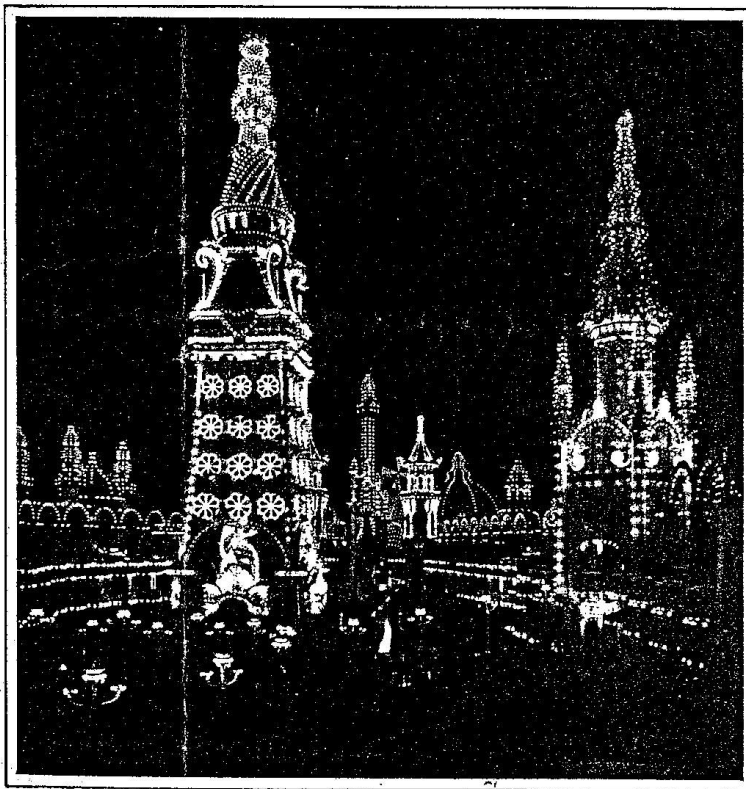
The man has frightened all the ani-

mals. The tigers softly withdraw into a corner of the cage, and the man, all in a sweat, satisfied that he has remained alive that day, bows to the coppery face of the crowd, as to an idol. He endeavors to conceal the tremor on his pale lips with a smile.

The crowd shouts and claps its hands and sighs—is it relief or is it regret?

Then the crowd breaks into dark pieces, and disperses over the slimy marsh of boredom.

Having delighted their eyes with the picture of man's rivalry with beasts, the human animals go in search of other



LUNA PARK AT NIGHT, CONEY ISLAND.

amusements. There is a circus. In the center, of the arena a man tosses two children into the air with his long legs. The children dart over them like two white doves with broken wings. Sometimes they fall to the ground. Then they cautiously look into the blood-suffused face of their father or master, and again ascend into the air. The crowd have disposed themselves about the arena, and look on. When the children slip from the performer's legs, a thrill of animation passes over all the countenances, as a wind sends a light ripple over the slumbering waters of a stagnant pool.

You long to see a drunken man with a jovial face, who would push and sing and bawl, happy because he is drunk, and sincerely wishing all good people the same.

The music rends the air. The orchestra is poor, the musicians worn out. The sounds of the brass instruments stray about as if they limped, as if no even course were possible for them. Even the circus horses, who are used to everything, turn cautiously aside, and nervously twitch their sharp ears, as if they wanted to shake off the rasping tin sounds. This music of the poor for the amusement of slaves puts strange notions into your head. You would like to tear the very largest brass trumpet from the musician's hand, and blow into it with all the power of your lungs, long and loud, so terribly that all the people would run from this prison, driven by the fury of the mad sounds.

Not far from the orchestra is a cage with bears. One of them, a stout brown bear with little, shrewd eyes, stands in the middle of the cage, and shakes his head deliberately. Apparently he thinks:

"All this is sensible only if it's contrived to blind, deafen and mutilate the people. Then, of course, the end justifies the means. But if people come here to be amused, I have no faith in their sanity."

Two other bears sit opposite each other, as if playing chess. Another is busy raking up straw in a corner of the cage. He knocks his claws against the bars. His snout is disappointedly calm. He seems to expect nothing from this life, and has made up his mind to go to bed.

The animals arouse the keenest inter-

est. The waiting eyes of the spectators follow them steadily and minutely. The people appear to be searching for something long forgotten in the free and powerful movements of the beautiful bodies of the lion and panther. They thrust sticks thru the gratings, and silently experimenting prod the animals' stomachs and sides and tickle their paws, and look to see what will happen.

The animals that have not yet become familiarized with the character of human beings are angry. They thrust their paws against the bars, and roar. This pleases the spectators. Protected from the beast by the iron grill, and assured of their safety, the people look calmly into the blood-shot eyes and smile contentedly. But the majority of the animals pay no heed to the people. When they receive a blow with a stick, or are spat upon, they slowly rise, and without looking at the insulter retire into a distant corner of the cage. There the lions, tigers, panthers and leopards couch their beautiful, powerful bodies. In the darkness their round irises burn with the green fire of scorn for mankind. And the people glancing at them once again walk away, saying:

"Uninteresting!"

A brass band plays desperately at a semi-circular entrance, a kind of dark, wide-gaping jaw, within which the backs of chairs stare like a row of teeth. In front of the musicians is a post to which a pair of monkeys are tied by a thin chain. It is a mother and her child. The child presses closely against the mother's breast, and its long, thin hands, with their little fingers cross over the mother's back. The mother encircles the baby in a firm embrace with one arm. The other is cautiously extended forward, its fingers nervously crooked, ready to seize, to scratch, to strike. The mother's strained, wide-open gaze clearly bespeaks impotent despair, the anguished expectation of unavoidable insult and injury, melancholy rage. The child has nestled its cheek against its mother's breast and looks slantwise at the people with cold terror, motionless, hopeless. Apparently it has been filled with dread from the first day of its life, and the dread has frozen and congealed

## BOREDOM

317

in it for all days to come. Displaying her white teeth the mother, without for a second removing the hand that clasps the child of her flesh, continually rebuffs the canes, the umbrellas, the hands of the onlookers, her tormentors.

The spectators are many. They are all white-skinned savages, men and women in straw hats and hats with feathers. It is fearfully amusing for all of them to see how skilfully the monkey mother shields her child from the blows they aim at its little body.

The mother quickly turns on a smooth space the size of a plate. She risks falling any second under the feet of the crowd, but she firelessly repels everything that threatens to come in contact with her child. Sometimes she does not succeed in warding off a blow, and then she shrieks out pitifully. Her arm quickly cuts the air like a lash, but the onlookers are so many, and every one desires so much to pinch, to strike, to pull the monkey by the tail or by the chain around its neck, that sometimes she misses. Her eyes blink thoughtlessly, and radiate wrinkles of injury and distress appear around her mouth.

The child's hands squeeze her bosom. It clasps her so firmly that its hands are almost hidden in her thin hair. It has sunk down motionless, and its eyes stare fixedly at the coppery blotch of the faces all around.

Sometimes one of the musicians turns the stupid, brass bellow of his instrument upon the monkey, and overwhelms the animal with a deafening noise. The little baby timidly clasps the mother's body still harder, shows its teeth and looks at the musician sharply.

The people laugh and nod their heads approvingly to the musician. He is satisfied and a minute later repeats the feat.

Among the spectators are women, some apparently mothers. But no one utters a word of protest against this cruel fun. All are satisfied.

Man is nurtured on terror, so he endeavors to inspire others with terror of himself. But he arouses only disgust, the poor, unfortunate wretch!

This torture continues thru the whole long night and part of the morning.

Alongside the orchestra is the cage of an elephant. He is an elderly gentleman.

with a worn, glossy skin. He thrusts his trunk thru the grating and swings it with serious mien. He looks at the public, and, good wise animal that he is, he thinks:

"Of course, these scoundrels, swept together by the dirty broom of tedium, are capable of making sport even of their prophets. So I've heard old elephants tell. But I'm sorry for the monkey, any way. I've heard also that human beings, like jackals and hyenas, sometimes tear one another to pieces. But that's no consolation to the monkey."

You look at the pair of eyes in which is depicted the grief of a mother powerless to protect her child, and at the eyes of the baby, in which the deep, cold, dread of man has congealed into immobile rigidity. You look at the people capable of deriving amusement from the torture of a living creature, and turning to the monkey, you say:

"Little beast, forgive them! They know not what they do. They will become better in time."

Thus, when night comes, a fantastic magic city, all of fire, suddenly blazes up from the ocean. Without consuming, it burns long against the dark background of the sky, its beauty mirrored in the broad, gleaming bosom of the sea.

In the glittering gossamer of its fantastic buildings, tens of thousands of gray people, like patches on the ragged clothes of a beggar, creep along with weary faces and colorless eyes.

Mean panderers to debased tastes unfold the disgusting nakedness of their falsehood, the *naïveté* of their shrewdness, the hypocrisy and insatiable force of their greed. The cold gleam of the dead fire bares the stupidity of it all. Its pompous glitter rests upon everything round about the people.

But the precaution has been taken to blind the people, and they drink in the vile poison with silent rapture. The poison contaminates their souls. Boredom whirls about in an idle dance, expiring in the agony of its inanition.

One thing alone is good in the garish city: You can drink in hatred to your soul's content, hatred sufficient to last thruout life, hatred of the power of stupidity!

CAPRI, ITALY.