

Louis Phillips / PRECISION MACHINES

SCENE: AN UNFURNISHED APARTMENT IN THE PROCESS OF BEING PAINTED. UP-STAGE CENTER IS A DOUBLE-DOOR WALK-IN CLOSET. THE DOORS ARE WIDE OPEN, REVEALING WOODEN AND WIRE COAT-HANGERS. THERE ARE NO CLOTHES.

TIME: TOMORROW

JOSEPH CRUICKSHANK ENTERS. THE APARTMENT BELONGS TO JOSEPH AND HIS NEWLY-MARRIED WIFE. JOSEPH CARRIES TWO-CARDBOARD BOXES HEAPED HIGH WITH COAT-HANGERS, METAL AND WOODEN ONES ALL TANGLED TOGETHER.

JOSEPH

I found them. I found the coat-hangers you were looking for.

SANDRA'S VOICE (OFF)

What did you say?

JOSEPH

I said I found the coat-hangers you've been looking for.

SANDRA ENTERS. SHE CARRIES WHITE PAINT.

SANDRA

I wish you wouldn't mumble all the time. I have a difficult time understanding you.

JOSEPH (HANGING THE COAT-HANGERS)

I was yelling.

SANDRA

You were mumbling in a yelling fashion.

JOSEPH

You want everybody in the building to know we've got coat hangers?

JOSEPH CLOSES THE CLOSET DOORS.

SANDRA

They talk about masturbation in the hallways. What's so shameful about coat-hangers?

JOSEPH

Just watch. We'll step out for a couple of hours and the kids will come up and steal them from us. I've seen them go in with scrapers and take a whole new paint job away.

SANDRA

Be careful. This is our first fight. It's going to set the tone for all the rest.

JOSEPH

We've only been married three days and you're already planning a life-time of fights?

SANDRA

I'm not planning anything. I'm being realistic. People who live together have to fight. It's only natural.

JOSEPH

You could have married Rocky Marciano.

SANDRA

It's important to accept things the way they are.

JOSEPH

It's the heart of science.

SANDRA

It's the back-bone of marriage.

JOSEPH

You see this jar here? You think it is merely a jar, but it's not. It's our first fight preserved in formaldehyde for generations yet unborn. The little brown speck floating near the top is her spleen. The red blotch is the first blood spilt upon the walls of our cave.

SANDRA

You never take anything seriously.

THERE IS A CRASH IN THE CLOSET.

JOSEPH

What was that?

SANDRA

It sounded like the coat-hangers. I think you upset the coat-hangers.

JOSEPH

How could I upset the coat-hangers?

SANDRA

They didn't like how you were making fun of me.

JOSEPH

Do coat-hangers have feelings?

THE CLOSET DOORS ARE OPENED. THE COAT-HANGERS HAVE FALLEN TO THE FLOOR IN A HEAP.

JOSEPH

Of course coat-hangers have feelings. Hath not a coat-hanger hands, eyes, organs, dimensions? Are they not warmed by the same winter, cooled by the same summer that we are? Or should that be the other way around?

SANDRA

I meant upset physically.

JOSEPH

I know what you meant, but I wasn't anywhere near them. They were safe in their closet and I was all the way out here, and there was a door between us. Maybe one could have fallen down, but there's no way they could have all fallen off the rod.

SANDRA

That may be, but they're all over the floor now.

JOSEPH (ADJUSTS THE POLE)

Maybe the pole's not straight.

SANDRA

How can someone not build a closet correctly?

JOSEPH

How can you tell if a pole is not straight? By the way he shakes your hand.

SANDRA

Is that supposed to be funny?

JOSEPH (REPLACING COAT-HANGERS)

I thought it was.

SANDRA

I think it's offensive on all levels.

JOSEPH PICKS UP ONE COAT-HANGER AND RUBS IT AGAINST HIS CHEEK.

JOSEPH

Not tonight, dear. I have a headache.

SANDRA

Of course, it's not nearly as offensive as someone who can't hang coat-hangers correctly.

THE COAT-HANGERS ARE BACK ON THE POLE.

JOSEPH

Let's close the doors gently. Give them time to adapt to their new surroundings.

THE DOORS ARE CLOSED.

JOSEPH

Perhaps it's too dark for them in there. Do you think they'll need a night-light?

SANDRA

Are you ready to paint, O Great King of the Coat-hangers?

JOSEPH

Quite.

SANDRA

Have I ever told you before how much I hate it when you say *quite*?

JOSEPH

I didn't hear you mention it at the marriage ceremony, if that's what you mean?

SANDRA

It's such an English affectation.

JOSEPH

Well, Cruickshank happens to be a good, old-fashioned English name. What kind of an affectation would you prefer I adopt? Persian? Chinese? Laplandish? Outlandish?

A CRASH IN THE CLOSET.

SANDRA

You've done it again.

JOSEPH

Done what?

SANDRA

Your stomping around has knocked the coat-hangers off again.

JOSEPH

Stomping around? I haven't even moved. Or do I stand still stompishly?

THE CLOSET DOORS ARE OPENED. THE COAT-HANGERS HAVE FALLEN TO THE FLOOR IN A HEAP.

SANDRA

You've upset them again.

JOSEPH

Please don't use the word *upset*. It's morally ambiguous.

SANDRA

If there's one thing I'm not, I'm not morally ambiguous.

JOSEPH

I didn't say *you* were. I said *upset* was. *Upset. Upset. Upset.*

SANDRA

I should listen to you? You don't even put coat-hangers on a bar correctly.

JOSEPH

I didn't realize there was a secret skill to it.

SANDRA (REPLACING HANGERS)

There isn't. You just have to be sure that the hook — that's the rounded part here — goes over the pole — that's the wooden part here.

JOSEPH

May I see that grip again?

SANDRA

Certainly.

JOSEPH (REPLACING HANGERS)

Do you use the over-lapping grip with all four fingers around the neck? (SLAMS ONE OVER THE BAR.) Or do you use a special twist when the neck hits the bar?

SANDRA

There's no need to get angry at me.

JOSEPH

Well I'm not the one who bought these cheap coat-hangers.

SANDRA

They're not cheap. Nothing from Bloomingdale's is cheap.

JOSEPH

Then why don't they work?

SANDRA

They do work. They just don't work for very long.

JOSEPH

Something is shaking the bar. That's all.

THEY CLOSE THE DOOR.

JOSEPH (PICKS UP PAINT-BRUSH)

What grip do you recommend for holding this?

A CRASH.

JOSEPH (PLEASED)

Aha. Now tell me those aren't cheap coat-hangers.

SANDRA

Are you playing some kind of a joke on me?

JOSEPH

I'm not playing a joke on you.

THEY OPEN THE DOOR. THE HANGERS ARE IN A PILE.

SANDRA

Then why are they falling down?

JOSEPH

I imagine they are falling down because of some mysterious force called gravity. They have gravity in closets too, my dear.

SANDRA (REPLACING THE HANGERS)

Is that right?

JOSEPH

Quite. . . . Now, the bar seems straight. The hooks fit tightly around the bar.

SANDRA

What more do you want?

JOSEPH

Unless these coat-hangers are spoiled rotten.

HE THROWS A COAT-HANGER ON THE FLOOR AND STEPS ON IT.

JOSEPH

Take that you rotten coat-hanger. We give you the best years of our lives, and what do you do? You turn on us.

SANDRA

Was that an earthquake?

JOSEPH

I didn't feel an earthquake. Did you feel an earthquake?

SANDRA

Maybe it was just one of those silent ones . . . a small tremor that passed right through the closet, and jiggled everything just long enough to make everything fall down.

JOSEPH

There's only one way to find out.

HE ENTERS THE CLOSET. HIS WIFE JOINS HIM. THEY STAND PERFECTLY STILL, STARING STRAIGHT OUT AT THE AUDIENCE.

JOSEPH

Feel anything yet?

SANDRA

Do you?

JOSEPH

Not me.

SANDRA

Not me either.

JOSEPH

Sounds like a conversation I had in bed once.

SANDRA (STARTS OUT)

You only think of one thing.

JOSEPH

Wait a minute.

SANDRA

You feel a tremor?

JOSEPH

There's a coat-hanger in my shirt.

SANDRA

You're supposed to take the coat-hangers out of your shirt before you put it on.

JOSEPH

I don't know how it got here. . . . Help me, willya?

SANDRA REMOVES A COAT-HANGER FROM BENEATH JOSEPH'S SHIRT.

SANDRA

I got it.

JOSEPH

Am I wounded?

SANDRA

I don't think it bites.

SANDRA TOSSES THE COAT-HANGER BACK INTO THE PILE.

JOSEPH

What are you doing with it?

SANDRA

There's no sense putting them back if all they're going to do is fall down.

JOSEPH

That's true, but it offends my sense of order to hang clothes on the floor.

SANDRA SCREAMS AND JUMPS.

JOSEPH

What's the matter?

SANDRA

It bit me. One of the coat-hangers bit me.

JOSEPH

Which one?

SANDRA

What do you mean which one?

JOSEPH

They didn't all bite you, did they? Was it the one you took out of my back?

SANDRA

I took it out of your shirt, not out of your back.

JOSEPH

We're talking about you, not me.

SANDRA

We're talking about coat-hangers. Not about either of us. . . . But I did feel something bite me, and we're both rational adults, so that we know it can't be a coat-hanger. So what could have bitten me?

JOSEPH

Perhaps your imagination bit you.

SANDRA

My imagination does not bite.

JOSEPH

A true imagination should.

SANDRA

Look at this welt. Is that my imagination?

JOSEPH

It could be a spider.

SANDRA

That's comforting. If you're going to grasp at straws, why not pick a cottonmouth rattlesnake, not just a lowly spider.

JOSEPH

I tell you here and now that it's more comforting to be bit by a snake or a spider than it is to be bitten by a coat-hanger. If you had been bitten by a coat-hanger, it would upset all known laws of the universe, and the universe, my dear, is a precision machine, just like these coat-hangers here are precision instruments. There is no way to improve upon the shape or function of a coat-hanger, just as in thousands of years there have been no ways to improve the shape of a barrel. There should be comfort in that. Better to die amid order than to live amid chaos.

SANDRA

You don't sound very sympathetic.

JOSEPH

I'm sorry, but at least now we can breathe easier.

SANDRA

Why can we breathe easier?

JOSEPH

Because there is something in the closet. It knocked all the hangers to the floor and it bit you. Now that the events of the day have been given a rational explanation, we get on with our painting. The human brain is a precision instrument.

SANDRA

But there's nothing in the closet. Nothing so big that it could have knocked all the clothes-hangers off.

JOSEPH

Tricky little bugger, isn't he?

SANDRA

We were both standing there and saw nothing.

JOSEPH

The bar that holds the clothes-hangers is a precision instrument. Any little thing could have thrown the balance off, especially with the earth moving in eight different directions at the same time.

HE CLOSES THE CLOSET DOOR.

SANDRA

Did you see anything in there that could have bitten me?

JOSEPH

I didn't bite you. That eliminates one.

SANDRA

You think I bit myself then? You think this redness is psychosomatic? . . . Where are you going?

JOSEPH

Whatever is in there is still in there. We've got it trapped in the closet. I'm going to get something to kill it with.

SANDRA

What about the coat-hanger that was in your shirt?

JOSEPH

You think I should kill it with that?

SANDRA

How do you explain the coat-hanger getting inside your shirt.

JOSEPH

I don't. But let's be satisfied with two out of three. The most advanced physicist doesn't know everything there is to know about the atom.

HE EXITS.

SANDRA

Then you admit something's wrong? . . . I can't hear what you're saying. You're mumbling.

SHE CROSSES TO THE REFRIGERATOR.

SANDRA

I need something to drink.

SHE OPENS THE REFRIGERATOR DOOR. 300 COAT-HANGERS TUMBLE OUT.

SANDRA

Joseph!

JOSEPH RETURNS. HE CARRIES A TENNIS RACQUET.

JOSEPH (SURVEYING THE SCENE)

What did you let them out for?

SANDRA

I didn't let them out. I opened the refrigerator and there they were.

JOSEPH

What do you mean *there they were*?

SANDRA

I mean they were there . . . inside the refrigerator.

JOSEPH

Are these the same ones? or are they different ones?

SANDRA

How would I know? They all look alike to me.

JOSEPH

Now THAT really will upset them.

SANDRA

Did you put them in there?

JOSEPH

Did I put what in where?

SANDRA

Did you put our clothes hangers inside the refrigerator?

JOSEPH

What for?

SANDRA

Joseph, you're annoying me.

JOSEPH

A little precision in language wouldn't hurt right now.

SANDRA

When we were moving, did you put things inside the refrigerator to save space?

JOSEPH

You can't save space. Space is always the same. Except when it's expanding.

SANDRA

You know what I mean.

JOSEPH

I know what you mean, but we didn't move the refrigerator. This one came with the apartment. Perhaps the previous tenant put them in there.

SANDRA

Who in God's name would put 300 coat-hangers in a refrigerator? For what reason? Pourquoi?

JOSEPH

Pourquoi?

SANDRA

Why?

JOSEPH

Some things we have to take on faith. If a human being wishes to store his or her clothes-hangers in a refrigerator, who are we to say no? Must we impose our will upon someone we haven't even met?

FROM THE CLOSET THERE IS A CRASH.

SANDRA

There it is again.

JOSEPH

We'll get it this time. Take this while I open the doors.

HE HANDS SANDRA THE TENNIS RACQUET.

SANDRA

What's this for?

JOSEPH

When I open the door, whatever comes out, hit it. Hit it good and hard.

SANDRA

Is this all you could find?

JOSEPH

No. I also found our color television set but I didn't think it would be very practical right now.

SANDRA

Why should there be a crash in the closet? There was nothing in there to fall down.

JOSEPH

Maybe the pole fell down.

HE OPENS THE DOORS. THERE ON THE POLE ARE ALL THE COAT-HANGERS SWAYING GENTLY. THREE OR FOUR HANG DOWN, INTERLOCKED TOGETHER.

JOSEPH

Now that's impossible.

SANDRA

Thank God!

JOSEPH

What are you thanking God for?

SANDRA

Because now we know that the hangers in there are not the same as the hangers out here.

JOSEPH (LOOKING INSIDE THE CLOSET)

Systems of philosophy have been built upon less.

SANDRA

There's nothing in the closet. Right?

JOSEPH

They're linked together. Can't you see that some of these hangers are linked together?

SANDRA

There is nothing in the closet.

JOSEPH

I can't pull them apart.

SANDRA

Not even anything small.

JOSEPH

Solid cannot pass through solid.

SANDRA

But something did bite me.

JOSEPH

It's a precise law of physics.

SANDRA

And coat-hangers don't fall down by themselves.

JOSEPH

The closet's built against a solid brick wall.

SANDRA

Nobody I know keeps clothes hangers in the refrigerator.

JOSEPH

A few moments ago I was perfectly content.

SANDRA

You open a refrigerator and they come spilling out.

JOSEPH

Je suis content.

SANDRA

What can be worse than a cold clothes hanger?

JOSEPH

It is impossible for a happy man to live in a universe where objects fall upward and people fall out.

SANDRA

I should call Mama and tell her not to send the trunks.

JOSEPH

Where shall we hide if coat-hangers revert to laws of the jungle?

SANDRA

Let's have another conversation like this sometime.

JOSEPH

Form follows function.

SANDRA

Call it counterpoint. You take the A line.

JOSEPH

What did people do before they had coat-hangers to comfort them?

SANDRA

I'll take the B line.

JOSEPH

Was there comfort in a world without coat-hangers?

SANDRA

You say one thing and I'll say another thing.

JOSEPH

I went out of the room.

SANDRA

See if we meet.

JOSEPH

Not if I go out of the room, and if you stay here.

SANDRA

What would Harold Pinter say in a situation like this?

JOSEPH

I stepped out. You opened the closet and hung up the hangers.

SANDRA

Precisely.

JOSEPH

And then you welded 3 coat-hangers together, linking them forever so that not the greatest brute force could wrench them apart.

SANDRA

All in less than a minute.

JOSEPH

Oh no. You planned all this out ahead of time. Putting 300 coat hangers inside the refrigerator. Just waiting for an opening, a chance to mock the world of reason.

SANDRA

There is a secret passage-way.

JOSEPH

Where?

SANDRA

I am supposing. Suppose there is a secret passage-way. You leave the room, enter the closet secretly, hang up the hangers while I'm distracted by the pile of hangers spilling out of the refrigerator which you had put there ahead of time. It was you that introduced the inter-locking hangers.

JOSEPH

I am an anthropologist not a practical joker.

SANDRA

An anthropologist in public. In the closet a practical joker.

JOSEPH

I have no motive. You lack a motive.

SANDRA

To drive me insane which you have succeeded doing beyond your wildest expectations.

JOSEPH

I have nothing to gain by driving you insane. For God's sake, I've just married you.

SANDRA

You an educated man! Since when are marriage and insanity mutually contradictory.

JOSEPH

Bosh!

SANDRA

Quite. . . . Not satisfied with my body you must get your fingers on my mind as well.

JOSEPH

It's you who's doing this to me. After all, you stand to collect insurance money.

SANDRA

Your college is so generous. What should I do with all that money?

JOSEPH

Buy yourself some clothes to go with all these hangers of yours!

SANDRA

They're not mine. They're ours. This is community property.

JOSEPH

We're getting upset.

SANDRA

That word isn't precise!

JOSEPH

We should be uniting together.

SANDRA

I don't see how we can unite apart.

JOSEPH

We must face this problem squarely like mature adults.

SANDRA

There is nothing to be afraid of.

JOSEPH

We are together, not attacking each other. Neither of us wants to harm the other.

SANDRA

Violence is the heart of sex.

JOSEPH

Not for us. Stiff upper lip.

SANDRA

I'm not playing a joke on you. Are you playing a joke on me?

JOSEPH

No.

SANDRA

Where does that leave us?

JOSEPH

Damn!

SANDRA

What?

JOSEPH

Another one has crawled under my shirt again.

HE REMOVES A COAT HANGER FROM BENEATH HIS SHIRT.

SANDRA

Is it the same one?

JOSEPH

Can it possibly make any difference at all?

SANDRA

You asked me if they were the same.

JOSEPH

Things are different with you.

SANDRA

Maybe there is one coat-hanger out of all these that has a great need for body warmth.

JOSEPH

Sandy, I'm going back in there.

SANDRA

No, Joseph, don't.

JOSEPH

I have to. Everything I believe about the world is at stake.

SANDRA

Go to darkest Africa instead. Another anthropological mission.

JOSEPH

But why?

SANDRA

Because in Africa they have trained guides. There's no guide for this closet.

JOSEPH

There's nothing to worry about.

SANDRA

How can you say that?

JOSEPH

I'll take this flashlight. I'll take the tennis racquet. If you hear me knock on the door open it immediately. That's all there is to it.

SANDRA

I don't want to be a widow on my honeymoon.

JOSEPH

You're over-reacting.

SANDRA

I'm not over-reacting. I'm under-reacting.

JOSEPH ENTERS THE CLOSET AND SHUTS THE DOOR.

SANDRA

Is anything happening?

JOSEPH

I just got inside.

SANDRA

It's not a good idea. The air's not good.

JOSEPH

I have plenty of air.

A PAUSE. THEN JOSEPH KNOCKS ON THE DOOR. SANDRA PULLS THE DOOR OPEN.

SANDRA

Joseph! You all right?

JOSEPH EMERGES WITH A COAT-HANGER AROUND HIS NECK.

SANDRA

What happened?

JOSEPH

Nothing happened. There are just no batteries in this flashlight.

SANDRA

You should have checked it before you went inside. You're losing all semblance of professional training.

JOSEPH

It's your flashlight!

SANDRA

When did I become the supply-sergeant all of a sudden?

JOSEPH

I'll use my lighter.

SANDRA

You'll start a fire.

JOSEPH

There's nothing to set fire to. There's nothing in the closet but metal coat-hangers.

SANDRA

What happened to them all?

JOSEPH

What do you mean what happened to them all?

SANDRA

They're all gone. . . . Most of them are gone.

JOSEPH

Perhaps they sensed a hostile atmosphere.

SANDRA

Why don't you say something about the coat-hanger around your neck?

JOSEPH

Why don't you say something about it? You're the one who's good at instigating conversations.

SANDRA

Quite.

JOSEPH

Every inanimate object in the world is making fun of me. Must you too?

SANDRA

Coat hangers are not every inanimate object.

JOSEPH

When I count to ten I want all those coat hangers back where they belong. And then we'll consider the whole subject closed.

SANDRA

Don't threaten me. I have nothing to do with it.

JOSEPH

No?

SANDRA

No.

JOSEPH

Whose idea was it to hang up our clothes in the first place? I'd just as soon keep my clothes dangling over chairs. A chair you can trust. A chair doesn't crawl up under your shirt.

SANDRA

Get it through your pedantic skull. I have nothing to do with anything that is happening, any time, any place.

JOSEPH

Things don't just happen by themselves.

SANDRA

Then let's admit it to each other. This place is haunted. There's such a thing as a haunted house.

JOSEPH

You call that a rational explanation?

SANDRA

Why not? Ghosts are precision machines like anything else.

JOSEPH

Oiled only by primitive superstition. We have risen far above the apes, the animals, the savage.

SANDRA

There isn't an ape in the Bronx Zoo plagued by a coat-hanger problem.

JOSEPH (COUNTING)

One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . five.

SANDRA

There. Are you happy now?

A SOLITARY COAT-HANGER SLIDES SLOWLY ALONG THE ROD AND
STOPS ON AND IN THE CENTER OF THE ROD.

JOSEPH

I am happy in a world where five comes after four, not after three, not after two, but after four.

SANDRA

It slid back all by itself.

A SECOND COAT HANGER SLIDES ALONG THE POLE AND JOINS THE FIRST ONE.

SANDRA

We didn't offer it any food or anything.

JOSEPH

I'm going right back in there. We'll try it again.

SANDRA

No, Joseph. Please! We must let well enough alone.

JOSEPH

When you hear me hit my fist against the door, open it immediately. If there's a ghost in that closet, I'm going to find out about it by God.

SANDRA

Then you agree with me that ghosts are causing this to happen.

JOSEPH

No. I don't agree with you. The Greeks never had ghosts in their civilization! that's what made them so much more human.

HE ENTERS THE CLOSET AND SHUTS THE DOOR. THERE IS A LONG PAUSE.

SANDRA

Joseph? Are you all right?

A COAT-HANGER SLIDES OUT FROM BENEATH THE CLOSET DOOR. THEN A SECOND ONE.

SANDRA

Joseph. Are you sliding coat hangers from beneath the door?

JOSEPH

What are you talking about?

A THIRD COAT-HANGER SLIDES OUT FROM BENEATH THE DOOR.

SANDRA

There's another one. . . . You're just doing that to scare me.

JOSEPH

I'm not doing anything to scare anybody.

SANDRA

They're all getting out.

JOSEPH (STILL IN CLOSET)

They can't. I have the exit blocked.

SANDRA (PUSHES THEM BACK)

I'm sending them back.

JOSEPH

I don't want them.

SANDRA

Can you see anything?

JOSEPH

I've got my lighter on. I can see everything.

THE DOORBELL RINGS.

SANDRA

What do you see?

THE DOORBELL RINGS.

JOSEPH

Nothing.

SANDRA (CALLING TO DOOR)

I'm busy now.

SHE PUSHES COAT-HANGERS BACK. MORE SLIDE OUT. THE DOORBELL CONTINUES RINGING.

SANDRA

All right. All right.

JOSEPH

Who are you talking to?

SANDRA

I'll be right back. Don't go away.

SANDRA EXITS. THE COAT-HANGERS STILL SLIDE OUT FROM BENEATH THE CLOSET DOOR.

JOSEPH

Sandra!

JOSEPH POUNDS ON THE CLOSET DOOR. EACH POUNDING IS SLIGHTLY MORE DESPERATE THAN THE ONE BEFORE IT. THERE IS A PAUSE. SANDRA RETURNS WITH A CARDBOARD BOX. SHE OPENS IT, INSIDE ARE THE COAT-HANGERS SHE HAD ORDERED FROM BLOOMINGDALE'S.

SANDRA

Joseph!

NO RESPONSE.

SANDRA

Joseph, are you all right in there?

NO RESPONSE.

SANDRA

Are you still in there? . . . Joseph, answer me!

SANDRA OPENS THE CLOSET DOOR. THERE INSIDE IS JOSEPH HANGING IN A NOOSE FASHIONED OF COAT-HANGERS. HIS TONGUE PROTRUDES. HIS EYES BULGE. HE IS CLEARLY DEAD. SANDRA SCREAMS.

SANDRA

Oh, my darling . . . Joseph . . . Joseph . . . Speak to me. . . .

SHE ENTERS THE CLOSET IN AN ATTEMPT TO RELEASE HER HUSBAND FROM THE GRIP OF THE COAT-HANGERS. SHE STRIKES OUT WILDLY AGAINST THE COAT-HANGERS THAT HAVE RETURNED TO THEIR PLACES ON THE ROD.

SANDRA

Killers! . . . Murderers! . . . That's all you are . . . You're precision killers. . . .

HER ARMS AND LEGS ARE ENTANGLED IN THE PILES OF HANGERS THAT HAVE FALLEN (LEAPT?) TO THE FLOOR. THE CLOSET DOOR SLOWLY SHUTS UPON HER. WE HEAR THE CRASH OF COAT-HANGERS.

SANDRA'S VOICE

Stop it! Let go of me! . . . Get your filthy hooks off me. . . .

SILENCE.

THE DOORBELL RINGS.

A SOLITARY COAT-HANGER SLIDES OUT BENEATH THE DOOR.

VOICE FROM OFF-STAGE

Hello in there! . . . I'm your neighbor from across the hall. Did you people by any chance leave some coat-hangers in the hallway?

AS IF BY WAY OF AN ANSWER THE COAT-HANGER BEGINS ITS JOURNEY TOWARD THE FRONT DOOR.

LIGHTS OUT.

CURTAIN.