

# *CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF*

By Tennessee Williams

Directed by Aaron Brown



**Rachel Cendrick**

As

Maggie the Cat

**Brody Volpe**

As

Brick

“Life has got to be allowed to continue  
even after the *dream* of life is--all--over....”

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## Project Description

This assignment was part of Directing Modern plays, to work in conjunction with a Modern plays seminar. The class was instructed to select a play from a predetermined lists of classic modern plays (*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Glass Menagerie*, *All My Sons*, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Golden Boy*, or *The Country Girl*) a mount a 15-minute scene. The assignment was designed to incorporate techniques from Francis Hodge, and equip directors to communicate texts with dated language with clarity.

The scene was performed in a proscenium space and featured stylistically appropriate direction, design, costumes, lighting, and properties without a budget. Each director cast their scene from the available undergraduate students at Baylor University, and was allotted 18 rehearsals that could not exceed two hours, over a span of three weeks.

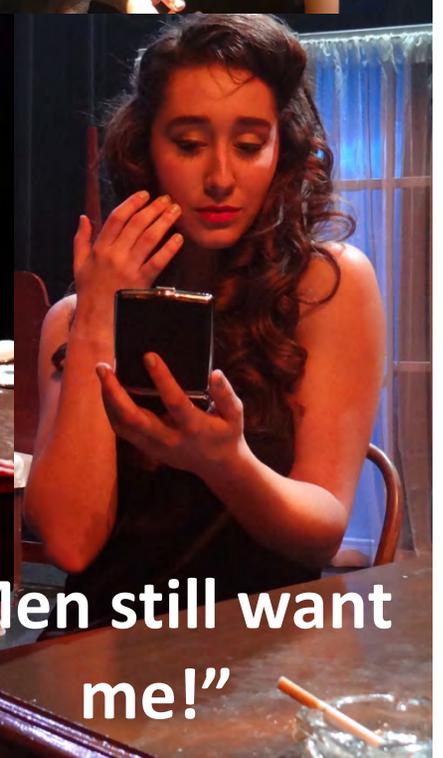


# Production Photos

**“Who are you?”**



**“Why, I’m Maggie the Cat!”**



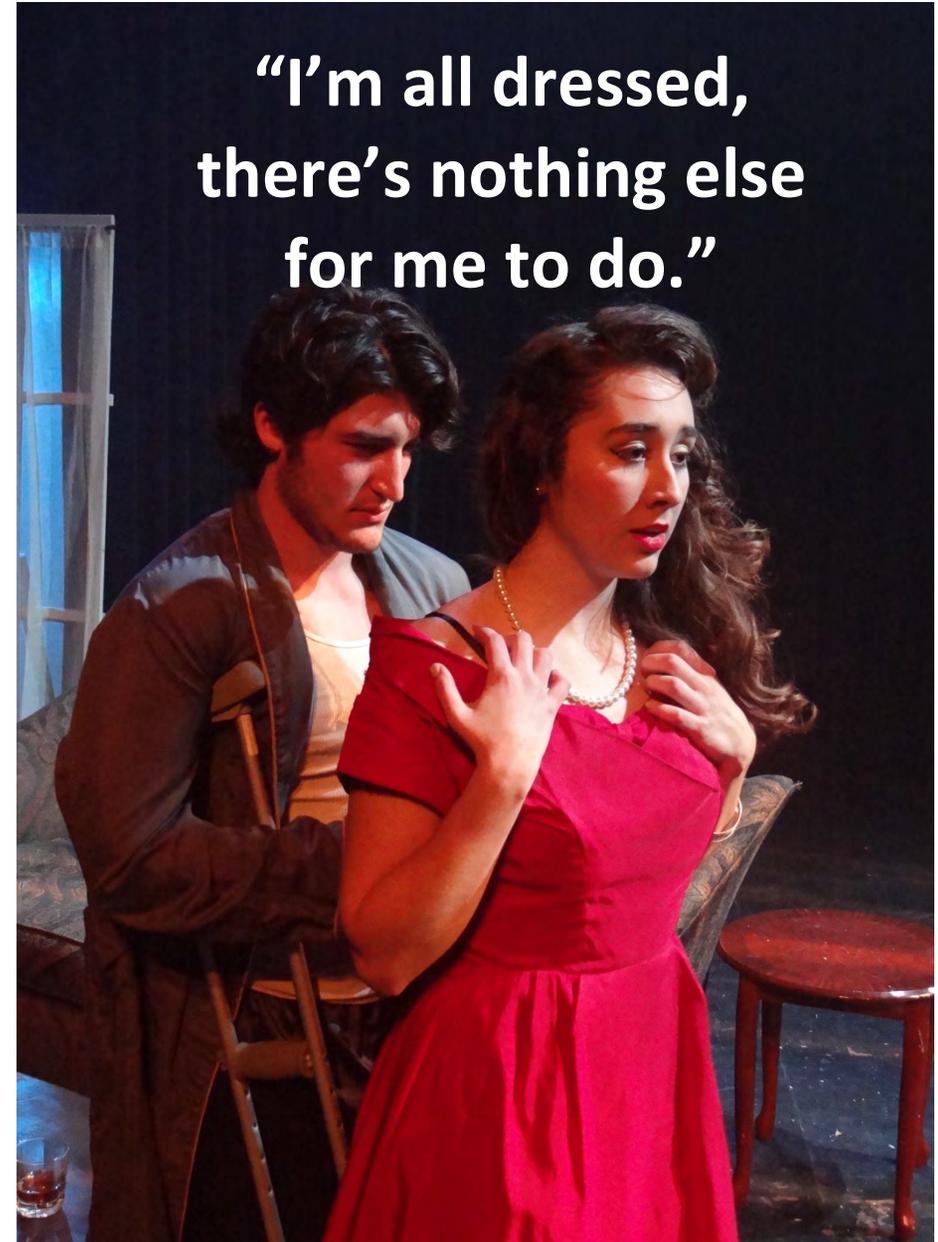
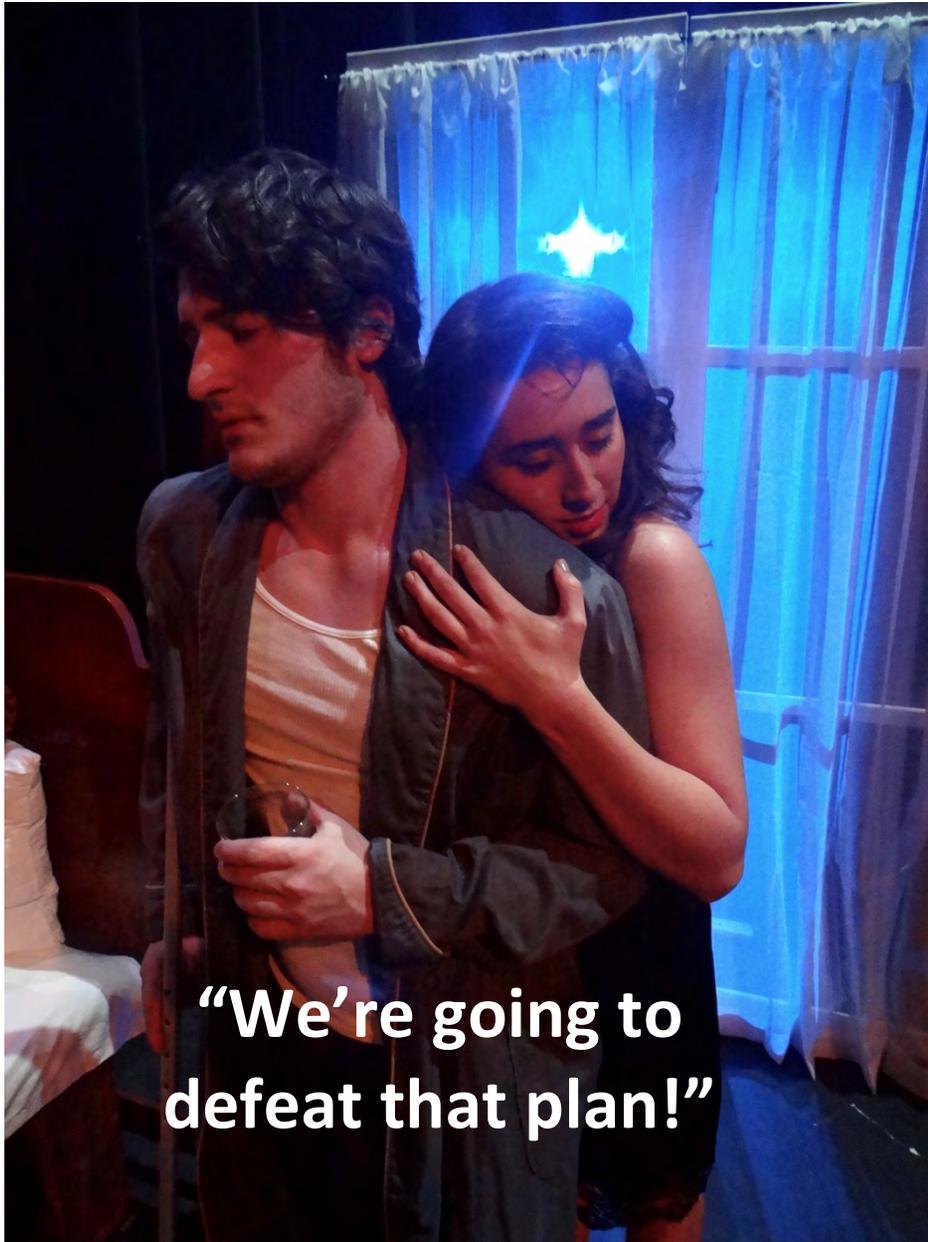
**“Men still want me!”**

**“You could leave me,  
Maggie.”**



**“No. I’d rather stay  
on this hot tin roof.”**

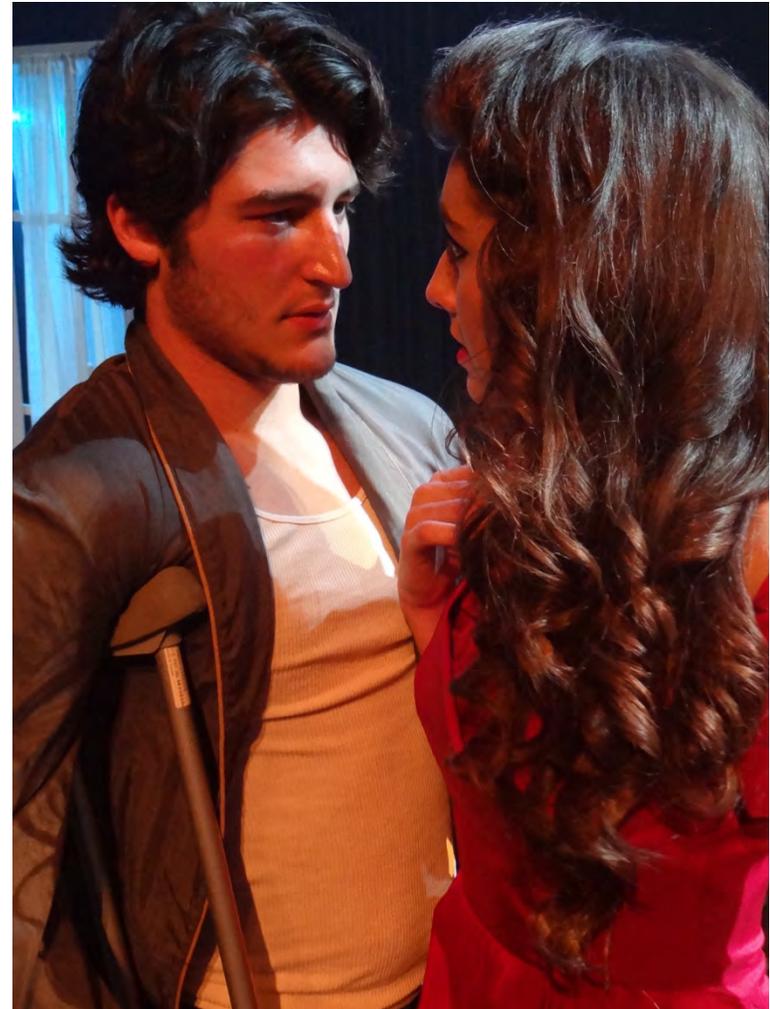






**“Not love with you, Maggie,  
but friendship with Skipper  
was that one great true  
thing...”**

**“Do you want me to hit  
you with this crutch?”**





**“I joined Skipper.”**

**“We drank  
together that  
night, all night..”**



**“Skipper! Stop  
lovin’ my  
husband!”**



**“Maggie the Cat is Alive!”**



**“This is my time by the calendar to conceive.”**

**“There is no reason why we can’t have a child”**



**“Are you listening to me?”**





**“That’s a  
problem that I  
will have to  
work out.”**



# Rehearsal Information

# Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Rehearsal Schedule

January 25-February 8

<b>When/Where</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Monday, Jan. 25 5:45-7PM Art Lobby	Read Thru Scene	Everyone	
Tuesday, Jan. 26 5:45-7:45PM Theatre 11	Table Work	Everyone	
Wednesday, Jan. 27 5:45-7:45PM Movement Studio	Table Work	Everyone	
Saturday, Jan. 30 10AM-12PM Theatre 11	Blocking	Everyone	
Monday, Feb. 1 5:45-7:45PM Movement Studio	Blocking	Everyone	Costume Fittings some time this week
Tuesday, Feb. 2 5:45-7:45PM Movement Studio	Blocking	Everyone	Stan Preview #1
Wednesday, Feb. 3 5:45-7:45PM Theatre 11	Blocking	Everyone	
Thursday, Feb. 4 5:45-7:45PM Theatre 11	Work Thru Scene	Everyone	
Monday, Feb. 8 5:00-7:00PM Movement Studio	Work Thru Scene	Everyone	Discuss Hair and Make-Up  Mary Stuart Preview

# Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Rehearsal Schedule

February 9-February 19

<b>When/Where</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Tuesday, Feb. 9 10:30PM-12:30AM Movement Studio	Work thru Scene	Everyone	
Thursday, Feb. 11 10:30PM-12:30AM Theatre 11	Work Thru Scene	Everyone	Stan Preview #2
Saturday, Feb. 13 10:00AM-12:30PM Theatre 11	Run & Work	Everyone	Come with Hair complete
Monday, Feb. 15 7:30-9:30PM Theatre 11	Run & Work	Everyone	We will stay after to finish the windows
Tuesday, Feb. 16 9-11PM Theatre 11	Dress Rehearsal	Everyone	Stan Preview #3
Wednesday, Feb. 17 6:30-8:30PM Theatre 11	Tech Rehearsal	Everyone	
Thursday, Feb. 18 8:30-10:30PM Movement Studio	Final Dress Rehearsal	Everyone	Photo Call and Preview

# ***Cat on a Hot Tin Roof***

## **Conflict Calendar**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
January	25	26	27	28	29 Conference (AB)	30	
31 Conference (AB)	1 February	2	3	4	5 Sorority Event (RC)	6 Field Trip (BV)	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Super Bowl Sunday	Mary Stuart Preview (7:30- 10PM)	<b>Mary Stuart House Managing 6-10:30PM</b>				Out of town (AB)	
14 Valentine's Day	15 Horton Foote Auditions 8:30-9:30	16	17 5:30-6:30 Sing (RC)	18 6:30-8:30 Sing (RC)	19 Performance		

# ***Cat on a Hot Tin Roof***

**By Tennessee Williams**

Time: Summer Evening 1955

Setting: Pollitt Family Plantation Home

*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is the story of Brick and Margaret's struggling marriage, caged by secrets and lies. While Margaret (Maggie) longs for Brick's love and attention, Brick wants nothing to do with his wife. He has descended into alcoholism as a way to escape the guilt, shame, and regret of his role in the death of his friend Skipper. However, Brick's relationship with Skipper is suspected to be more than platonic.



In this scene, Maggie is getting ready for the birthday celebration of her father-in-law, Big Daddy. As she attempts to connect with Brick, she reaches beyond their normal boundaries of conversation. She uncovers the secrets of their past in search of truth and the hope of moving forward and truly living.

Directed by Aaron Brown

Cast:

Margaret-Rachel Cendrick

Brick-Brody Volpe

Stage Manager-Lexie Rains

Lighting Designer-Ryan Burkle

Special thanks to Sylvia Fuhrken, Jordan Rousseau, Amanda Lassetter, Ryan Joyner, JoJo Percy, Lexi Rains, Ryan Burkle, Ramzi Kelley, Nick Pena, Mitch Winkler, Holly Brown, my fellow graduate students, and Stan Denman for their invaluable assistance.



# Production Needs

Costume Breakdown, Set Pieces,  
& Prop List

# Costume Breakdown

## Maggie

- Slip
- Red Dress
- High Heels
- Bracelets
- Earrings
- Pearl Necklace

## Brick

- Pajama Pants
- White tank-top
- Robe

## Set Pieces

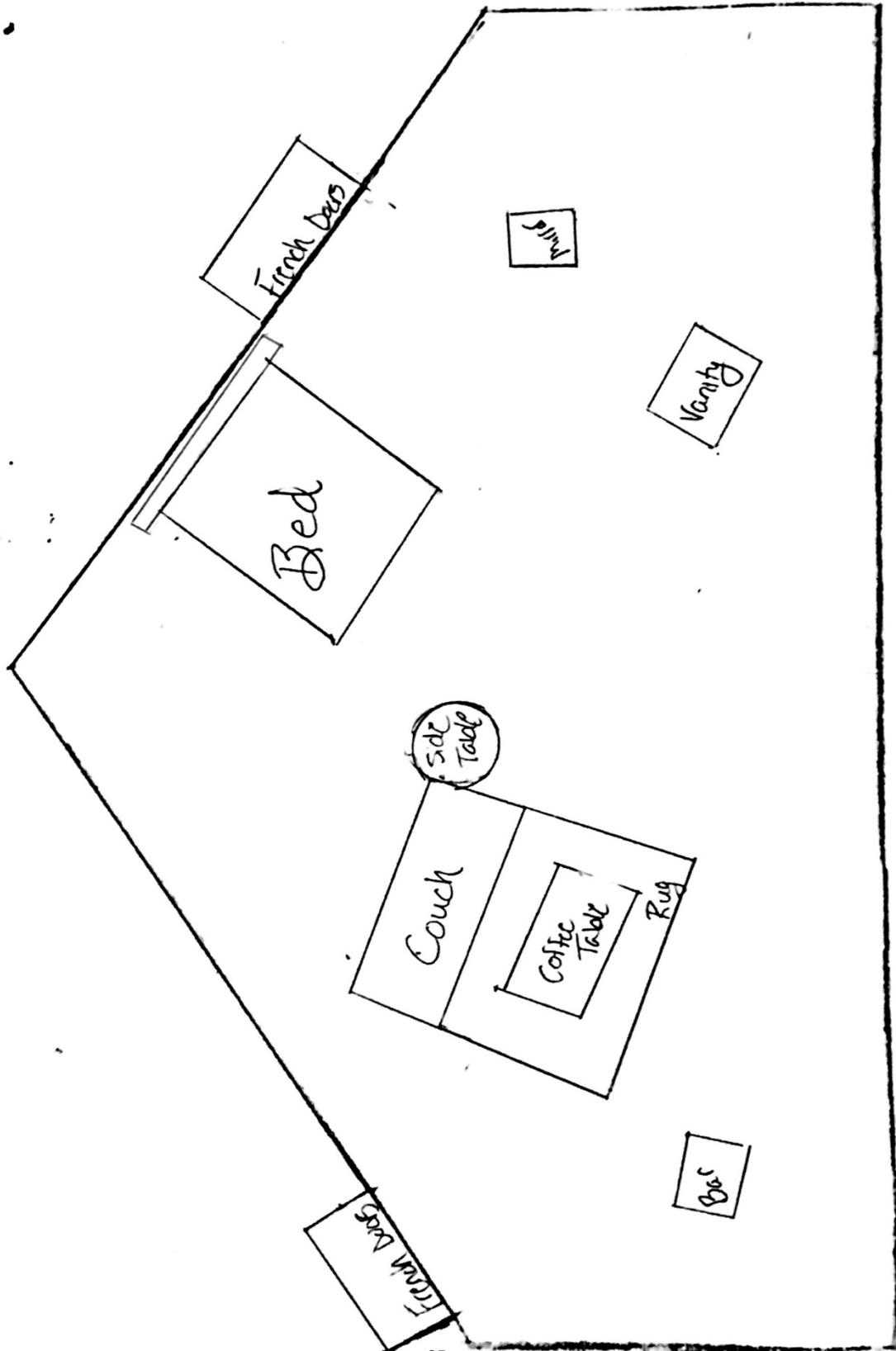
- Bed
- Headboard
- Body Mirror
- Vanity
- Chair (for vanity)
- Couch
- Side Table
- Coffee Table
- Rug
- 2-French Doors with curtains
- Bar

## Properties List

- 1 Crutch (wooden if available)
- Queen size bedding
- 6 Bed Pillows
- 2 Couch pillows
- Hand mirror
- Hair comb
- Make-up compact
- Make-up powder case
- Ash tray
- Cigarette
- Lamp
- 8 Alcohol bottles (variety)
- 1 Bottle of Echo Spring
- Pair of stockings
- 1 cocktail glass
- Ice bucket with tongs



# Ground Plan



are you?"--Then she crouches a little and answers herself in a different voice which is high, thin, mocking: "I am Maggie the Cat!"--Straightens quickly as bathroom door opens a little and Brick calls out to her.]

BRICK: Has Big Mama gone?

1 MARGARET: She's gone.

2 [He opens the bathroom door and hobbles out, with his liquor glass now empty, straight to the liquor cabinet. He is whistling softly. Margaret's head pivots on her long, slender throat to watch him. | She raises a hand uncertainly to the base of her throat, as if it was difficult for her to swallow, before she speaks:]

Unit 2: Sex Life You know, our sex life didn't just peter out in the usual way, it was cut off short, long before the natural time for it to, and it's going to revive again, just as sudden as that. I'm confident of it. That's what I'm keeping myself attractive for. For the time when you'll see me again like other men see me. Yes, like other men see me. They still see me, Brick, and they like what they see. Uh-huh some of them would give their--Look, Brick!

[She stands before the long oval mirror, touches her breast and then her hips with her two hands.]

6 [How high my body stays on me!--Nothing has fallen on me--not a fraction--

[Her voice is soft and trembling--a pleading child's. At this moment as he turns to glance at her--a look which is like a player passing a ball to another player, third down and goal to go--she has to capture the audience in a grip so tight that she can hold it till the first intermission without any lapse of attention.]

7 Other men still want me. My face looks strained, sometimes, but I've kept my figure as well as you've kept yours, and men admire it. I still turn heads on the street. Why, last week in Memphis everywhere that I went men's eyes burned holes in my clothes, at the country club and in restaurants and department stores, there wasn't a man I met or walked by that didn't just eat me up with his eyes and turn around when I passed him and look back at me. Why, at Alice's party for her New York cousins, the best lookin' man in the crowd--

Unit 3: Take a Lover followed me to the door and tried to force his way in!

BRICK: Why didn't you let him, Maggie?

10 MARGARET: Because I'm not that common, for one thing. Not that I wasn't almost tempted to you like to know who it was? It was Sonny Boy Maxwell, that's who!

BRICK: Oh, yeah, Sonny Boy Maxwell, he was a good end-runner but had a little injury to his back and had to quit.

# Annotated Script

# Characters

Brick Pollitt\*

Margaret (Maggie) Pollitt\*

Big Daddy

Big Mamma

Mae

Gooper

Reverend Tooker

Dr. Baugh

Dixie

Servants

Children

\*For this scene, I only used  
Brick and Maggie, starting  
after Big Mamma's exit.

Maggie enters & stands  
in front of mirror

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2

3

4

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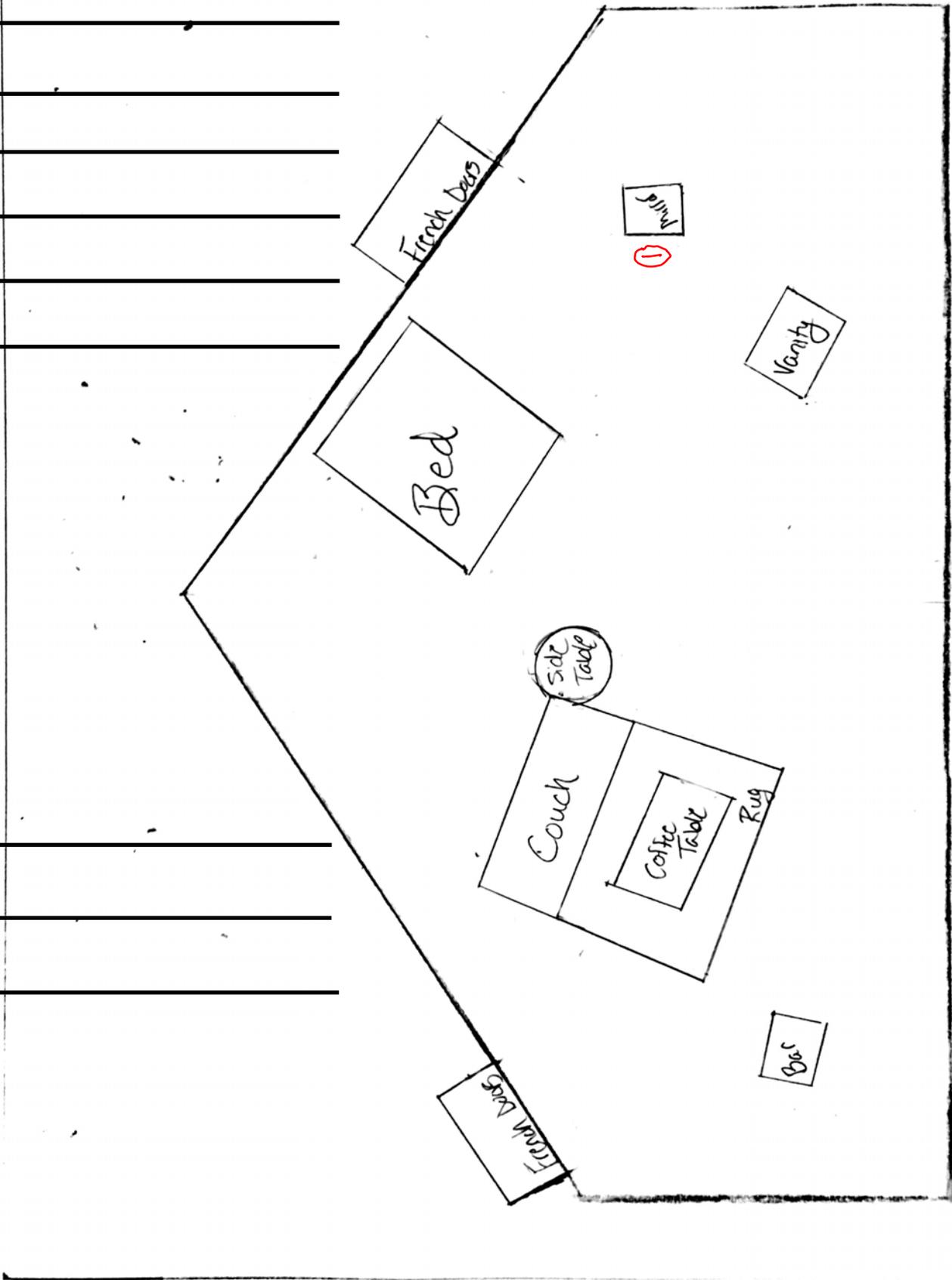
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# Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

## Act 1

~~thing always has her hand out fo' somethin'. I don't think Big Daddy gives her as much as he should.~~

~~[Somebody shouts for her downstairs and she shouts:] I'm comin'!~~

~~[She starts out. At the hall door, turns and jerks a forefinger, first towards the bathroom door, then towards the liquor cabinet, meaning: 'Has Brick been drinking?' Margaret pretends not to understand, cocks her head and raises her brows as if the pantomimic performance was completely mystifying to her. Big Mama rushes back to Margaret.]~~

~~Shoot! Stop playin' so dumb!--I mean has he been drinkin' that stuff much yet?~~

~~MARGARET [with a little laugh]: Oh! I think he had a highball after supper.~~

~~BIG MAMA: Don't laugh about it!--Some single men stop drinkin' when they git married and others start! Brick never touched liquor before he--!~~

~~MARGARET [crying out]: THAT'S NOT FAIR!~~

~~BIG MAMA: Fair or not fair I want to ask you a question, one question--D'you make Brick happy in bed?~~

~~MARGARET: Why don't you ask if he makes me happy in bed?~~

~~BIG MAMA: Because I know that--~~

~~MARGARET: It works both ways!~~

~~BIG MAMA: Something's not right! You're childless and my son drinks!~~

~~[Someone has called her downstairs and she has rushed to the door on the line above. She turns at the door and points at the bed.]~~

~~--When a marriage goes on the rocks, the rocks are there, right there!~~

~~MARGARET: That's--~~

~~[Big Mama has swept out of the room and slammed the door.]~~

Blackout

Sound Cue #1

Light Cue

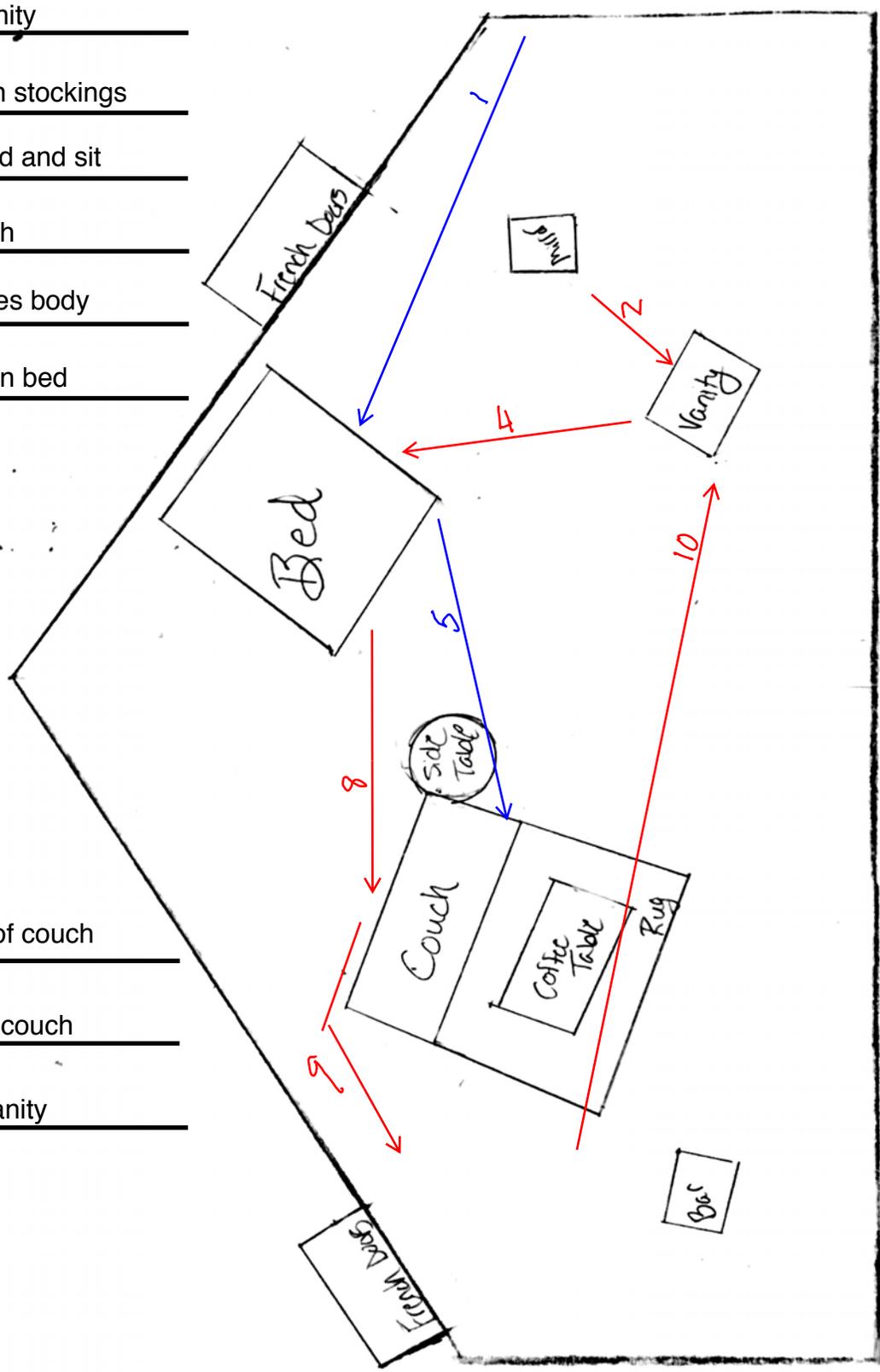
~~--not fair...~~

[Margaret is alone, completely alone, and she feels it. She draws in, hunches her shoulders, raises her arms with fists clenched, shuts her eyes tight as a child about to be stabbed with a vaccination needle. When she opens her eyes again, what she sees is the long oval mirror and she rushes straight to it, stares into it with a grimace and says: 'Who

Unit 1:  
Identity

1

- 1 | Brick en St L. and x to Bed
- 2 | Maggie x to vanity
- 3 | Maggie puts on stockings
- 4 | Maggie x to bed and sit
- 5 | Brick x to couch
- 6 | Maggie touches body
- 7 | Maggie lays on bed
  
- 8 | Maggie x US of couch
- 9 | Maggie x R of couch
- 10 | Maggie x to vanity



are you?'--Then she crouches a little and answers herself in a different voice which is high, thin, mocking: 'I am Maggie the Cat!'--Straightens quickly as bathroom door opens a little and Brick calls out to her.]

BRICK: Has Big Mama gone?

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2 [He opens the bathroom door and hobbles out, with his liquor glass now empty, straight to the liquor cabinet. He is whistling softly. Margaret's head pivots on her long, slender throat to watch him. | She raises a hand uncertainly to the base of her throat, as if it was difficult for her to swallow, before she speaks:]

Unit 2:  
Sex Life

You know, our sex life didn't just peter out in the usual way, it was cut off short, long before the natural time for it to, and it's going to revive again, just as sudden as that. I'm confident of it. That's what I'm keeping myself attractive for. For the time when you'll see me again like other men see me. Yes, like other men see me. They still see me, Brick, and 3  
4 they like what they see. Uh-huh. Some of them would give their--Look, Brick! 5

[She stands before the long oval mirror, touches her breast and then her hips with her two hands.]

6 How high my body stays on me!--Nothing has fallen on me--not a fraction--

[Her voice is soft and trembling--a pleading child's. At this moment as he turns to glance at her--a look which is like a player passing a ball to another player, third down and goal to go--she has to capture the audience in a grip so tight that she can hold it till the first intermission without any lapse of attention.]

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Unit 3:  
Take a Lover followed me to the door and tried to force his way in! 9

BRICK: Why didn't you let him, Maggie?

10 MARGARET: Because I'm not that common, for one thing. Not that I wasn't almost tempted to. You like to know who it was? It was Sonny Boy Maxwell, that's who!

BRICK: Oh, yeah, Sonny Boy Maxwell, he was a good end-runner but had a little injury to his back and had to quit.

1 Maggie puts on stocking

2 Brick sits up

3 Maggie x to couch and sits

4 Brick x to bar

5 Maggie reclines on couch

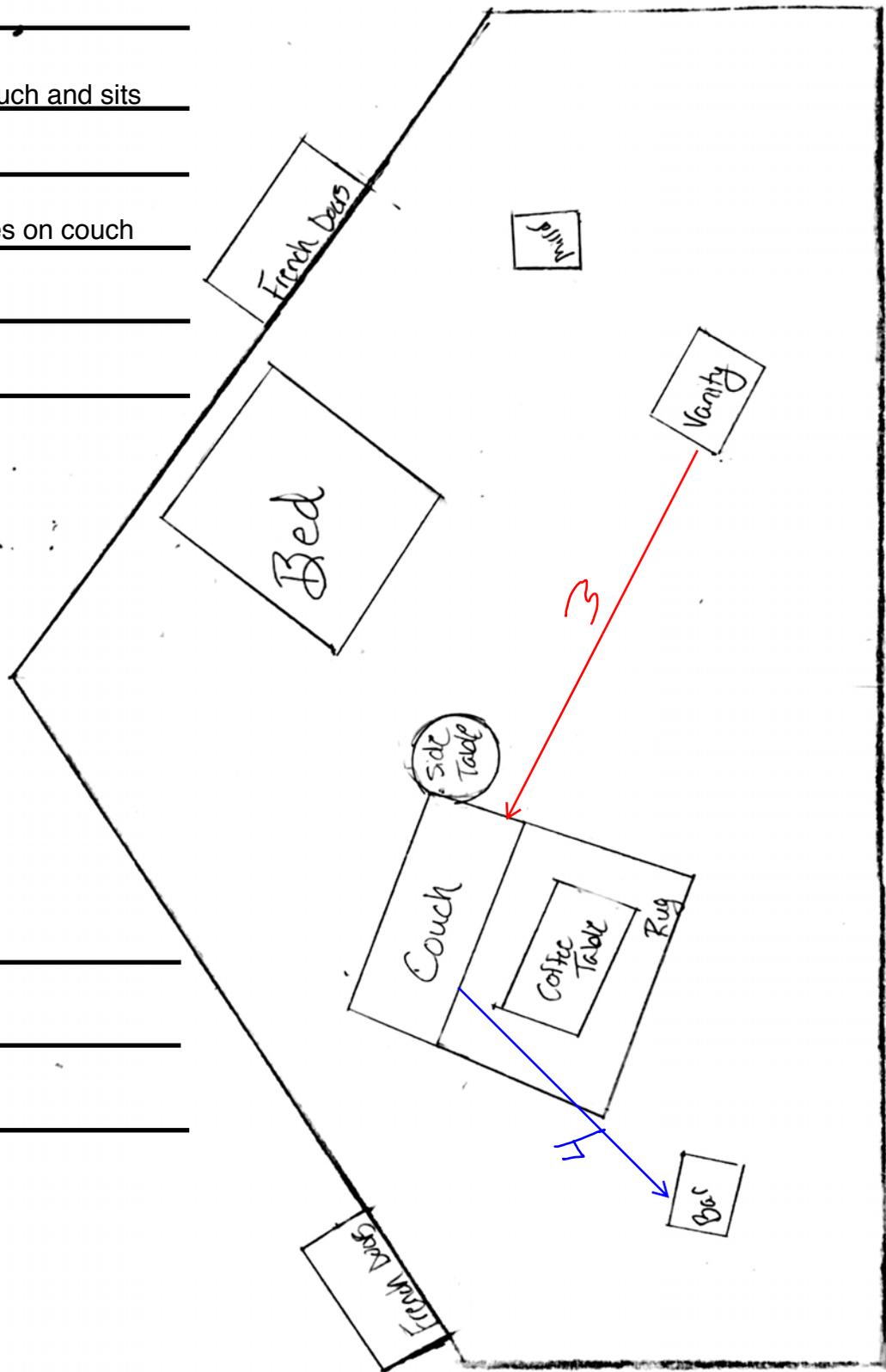
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MARGARET: ~~He has no injury now and has no wife and still has a leech for me!~~

BRICK: I see no reason to lock him out of a powder room ~~in that case.~~

MARGARET: And have someone catch me at it? I'm not that **stupid.** ~~Oh, I might some time cheat on you with someone, since you're so insultingly eager to have me do it!--But if I do, you can be damned sure it will be in a place and a time where no one but me and the man could possibly know.~~ Because I'm not going to give you any excuse to divorce me for being unfaithful or anything else....

1

BRICK: Maggie, I wouldn't divorce you for being unfaithful or anything else. Don't you know that? Hell. I'd be relieved to know that you'd found yourself a lover.

MARGARET: Well, I'm taking no chances. ~~No, I'd rather stay on this hot tin roof.~~

Unit 4:  
The Standoff

BRICK: A hot tin roof's 'n uncomfo'table place t' stay on....

[He starts to whistle softly.]

MARGARET [through his whistle]: Yeah, but I can stay on it just as long as I have to.

BRICK: You could leave me, Maggie.

[He resumes whistle. She wheels about to glare at him.]

MARGARET: Don't want to and will not! ~~Besides if I did, you don't have a cent to pay for it but what you get from Big Daddy and he's dying of cancer!~~

Unit 5:  
Big Daddy's  
Diagnosis

[For the first time a realisation of Big Daddy's doom seems to penetrate to Brick's consciousness, visibly, and he looks at Margaret.]

2 BRICK: **Big Mama** just said he wasn't, that the report was okay.

3 MARGARET: **That's** what she thinks because she got the same story that they gave Big Daddy. ~~And was just as taken in by it as he was, poor ole things.... But tonight they're going to tell her the truth about it. When Big Daddy goes to bed, they're going to tell her that he is dying of cancer.~~

[She slams the dresser drawer.]

4 **--It's** malignant and it's terminal.

BRICK: Does Big Daddy know it?

5 MARGARET: **Hell,** do they ever know it? Nobody says, 'You're dying.' You have to fool them. They have to fool themselves.

1 Maggie x to vanity

2 Brick x, sits on couch

3 Maggie x US of couch

4 Maggie x to vanity, & puts on necklace

5 Maggie x Center Stage

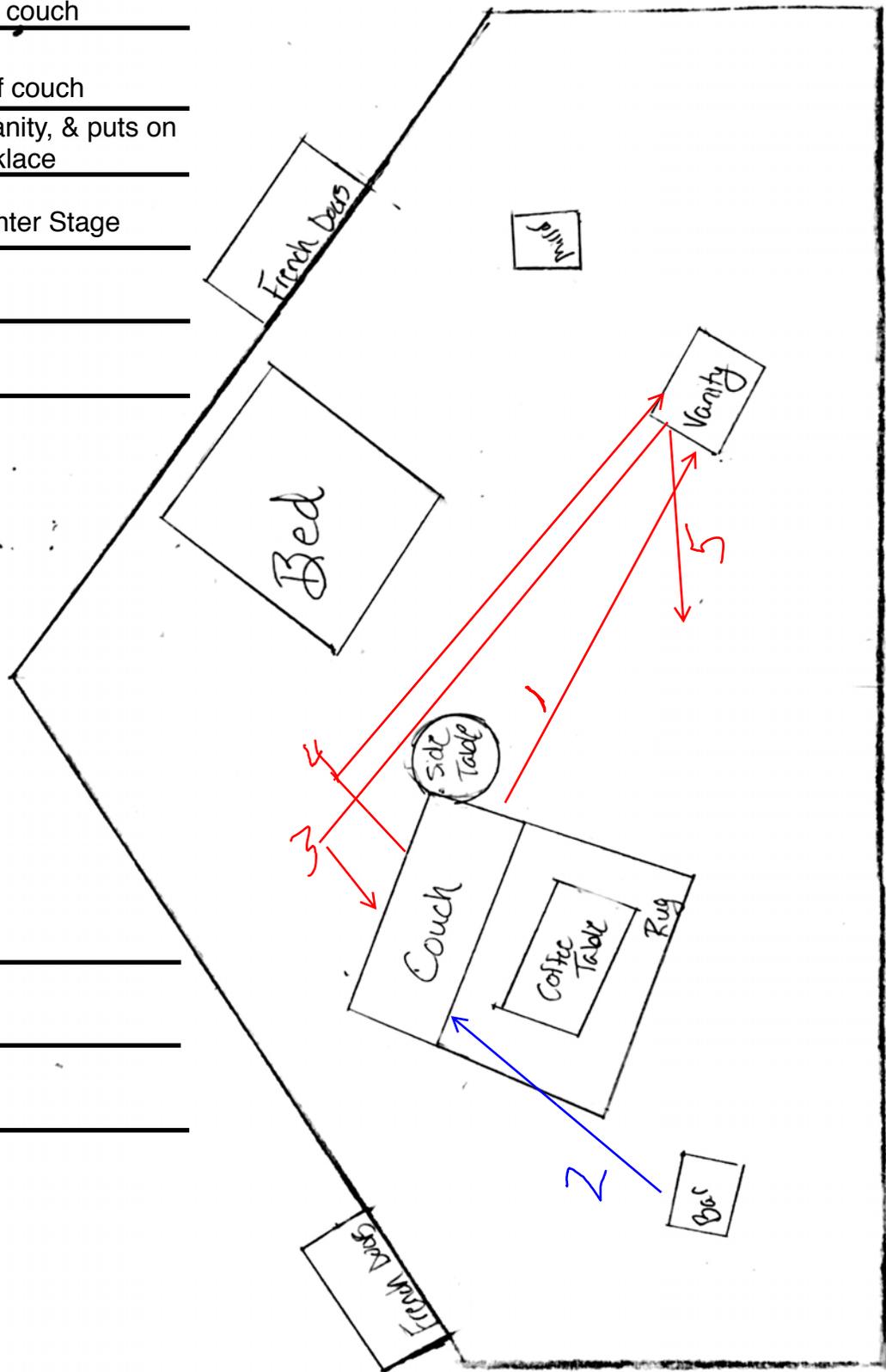
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BRICK: Why?

MARGARET: Why? Because human beings dream of life everlasting, that's the reason! But most of them want it on earth and not in heaven.

[He gives a short, hard laugh at her touch of humor.]

Well.... [She touches up her mascara.] That's how it is, anyhow.... [She looks about.]

where did put down my cigarette? Don't want to burn up the home-place, at least not with Mae and Gooper and their five monsters in it!

1

2

Unit 6:  
Praise Big Daddy

[She has found it and sucks at it greedily. Blows out smoke and continues:]

So this is Big Daddy's last birthday. And Mae and Gooper, they know it, ~~oh, they know it, all right. They got the first information from the Ochsner Clinic.~~ That's why they rushed down here with their no-neck monsters. Because Do you know something? Big Daddy's made no will? Big Daddy's never made out any will in his life, and so this campaign's afoot to impress him, forcibly as possible, with the fact that you drink and I've borne no children!

3

[He continues to stare at her a moment, then mutters something sharp but not audible and hobbles rather rapidly out on to the long gallery in the fading, much faded, gold light.]

MARGARET [continuing her liturgical chant]: Y'know, I'm fond of Big Daddy, I am genuinely fond of that old man, I really am, you know----

BRICK[faintly, vaguely]: Yes, I know you are....

4

~~MARGARET: I've always sort of admired him in spite of his coarseness, his four-letter words and so forth. Because Big Daddy is what he is, and he makes no bones about it. He hasn't turned gentleman farmer, he's still a Mississippi red neck, as much of a red neck as he must have been when he was just overseer here on the old Jack Straw and Peter Ochello place. But he got hold of it an' built it into th' biggest an' finest plantation in the Delta.--I've always liked Big Daddy....~~

[She crosses to the proscenium]

Well, this is Big Daddy's last birthday. I'm sorry about it. But I'm facing the facts. It takes money to take care of a drinker and that's the office that I've been elected to lately.

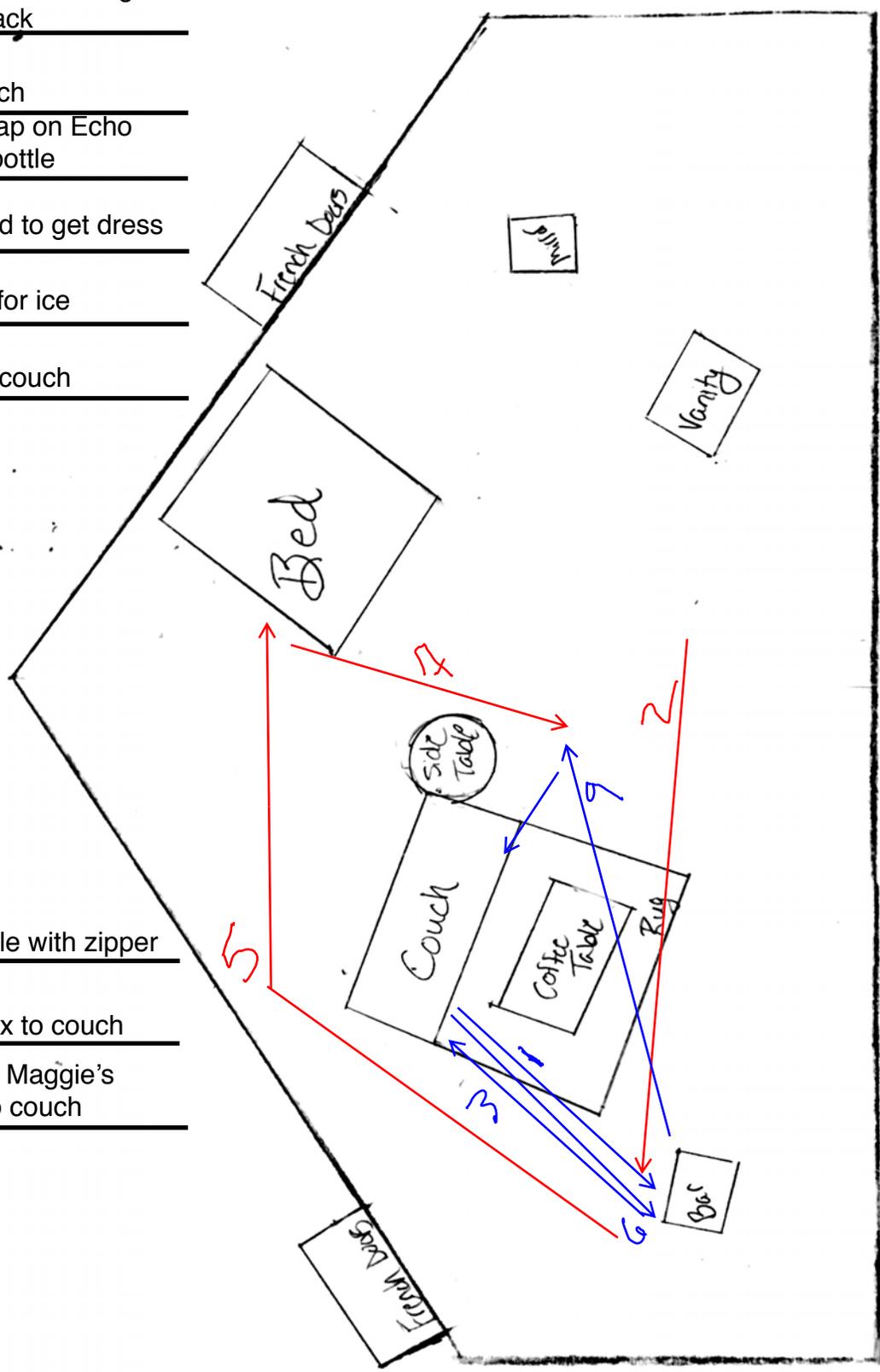
Unit 7:  
Rally Cry

BRICK: You don't have to take care of me.

MARGARET: Yes, I do. Two people in the same boat have got to take care of each other. At least you want money to buy more Echo Spring when this supply is exhausted,

5

- 1 Brick x to bar
- 2 Maggie x to Brick and hugs his back
- 3 Brick x to couch
- 4 Maggie puts cap on Echo Spring bottle
- 5 Maggie x to bed to get dress
- 6 Brick x to bar for ice
- 7 Maggie x L of couch
- 8 Maggie struggle with zipper
- 9 Brick trips on x to couch
- 10 Brick zips up Maggie's dress, x to couch



or will you be satisfied with a ten-cent beer?--Mae an' Gooper are plannin' to freeze us out of Big Daddy's estate because you drink and I'm childless. But we can defeat that plan. We're going to defeat that plan! • Brick, y'know, I've been so God damn disgustingly poor all my life!--That's the truth, Brick!

Unit 8:  
Maggie's  
History

BRICK: I'm not sayin' it isn't.

MARGARET: Always had to suck up to people I couldn't stand because they had money and I was poor as Job's turkey. You don't know what that's like. Well, I'll tell you, it's like you would feel a thousand miles away from Echo Spring!--And had to get back to it on that broken ankle... without a crutch!

~~That's how it feels to be as poor as Job's turkey and have to suck up to relatives that you hated because they had money and all you had was a bunch of hand-me-down clothes and a few old mouldy three per cent government bonds.~~ My daddy loved his liquor, he fell in love with his liquor the way you've fallen in love with Echo Spring!--And my poor Mama, having to maintain some semblance of social position, to keep appearances up, on an income of one hundred and fifty dollars a month on those old government bonds!

~~When I came out, the year that I made my debut, I had just two evening dresses! One Mother made me from a pattern in Vogue, the other a hand-me-down from a snotty rich cousin I hated!~~

--The dress that I married you in was my grandmother's weddin' gown....

5 So that's why I'm like a cat on a hot tin roof! 6

[Brick is still on the gallery. Someone below calls up to him in a warm Negro voice, 'Hiya, Mistah Brick, how yuh feelin?']

BRICK raises his liquor glass as if that answered the question.]

7 MARGARET: You can be young without money but you can't be old without it. You've got to be old with money because to be old without it is just too awful, ~~you've got to be one or the other, either young or with money, you can't be old and without it.~~--That's the truth, Brick....

8, 9, 10

Unit 9:  
The Unspeakable

[Brick whistles softly, vaguely.]

~~Well, now I'm dressed, I'm all dressed, there's nothing else for me to do.~~

~~[Forlornly, almost fearfully.]~~

~~I'm dressed, all dressed, nothing else for me to do....~~

~~[She moves about restlessly, aimlessly, and speaks, as if to herself.]~~

1 Maggie x to bed for bracelets

2 Maggie sits on bed

3 Brick x to bar

4 Maggie x to center

5 Maggie x DS of bar

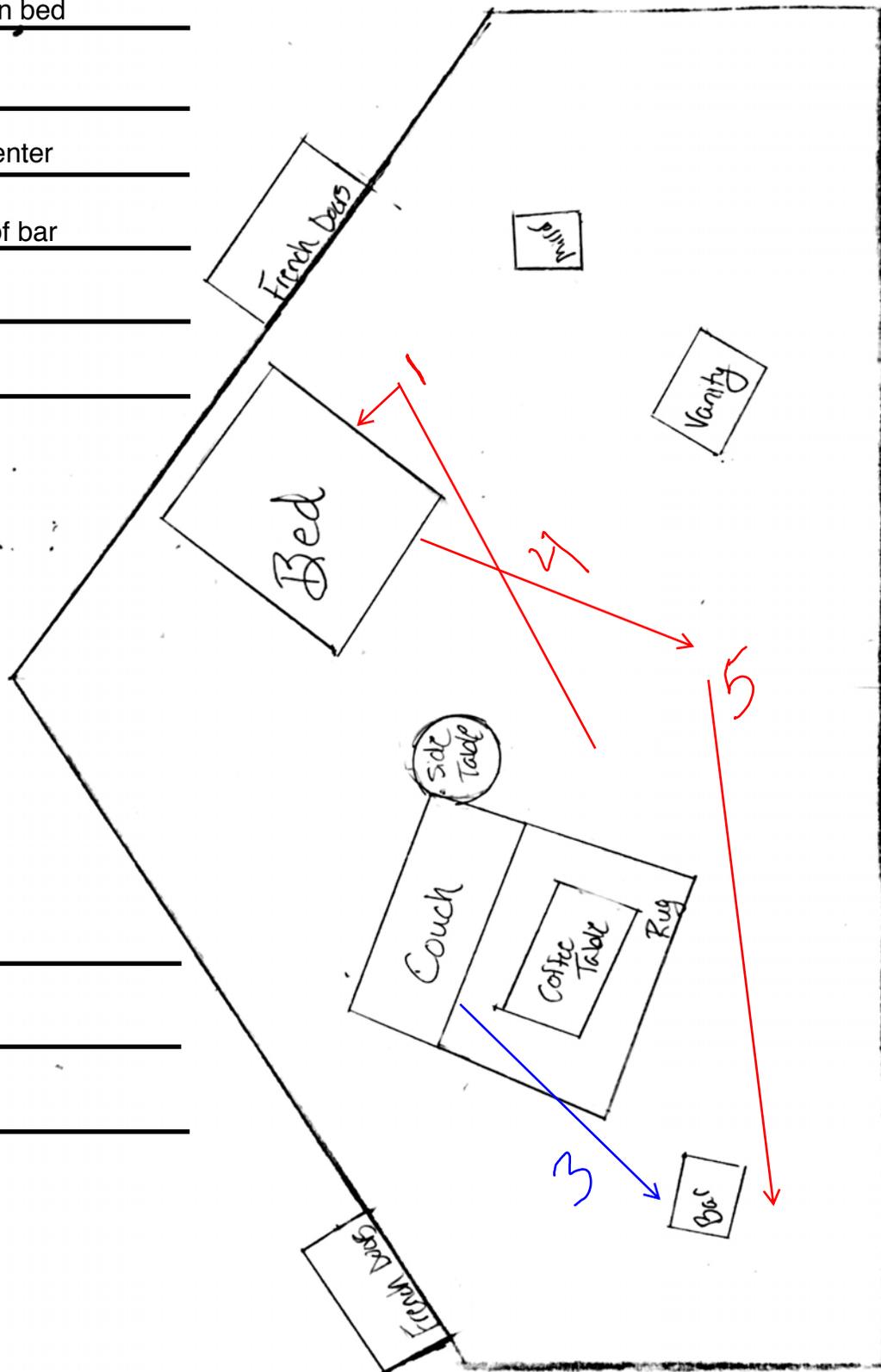
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~~I know when I made my mistake.--What am I--?~~ Oh!--my bracelets....

1

[She starts working a collection of bracelets over her hands on to her wrists, about six on each, as she talks.]

2 I've thought a whole lot about it and now I know when I made my mistake. Yes, I made my mistake when I told you the truth about that thing with Skipper. Never should have confessed it, a fatal error, tellin' you about that thing with Skipper.

BRICK: Maggie, shut up about Skipper. I mean it, Maggie; you got to shut up about Skipper.

MARGARET: You ought to understand that Skipper and I--

BRICK: You don't think I'm serious, Maggie? You're fooled by the fact that I am saying this quiet? Look, Maggie. What you're doing is a dangerous thing to do. You're--you're--you're--foolin' with something that--nobody ought to fool with.

MARGARET: This time I'm going to finish what I have to say to you. Skipper and I made love, if love you could call it, because it made both of us feel a little bit closer to you. You see, you son of a bitch, you asked too much of people, of me, of him, of all the unlucky poor damned sons of bitches that happen to love you, and there was a whole pack of them, yes, there was a pack of them besides me and Skipper, you asked too goddam much of people that loved you, you--superior creature!--you godlike being!--

3

4 And so we made love to each other to dream it was you, both of us! Yes, yes, yes! Truth,  
5 truth! What's so awful about it? I like it, I think the truth is--yeah! I shouldn't have told you....

BRICK [holding his head unnaturally still and uptilted a bit]: It was Skipper that told me about it. Not you, Maggie.

MARGARET: I told you!

BRICK: After he told me!

MARGARET: What does it matter who--?

[Brick turns suddenly out upon the gallery and calls:]

~~BRICK: Little girl! Hey, little girl!~~

~~GIRL [at a distance]: What, Uncle Brick?~~

~~BRICK: Tell the folks to come up!--Bring everybody upstairs!~~

1 Brick x SL

2 Maggie x US of couch to SL,  
in front of Brick

3

4

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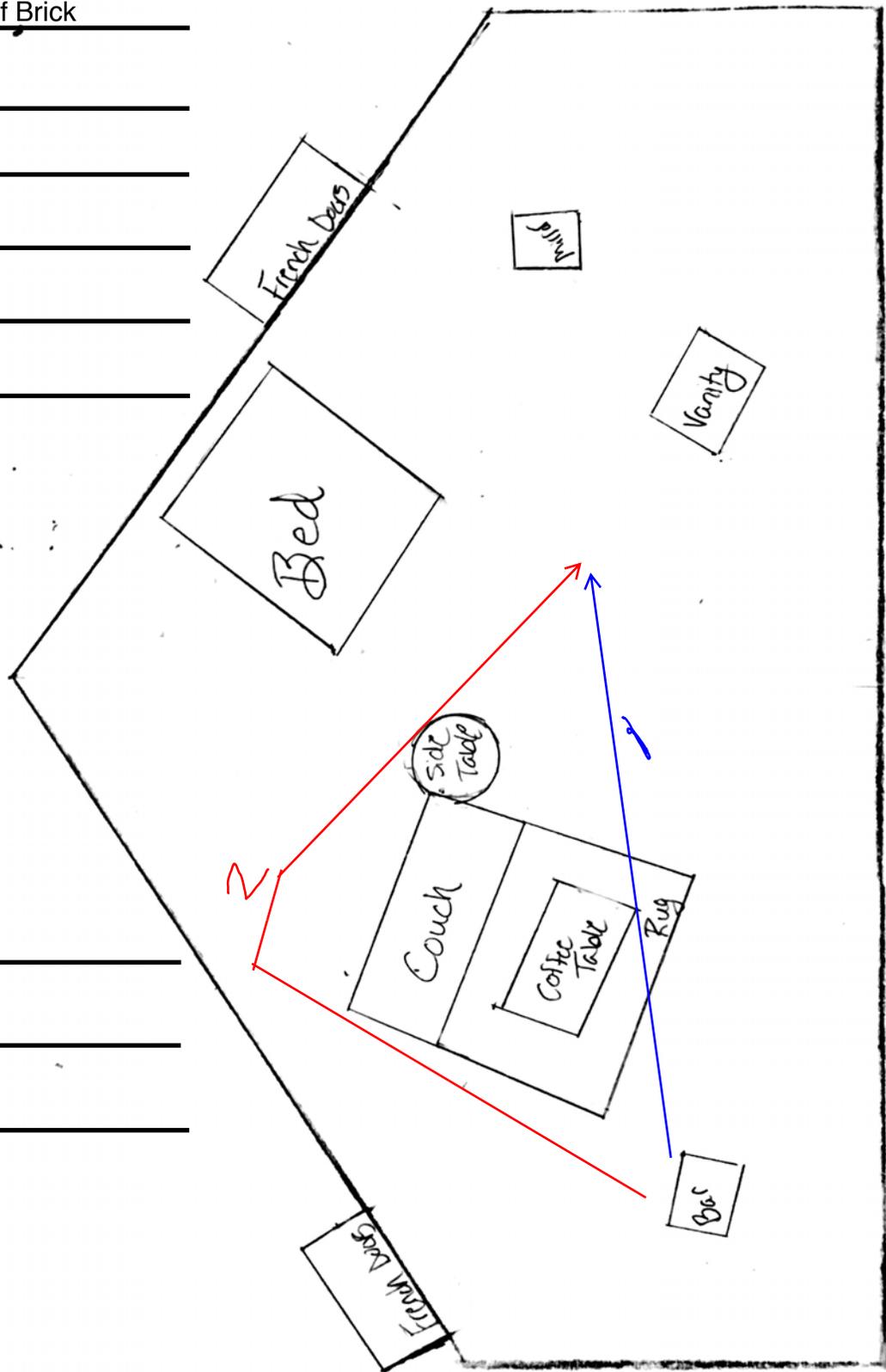
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~~MARGARET: I can't stop myself! I'd go on telling you this in front of them all, if I had to!~~

~~BRICK: Little girl! Go on, go on, will you? Do what I told you, call them!~~

MARGARET: Because it's got to be told and you, you!--you never let me!

Unit 10:  
Brick & Skipper

[She sobs, then controls herself, and continues almost calmly.]

~~It was one of those beautiful, ideal things they tell about in the Greek legends, it couldn't be anything else, you being you, and that's what made it so sad, that's what made it so awful, because it was love that never could be carried through to anything satisfying or even talked about plainly. Brick, I tell you, you got to believe me, Brick, I do understand all about it! I--I think it was--noble! Can't you tell I'm sincere when I say I respect it? My only point, the only point that I'm making, is life has got to be allowed to continue even after the (dream) of life is--all (over...)~~

1

2

[Brick is without his crutch, leaning on furniture, he crosses to pick it up as she continues as if possessed by a will outside herself:]

~~Why I remember when we double-dated at college, Gladys Fitzgerald and I and you and Skipper, it was more like a date between you and Skipper. Gladys and I were just sort of tagging along as if it was necessary to chaperone you!--to make a good public impression--~~

BRICK [turns to face her, half lifting his crutch]: Maggie, you want me to hit you with this crutch? Don't you know I could kill you with this crutch?

MARGARET: Good Lord, man, ~~d' you think I'd care if you did?~~

BRICK: One man has one great good true thing in his life. One great good thing which is true!--I had friendship with Skipper.--You are naming it dirty!

MARGARET: I'm not naming it dirty! I am naming it clean.

BRICK: Not love with you, Maggie, but friendship with Skipper was that one great true thing, and you are naming it dirty!

MARGARET: Then you haven't been listenin', not understood what I'm saying! I'm naming it so damn clean that it killed poor Skipper!--You two had something that had to be kept on ice, yes, incorruptible, yes!--and death was the only icebox where you could keep it....

BRICK: I married you, Maggie. Why would I marry you, Maggie, if I was-?



MARGARET: Brick, ~~don't brain me yet,~~ let me finish! I know, believe me I know, that it was only Skipper that harbored even any unconscious desire for anything not perfectly pure between you two!--Now let me skip a little. You married me early that summer we graduated out of Ole Miss, and we were happy, weren't we, we were blissful, yes, hit heaven together ev'ry time that we loved! But that fall you an' Skipper turned down wonderful offers of jobs in order to keep on bein' football heroes--pro-football heroes. You organized the Dixie Stars that fall, so you could keep on bein' team-mates for ever! But somethin' was not right with it!--Me included!--between you. Skipper began hittin' the bottle... you got a spinal injury--couldn't play the Thanksgivin' game in Chicago, watched it on TV from a traction bed in Toledo. I joined Skipper. The Dixie Stars lost because poor Skipper was drunk. We drank together that night all night in the bar of the Blackstone and when cold day was comin' up over the Lake an' we were comin' out drunk to take a dizzy look at it, I said, 'SKIPPER! STOP LOVIN' MY HUSBAND OR TELL HIM HE'S GOT TO LET YOU ADMIT IT TO HIM!'--one way or another!

1

Unit 11:  
The Confession

Sound Cue #2

HE SLAPPED ME HARD ON THE MOUTH!--then turned and ran without stopping once, I am sure, all the way back into his room at the Blackstone....

--When I came to his room that night, with a little scratch like a shy little mouse at his door, he made that pitiful, ineffectual little attempt to prove that what I had said wasn't true--

2

[Brick strikes at her with crutch, a blow that shatters the gemlike lamp on the table.]

3 --In this way I destroyed him, by telling him truth that he and his world which he was born and raised in, yours and his world, had told him could not be told?

--From then on Skipper was nothing at all but a receptacle for liquor and drugs..

4

5 --Who shot cock-robin? I with my--

6

[She throws back her head with tight shut eyes.]

7 --merciful arrow!

[Brick strikes at her; misses.]

Missed me! Sorry,--I'm not tryin' to whitewash my behaviour, Christ, no! Brick, I'm not good. I don't know why people have to pretend to be good, nobody's good. The rich or the well-to-do can afford to respect moral patterns, conventional moral patterns, but I could never afford to, yeah, but--I'm honest! Give me credit for just that, will you please?--Born poor, raised poor, expect to die poor unless I manage to get us something out of what Big Daddy leaves when he dies of cancer! But Brick?!--Skipper is dead! I'm alive! Maggie the cat is--

8

Unit 12: Plea for Love

9

Maggie gets on bed, and  
clutches Brick's arms

1

2

3

4

5

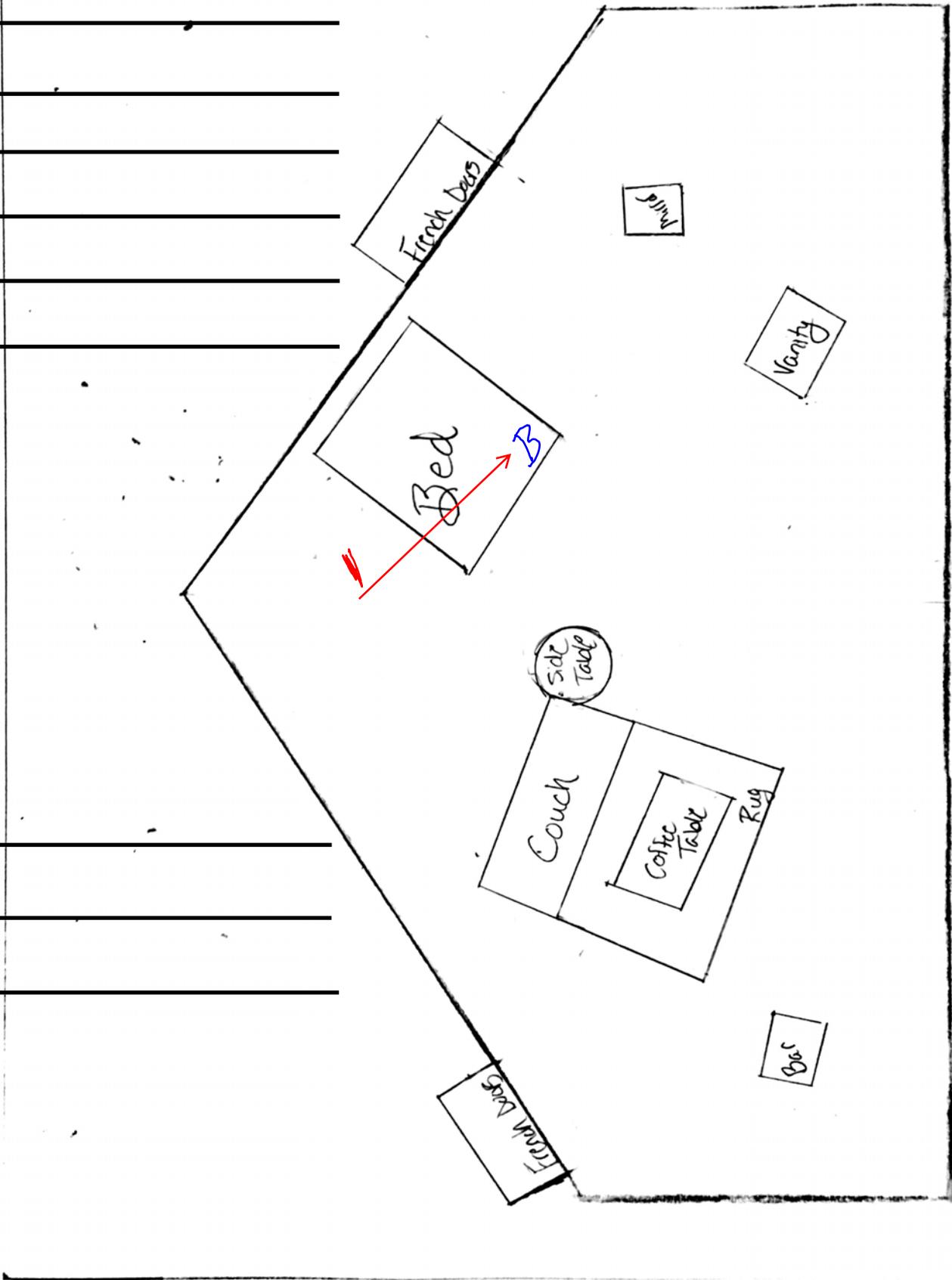
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7

8

9

10



[Brick hops awkwardly forward and strikes at her again with his crutch.]

1 ~~--alive!~~ I am alive! I am...

[He hurls the crutch at her, across the bed she took refuge behind, and pitches forward on the floor as she completes her speech.]

--alive!

Unit 13:  
The Request

~~[A little girl, Dixie, bursts into the room, wearing an Indian war bonnet and firing a cap pistol at Margaret and shouting: 'Bang, bang, bang!' Laughter downstairs floats through the open ball door. | Margaret had crouched gasping to bed at child's entrance. She now rises and says with cool fury:]~~

~~Little girl, your mother or someone should teach you--[gasping]--to knock at a door before you come into a room. Otherwise people might think that you--lack--good breeding....~~

~~DIXIE: Yanh, yanh, yanh, what is Uncle Brick doin' on th' floor?~~

~~BRICK: I tried to kill your Aunt Maggie, but I failed--and I fell. Little girl, give me my crutch so I can get up off th' floor.~~

~~MARGARET: Yes, give your uncle his crutch, he's a cripple, honey, he broke his ankle last night jumping hurdles on the high school athletic field!~~

~~DIXIE: What were you jumping hurdles for, Uncle Brick?~~

~~BRICK: Because I used to jump them, and people like to do what they used to do, even after they've stopped being able to do it....~~

~~MARGARET: That's right, that's your answer, now go away, little girl.~~

~~[Dixie fires cap pistol at Margaret three times.]~~

~~Stop, you stop that, monster! You little no-neck monster!~~

~~[She seizes the cap pistol and hurls it through gallery doors.]~~

~~DIXIE [with a precocious instinct for the cruellest thing]: You're jealous!--You're just jealous because you can't have babies!~~

~~[She sticks out her tongue at Margaret as she sashays past her with her stomach stuck out, to the gallery. Margaret slams the gallery doors and leans panting against them. There is a pause. Brick has replaced his spilt drink and sits, faraway, on the great four-poster bed.]~~

1 Maggie puts arms around Brick

2 Brick x to bar and pours drink

3 Maggie turns to Brick, and  
adjust to center of bed

4

5

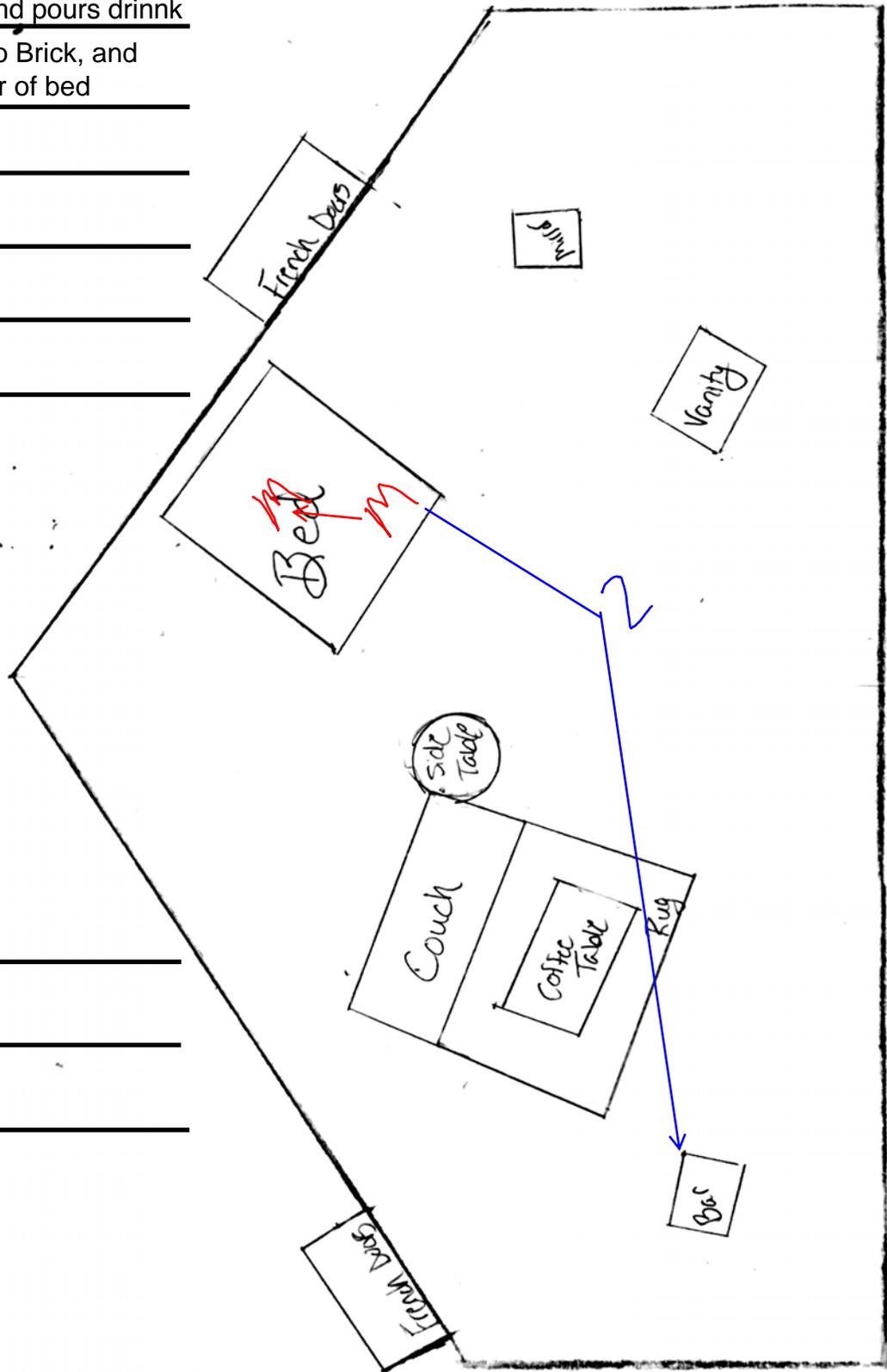
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9

10



MARGARET: You see?--they gloat over us being childless, even in front of their five little no-neck monsters!

[Pause. Voices approach on the stairs.]

1 Brick?--I've been to a doctor in Memphis, a--a gynaecologist.... I've been completely  
2 examined and there is no reason why we can't have a child whenever we want one. And  
this is my time by the calendar to conceive. Are you listening to me? Are you? Are you  
LISTENING TO ME!

BRICK: Yes. I hear you, Maggie.

[His attention returns to her inflamed face.]

--But how in hell on earth do you imagine--that you're going to have a child by a man  
that can't stand you?

Sound Cue #3

3 MARGARET That's a problem that I will have to work out.

~~[She wheels about to face the hall door.] Here they come! [The lights dim.]~~

CURTAIN      **Blackout**

~~ACT TWO~~

~~There is no lapse of time. Margaret and Brick are in the same positions they held at the  
end of Act One.~~

~~MARGARET [at door]: Here they come!~~

~~[Big Daddy appears first, a tall man with a fierce, anxious look, moving carefully  
not to betray his weakness even, or especially, to himself.]~~

~~BIG DADDY: Well, Brick.~~

~~BRICK: Hello, Big Daddy.--Congratulations!~~

~~BIG DADDY: --Crap....~~

~~[Some of the people are approaching through the hall, others along the gallery |  
voices from both directions. Gooper and Reverend Tooker become visible outside gallery~~



# Design

Scenic, Costume, Lighting,  
& Sound

## Emphasize:

- Wealth
- Prominent Bed
- Southern Elegance
- Sexuality
- French Doors
- Bar
- Brick's Space
- Maggie's Space



THE BEDSHACK  
LONDON

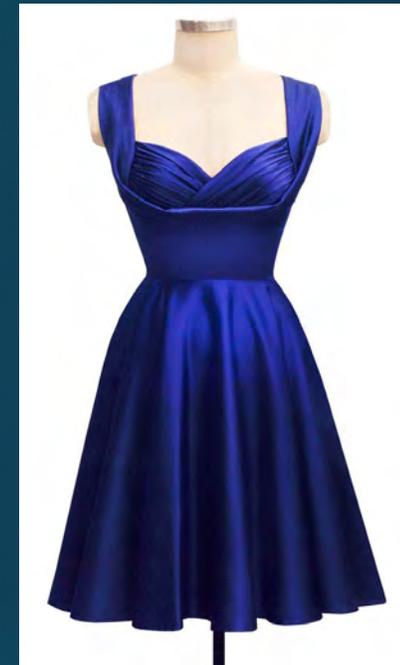


# Set Design

# Costume Design

## Maggie:

- Party Dress
- Slip
- Earrings
- Necklace
- Bracelets
- High Heel Shoes



## Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Costume Ideas

**Margaret: Rachel Cendrick**

Height: 5' 6"

Dress Size: M

Shoe: 7.5

**Need:**

Dress  
Slip  
Shoes  
Bracelets



**Brick: Brody Volpe**

Height: 5' 9"

Shirt: Medium

Pants: 35 x 30

Shoe Size: 10

**Need:**

White PJs  
House Shoes



## Brick:

- Pajama Set
- Robe
- House Shoes



Costume Design



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# Lighting Design Inspiration

## Emphasize:

- The Shadows of Secrecy
- The Moonlight
- Haze in the air
- Specials for Maggie's mirror moment and Skipper Confession

Lighting Designer:  
Ryan Burkle



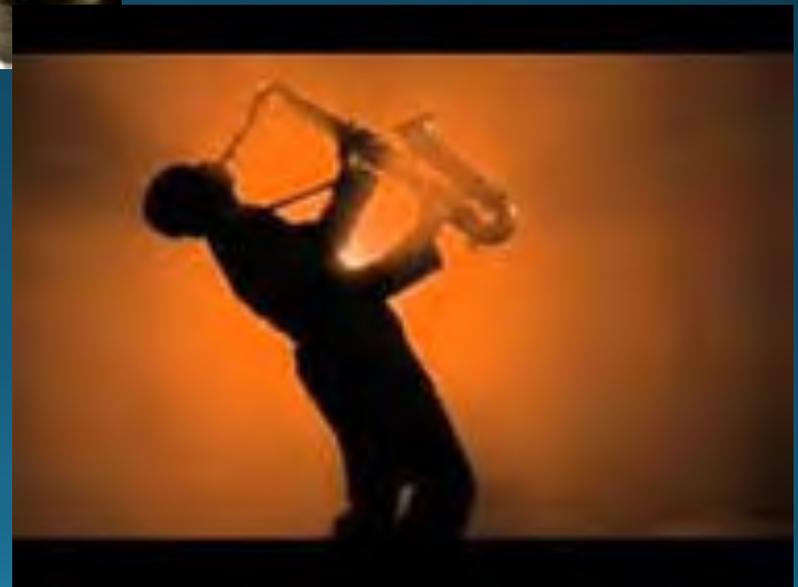
Lighting Design

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof- Designed by Ryan Burkle			
Cue	Time	What	When
1	5	Pre- Show. Moon light streams in from stage left. The backlights are in white, and the gobo is very prevelant. Very little facelight, and the house is up.	Preshow
2	3	House to half and FL up for Aaron	Top of Show
3	5	Blackout	After Aaron
4	3	It is very dark onstage. The gobo is on very bright to add texture. It's night time.	Top of Show
5	3	The mirror backlight comes on to put Maggie in shillouette.	When Rachel gets into place, or after a beat to set the scene. Whichever is safer for her. If she wants to set in Blackout that's cool, but I kind of want to see her walk out.
6	3	BL special goes out, and we set up the scene light. The room is dark, but moonlight provides us with a tense cool atmosphere. There is no warmth here.	Maggie: Yes she's gone**
7	5	The backstage door special goes out.	After Brick comes onstage.
8	5	The rest of the stage dims and we pull to CC with Rachel in another backlight. We like backlight.	Maggie: I joined skipper**
9	2	Return to the standard show light with moonlight and shit.	Maggie: In this way I destroyed him. (When Brick attacks her.)
10	5	We begin to pull focus to the bed.	Brick: With a man that can't stand you.**
11	2	No facelight and only backlight. So much Backlight wow	A beat after bricks line. Let the weight of what he said really hit her, then she decides to be ok with it.

12	1	blackout	Maggie: I guess I'll have to figure that out.**
13	2	House up. Post-show	after the blackout breaths

## Emphasize:

- Sultry Southern Blues
- Sound of Longing for Maggie
- Haunting Music for Maggie's Confession
- Sound of Tension at the end of the scene



# Sound Design



# Script Analysis

# Hodge Analysis for *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

## I. Given Circumstances

### A. Environmental Facts

1. Time: The action of the play covers one summer night, from late afternoon through the evening, presumably 1955. The season is a typical humid, summer evening on the Mississippi Delta. The continuity of time allows the audience to watch the emotional evolution of the characters in real time.

2. Place: [Tennessee Williams provides a poetic and practical description of the setting which determines many of the environmental choices.] The action takes place in one bedroom of the family's 28,000-acre plantation home in the Mississippi Delta, reminiscent of all the customs and traditions of the antebellum South. The room is done in a Victorian style with a hint of the Far East, and evokes the ghosts of the original owners, Jack Straw and Peter Ochello, whose uncommon relationship haunts the room. The room is on the second floor of the house, and has two large doors that provide entrances to the gallery that wraps around the home. The room's prominent features are the double bed and the console that holds the radio/phonograph, television, and liquor cabinet. There is a door to the hallway and a door to the bathroom attached to the room. Above every door are fan lights with panes of blue and amber. However, there should be enough room for the actors to move about the set freely, to show the restlessness of the characters and their passion for being free. Although these are practical elements in the room, Williams believes the set should be less realistic than implied. The set is a background for a play dealing with human extremities of emotion, so the set should offer a contrast of softness. The light in the room should offer grace, comfort, and reassurance, and be powerful enough to soothe the dread of death. The walls should dissolve into the air, so it is as if the sky, moon, and stars serve as the roof for the home.

3. All of the principle characters in this play are presumably well-off, but only because they are living off of Big Daddy's plantation money. However, there is a background of poverty in Big Daddy and Margaret's past. Big Daddy rose from poverty, working as an overseer on the plantation and building it into the biggest plantation on the delta before taking ownership of it. He is extremely wealthy and can afford to take European vacations, allow his wife to buy whatever she likes, and support his family. Margaret grew up "disgustingly poor," as her mother attempted to provide for them with \$150 a month from government bonds. However, she warns Brick that you can't be old and poor. She refuses to be poor again, and works to gain a stake in Big Daddy's will. The need to secure a profitable financial future becomes a driving force in this play. This battle for power, property, and money in Big Daddy's will generates the conflict between

the family. Reverend Tooker spends his time hinting at his expensive wish list for the church (air conditioning, stain glass windows, etc.), proving money is important to every character. There are a few servants in the play who can be assumed to be poor.

4. Politics: There are no real politics referenced in this play. The closest element is the “dummy outline” Gooper draws up at the bank for Big Daddy’s will. Legal documentation is the extent of the political realm in this play.

5. Social: This play examines the ostracized others of race, poverty, and homosexuality. Big Daddy refers to feeling like the “niggers” working in the fields when he began to work on the plantation. There is a clear racial, and class distinction between the family and their African-American servants who are seen and not heard. Economics serve a large role in social classification in this play. Margaret tells Brick that her mother had to keep some “semblance of social position” with \$150 a month, and has managed to climb the social ladder. Families are social entities with labels such as “Mae Flynn of the Memphis Flynnns.” Margaret and Mae both had social debuts as their introduction into proper society. Perhaps the most significant social issue in this play is the intolerance of homosexuality. The speculation of a homosexual relationship between Brick and Skipper is a pivotal conflict in this play. It is described as something the world can’t allow and is hidden in secret. At one point, Brick describes a situation in which his fraternity kicked out a homosexual man from their fraternity and ran him out of town. This shows there is no acceptance or tolerance for homosexuals in the world of the play.

6. Religion: Organized religion is a staple of Southern society, but it does not seem to shape how they live their lives. Although Rev. Tooker is at the house, he is working the family for financial support for the church. He doesn’t offer comfort to the family after the news of Big Daddy’s cancer. Big Mamma does some course joking with the minister when she pulls him on to her lap during the birthday party. They also take the Lord’s name in vain and use it in expletives throughout the play. Their language as well as Big Mama’s treatment of Tooker reflects their trivial, passive view of religion.

## B. Previous Action

The former owners of the plantation, Jack Straw and Peter Ochello, lived together in the same room that Brick and Maggie are staying. There is speculation that the two men may have been lovers, but there is no conclusive proof.

Brick met Margaret while they were students at Ole Miss. They were married in early summer the year they graduated. Brick and his best friend Skipper turned

down professional jobs to continue playing football professionally for the Dixie Stars. During this time, Skipper began drinking and Brick suffered a spinal injury. While Brick stayed in Toledo, Maggie went with the team to the Thanksgiving game in Chicago. The Dixie Stars lost because Skipper was drunk. After the game, Maggie got drunk with Skipper. On the way out of the bar, Maggie gave Skipper the ultimatum “Stop lovin my husband or tell him he’s got to let you admit it to him!” Skipper slapped her and ran back to his hotel. Maggie came back to his room at the Blackstone, and had sex with Maggie in an attempt to disapprove her claims against him. However, this act destroyed Skipper. He later called Brick and made a confession, but Brick just hung up and said nothing. This was the last time they spoke to one another. Skipper fell deeper into his alcoholism, and it eventually killed him. After Skipper’s death, Brick began drinking heavily and quit his job as a sports announcer.

Consequently, Brick and Maggie have come to an agreement as to how their marriage will function, with very clear “conditions.”

Big Daddy has gone to the Ochsner clinic for tests. He and Big Mama were told the results of his test were positive for a spastic colon, but negative for cancer. However, Big Daddy does have cancer, it is malignant and terminal. Upon getting his medical results from the clinic, Mae, Gooper, and their five children came down to visit Big Daddy and get a piece of his will. In an effort to protect their parents, the family decided to tell Big Daddy and Big Mama after the birthday celebration.

The family is on the plantation to celebrate the 65<sup>th</sup> birthday of Big Daddy. In a drunken state the night before the action of the play begins, Brick went to his former high school, Glorious Hill High School, to jump hurdles. He didn’t clear the first hurdle and broke his ankle.

### C. Polar Attitudes

1. Brick Pollitt is the protagonist of the play. The action of the play centers on his efforts to free himself from his wife, family, and past. He rejects life, neglects his wife and family, and turns to alcohol to survive each day. Brick is disgusted with the “mendacity” and lies of his family, the sins of Maggie, and his guilt for his rejection of Skipper. He begins the play detached and isolated from his family. Despite his love for Maggie, their past is too much to handle, and Brick continually pushes her away. He continually searches for the “click” instead of connecting and communicating with his family. By the end of the play, Brick has learned that he still has life to live, and offers Maggie a glimmer of hope for their marriage.

2. Margaret Pollitt (Maggie the Cat) is a primary antagonist of the play and continually pleads for intimacy from Brick, a physical representation of connection and love. She comes into the play feeling that she is truly alone in her marriage. She must do everything she can to save Brick, their marriage, and a financially secure future. She grew up with an alcoholic father and knows how detrimental it can be to a family and refuses to regress. By the end of the play, she feels supported and connected to Brick.

3. Big Daddy Pollitt is another primary antagonist of the play, and forces Brick to confront the truth behind his drinking. At the beginning of the play, Big Daddy is full of hope, possibility, and a new lease on life. He wants to “live” and find “pleasure” with women. However, this is crushed when he gets the news of his cancer. By the end of the play, Big Daddy is looking death in the face. He has lost all hope and feels life slipping away. He must face the impending pain and death with Big Mama, a woman he “can’t stand,” by his side. The person he hated will be the only person truly there with him until the end.

#### D. Significance of Given Circumstances

The history of this large plantation’s owners mirrors the mystery between Brick and Skipper. The big beautiful mansion looks stately, but is full of secrets, lies, and illusions. The ghosts of the owners and Skipper are haunting Brick. The joy and celebration of life that normally accompanies a birthday party is in direct contrast to the lies, fighting, and impending death within the home.

## II. Dialogue

This play is written in prose, but has a poetic quality that Williams describes to “a liturgical chant.” The Southern dialect, imagery, symbolism, and colloquial phrases help to create the world of the Pollitt Planation on the Mississippi Delta.

#### A. Words:

- athlete, victory, quit, defeated, playing, determined, win, jump, glory, hero, gallant, stronger, overpower
- truth, noble, friendship, sincere, good, honest, dirty, clean, admirable, respect, devotion
- animals, breeding, banshee, cage, catty, parrot, dogs, panting, sweat, monkeys, pistons, howls, chickens, pig, squeals, squeaks, crawl
- decent, queer, farriers, sissies, unnatural, tolerance
- lech, sex, cheat, naked, strip, humping, desire, pleasure, smother, choke, affection
- estate, debut, common, money, afford, luxuries, cashmere, champagne, society, auction, bought, broke, greed, envy
- symptoms, dope, drinkin, sore, fester, malignant, click, crack, uninjured, hurts, terminal, cripple, alive, uncomfortable, numb, specimen, organs, morphine, strain,

poisonous, venomous, tired, sweaty, sober, crazy, life, weak, suffer, crisis, crutch, normal

- black, reaper, grave, terror, scared, mortuary, caution, disturbs, outlive, dying, martyrdom, nowhere
- confusion, dodging, confidential, sneakin, spyin, eavesdroppers, legal, sly, escape, privacy, dangerous, lies, liar, pretend, pretense, corruption, rot, hypocrisy, mendacity
- unconscious, conscious, memory, indifferent, mistake, ineffectual, pitiful, lonely, exposed, destruction, embarrassed, unfaithful, wasted, ignorance, knowledge, disgustingly, restless, wasted, regret, resented
- motherhood, conceive, housewife, mother, stork

#### B. Phrases

- Human Animal, Selfish beast, human machine, animal machine
- House on fire, doorstep of death, kick off, conceived of death, shadow of death
- No neck monsters, precious little things, no children, master of fertility
- Public impression, purse strings, successful climbers, social ladder, hand-me down, social position
- First hurdle, superior creature, God-like being, Greek legend, high hurdles, fair play, wild games, pink-cheeked
- Good true thing, fatal error, live alone, impossible conditions, consumed with envy, eaten up with longing, see me, leave me, lie true

#### C. Images

There is strong animal imagery throughout this play. Margaret repeatedly refers to herself as Maggie the Cat. People are reduced to their basic needs such as life, sex, and death. The Southern plantation home is well cared for and in order, but it is in sharp contrast to the emotional disarray between the family contained within its walls. As evening falls, the shadows engulf the house to represent the guilt and secrecy of the Pollitts.

#### D. Dialect/Peculiar Characteristics

The use of colloquial phrases, meals, and customs incorporated by Williams highlights the Southern dialect of the characters. Maggie and Big Daddy speak in drastically long speeches, especially when they are in scenes with Brick. Their storytelling is aided by the slow and steady rhythm of the Southern dialect. The dialect has particular spelling of words to emphasize the lower level of education and priority of idioms. They have shortened versions of words and spelling that matches the way it should sound, "Cawn-bread, wha's muy precious." Although Brick is the protagonist of this play, he has very few monologues and speaks as much as the secondary characters. Brick is a man of few words to emphasize his isolation from the rest of the world. He doesn't engage fully with the family. The other characters, Mae, Gooper, and their guests speak far less than the rest of the cast but in the same strong Southern dialect and idioms.

#### E. Sound:

The sound of the play is typical to that of a large family gathering for a holiday or celebration. While people are trying to communicate in the bedroom the audience hears the interruptive sounds of the other guests outside on the gallery, phone calls, and screaming children. Although Brick desires silence, there is the constant sound of someone attempting to talk with him. Margaret and Big Daddy take the bulk of time with in contrasting ways. Maggie is more graceful than the bombastic Big Daddy, although both control the room in their own way.

#### F. Structure of Lines and Speeches:

The play follows the traditional climatic structure through the line and speeches. There is heavy use of dashes to indicate thought or the interruption of thought for several of the characters in their long monologues. Brick has several moments that end in ellipses as he gets lost in the memories and guilt of the past. His mind wanders to what he is trying to forget with his alcohol. The play is divided into three acts. However, Act 1 is largely Brick and Maggie, Act 2, Big Daddy and Brick, and Act 3 all the Birthday party guests minus Big Daddy (depending on the edition of the play). The French scenes are fairly straight forward and often interrupt the important action of the play, so they run simultaneously. The most important scenes are the scenes between Brick, Margaret, and Big Daddy. In these scenes, Big Daddy and Margaret have long speeches as they recount the past and attempt to connect with Brick. The most intense scenes are when Brick attempts to hit Maggie with his crutch and his confession to Big Daddy.

### III. Dramatic Action:

The play is centered on Brick's attempt to free himself from his wife, family, and past. However, through the pleading of Maggie, Big Daddy's impending death, and facing the guilt of his past Brick begins the process to reconnecting with the world and his wife, and learning to live again.

A. French Scenes: This play is plotted in to approximately 20 French scenes. This count is approximate because so many scenes involve characters entering in groups and wandering on the gallery and back into the room. This break down reflects the way I would divide the scenes for rehearsal purposes.

B. Each French scene is broken down in to smaller units. Each unit focuses on a subject and features as aggressor and defender. Example:

#### Act 1-French Scene 4 (Unit 3-Take a lover)

- Maggie slaps
- Brick encourages
- Maggie defends/re-launches
- Brick endorses

- Maggie flaunts
- Brick pushes
- Maggie threatens
- Brick strokes/invites
- Maggie recovers
- Brick warns
- Maggie refuses
- Brick persuades
- Maggie defies

Summary: Maggie attacks, Brick entices

## IV. Character

### A. Brick

#### 1. Function and Polar Attitudes:

Brick Pollitt is the protagonist of the play. The action of the play centers on his efforts to free himself from his wife, family, and past. He rejects life, neglects his wife and family, and turns to alcohol to survive each day. Brick is disgusted with the “mendacity” and lies of his family, the sins of Maggie, and his guilt for his rejection of Skipper. He begins the play detached and isolated from his family. Despite his love for Maggie, their past is too much to handle, and Brick continually pushes her away. He continually searches for the “click” instead of connecting and communicating with his family. By the end of the play, Brick has learned that he still has life to live, and offers Maggie a glimmer of hope for their marriage.

#### 2. Desires and Personal Climaxes:

Brick desires to be done with Maggie, his family, and be left alone. He cannot let go of Maggie’s “affair” with Skipper nor forgive himself for hanging up on Skipper when he called to confess his truth, both of which led to Skipper’s death. Brick has stopped living. He quit his job as a sports announcer, and spends the day working for the “click” in his head to reach his state of peace. Brick is disgusted with all the lies and secrecy that have the power to destroy people. Brick is existing in isolation instead of *living* life.

Brick’s growth can be tracked through the three acts of this play.

Act 1- Brick works to push Maggie away from him. He ignores and neglects her, and encourages her to take a lover. However, he refuses to divorce her because he still loves her. He is passive and relaxed with Maggie until she begins to talk about Skipper. He attacks Maggie with his crutch and refuses to have a child with her because he “can’t stand” her.

Act 2-Brick spends much of the act speaking with Big Daddy, having a “real” conversation. He tells his version of his relationship with Skipper, confesses he hung up on him without saying a word, and tells Big Daddy that he does have cancer. He recognizes the power of lies and truth, life and death.

Act 3-Maggie tells the family she is pregnant in an effort to gain a stake in Big Daddy’s will. Instead of exposing Maggie’s lie, he goes along with it and supports his wife, giving her the hope of a partnership and saving their marriage.

### 3. Willpower and Moral Stance:

Brick uses his willpower to detach himself from Maggie and all those around him. Despite his love for his wife, he continually works to push her away from him. He refuses to divorce her but attempts to make her want to leave him. He is also completely devoted to drinking his sorrows, guilt, and past away until he receives his “peaceful” click. Morally, Brick’s flaws are found in his alcoholism and sometimes cruel attempts to distance himself from Maggie. He knows how much she loves him, but he refuses to show her any affection or intimacy.

### 4. Decorum and Mood Intensity:

Brick is in his late 20s. He is a former athlete and has kept in good shape, despite his drinking problem, he doesn’t seem to gain weight. He is attractive and charismatic. Brick’s detached nature has a way of making him more attractive to people around him. He walks around with an indifferent disposition. He is a college graduate and at one time would be considered a gentleman. However, in the wake of Skipper’s death, he is detached, cold, and brooding. He is interested in himself and can be rude and insensitive to the needs of those around him, and loses his calm demeanor if Skipper is brought up, becoming aggressively defensive.

## B. Margaret

### 1. Function and Polar Attitudes:

Margaret Pollitt (Maggie the Cat) is a primary antagonist of the play and continually pleads for intimacy from Brick, a physical representation of connection and love. She comes into the play feeling that she is truly alone in her marriage. She must do everything she can to save Brick, their marriage, and a financially secure future. She grew up with an alcoholic father and knows how detrimental it can be to a family and refuses to regress. By the end of the play, she feels supported and connected to Brick.

### 2. Desires and Personal Climaxes:

Maggie desires an intimate connection with Brick, preferably sexual intercourse. She loves Brick so much she needs a physical outlet for it. She desires to show him her love. She does everything in her power to show Brick her love by securing a future for them, loving Big Daddy, and covering up his alcoholism. As the play begins, Maggie attempts to seduce Brick and pleads for him to engage

with her—have sex, have a baby, and move on. She confesses to her affair with Skipper in hopes that the truth will allow them to escape their prison of guilt, but it only pushes Brick further away. Maggie continues to act as if everything is ok in front of the family in effort to secure a place in Big Daddy's will. In the final act, Maggie tells everyone she is pregnant to ensure their financial security in the will. Brick goes along with the lie, giving Maggie the hope she needs for their marriage. She locks up all the alcohol and throws Brick's crutch over the gallery, giving him the ultimatum to make love to her or go without alcohol.

### 3. Willpower and Moral Stance:

Maggie the cat is a survivor. She will adapt to any situation and succeed. As a young woman growing up poor with an alcoholic father, she learned to fight. She will do whatever is necessary to survive. She is even willing to do what she detests, suck up to people for money, to secure a future for Brick and herself. She will not allow Mae and Gooper to cut them out of their share of the estate. Although she did have an affair, and lie about her pregnancy, her heart is in the right place. She regrets the affair and pleads for Brick's forgiveness. In actuality, it was an attempt to be closer to Brick, in a sad, desperate, and backwards way.

### 4. Decorum and Mood Intensity:

Maggie is in her late 20s, sexy, and has kept her figure, "nothing has fallen." She is starting to show strain on her face, but she is still beautiful, although she knows it will be waning soon. Maggie can command the room without trying. All eyes just fall on her. She did not grow up with money, but she understands social graces and how to be a lady. Although she can be classy, she is not afraid to fight for what she wants. Maggie is "catty" with Mae in efforts to protect their stake in the estate, and goes toe to toe with Brick and his crutch. She will do anything and everything to survive, and get what she wants.

## C. Big Daddy

### 1. Function and Polar Attitudes:

Big Daddy is another primary antagonist of the play, and forces Brick to confront the truth behind his drinking. At the beginning of the play, Big Daddy is full of hope, possibility, and a new lease on life. He wants to "live" and find "pleasure" with women. However, this is crushed when he gets the news of his cancer. By the end of the play, Big Daddy is looking death in the face. He has lost all hope and feels life slipping away. He must face the impending pain and death with Big Mama, a woman he "can't stand," by his side. The person he hated will be the only person truly there with him until the end. He is what Brick could become if Brick doesn't change.

### 2. Desires and Personal Climaxes:

Big Daddy is the antithesis of Brick; he desires to live. He wants to go have wild pleasures with women other than Big Mama, and "have a ball" with his

remaining years. He felt the “shadow of death” lifted and wanted to bask in the light of life. As act two begins, Big Daddy is ready to take back the reigns of control. He is ready to prove that he is still the patriarch of the family, and ready to put Big Mama and anyone else who questions that back into their place. As he talks with Brick, he recognizes just how bad Brick’s alcoholism has gotten and attempts to “straighten him out,” now that his cancer issue has been resolved. Big Daddy bullies Brick into an honest talk about his drinking, which uncovers Brick’s disgust with mendacity and his own actions against Skipper. As Brick reveals his truth about his relationship with Skipper, he also informs Big Daddy that he does have cancer. Big Daddy’s hopes are crushed as he once again is forced to face his mortality and eminent death.

### 3. Willpower and Moral Stance:

Big Daddy is a powerful man. He helped turn this 28,000-acre plantation into the most successful plantation on the Mississippi Delta. He rose from nothing to one of the wealthiest men in the South. If you refuse Big Daddy, he will bully you into doing what he wants. He won’t take no for an answer and doesn’t apologize for it. As the patriarch, there is no questioning him. Big Daddy cruelty towards Big Mama and disrespect for members of his family exemplify his moral shortcomings. He openly asks about Brick’s sex life and discusses his desires to have pleasures with other women. However, he is the only one in the play to encourage the growth of “tolerance.”

### 4. Decorum and Mood Intensity:

Big Daddy is a 65-year-old, coarse red-neck. He is a large, over-weight, bombastic man, who will bully people to get what he wants. He is not highly-educated, but a self-made man, confident and self-assured. He takes great pride in his plantation and his wealth. He is the king of the castle and is willing to throw his power and money at any situation. He only cares about what he cares about. Yet, he has a tender place in his heart for Brick. He truly wants to save his son from the pain that is causing him to drink his life away.

#### D. Big Mama, Mae, and Gooper

Big Mama, Mae and Gooper are secondary characters in the play. They do not have polar changes in the play.

Big Mama-She loves her family and is completely devoted to Big Daddy. She is by his side in sickness and health, kindness and cruelty. Much like Big Daddy, her hopes are raised when she thinks it is just a spastic colon, but dashed when she learns the truth. She does not seem to have her own identity, but is whomever Big Daddy allows her to be. She had some freedom when she thought he had cancer, but he quickly strips that from her when he thinks he is healthy. She is the representation of what Maggie could dwindle down to if her relationship with Brick doesn’t change.

Mae and Gooper-They work in opposition of Brick and Maggie. They have five children, Gooper is an attorney, and they appear to have it all together. They are putting on a show with their children to gain control of the plantation in Big Daddy's will. Mae and Maggie are good adversaries, although Maggie seems to be smarter and more equipped for the game.

E. Dr. Baugh, Rev. Tooker, Dixie

Dr. Baugh, Rev. Tooker, and Dixie are third level characters. They help facilitate information about the world of the play and tensions between family members. These characters do not have clear backstories or drive the action, but support the themes of the play and advancement of plot points.

F. Servants and other children

The servants and children serve as fourth level characters. The servants are used as atmosphere and voices of the world outside of this one bedroom. They help illustrate the class and wealth distinction. The children highlight the contrast of chaos in Mae and Gooper's life in comparison to Brick and Maggie.

## V. Idea

*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is a play about living. Maggie pleads with Brick that the "life has to be allowed to continue even after the dream of life is—all—over." Brick is trapped in the matrix of his guilt, disgust of his wife's affair with Skipper, and unclear picture of what his relationship was with his best friend. Brick questions ideas of truth, lies, friendship, and intimacy. Much like a cat on a hot tin roof has to struggle to stay on top of the uncomfortably warm structure, Maggie and Brick are struggling to find their way through this tumultuous time in their marriage. On one side Brick has his wife begging him to move on and live, connect with her, love her. The other is Big Daddy confronting death, but longing for life. Brick can see his future in his father, unless he changes. The action of the play shows Brick's struggle to let go of the past—guilt, shame, lies, disgust—and move forward anew. The end of the play presents the dichotomy of Maggie's request to create life and Big Daddy's impending death. It may be too late for Big Daddy, but Brick and Maggie still have a chance. Hope is a powerful thing.

## VI. Moods

Act 1.4: Maggie, Brick, & Truth

U1: Maggie— isolation—lonely prison

U2: Sex Life—flirty--striptease

U3: A Lover—punchy—vacuum out the air

U4: Tin Roof—tense—standoff

U5: Big Daddy's Cancer—depression—world pauses

U6: Fondness—lavish—warm applause

U7: Reality—stern—dropped bricks

U8: Poor Past—lament—painful flashback

U9: Speak Truth—forceful—physical assault

U10: Understanding—dangerous—walking on thin ice

U11: That Night—intensely eerie—haunted moment  
U12: Rationalization—calm—deep breath  
U13: New Life—timid—child’s request

## **VII. Tempos**

The play uses a variety of tempos, but generally uses a slow to moderate pace to reflect the slower tempo of Southern life, match the depressant effects of the alcohol on Brick, and the “real time” element of the plot. There are a few exceptions, such as when Brick attacks Maggie with his crutch, the chaos of the children running around the house, and the intense moments between Brick and Big Daddy.

Act 1.4: Maggie, Brick, & Truth

U1: Slow  
U2: Medium  
U3-5: Slow  
U6: Medium  
U7: Slowing  
U8: Slow  
U9: Fast  
U10: Slowing  
U11: Slow/Fast  
U12: Slowing  
U13: Medium

## **VIII. Tone**

*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is about the struggle to let go of the past, move forward, and *live*.