SETTING

ACT ONE
Window of Mrs. Swanson's house and Window of John Dodge's house
Library
Town Square
Outer Space
Mrs. Swanson's Kitchen
Seating for Intermission Audience

ACT TWO
Window of Mrs. Swanson's house and Window of John Dodge's House
Entrance and Lawn of Middletown Hospital
Doctor's office
John Dodge's hospital room
Loading Dock behind hospital
Mrs. Swanson's hospital room

A natural and unforced symmetry might exist between aspects of the sets in the first act and second act. Specifically, between the Swanson and Dodge houses, in the first, and the Swanson and Dodge hospital rooms, in the second; and between the Town Square and the Hospital Lawn and Entrance.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The set and props should be such that the specified locations are immediately recognizable and there is some richness to the design, but also uncomplicated enough that transitions between scenes can be done quickly and easily.

A general note on the acting: the first and probably most important thing is that the characters should sound, as in most plays, like normal human beings, talking. There is some philosophy in the play and even perhaps some poetry, but the characters in the play are mainly speaking off the tops of their heads, perhaps sometimes thinking out loud, perhaps sometimes seeking to share or clarify a thought they've been having. A serious and simple and kind of matter-of-fact delivery is probably best. Of course there are moments of emotional difficulty, yearning, wondervent, etc., but in general, I think the play should move along at a pretty good clip, like life.

PROLOGUE

PUBLIC SPEAKER. Ladies and Gentlemen, Esteemed Colleagues, Members of the Board, Local Dignitaries, everyone really, stockbrokers, dockworkers, celebrities, nobodies. Ladies, Gentlemen, all comers, newcomers, the newly departed, the poorly depicted, people who are still teething, who are looking for a helping verb, the quote beautiful, the unquote unbeautiful, whose bones are just so, whose veins are just so, the drunk, the high, the blue, the down, los pueblos, los animales, foreigners, strangers, bookworms, those whose eyes are tired from trying to read something into everything, those at a crossroads, in a crisis, a quandary, a velvety chair, the dirty, the hungry, yes, we the cranky, the thirsty, the furious, the happy, who are filled with life, bloated with it, gorged on words, and of course the bereaved, the bereft, and let's not forget the local merchants, the smiling faces, the placeholders, us, all we people slowly gravitating, slowly leaving, who make all this all possible, this activity, this festivity, this hope, this dream dreamt with open eyes, with closed eyes, friends of the deceased, the diseased, friends of the disowned, and of course also healthy friendly people with great skin and congenital heart defects, sports fans, sufferers of autism, down-and-outs, non-believers, animal lovers everywhere, real people, with doubts, without certainty, with nothing else worthy mentioning, the majority of us, silent, stifled, delinquent, in the background, barely hanging on, running out of time. hope, air, heart, nerves, chances, money, blood, friends, courage, faith, hair, time, teeth, time, time, health, hope, all of it, all of it, those sans everything, those avec nothing, who