

SCRIPT (characters for each scene listed after the end)

SCENE 1: Kitchen

ARGUEDAS (NARRATOR):

You may be surprised if I confess to you that I am the handiwork of my stepmother. My mother died when I was two and a half. My father remarried; his new wife already had three children. I was the youngest and, as I was so small, my father left me in the house of my stepmother, who owned half the town; she had many indigenous servants and with it the traditional contempt for and lack of awareness of what an Indian was. Since my stepmother despised and hated me as much as [her] Indians,¹ she decided that I was to live with them in the kitchen, eating and sleeping there. My bed was a wooden trough of the kind used to knead bread...Resting on some sheepskins and covered with a rather dirty but very sheltering blanket, I spent nights talking and living so well that if my stepmother had known it she would have removed me to her side...²

[Domestic scene; servants preparing meal. Arguedas helps (an older?) woman peel potatoes. ((maybe somebody sings a worksong in the background?)) Speaking aloud, the woman tells the little boy about the machus who help grow such big potatoes [see Allen Ch1].

SERVANT 1:³

Machus are demons who eat you at night.

Machus are kind old grandpas they
work all night in your fields
growing good potatoes.

SERVANT 2:

They live in the towers and holes
of their ghost-town
forever.

Your soil is theirs
your place is defined by them.
They underlie you.

They drain you suck you stick you
get those sick

¹ *Páginas escogidas* (1972).

² Arguedas lecture quoted in *Deep Rivers*, Introduction, ix.

³ Allen, "Old Grievs," *Anthropology & Humanism Quarterly* (Vol.15, no.4) 1990.

litters of monsters and squeaky abortions.

SERVANT 3:

But they'd like to be friends.

A nod, a word and a bite to eat and they
stretch out bountiful bony hands to make you
tough and lucky. Sweet toothless grin!
Good grandpas!

Machus are always there.
They inhabit your silence.
You meet them in twilight

Which way?
You must choose.

[Servant women chew coca (talk about Tirakuna, ayllu), punctuated by Q&A]

ARGUEDAS:

Where are you blowing the kintu towards?

Insert phukuy: "Santa Tira, Apu Ausangati, Machukuna."

Take this little gift, and help grow good harvests.

ARGUEDAS: Tell me another story.

[SERVANT #1 begins "Star-wife" narrative, and the kitchen scene fades.]

XX

SCENE 2: The Star-wife

Opening scene:

(Early morning. Four cloaked Tirakuna surround a high potato field. Lights slowly come up on MAMAY, TAYTAY, SON. It is late afternoon, just past the planting season. The trio moves in a well-practiced but hasty rhythm with the son digging the hole, Taytay poking in the seed, Mamay fertilizing, and Taytay covering it up again. They move smoothly as a unit for thirty seconds or so.)

TAYTAY: *Achachau*, a moment's rest for my aching back, son. You move too quickly for your old father and mother.

(The son pauses to rest.)

MAMAY: If only the *Machu* hadn't drained the life from your brothers and sisters, you wouldn't have to rely on your old mother and father to help with the plantings. (*Looks out over the ridge.*) *Karahu!* The pigs have wandered over to the neighbors' again. *Waway*, go take care of those *khuchi*.

SON: Yes, *Mamay*.

(*Exit SON, passing NEIGHBOR and exchanging greetings, carrying a bucket of water from the well*)

NEIGHBOR: *Imaynalyan, Mamay! Imaynalyan taytay!* How are you this morning?

TAYTAY: *Allillanmi, Comadre..* We are doing just fine.

NEIGHBOR: I see you have not yet finished planting your potatoes yet?

MAMAY: It is the strangest thing, *urpillay*, dear neighbor. A thing so strange, you would not even believe it, but each night, when all good *runa* are asleep in bed, someone comes, slipping out of bed like a fox, to steal our young potatoes. Those high fields have not even finished growing yet!

NEIGHBOR: Oh well, with the help of *Pacha Mama*, your potatoes will grow big and fine, as always. But what a shame that a strong young man like your son can't keep thieves away from your field! *Achakalau!* And of course he wants to take the worry away from his parents! My own son stays up all night to keep tricksters from ruining our good work... well, *allinllaña, Mamay, allinllaña, Taytay.*

MAMAY: *Go ahead, dear Comadre..*

TAYTAY: *allinllaña, Mamay...*

(*Exit NEIGHBOR, still lugging buckets of water*)

MAMAY: *Our comadre* was right. *Waway!!*

(*Enter SON*)

SON: Yes, *Mamay?*

MAMAY: What good is a worthless son like you? We are tired and cannot work any more...we must not lose any more of our crop to this thief. You can stay and watch the fields tonight; we are old and need our rest.

(*Exit MAMAY and TAYTAY. Lights dim. Young man walks around the field, looks around, sits down in the "watch-hut," dawdles, then drifts asleep. It is night. Three huddled figures scramble out, kneel to dig up some potatoes. They look at each other and giggle a bit, then fling off their cloaks and dance and chase each other around. The*

young man wakes up but they do not see him. He rubs his eyes in amazement, but stays put.)

SON: Oh, how could I turn in such beautiful girls! These lovely creatures are thieves? How is it possible? They must be stars from the heavens in disguise - these are no *runa* girls!

(Meanwhile, two of the girls whirl offstage, but one remains. As she leans over to pick up her sack and whisk away, the young man runs out and pulls her (braided) hair. She laughs, turns around then sees him and tries to run away. He grabs her arm, pulls her into the "watch-hut" and sits her down.)

SON: You have been stealing my potatoes!

STAR: Oh, what do I want with your old potatoes? We were just trying to have some fun! Now let me go home, please?

SON: Fun or not, you have stolen our best potatoes and must pay for it somehow.

STAR: Do you think your family grows such large, fine potatoes every year by yourself? They grow in the soil, in the water, in the sun of *Pacha Mama*, and with the blessing of the *Apu*. They are not really yours, anyway.

SON: I would give *all* the potatoes in my fields and my llamas in the highlands, for you to stay here with me. Be my wife!

(He yanks her to her feet and she tries to pull away.)

-----INTERJECTION-----

ARGUEDAS (interrupting obnoxiously): That's silly. A star-woman could never come down from the sky and marry a *runa*.

SERVANT #2: The stars can do a great many things... they sing and laugh and dance even better than you or me. They especially love to laugh.

SERVANT #3: But if you anger the stars they can freeze your skin right off until you're nothing more than a little piece of ch'uno!

ARGUEDAS (looks a little shocked.) Eeeu! Like frozen dried-up potatoes!

SERVANT #1: Beware the anger of a star-woman...

-----INTERJECTION-----

STAR: Let me go! Let me go! My sisters will tell my parents! I'll give you back all your potatoes! Please, don't make me stay here!

(Enter MAMAY from one side, she doesn't see them yet.)

MAMAY: *Waway*, are you there? I brought you some stew... hmph. The lazy boy's probably fallen asleep.

STAR: You mustn't show me to your *mamay* or *taytay* for anything!

SON: Oh, of course not! *(She hides and he turns out to meet MAMAY.)* Oh *YUSULPAYKI*, *Mamaytay*, for this delicious dinner. Don't come in, stay right there and I will bring out the dish out for you again soon.

(He winks big and points over his shoulder, then brings the girl the food. The mother sneaks up and peers at her in surprise, then sneaks back. The son brings her the dish.)

MAMAY: *Allillaña*, *waway*.

(She potters to the edge of the stage but doesn't leave. The son drags the princess offstage in the opposite direction. TAYTAY enters.)

MAMAY: Oh, *Taytay*! Our son caught a potato thief who came down from heaven, and he's caring for her in the watch-hut! He says he's going to marry her. He doesn't want anyone to come and scare her away, though.

TAYTAY: I always knew that boy would be useful for something. We must get her into the house, and then we can keep her there forever.

(Lights down, lights up again on a house-scene. A big plate of potatoes and a glass of tragu sit on the otherwise empty table. MAMAY and TAYTAY are there, hiding behind the stove. The SON pulls the STAR-girl in.)

SON: You see? I told you I had my own hut.

STAR: Your parents absolutely must not see or meet me.

(The STAR-WOMAN stands in the doorway looking around cautiously, then sees the food set out, walks over to it, and begins to inspect the potatoes.)

STAR-WOMAN: Ooooh, *puma maki...* *puka mama...* and *tragu*!

(She begins to drink the tragu greedily. MAMAY and TAYTAY step out to block the doorway.)

TAYTAY: Ahhh, *welcome*, my *urpicháy*, welcome to your new home.

MAMAY: We are happy to see you accepted the wedding offerings we made you. Now you are part of the family and will stay with us.

-----INTERJECTION-----

SERVANT #3: And you know what? She did stay with them, for years and years. And the parents and the son took good care of her –

SERVANT #2: But she was lonely, for they would not let her leave the hut.

ARGUEDAS: Not even to fetch water? *They shake their heads.* Or to help with the harvest? *They shake their heads.* Or even for *Agustu??*

SERVANT #2: Not even for *Agustu.*

SERVANT #1: And the Star-woman's belly grew fat with a baby, but it died – poisoned by her unhappiness.

SERVANT #3: So the years passed, and then one day, as MAMAY was becoming very old...

-----INTERJECTION-----

(Home scene: STAR-WOMAN lounges, looking bored. MAMAY, sitting on her heels in the corner of a room spinning, begins to doze off. The STAR-WOMAN looks at her, then sneaks bit by bit to the doorway, looking back at her every now and then. Finally, she grabs her cape and swoops out the doorway and offstage. The SON, coming home from the fields for lunch, enters from the opposite side and chases after her just as she is leaving.)

SON: *Urpicháy!!* Where are you going!

(Breaks into a despairing lament, wandering aimlessly:)

Oh my heart! My heart!
Sunqulláy sunqu!
My heart is bursting!
My heart is breaking!
Oh my heart, my heart!
And my head, my head is spinning!
Little darling, little pigeon!
How could you leave me?

I looked by the rocks
I looked by the river
I looked on the old high path

I looked on the new low path
Sunquulláy sunqu!

Oh *Pacha Mama!*
Oh *Tirakuna!*

(He pulls out a kintu and blows it to the Tirakuna. From his perch among the Tirakuna, the CONDOR takes notice.)

Oh, Condor, help me get my *urpicháy* back!

(Down struts the CONDOR – ugly but vain, smug, and self-satisfied)

CONDOR: Youth, why are you weeping like this?

SON (*dejected*): Oh *wiraqucha*, I had the most beautiful wife, and now she's gone away somewhere. I think maybe she's gone back to heaven.

CONDOR: Don't cry like a *wawa*. You're right – she's gone back to heaven. But I know how you can get your wife back.

SON: Really? What can I do??

CONDOR: It's easy... If you like, I can take you there on my back.

SON: That would be won--

CONDOR: Just give me two llamas and I'll take you there right away.

SON: *Two* llamas??

CONDOR: One to eat here, and another to keep and eat on the way. It is a long way to get to the stars.

SON: Okay, fine, I will give you the two llamas... wait for me right here.

-----INTERJECTION-----

ARGUEDAS: What did Condor do with the llamas?

SERVANT #1: He gobbled one up, down to the very bones, picking them clean with his teeth. And they butchered the other one—

SERVANT #2: And the youth brought it with him on their journey to the heavens. Whenever that greedy Condor said "Meat!" the man had to feed it a piece or he would just throw him off anywhere, until after three years, they ran out of meat.

ARGUEDAS: *Akakalau!* What'd he do then?

SERVANT #3 (*leaning over to pinch his leg*): Why, *urpicháy*, he cut off bits of meat from his very own leg, and fed it to the condor bit by bit until finally, old, dirty and tired, they arrived at the glittering gold mansion of the Sun and Moon by the shores of a magical lake. And they bathed in it and became young and beautiful, like stars themselves.

-----INTERJECTION-----

(Tirakuna are visibly lacking from this scene, which is set in the sky)

CONDOR: Now listen – go wait by that big shining door. Pretty soon, a group of beautiful young girls will walk out, and you won't know which one is your wife. But don't speak to any of them... just follow the girl dropping bits of quinoa to the ground. She is your wife. Whatever you do, don't stop following her or get distracted.

(The man walks across the stage and waits outside a doorway. Three STAR-WOMEN walk out, smiling, laughing and talking. One of them drops quinoa along the floor. He follows the trail for some time, then after a while grabs her.)

STAR-WOMAN: *Yau!* Who is grabbing me? Let go! *Amaya!* Let go! *Ay!*

SON: Not for anything will I let you go again, *urpu sunqu*. Not for all the *chicha* in *Cuzco*.

STAR: What did you come here for? I would have gone back down. Let me go now!

SON: Not for all the coca in *Sonqo*, *urpichay*. (*Shivers with hunger*).

STAR (*craftily*): Now, now, *urpichay*, *urpu sunqu*, you look so hungry, so tired. I wish I had something to give you, but all I have was all the *quinoa* I dropped. Help me pick it up so I can make a meal for you.

SON: I *am* hungry, but am I a guinea pig? Is *quinoa* off the ground all you offer your husband after such a long journey? Where is a real *runa* meal?

STAR: Now, now, don't be angry, *urpichay*. I cannot let my parents see you, or I would give you something more. I can bring you something more if you will hide in this hole here, a real nice, tasty little stew. You will love it.

(The man, convinced, lets her go and sinks down to the floor, where she wraps her cloak around him and scampers off. She goes over to the Condor, and flirts and romps with him. The man grows impatient. He whistles. She ignores him.)

SON: *Urpichay!* (Still, she ignores, and chats with her friends. He is hungry now, and sweeping up the quinoa from the floor.) *Mamaytay!* (The STAR-WOMAN finally comes back impatiently.) It's been a year and you forgot to bring me food.

STAR-WOMAN: Just get out! It's time you left!

(SON walks dejectedly to the lakeside, by the condor.)

SON: Now how can I find anyone to carry me? Hey – what's happening with you?

CONDOR (*simultaneously*): What's happening with you?

SON: Yesterday my wife threw me out. She's finished with me.

CONDOR: *Akakalau!* That's terrible! How could she do that?

SON: Condor, carry me down to the earth, to my home.

CONDOR: All right, I'll take you. But first we must bathe in the lake, and then you will have to repay me two llamas in return for my carrying you.

SON: I'll repay you for sure – just carry me down right away.

SERVANT # 1: They traveled as before, and three whole years later...

(*Tirakuna take their places again to signify the ayllu. CONDOR and SON enter opposite MAMAY and TAYTAY. The CONDOR drags the SON over to his parents.*)

MAMAY and TAYTAY: *Waway!*

CONDOR: Here, I've brought your son to you. Now you must take good care of him.

SON: Mamay, Taytay, I'm never going to marry. Never again will I take a wife. That woman was my heart's only desire. I'm going to stay single like this until I die.

TAYTAY: Well, if you really don't want to marry again, we'll take care of you.

HE TURNS TO HIS WIFE AND THEY LAMENT: Oh, how will we live now? Have have a grown son who can't take care of himself. What will become of us?

-----INTERJECTION-----

(*SERVANT #1 moves onto the stage with a hand-broom to sweep up the quinoa, merging into the kitchen-scene.*)

SERVANT #2: And that's the story of the Star-Wife.

(ARGUEDAS has nodded off.)

XX

SCENE 3: Kitchen

SERVANT #2: Waway?

SERVANT #1: I think he's asleep Mamay.

SERVANT #2: We should sleep now, too.

[The women tend the fire briefly, cross themselves and say "Buenos noches" to each other, lay down, and go to sleep.]

STEPMOTHER [bursting in angrily]: The gate! Someone left the gate open!

SERVANT #1 [groggy, startled] : Mamay?

STEPMOTHER: One of you left the gate open and the pigs have gotten loose!

ARGEUDAS [waking]: Seniors?

SERVANT #2 [awake now]: Mamay, we always close the—

STEPMOTHER: It's open—wide open!

SERVANT #3: But Mamay, I closed it earlier this evening after dinner.

STEPMOTHER: You Indians are useless! Go find them now, or they'll be added to what you owe us.

[STEPMOTHER storms out of the kitchen, and SERVANT #2 and #3 bundle up and rush outside to find the pigs. SERVANT #1 and ARGUEDAS stay in the kitchen, awake now.]

ARGUEDAS [worried]: Do you think they'll find the pigs?

SERVANT #1: Go back to sleep, Waway. They'll find them.

ARGUEDAS: But—

SERVANT #1: Shh...it will be alright, just go to sleep.

[SERVANT #1 sits for a while, and then chews some coca, quietly asking the Tirakuna to help the other women find the pigs.]

ARGUEDAS [after a long pause]: Why does my stepmother treat you and the other Indians so poorly?

SERVANT #1 [after a pause]: The misti have always treated the runa this way, Waway. Ever since the Spaniards came and defeated the Inca it's been like this.

ARGUEDAS: It just...doesn't seem right. Will it always be this way?

SERVANT #1: [sighs and pulls the blanket over ARGUEDAS'S shoulder.] Have I ever told you the story of the Pongo's Dream?

ARGUEDAS: No, mamay.

SERVANT #1:

A little man headed to his master's mansion. As one of the serfs on the lord's estate, he had to perform the duty of a pongo, a lowly house servant. He had a small and feeble body, a meek spirit. His clothes were old and tattered. Everything about him was pitiful. The great lord, owner of the mansion and lands surrounding it, could not help laughing when the little man greeted him in the mansion's corridors.

XX

SCENE 4: Pongo's Dream

[Light fades from kitchen to scene with landowner, pongo and serfs]

MASTER:

What are you? A person or something else?
[in front of all servants]

[the pongo bowed his head and did not answer. He stood frightened, eyes frozen.]

Let's see! With those worthless little hands, you must at least know how to scrub pots or use a broom. Take this garbage away!

[the pongo knelt to kiss the master's hand and followed him hanging his head.]

[quick spotlight change - interjection from Arguedas to kitchen servants...]

-----INTERJECTION-----

ARGUEDAS:

What a silly little man! [giggling to himself] But why is the master so mean to him??

SERVANT #1:

Now shhhhh waway! Settle down and just listen! The little man had a small body but an average man's strength. Whatever he was told to do he did well, but he always wore a slight look of horror on his face. Some of the serfs laughed at him while others pitied him. The little man rarely talked to anyone. He worked and ate quietly. Whatever they ordered him to do was done obediently.

[Pongo washes dishes or sweeps with broom... other serfs make orders, pointing fingers at him and he nods his head, saying...]

PONGO:

Yes, papacito, yes, mamacita.

SERVANT #1:

--- These were the only words he uttered.

Perhaps because of the little man's frightened look and his threadbare, filthy clothes, or perhaps because of his unwillingness to talk, the lord regarded the pongo with special contempt.

[SERVANTS #1 and #2 return after finding the pigs. After some talk with SERVANT #1 about finding the pigs, they settle down and listen and the story resumes. *Light fades completely from kitchen to scene with pongo, master and serfs*]

SERVANT #1:

He enjoyed humiliating him most at dusk, when all the serfs gathered to say the Hail Mary in the mansion's great hall. He would shake him vehemently in front of the serfs like a piece of animal skin. He would push his head down and force him to kneel, and then, when the little man was on his knees, slap him lightly on the face.

MASTER:

I believe you are a dog... Bark!

--- Stand on all fours!

[the pongo obeys and begins crawling on the floor]

Walk sideways like a dog!

[Master laughing... his whole body shaking with exhilaration]

Come back here!

[the pongo returns running sideways, arriving out of breath]

Perk up your ears hare! You are just an ugly hare!
--- Sit on your two paws! Put your hands together!
[meanwhile some of the serfs are pointing and laughing, while others quietly say their
Hail Marys in the background]

MASTER:

Get out of here, offal!

[quick spotlight change to Arguedas in the kitchen.]

ARGUEDAS:

Mamay... why does the pongo act out such nonsense?? He is not an animal!
He should----

SERVANT #1:

(Quechua term) Yes, yes Arguedas, you are right.. the pongo is not an animal. But let me finish telling you the story. Lie down.

SERVANT #1 (resumes):

And so, everyday, in front of the other serfs, the master would make the pongo jump to his demands. He would force him to laugh, to fake tears. He would hand him over to the other workers so that they could ridicule him too.

SERVANT #2 [interjects]:

BUT... one afternoon, during the Hail Mary, when the hall was filled with everyone who worked and lived on the lord's estate and the master himself began to stare at the pongo with loathing and contempt, that same little man spoke very clearly. His face remained a bit frightened...

[light fades to scene with pongo, master and serfs]

PONGO:

Great lord, please grant me permission. Dear lord, I wish to speak to you.

[the master could not believe his ears!]

MASTER:

Talk... if you can.

PONGO:

My father, my lord, my heart... Last night, I dreamt that the two of us had died. Together we had died.

MASTER:

YOU with ME?? YOU? Tell all Indian.

PONGO:

Since we were both dead men, my lord, the two of us were standing naked before our dear father St. Francis, both of us, next to each other.

MASTER:

And then? Talk!

PONGO:

When he saw us dead, naked, both standing together, our dear father Saint Francis looked at us closely with those eyes that reach and measure who knows what lengths. He examined you and me, judging I believe, each of our hearts, the kind of person we were, the kind of person we are. You confronted that gaze as the rich and powerful man that you are, my father.

MASTER:

And you?

PONGO:

I cannot know how I was, great lord. I cannot know my worth.

MASTER:

Well keep talking!

PONGO:

Then, our father spoke...

ST. FRANCIS:

May the most beautiful of all the angels come forth. May a lesser angel of equal beauty accompany the supreme one. May the lesser angel bring a golden cup filled with the most delicate and translucent honey.

MASTER:

And then?

PONGO:

My owner, as soon as our great father St. Francis gave his order, an angel appeared, shimmering, tall as the sun. He walked very slowly until he stood before our father. A smaller angel, beautiful, glowing like a gentle flower, marched behind the supreme angel. He was holding in his hands a golden cup.

MASTER:

And then??

ST. FRANCIS:

Supreme angel, cover this gentleman with the honey that is in the golden cup. Let your hands be feathers upon touching this man's body.

PONGO:

And so, the lofty angel lifted the honey with his hands and glossed your whole body with it, from your head down to your toenails. And you swelled with pride. In the splendor of the heavens, your body shone as if made of transparent gold.

MASTER:

That is the way it must be. And what happened to you?

PONGO:

When you were shining in the sky, our great father St. Francis gave another order.

ST. FRANCIS:

From all the angels in heaven, may the very least, the most ordinary come forth. May that angel bring along a gasoline can filled with human excrement.

MASTER:

And then?

PONGO:

A worthless, old angel with scaly feet, too weak to keep his wings in place, appeared before our father. He came very tired, his wings drooping at his sides, carrying a large can.

MASTER:

And then?

ST. FRANCIS:

Listen. Smear the body of this little man with the excrement from that can you brought. Smear his whole body any way you want and cover it all the best you can. Hurry up!

PONGO:

So the old angel took the excrement with his course hands and smeared my body unevenly, sloppily, just like you would smear mud on the walls of an ordinary adobe house. And in the midst of the heavenly light, I stank and was filled with shame.

MASTER:

Just as it should be!... Keep going! Or is that the end?

PONGO:

No, my little father, my lord. When we were once again together, yet changed, before our father St. Francis, he took another look at us, first at you, then at me, a long time. With those eyes that reach across the heavens, I don't know to what depths, joining night and day, memory and oblivion. Then he said...

ST. FRANCIS:

Whatever the angels had to do with you is done. Now... lick each other's bodies slowly, for all eternity.

PONGO:

At that moment, the old angel became young again. His wings regained their blackness and great strength. Our father entrusted him with making sure that his will was carried out.

XX

SCENE 5: Kitchen

SERVANT 1:

It's said that someday the Incas will return in a *Pachakuti*—a turning around of the world—with a series of great storms and earthquakes. They say that every Spanish building made from Inca stones by Indian hands will crumble.

SERVANT 3:

But the Inca walls will still be standing. In fact, they'll reach to the sky!

SERVANT 2:

Inkaríy has been living inside—in the underworld—ever since Pizarro the priest killed him. And the day this world ends, he'll emerge and join all the runas.⁴

SERVANT 1:

Ay! The Inca were great builders—*santuyuq!*

ARGUEDAS:

Experts.

SERVANT 2:

—Great builders because they really did talk with the Tirakuna. And the Tirakuna were always talking with them.

SERVANT 1:

The Inca could herd boulders onto walls as Runa herd sheep.⁵

ARGUEDAS:

That's silly! I've never seen a wall move! The Inca stones *move?*

SERVANT 3:

Not on command; not anymore.

⁴ Andean Lives, 35.

⁵ Of Bear-Men, 44.

SERVANT 1:

I've seen the stones flow like the *yawar mayu*.

ARGUEDAS:

[recalling word] ...(+3) Bloody... river?

SERVANT 1:

Like the summer rivers flooding [*that flood?* –ed.] with muddy water. When the sun shines on them, they glisten like blood.

SERVANT 2:

They *can* move again! Maybe someday. (+5) Probably not in my lifetime.

ARGUEDAS:

In my lifetime?

[The question is ignored. **SERVANTS & ARGUEDAS are preparing for bed. ARGUEDAS, however, is becoming too excited to sleep.**]

SERVANT 1:

If you want to see walls that really *are* alive—and big as beasts—someday you should go to Sascayhuamán—the fortress just above Cuzco. Inkariy was the one who built Sascayhuamán—

ARGUEDAS:

—Have you been there?

SERVANT:

Of course. Sascayhuamán isn't far from here. You pass it on the road to the ayllu where I lived a child.

ARGUEDAS:

Who lives there now?

SERVANT:

Nobody's allowed to live there.

ARGUEDAS:

It must be that the Inca doesn't allow it. Do the stones sing at night?

SERVANT:

They might.

ARGUEDAS:

Like the largest river boulders or cliff rocks. The Incas must have known the history of all the enchanted stones and have had them brought to construct the fortress.

ARGUEDAS:

Let's go see the fortress!

SERVANT:

You can't go there at night. The walls are dangerous. They say they devour children. But the stones are like those of the Inca Roca's palace, except that each one is higher than the top of the palace.

ARGUEDAS:

What does Sascayhuamán mean?

SERVANT:

Don't you remember? *Huaman* means 'eagle.' *Sascay huamán* means satiated eagle. There's always eagles there.

ARGUEDAS:

Satiated? They must fill themselves with air.

SERVANT:

No, they don't eat. They're the fortress eagles. They don't need to eat, just soar over the fortress. They never die. They'll be at the *Pachakuti*.

[The lights fade a little lower as SERVANTS, one by one, sink into slumber. Laying awake beside them, ARGUEDAS, restless, does not. He waits for the last of his bedmates to fall asleep, then carefully, quietly slips outside. It is still dark. With TIRAKUNA looking on, ARGUEDAS finds his way along the path that will take him to Sascayhuamán—and from there, the ayllu.]

[A more complete idea of the TIRAKUNA's role in this sequence can be developed by the principals involved. ARGUEDAS should not expect to travel alone at night unmolested.]

XX

SCENE 6: Arguedas visits the Walls

[Lights fade up slowly: Daybreak (*Y'llary*). ARGUEDAS is arriving at the WALLS at Sascayhuamán.]

ARGUEDAS (NARRATOR):

In broken ranks, the walls settled into the gray, grassy slope. Some black birds, smaller than condors, soared over the rows of walls or plummeted down from the depths of the sky. ... Sascayhuamán appeared, encircling the mountains, and I could distinguish the rounded, blunt profile of the angles of the Inca walls. I ran to see them.

The stones were larger and stranger than I had imagined. The lines of the wall frolicked in the sun; the stones had neither angles nor straight lines; each one was like a beast that moved in the sunlight, making me want to rejoice, to run shouting with joy. (18-19 / 164).

Together, they flowed like a river, “undulating and unpredictable... The wall was stationary but all its lines were seething and its surface was as changeable as that of the flooding summer rivers.” (6, 7 / 143, 144).

I walked along the Inca wall stone by stone; the lines I touched burned on the palms of my hands. Each one was singing. And I felt the sad and powerful current that buffets children who must face, all alone, a world fraught with monsters and fire and great rivers that sing the most beautiful of all music as they break upon the stones and the islands.” (38)

[Estimated read time for NARRATOR – 1:27]

[ARGUEDAS walks along WALLS. The stones sing.]

[OPTIONAL: STEPMOTHER (or another character) follows ARGUEDAS’ path, looking for him (calling aloud?). On stage, the two don’t appear very far from one another, yet they never make contact. We will have to decide if this works, thematically and practically.]

XX

SCENE 7: Ayllu

[Walls dissolve into Ayllu, which welcomes ARGUEDAS with a song & dance.]

SONG & DANCE: To be determined.

THE END.

Characters in each scene

SCENE 1:

Characters:

Three servants

Arguedas

Ensemble:
Tirakuna (4)

Narrator:
An older Arguedas

SCENE 2:

Characters:
Star-wife
Young man
Mamay
Taytay

Ensemble:
Attendant/Neighbor
Attendant
Tirakuna (4)

Kitchen Narrators:
Arguedas
Three Servants

SCENE 3:

Characters:
Three servants
Arguedas
Stepmother

Ensemble:
Tirakuna (4)

SCENE 4:

Characters:
Kitchen characters (Arguedas and three servants)
Pongo
Master
St. Francis

Ensemble:
Other servants

SCENE 5:

Characters:
Three servants

Arguedas

Ensemble:

Tirakuna (4)

SCENE 6:

Characters:

Arguedas

Singing wall

Narrator:

An older Arguedas

SCENE 7:

Characters:

Arguedas

Runa (#?)

Tirakuna (4)