

Norma(l) Dream

SCENE 1

Speaker goes on the stage.

Speaker: Have you ever wondered what it would be like to go back in time? Of course you had. To be the witness of all the historical milestones... Today you will get it! Well, almost...

The speaker goes off stage and the lights go down.

Darkness. Sound of falling glass and no signal in the phone. The lights are slowly getting lighter. In the middle of the scene, there is a bed with a thin, naked woman on it with a telephone next to her head. Gramophone next to her bed is on. Under the bed, on the floor there is a bottle of Chanel No. 5

Off voice: August 5, 1962. Brentwood, Los Angeles. California. Norma Jeane Mortenson is lying naked on her bed with a phone at her ear. On the floor you can see a bottle of freshly open Chanel No. 5... Right now, chemical reactions are taking place in Norma's pineal, producing substance as powerful as LSD. Dear audience, fasten your imaginary seatbelts because we are taking you on a trip of your life! A trip to Norma's head. Or as the world rather called her, Marilyn Monroe's head.

Strobe lights and music start (a remixed, psychedelic version of Diamond's Are a Girl's Best Friends). Dancers come on stage in black jumpsuits. After a while they split and some of them dance at the beginning of the stage and the other half lifts Norma up and puts a reflecting dress on her. When bring her at the top of the stage like an angel and put her on the ground strobes and music stop and a single beam of light is directed right at her from the ceiling. Then all the dancers go down and slowly move away from her.

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Norma: Wow! Why am I shining like that!

Voice: Because you are a diamond!

Norma: Oh I wish I was! No scars, no feelings... perfection!

Voice: Darling, I am telling you, you are a diamond! A woman comes on stage.

Woman: One, big, fat diamond!

Norma: I know I might have gain a little weight lately, but I am working on it! I really am!

Woman: No, no! Stay as you are! I am gonna cut you in smaller pieces sweetheart! Otherwise you are no good!

Norma: Cut me?! Are you crazy missy?!

Woman: What good are you in one piece? Of course I could sell ya like you are, but it is much harder to find a connoisseur than let's say someone who wants to buy a diamond ring! And even if I did find a connoisseur, he would have probably cut you anyway at some point. Ya know, for profit!

Norma: You don't understand! I am a human being! You cannot cut a human being! Are you insane?! Can't you see I am a real woman?!

Woman: Oh please, you are not a human! Take a look at yourself! You are nothing but an object! Big, shiny object worth a lot of greens!

Norma: No! No! It must be that dress! Take it off me! (she is screaming and trying to rip off the dress) They put it on me! They did it! Take it off! (The woman is slowly

approaching Norma. Strobes are on again and her scream is looped and slow-paced. Some man enter the stage. The woman is gone)

Norma: Take it off! Take that dress off me! Help, please!

(Men are ripping Norma's dress off and go to stand in a row in front of her. In the meantime she screams)

Norma: See! I told you I am a woman! See! It was that dress! I do not shine! I am no diamond!

(Another man enters the scene and stands above Norma)

Auctioneer: Who gives 5,000?

Man1: 5,000?! She's too fat for 5,000!

Man2: And her make-up is a mess!

Man3: She wasn't suppose to have feelings and yet here she is all crying and screaming!

Auctioneer: Hmmm. 1,000 then!

Norma: Excuse me! I am not for sale! Has everyone gone crazy today?! Women are for purchase!

Man1: And now she is being rational! I am not paying for that!

Man2: Products are not supposed to think!

Auctioneer: Ma'am, but...

Norma: But what!

Auctioneer: You are a recycled, very used product... If you will not go today... no one may want to buy you ever again. Let's face it, you are not getting any younger! And looks is all you are left with...

SCENE 2

Norma covers herself up with remains of the dress and silently leaves the men. Lights go down. Train sounds can be heard. Lights appear and disappear above the stage like if a train was passing by. When the lights are we see that there is a building on the right with a little roof above the entrance and in the background we can see train rails. Norma is sitting on that roof with Hank Williams who is playing the guitar. She has a big, man's jacket on)

Hank: Say hey, good lookin' whatcha got cookin'?
How's about cookin' something up with me?

Norma: One more time, one more time!

Hank: Okay sweetheart, but this time together, alright?

Norma: Yeah, sure!

Norma and Hank: Say hey, good lookin' whatcha got cookin'?
How's about cookin' something up with me?
Hey, sweet baby don't you think maybe
We can find us a brand new recipe?
I got a hot rod ford and a two dollar bill
And I know a spot right over the hill
There's soda pop and the dancin's free
So if you want to have fun come along with me
Hey, good lookin' whatcha got cookin'?
How's about cookin' something up with me?
I'm free and ready so we can go steady
How's about saving all your time for me
No more lookin' I know I been cookin'
How's about keepin' steady company?
I'm gonna throw my date book over the fence
And find me one for five or ten cents
I'll keep it 'til it's covered with age
'Cause I'm writin' your name down on every page
Say hey, good lookin' whatcha got cookin'?
How's about cookin' something up with me?

A train passes by and as its horn is heard the lights go down and we can hear the train moving further and further away.

SCENE 3

Norma is in a dress and a kitchen apron facing a wall and humming. A man is sitting at the table reading a newspaper. Sounds of sea waves are quietly coming from the fridge soon after they start talking.

Man: Whatcha got cooking?

Norma: What? (She turns around)

Man: I said, whatcha got cooking? And get me some beer would ya?!

Norma: Oh get it yourself you lazy sleeze bag! I have had enough of this!

Man: Hey! Where do you think you're going?!

Norma: As far from you as possible!

She puts the pot on the stove, takes off the apron and goes to the fridge. When she opens the it, the sound is getting really loud and water splashes on the floor. She walks into the fridge and the lights go down. Another sounds are added in the darkness- laughter, splashes, lifeguard's whistle. When the light is on again, Norma is on a beach, lying on blanket in a swimming suit

and sunglasses on. Sipping a drink and reading a book- all of this on a huge magazine's cover (like a picture).

Woman: Miss Monroe?

Norma: Yes?

Woman: I am sorry, I do not want to bother you, but it's just that I admire you so much! I do not know if you remember me, but we used to work together. In the factory! Gosh, I was so shocked when you left! I was so worried about you...

Norma: Why? You didn't think I was gonna make it?

Woman: Oh, no! That's not it at all! You've always been different from the rest of us! So beautiful and charismatic! But... I was afraid that such young girl could be easily hurt, ya know? I was afraid they'd take advantage of ya!

Norma: See, everything turned out just fine!

Woman: Oh yes! You look amazing! Everyone loves you! You must be so happy now!

(A man in a suit with a cigar appears behind them)

Man: Yes, she must! That is in her contract. And according to that contract she should not be here right now. She should be in a studio, the whole set is waiting for her!

(The light is only on Norma and the man right now)

Norma: Did I get a new part?

Man: Yes! And this one is gonna be a hit babe! Get your ass in the car.

(Girl and a woman pass by)

Girl: Mommy! That is her! Marilyn Monroe! Are you real?

(Norma comes out from the magazine and after the dialogue goes back into the picture)

Norma: No, dear. I never was. Marilyn Monroe doesn't exist.

Women: Sweetheart, come back here and leave this lady alone!

(The girl runs back to her mom and they disappear behind the stage)

Norma: What's the part? Is it a serious movie?

Man: Serious movie? Honey, no one wants to see you in a "serious movie". It's a comedy! Poor girl from the country gets to the city and ...

Norma: No! Enough with the sweet, stupid, blond girl! I want something more!

Man: More?!

Norma: Yes! I am more than just a face and boobs! I.Want. More! Something more intellectual!

She knocks over the magazine and stands now with no background in the spotlight. Then everything turns dark.

SCENE 4

Norma appears in a white dress and a crown on her head, next to her is Marlon Brando, also in a crown and white suit. They are playing chess.

Norma: I sure glad to see you Marlon.

Marlon: I am glad to see you too my dear! It is your turn.

Norma: It's funny don't you think?

Marlon: What is Mar?

Norma: How easy it is to make someone a sex symbol and how hard it is to make someone seen as a smart person, you know? Look at me. There are tons of girls prettier than me, thinner than me, more confident. Yet, all it took to make me a sex bomb was to dye my hair blond, get my nose and chin fixed and that is all! But I am not that person Marlon. I think I will always be this small-town girl working in the factory. In a pair of old jeans and a checkered shirt. No matter what they put on me, no matter how much make-up I wear and no matter how many men are after me, I will always feel that I do not fit there... This is not what I dream of.

Marlon: I don't think we ever get what we dream dear. That is why dreams so much more appealing than real life. But you know Mar? Tons of girls would kill to be you.

Norma: No Marlon, first of all, they'd kill to be Marilyn, not Norma. Second of all, they'd do that because they don't know what she went through to become what they see. And all I wanted was to just to be an actress. Wonderful actress. Smart one, strong one. But no one is interested in that. They'd rather see that silly blond who shows a little skin again.

Marlon: That's showbiz kid.

Norma: Marlon. Do me a favor, would ya?

Marlon: What is it dear?

Norma: Don't be one of them.

Marlon: What do you mean?

Norma: You're a smart guy, you know what I mean! A handsome, intelligent, famous actor. Women would do anything for you. Don't make them do that. Deep down many of us don't want it. We just cannot say no. Like if someone was holding our throats. And men often take advantage of that and not only use us but make us do things we never thought we'd do.

Marlon: Oh Mar, I would love to make that promise... but just like you, even though I have more privileges, even though there are less wolves to attack me, I am still just a pawn.

Some dancers in black jumpsuits come on stage and move both Norma and Marlon. While Norma is taken to the front of the stage Marlon is taken off the stage. Dancers take off Norma's crown and take off her dress so that she is only in her underwear.

Norma: No! We're more than this! We can control that! Marlon, say we can!

Marlon: I will promise to do my best Norma.

Norma: That is not enough! I want more than this!

Whispers from the darkness: More? She wants more! It is not enough. More she says. *Dancers dance in black jumpsuits whispering the same phrases all the time. When she starts to speak again, all the other voices go quiet*

SCENE 5

Norma: Yes! I can act! I've been doing it ever since I remember!

(Someone comes from the darkness)

Gwen: So did I honey, so did I.

Norma: Gwen? Is that you?

Gwen: Yes. But sweetheart, you realize what more means, don't you? Put this on *(She gives her a tricot)*

Norma: I am not afraid of hard work!

Gwen: Oh, I am not talking about work. I am talking about this.

(Light turns on and there is Wonderland-like scenery, with a smiling cat's head in the center with empty eye holes. Below the head there is a huge heart and kids with few old people watching over them, standing still like if they were frozen. A ball stopped in the air with some other objects and a butler with silver platter with pills on it. A huge bottle [human size] with a card "drink me")

Norma: What is that?

Gwen: Prices for our ambitions dear.

Norma goes around to look at those things. She stands behind the bottle for a while. When she comes out she continues her dialogue with Gwen who started stretching.

Norma: I don't think I understand Gwen...

Gwen: Darling, it is easy!

Someone appears at the stage from the above.

Man in a top hat: It's still land! You'll find here everything ambitious ones have to give up. Things they dream about, things they need in order to continue. Even ambitions have their price. It's like a pact you see...

Norma: Are... are...

Man in top hat: There she goes stuttering again.

Norma: Are those my kids?

Man: Oh no! But actually, they could have been.

Norma: Really?

Man: Yeah, because they're still *(he laughs)*

Norma: That is just cruel!

Man: That's just true! No baby would have survived in such body!

Norma: What is wrong with my body?!

(Dancers come in and singing)

Dancer 1: Takes different pills twice a day!

Dancer2: Or more!

Dancer3: Chases them with vodka!

Dancer2: Or other liquor!

Dancer3: Doesn't know who she really is.

All dancers: Stresses out, smokes cigars and goes crazy like her mother!

(Dancers are now at the man's feet. Another man enters.)

Man with a cigar: Do you still want that? Do you still want more?

Norma: Yes...

Man with a cigar: Excellent then! (*Beneath the heart a door opens*) I can help you. Just go through that door

Norma hesitates for a while

Man with a cigar: What is the matter?

Norma: I am a little afraid.

Man in top hat: What are you afraid of if the devil is here? (*laughs*)

(The light goes down as Norma runs through the door. The man with a cigar puts it down on a man in top hat)

SCENE 6

Norma is walking along stage as random man come to her one by one with flowers or her pictures, chocolates etc. She ignores them and walks ahead. At the end of the scene a phone headset comes down from the ceiling.

Voice from the phone: Hello, may I speak to Marilyn Monroe?

Norma: No, you may not.

Voice from the phone: Oh, I see, could you please tell her then...

Norma: Marilyn Monroe is dead. (*lost connection sound as she drops the headset*)

Then a bunch of clothes fall from above in the middle of the stage and a dressing table appears on the other side of the stage. Norma walks to the clothes and chooses a dress with no shoulders and puts it on. She is barefoot. Norma walks to the dressing table and fixes her make-up, washes off the characteristic mole above her lip and takes off the blond wig and now has her natural hair color. She sings through all this time one of Ella Fitzgerald's songs.

SCENE 7

Norma is dancing with Clack Gable

Clark: I read about you in the paper today.

Norma: What did you read Clark?

Clark: How successful you company is. I am proud of you pumpkin!

Norma: And have you seen my new movie?

Clark: Of course I have.

Norma: And? Did you like it?

Clark: No.

(They stop for a second)

Clark: I loved it. You were wonderful. I can't remember the last time I cried like that during a movie. You know what my favorite scene was? When you closed that door, took your bag and left without even looking back.

Norma: You know Clark, that was my favorite scene too. One take.

Clark: Incredible. My smart little Norma finally in the right place.

Norma: Almost Clark, almost. I just need to do one more thing.

Clark: Well, you gotta do whatcha gotta do! Go, go my little bird!

(She gives him a kiss on a cheek and goes off the stage in colorful lights. The whole stage is filled with smoke. Clark disappears)

SCENE 8

Noise of rolling glass on the table, twisting off a jar and dropping something in to it, one by one. With each drop they are heard some screams. They hear the sound of closing the jar. When the lights turn on there is a huge jar on the stage with some men inside. One of them is the president of the USA.

Man1: You crazy bitch, let me out!

Man2: I am gonna die here!

President: Shhh! I demand you let me and my brother out this instant!

Man1: And what about us?! You would leave us here?

President: With all due respect gentlemen, but...

On the screen behind the jar appears Norma's face multiplied, like if many small TVs.

Norma: But yes, he would. He has no honor nor empathy. Just like the rest of you.

Man3: Baby, what are you ta...

Norma: Shush! All you ever wanted was a pretty,thoughtless, well-selling product. A secret sex toy. A property. Well, congratulations! You succeeded. But at me expanse... All this time I played along because I believed that at least one of you saw the real me behind that mask. I thought that you knew it is just an act... Well, how wrong was I... But your lucky days are over. And I am gonna make sure you will never create and use another Marilyn. That you will not steal another life.

Man1: If it wasn't for us, you'd be no one! Hear me?!No one! And now you are an icon! A piece of art one may say!

Norma: Then now I will make you a piece of art. From now on you will live your life on a shelf, behind the glass, so that anyone watch you at any time, in any state. You will get to forget your identity, lose your sanity and remains of your dignity. You will be my installation. I'll call you "a jar of dirt".

In place where was Norma's face is now a sign "NO SIGNAL" and colorful stripes. Light slowly goes down.

SCENE 9

Norma and Elvis are in a dressing room.

Norma: What will you miss the most when you are gone?

Elvis: Happiness I guess. Happiness that is enclosed in a single touch, voice,laughter, sight, smell... It is even hard to explain.

Norma: You know what? Sometimes one movie, poem or a song is not enough to describe one's feelings, so maybe one person and one life is also not enough. Maybe that is why we are reborn over and over again. To experience more.

Elvis: You think that we are reborn?

Norma: Why of course I do! We are all just a handful of dust from a very, very old star, that exploded once! And we are put together from those particles of hers,get life, live it to its fullest and become dust again. Then we are formed again and again! Each time with a little pinch of new particles! That is why we feel so comfortable around some people I think! Because they share the same particles as we! From the same life, you get it? Like if I die and you die,half of our particles might end up together in one person in the next life.

Elvis: And the other half?

Norma: In another person! And, and when those people meet, they will go “Hey, do I know you? You seem familiar”.

Elvis: Yeah, I think I know what you mean.

Norma: Yeah?

Elvis: Yeah... I like that idea.

A woman enters the scene. She looks like a person from the staff.

Woman: Excuse me, Norma Jeane? Norma Jane Mortenson?

Norma: Yes.

Woman: I have a package for you.

Norma: Who is it from?

Woman: Some elderly lady gave it to me in the hallway. She said you’d know what it is.

Norma opens the package and smiles

Norma: Yes, I do, thank you!

Elvis: Are you ready?

Norma: More than ever...

Elvis: Come on, it’s time.

**Norma: Oh, wait! (She puts on shoes that were in the box- a pair of red, glittery heels)
There is no place like home.**

SCENE 10

The lights go down for a moment but there is red shimmering. When the lights are on again Norma is standing with Elvis at the bottom of stairs made of books. They begin to sing Ella Fitzgerald's song and come up.

Norma and Elvis:

Who cares if the sky cares

To fall in the sea?

Who cares what banks fail in Yonkers,

Long as you've got a kiss that conquers?

Why should I care?

Life is one long jubilee,

So long as I care for you

And you care for me!

At the top she says goodbye to Elvis, Marlon Brando, Chaplin, Ella Fitzgerald, Jean Harlow and Donald O'Connor. Each of them gives her a rose. There are other people standing in the line but as she comes to Donald she stops.

Elvis: Come on my sweet Norma, it is time.

Norma: Oh no dear, it is my time. Your light is still on.

She lets go of his hand and smell the bunch of roses she got from her friends. As she throws the roses ahead of her, the lights go down. A single shimmering light slowly goes up from the place she was standing and we can hear her voice in the dark.

Norma from off: Here lay the stars and our place is amongst them.

After that sentence rose petals fall on the audience and a sound sheets taken off the bed are heard and a no signal sound from the phone. When the lights are on again we see Norma's bed again, like in the first scene. Her maid is spreading new sheets and two men are carrying a bag with a body. A policeman enters.

Policeman: M'am! Those sheets you're washing there, those were our evidence!

Maid: She may be gone, but everything needs to stay clean sir.

The policeman takes off the needle from gramophone. Lights go down.

THE END