

Evelyn Brown (A Diary)

Maria Irene Fornes

Edited by Gwendolyn Alker

This script of *Evelyn Brown (A Diary)* is from the recent revival at La MaMa E.T.C. which took place at the Downstairs theatre, May 19–June 4, 2023, directed by Alice Reagan. The original production of *Evelyn Brown (A Diary)* was produced in spring 1980 at the Theater for the New City. Conceived and originally directed by Maria Irene Fornes, the dialogue was taken primarily from a 1909 journal of a housekeeper who lived in Melvin, New Hampshire. The revival was conducted after a five-year recovery project detailed in my accompanying dramaturgical essay. The script is based on the most recent version of the original Fornes script, which is also available online as a digital resource. Any remaining spelling and grammar inconsistencies were present in the original script and have been corrected only when necessary. I have inserted comments in brackets where helpful, and stage directions have been augmented to explain blocking previously detailed by Fornes's drawings. Donald Eastman designed the sets for both the original production and the revival. Entrances and exits in this script conform to Eastman's 2023 set.

GA

Characters:

Evelyn

Evelyn Brown

The set is a wooden temple suggestive in its lack of decor of a puritan place of worship. However, its shape is closer to the interior of a mausoleum.

PROLOGUE

A dim white-gray light begins to light the stage. EVELYN stands center stage blindfolded. "Child Grove" plays in its entirety. After standing in stillness, she turns three times counterclockwise. Toward the end of the piece EVELYN BROWN is seen standing in the furthest upstage area of the corridor. She is also blindfolded and turns three times clockwise.

*As the music ends the lights fade. ["Child Grove" is from *More Path Rent* by Douglas Ecker, 1976, and was a key inspiration to Fornes for the original production of *Evelyn Brown (A Diary)*.]*

AT CHARLIE'S

Jan. 1 – Jan. 8

EVELYN is now center stage without the blindfold. She moves in the pattern indicated below with her head, torso, and hips always facing front. The rhythm is fast without rushing. She always stops at center to speak. The stage directions between the speeches indicate how many times or fractions of time the pattern is executed.



EVELYN walks the pattern four times.

EVELYN: January 1st. Here with Aunt Kate in Wolfboro. Spent the day with her went down to Nat's store with her also to the Post Office. Got a letter from the Church in Alfred, also a New Year's present from Dr. Gardner. In the evening Margaret and I called on Mrs. Davis and Mable. [Brown was inconsistent with her spellings, such as with "Wolfeboro," the town near where she lived.]

EVELYN walks one-half of the pattern stage left.

Second. Cold this morn 6 below zero. Have got to go to Melvin. Went over to Plumie's and took dinner, then Wesley J came for me and I came with him to Melvin. Stopped here to Charlie's, found the School Teacher still here. [Brown capitalized many nouns, such as "School Teacher," perhaps a remnant of a practice of capitalizing nouns that was more commonplace in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.]

EVELYN walks one-half of the pattern stage right.

January 3rd. Sunday. Felt tired all day, think I took a little cold. Charlie went with me up to my cottage, to carry up some things. Then we rode up as far as Mrs. Fernald's place to get his mittens. Called at Mrs. Gordon's to see Mr. Porter. Warmer today.

EVELYN walks one-third of the pattern.

Fourth. More mild. Sed washed and I helped her some about the work. Went over to the Office called to see Aunt Lydia a minute, and went up to the Cottage, Frank overtook me and went too. He and Lizzie were here to dinner John Haley and Mrs. Horn called.

EVELYN walks one-half of the pattern stage right.

Fifth. A hard rainstorm. Glad to see it. Wells nearly dry, the first we have had for a long time. Made potato bread for Sarah and helped about the housework,

EVELYN walks one-sixth of the pattern stage left.

Wednesday. Mild Have not done much today, helped Sed a little and done a little mending myself.

EVELYN walks one-half of the pattern stage left.

January 7th. Colder Helped a little around the house and washed out a few things for myself. This afternoon called on Aunt Lydia and Mrs. Piper and went to the Office for the mail.

EVELYN walks one-sixth of the pattern stage right.

Friday. Zero weather this morn. Have not done much around the house, but sewing on sheet for myself. Aunt Lydia called to see me this p.m. And Sed had other callers. Went to the Office for the mail.

EVELYN exits through hallway 1. She and EVELYN BROWN enter carrying a table through hallway 1. On the table there are:

2 potatoes

2 paring knives

1 pan

1 masher

1 bowl

1 pitcher with water

2 wooden spoons

1 cup with yeast

A box with flour

Newsprint paper covering the table.

They both stand upstage of the table facing the audience.

EVELYN: The following is Mrs. Hiram Hill's recipe for domestic bread which received the first premium from the Rhode Island Society for the promotion of Industry. For two loaves of the ordinary size, take two potatoes (*They take one potato each.*), pare them. (*They do.*) ["Recipe" is the original spelling that Fornes used. It may have come from Brown's diary, or from one of the other found texts that Fornes used to construct the script.]

EVELYN BROWN: Slice very thin. (*They slice the potatoes and put them in the pan.*)

EVELYN: And boil quick until quite soft. (*EVELYN puts on the top of the pan. In unison, they step away from the table for a beat, then they return. EVELYN empties the potatoes in the bowl. EVELYN BROWN starts to mash the potatoes.*)

EVELYN BROWN: Then mash it to a fine pulp.

EVELYN: (*Pouring a trickle of water in the bowl.*) And add, little by little, two cups of boiling water.

EVELYN BROWN mashes a moment longer, then takes the spoon and stirs.

EVELYN BROWN: Stir until a starch is formed. (*She stirs a little longer and stops. They look at the bowl.*)

EVELYN: Let it cool. (*They look at it. EVELYN BROWN waves her hand over it. EVELYN blows at it. EVELYN BROWN feels the side of the bowl for heat, then slowly pours the yeast while EVELYN stirs.*)

EVELYN BROWN: Then add one third of a cup of yeast. (*EVELYN BROWN begins to stir as she continues speaking.*) This forms the "sponge" which should remain in a moderately warm place for ten or twelve hours, or overnight until it becomes very light and frothy. (*As she talks, EVELYN covers the bowl with a cloth, she then pulls off the cloth with a flourish.*) Even if a little sour.

EVELYN starts to add flour while EVELYN BROWN continues to stir.

EVELYN: When the sponge is ready, add flour, and work it in. (*EVELYN BROWN works the flour in until it is solid. EVELYN starts to spread flour on table, and on her hands. EVELYN BROWN also slaps her hands on table to coat them with flour.*) Until you have formed a stiff, firm mass.

EVELYN BROWN moves the bowl to the side of the table. EVELYN puts flour on the table. EVELYN BROWN places the bowl on its side. EVELYN moves the mass from the bowl to the table and works the mass a moment vigorously. Then, she steps to the side allowing EVELYN BROWN to work on the mass.

EVELYN BROWN works on the mass with great flourish. Then she steps to the side to allow EVELYN to work. EVELYN moves away from the table to run in and hit the mass with vigor. She picks up the mass and throws it on the table several times. She steps aside to allow EVELYN BROWN to work. EVELYN BROWN works with augmented flourish and steps aside to allow EVELYN to come in once more and repeat her previous action. EVELYN BROWN works again with augmented flourish. And EVELYN comes in again and throws the mass against the table.

EVELYN BROWN: (*As if leading an army.*) The longer and more firmly this is kneaded, the better the bread.

EVELYN BROWN picks up the mass. They both hold the mass up in the air and knead it. They pull it in half. EVELYN throws her half on the table. EVELYN BROWN throws her half on the table. EVELYN picks the whole things up, adding flour as she goes. EVELYN BROWN places a piece of paper on the table. EVELYN places the mass on the paper.

EVELYN: Let the kneaded mass remain say from half to three quarters of an hour to rise, then divide into pans, where it should remain, say fifteen minutes; care being taken that it does not rise too much and crack. (*As she talks, EVELYN covers the dough with a cloth. She then pulls off the cloth. EVELYN BROWN divides the dough in two.*) Then put the loaves into a quick oven. (*EVELYN BROWN wraps the dough in the paper and carries it upstage.*) And bake. (*EVELYN BROWN stops walking.*) Say three-quarters of an hour. (*EVELYN BROWN disappears through door 7, leaves the dough, and re-enters. Throughout this speech, EVELYN starts wiping her hands.*) If the oven is not hot enough, the bread will rise and crack; if too hot, the surface will harden too rapidly, and confine the loaf.

EVELYN begins to carry items from table out through door 2 and then reenters. EVELYN BROWN wipes her hand, looks back at the oven, then back to the table. They remove everything that lies on the table and take it off stage. EVELYN through door 2, EVELYN BROWN through door 7. EVELYN returns to remove the tablecloth, which she folds in a fashion resembling the folding of a flag. EVELYN BROWN returns through door 7 with cloth and cleans the floor. They leave once more. They reenter, through their regular doors. They move the table downstage. They exit and enter, EVELYN through door 2 and EVELYN BROWN through door 7, each carrying a chair which they place at the ends of the table.

AT MRS. GORDON'S

EVELYN sits facing stage left. EVELYN BROWN stands upstage of the table and to the left. EVELYN places a diary on the table.

EVELYN BROWN: Mr. Porter came down for me this morn, am to work for him for a time. Helping Mrs. G about the housework. (*They both read through the following speeches until otherwise indicated.*)

EVELYN: Sunday. Cloudy with a little Snow and rein. Helped Mrs. G do the work and have been reading some. Arthur C. came for milk. And Lizzie Lord called. [Here and below, "rein" is Brown's original spelling for "rain."]

EVELYN BROWN: Cloudy and warm for the season. Have been doing a little of different kinds of housework. Aunt Lydia called for milk this p.m. Read a letter from Ada.

EVELYN: Tuesday the 12th. Cold with a little snow. Mr. Porter and I did a large washing. I got breakfast. Supper, did sweeping & ironing, made beds help wash dishes and the like, am very tired tonight. Got a letter from Mrs. Heath.

EVELYN BROWN: Wednesday January thirteen cold and fair. Got breakfast, washed dishes, made beds, wrung out the clothes, made raise bread, did some ironing for the Baby, sweeping and other work as usual.

EVELYN: Thursday 14 more mild with Snow. Got breakfast washed the dishes made two beds, did sweeping, got the clothes into the house, and dried, and did the most of a large ironing, helped get dinner and supper, and washed the dishes. Have worked all day and am very tired.

EVELYN BROWN: Friday pleasant. Have been doing the usual housework, this forenoon & fixing squash to freeze for pies this p.m. here tended baby most of the time Mrs. P getting tired out. Arthur's Wife and baby called this morn. Mr. P went to Wolfeboro today.

EVELYN: January 16th Very cold. Got breakfast washed dishes sweeping dusting washed three floors, made two kinds of cake, fried doughnuts, made beds, did lots of little things. Mrs. Gordon and Mr. Porter went down to Mr. Frisbey's today. Lizzie Lord called.

EVELYN BROWN: Sunday 17. Cold morning, and a big Snow Storm. Stayed in all day, and just helped Mrs. Gordon do the work, and tend baby a little. Wrote a letter to Plumie. And one to Ada.

EVELYN: Monday 18. Fair and cold. Got breakfast washed the dishes, and Mr. Porter and I did the washing, Mrs. G got the dinner, and I washed the dishes. Then washed the floors. Got supper and washed dishes.

EVELYN BROWN: Jan 19. Cold, cloudy, and a little Snow. Got breakfast washed dishes, did sweeping made two beds, helped put on the dinner and washed the dishes, and ironed the rest of the time until 4 o'clock p.m.

EVELYN: Wednesday. Warmer but not very fair. Got the meals and washed the dishes, did sweeping as usual also swept Mrs. Gordon's room, Ironed some. Rec'd a letter from Emma. Tended Baby some. Saw Charlie go up for a load of wood. Lizzie L. called, made the beds.

EVELYN BROWN: Twenty first. A nice day, been working all day. Did some cooking got all the meals, washed dishes, swept Mrs. Porter's room and the sitting room, wiped the floors some after dinner. And helped tend Baby. Mrs. Will Gordon, Aunt Lydia and Johnie here this p.m. So tired and almost sick.

EVELYN: Friday 22. Partly cloudy, and warm. Got breakfast washed the dishes made beds, did sweeping. As usual also the front hall, and Mrs. Porter's sleeping room. Got dinner Mrs. G and I washed the dishes, then I got ready & walked to Melvin called to Charlie's, waited until the mail came and he brought me up here. Got supper and washed dishes.

EVELYN BROWN: Saturday. Cloudy with some rein. Working all day. The usual work. Cooking and clearing floors and windows. Mr. P went down to the Blacksmith's was late to dinner. Milton come in this evening. Rec'd a letter from Eliza and one from Lela.

EVELYN stands. EVELYN BROWN steps downstage.

EVELYN: Sunday 24th Cloudy with rain and Snow at night. Have felt poorly all day, but managed to get the work done, and have tended baby some. Mrs. Gordon ill today, has had to lie down most of the day. Read a nice sermon this evening. And other reading.

EVELYN BROWN takes out her diary, places it on the table and sits. EVELYN sits. They face each other. They read at an increasingly rapid speed.

EVELYN BROWN: Monday. Cloudy and Snowing some. Did all the housework. Mrs. Gordon feeling poorly today. Called over to see Lizzie Lord this p.m. then came home and made hot gingerbread and biscuit for Supper.

EVELYN: Tuesday 26th. Fair this morn and cold later & reined cloudy with some Snow. Got breakfast washed dishes. Did sweeping. Mr. Porter and I did the washing. And I washed the floors, got supper and washed dishes Rec'd a letter from Plumie.

EVELYN BROWN: Wednesday 27th. Warmer and fair this morn. Cloudy later. Got all the meals. Washed dishes twice Swept made two beds, made raise bread, ironed and tended Baby some. Mrs. G went over to Lizzie this a.m. Nannie this p.m. Milton came in here.

EVELYN: 28th. Fair and cold. Mr. Porter went to Wolfborough. Have not had a very hard day, doing the usual housework and tended Baby some. Cut a dress for Mrs. Gordon this p.m. got supper and washed dishes. Mr. Porter's Mother came home with him.

Through the following speeches, EVELYN brings the pages close to her eyes, as if she were nearsighted, while EVELYN BROWN places the paper away from her eyes. They do this in a slow speed so that the action is imperceptible. They reach the end of this action when the following stage direction occurs.

EVELYN BROWN: Friday 29th. Fair, and fine, been doing the usual housework today, and have worked nearly all the time. Am tired. Mrs. P went with Mr. P up to Hoyts for a ride this p.m.

EVELYN: Saturday 30th of January. Snow storm and an old fashioned one. Got all the meals, washed dishes washed floors, wiped doors, ironed some and have kept busy all day. Made beds, trimmed lamp and such like.

EVELYN BROWN: Sunday 31st. Cold with some wind. Got breakfast and did up the work as usual. This p.m. Mr. Porter took me and Mrs. Gordon to ride, I went down as far as Charlie's and stopped to tea. Mrs. G stopped to Will Gordon's. Mr. P came down after us at night.

EVELYN: February 1st. Monday. Cold ten below zero. Got breakfast and washed the dishes, helped do the chamber work. Mr. P and I did the washing. Then I cleaned up washed floors, helped put the dinner on washed dinner and supper dishes, made hot biscuit for supper, and ironed lots of Baby clothes, worked until Lela called. Past seven at night.

EVELYN BROWN: Tuesday, February 2nd. Fair & cold. Twelve below zero this morn. Got breakfast and all the meals, did most of a large ironing made beds swept and washed dishes did not get through work until 8 o'clock.

EVELYN: Wednesday, February 3rd. Cold and Fair. Mr. P took his mother to Wolfboro. Working around the house as usual this a.m. This p.m. helped Mrs. Gordon sew on her dress.

EVELYN BROWN: Thursday 4th. Cold and cloudy 14 below. Mr. Porter went to Wolfboro again today. Working around the house as usual and helping Mrs. P tend Baby. Wrote to Emma this p.m. Lizzie Lord called.

EVELYN: Friday. Warm for the Season, and fair most of the day. Mrs. Gordon and Mrs. P, not feeling well. So have had most of the housework to do, and tended Baby quite a little. Mrs. Wallace called this p.m. and Charlie D. just stepped in the door a minute. Mr. P went down to Wolfboro on business.

EVELYN BROWN: Saturday 6th. Warm and cloudy with showers this p.m. Have been cooking some washing dishes making cheese, making beds washing floors, trimming lamps, getting the meals, and such like.

EVELYN: Sunday 7th. Fair and warm. After getting breakfast, and doing up the other work, took a walk down to Melvin, went to my Cottage, then down to Charlie's took dinner and supper there. Called down to see Uncle James and Aunt in the p.m. Mr. Porter came after me about six o'clock.

EVELYN BROWN: February 8th. A fine day for washing. Got breakfast washed dishes Mr. Porter and Nannie helped about the washing. Helped get dinner, washed dishes made bed washed floors. Mrs. Will Gordon here this p.m. Got supper as usual and washed the dishes.

EVELYN: Tuesday. Fair and colder. Got breakfast washed dishes. Swept and ironed until 11 o'clock then Aunt Lydia came, was here to dinner, Mrs. G helped me some about dinner, then I did up the work, took care of Baby for Nannie to go over to Lizzie got supper and washed dishes.

EVELYN BROWN: Wednesday 10th Rain and sleet. Ironed this forenoon after doing the usual morning's work. Mrs. G got a boil dinner. After dinner did up the work, fixed up a lot of Pumpkins to stew, trimmed lamps, and got through ready to rest, about 5 o'clock.

EVELYN: Thursday 11 Fair Doing housework as usual this forenoon, this p.m. after I got the work done helped Mrs. G a little about sewing, then wrote a letter to Eliza. Got supper and washed dishes, and helped tend Baby some. This evening wrote two more letters. To Sister Lizzie and Plumie Heath.

EVELYN BROWN: Friday the 12 Fair and warm. Got breakfast did sweeping tended Baby for a time this morn, then washed dishes, answered a telephone call over to Lizzie's came back did more sweeping, got the other two meals, washed dishes, made beds, made raise bread,

She emits a short and deep sigh.

EVELYN: cake, washington pie, and this evening did some mending. February Saturday 13th. Partly cloudy and warm. Got breakfast and dinner, did sweeping trimmed lamps washed dishes, and floors, company today, Nannie's Father and Mother here to dinner. Got supper and washed dishes.

EVELYN BROWN: Sunday. Warm in the morning, but cloudy and cooler toward night. Got breakfast, and dinner washed dishes, did sweeping, and helped tend Baby this a.m. Mr. Porter and Miss Fullington here to dinner. After dinner Mr. Porter took Miss F and I to Melvin, I stopped to Charlie's until evening, then he brought me home to Mrs. Gordon's.

EVELYN: Monday Cloudy with rain and sleet. Have not done much but the usual housework, and helped tend Baby, except to wash some windows this p.m. Have had hard work to keep around and hold my head up.

She sighs.

EVELYN BROWN: Tuesday. Continued rain and sleet. The air raw and cold. Was sick all last night, feel some better this morn, kept busy about the house all the forenoon,

She sighs.

EVELYN: Except to tend Baby a little time. Got supper and washed dishes. Wednesday. Warm and raining all day. Got the meals, washed dishes, did sweeping, made cheese, and two cakes this p.m.

She sighs.

EVELYN BROWN: Had good luck, got supper and washed dishes.

She closes her diary, stands and puts her right leg over the table, going into position 1. [See Fornes's drawings and photos of original production by Sylvia Plachy for the blocking in this section.]

Heard of the death of Mrs. Bert Horn, David Bennet, and others I do not know in Wolfeboro. Thursday 25 Windy and cold. Got breakfast. Washed dishes with Mr. Porter's help. He and Nanny hung all the clothes to dry and she washed some of baby's clothes. Got dinner and Mrs. G wiped some of the dishes. Washed the floors. Made a cheese, got supper, washed dishes,

She sighs and goes to position 2 for a count of two. Then she goes to position 3 at the same time as EVELYN goes to position 1.

EVELYN: Folded clothes and tended baby some. Rec'd letter from Plumie. Friday Continued cold. Doing the usual housework, with extra cooking, made a pan of ginger cookies also one of sugar cookies, fried potatoes for dinner. This p.m. was taken with chills, dosed up well, but feeling poorly tonight. Wesley Ceney's wife died this p.m.

She sighs. They both go to position 2 and hold it for a count of two. Then they both move. EVELYN goes to position 3 and EVELYN BROWN goes to position 4.

EVELYN BROWN: Saturday February 27th. Warmer. Got up and got breakfast and washed the dishes, but had about all I could do to sit up. Trimmed the lamps, and washed the floors. After dinner Mr. Porter brought me and baggage down to Charlie's.

She sighs. EVELYN goes to position 2 and holds it for a count of two. Then they both move. EVELYN goes to 4 and EVELYN BROWN goes to 5.

EVELYN: Did not work but just sat around. Arthur Caverly's baby died about five o'clock. Sunday 28th. More mild, but growing colder toward night. Not feeling

much better have sat around and lain on the lounge all day. Sed went to the funeral of Wesley Ceney's wife this p.m.

She sighs. EVELYN moves to 5 while EVELYN BROWN moves to 6.

EVELYN BROWN: Mrs. Shepard called. Bert Horne died today. Monday 1st of March. Fair and growing warmer. Have done almost nothing today, this a.m. called down to see uncle James and Aunt, also called to see Arthur and Emma. Went to the funeral of their Baby this p.m.

She sighs. EVELYN BROWN moves to 7 while EVELYN moves to 6.

EVELYN: Went with Charlie and Sed. This p.m. about 4 o'clock realized I had taken cold. Tuesday. Cold with Snow. Have felt so mean with my cold, have not done much, helped a little around the house. Fair this p.m. Wednesday, March 3rd. Cold. Not doing much helping Sed a little and sewing.

EVELYN moves to 7 while EVELYN BROWN moves to 8.

EVELYN BROWN: March 4th. Cold and windy. Helping a little around the house, and sewing. Rec'd a letter from Lela tonight saying Ada was sick.

Sigh. EVELYN BROWN moves to 9 while EVELYN moves to 8.

EVELYN: Sunday. Cloudy a little warmer. Not feeling much better. Wanted to go out, but don't dare to. Sed called down to Aunt Lydia's. She has this cold. Lillian went back today. Rob Hunt and Mr. Gendrow called.

EVELYN moves to 9 as EVELYN BROWN moves to 10.

EVELYN BROWN: March 9th. Nice day. Sed sick with the cold so have done all the housework today. And tried to care for her.

EVELYN BROWN moves to 11 as EVELYN moves to 10.

EVELYN: March 10th. Cold day. Sed is some better. Up around the house. Charlie has a cold coming on.

EVELYN moves to 11 as EVELYN BROWN moves to 12.

EVELYN BROWN: March 11th. Cold day. Sed up working on her rug and helping do the work as usual. Charlie suffering with Sciatica. Went to the Office for the mail.

EVELYN BROWN moves to 13 while EVELYN moves to 12.

EVELYN: Friday 12. Helped around the house, did my ironing.

They carry the table out hallway 9. They return, EVELYN through door 7, EVELYN BROWN through hallway 9, and each carry out a chair, EVELYN through door 2 and EVELYN BROWN through hallway 9. EVELYN reenters upstage through hallway 4 to begin her monologue.

“EVERY KITCHEN NEEDS A BOX”

EVELYN: Every kitchen needs a box.
Containing balls of brown thread and twine,
a large and small darning needle.

Rolls of waste paper
and old linen and cotton,
and a supply of common holders.
There should also be another box
Containing a hammer, carpet-tacks,
and nails of all sizes,
a carpet claw.

(She exits through 2.)

Screws and a screw-driver, pincers,
gimlets of several sizes,
(She re-appears from hallway 6.)

A small saw, two chisels
(one to use for button-holes in broadcloth),
two awls
and two files.

In a drawer or cupboard should be placed
cotton tablecloths for kitchen use:
nice crash towels for tumblers, marked TT;
coarser towels for dishes
marked T;
and a dozen hemmed dish-cloths with loops.
Also two thick linen pudding
or dumpling-cloths.
a jelly-bag made of white flannel,
to strain jelly, a strain jelly, a starch-strainer,
and a bag for boiling clothes.

In a closet should be kept, arranged in order,
the following articles:
The dust-pan, dust brush, and dusting-cloths.
old flannel and cotton for scouring and rubbing,
(She opens door 3, looks through it and then leaves it open.)

large sponges for washing windows and looking-glasses,
a long brush for cobwebs,
and another for washing the outside of windows,
whiskbrooms,
common brooms,
a coat-broom or brush,
a whitewash-brush,
a stove-brush,
shoe-brushes (*She exits out door 7 and immediately re-enters through door 8.*) and
blacking,

articles for cleaning tin and silver,
leather for cleaning metals,
bottles containing stain-mixtures and other articles
used in cleansing.

EVELYN closes door 3 as "Sugar Hill" plays. ["Sugar Hill" is from Vintage Banjo by Mary Z. Cox, 2016. The original song for the dance in the 1980 production was "Buffalo Gals" from More Path Rent. In the original script this is described as a "Polka" but seemed more like a country dance, according to interviews. In 2023, it was choreographed as a simple country dance.]

POLKA

EVELYN BROWN enters from 7. She cleans the floor in three places, downstage, middle stage and upstage. She joins EVELYN who is now facing downstage in front of door 3. They do eight three count step together and then break apart, EVELYN dancing down stage left, EVELYN BROWN downstage right. EVELYN BROWN exits hallway 9, adding a few more steps of dance as she goes. EVELYN walks up and exits door 2. [Fornes's drawing of this blocking is reproduced on page 50.]

EVELYN BROWN re-enters from 7 with a chair. She places the chair and sits upstage left. The music fades out as the voice of EVELYN is heard on tape.

EVELYN BROWN SOLO/EVELYN'S VOICE

EVELYN'S VOICE: Sunday 21st. March. Cool this morn, but fine this p.m. did up the work this morn Sed went up to Bertha this p.m. went down to see Jennie Doe, sick with cold. Have been reading some and wrote letters. Plumie Heath died today we hear.

Monday 22nd. Fair and cold. Helping around the house and did quite a large wash for myself. Lela called me at the Phone early this morn wanted me to go down Ada sick. Frank and Lizzie came up, and went up to the old home.

EVELYN BROWN shakes.

Tuesday 23rd. Cool and windy. Helping around the house and ironing. Trying to get ready to go down to Ada. Went for the mail.

Wednesday 24 March. Fair, a nice day. Went over to the Office this morn, feeling poorly and not able to go to W. wanted so much to attend the funeral of Mrs. Heath. Called in to see Aunt Lydia.

Thursday. Cold and windy, and later in the day develops into a hard storm of rain and sleet. Charlie sick with severe cold, Sed and me have had to dose him to day. Rob Hunt in this evening.

EVELYN BROWN grimaces. Turns her head to look front.

Friday 26. Storm continues, but its fury has abated. Charlie some better. Dr. Leirering here this a.m. left him some medicine. Have not felt like work today, have not done much.

27th. Raw & cold. Helping to do the housework. But not feeling well. Went for the mail this p.m. Rec'd a letter from Eliza.

Sunday 28. Cold with some Snow in the morning. Read until I had headache then called up to Mrs. Sullivan's. (*EVELYN BROWN comes down from grimace.*) And in to see Arthur, he is not feeling as well. Charlie feeling some better today.

EVELYN BROWN stands and flips chair to stage right, facing downstage. She sits.

March 29 Monday. Cold and raw air with some wind. Was called to the phone this morn. Lela wants me to go down, Ada no better. Called in to Aunt's and to the store. Charlie not well this morn. And myself feeling hardly able to keep up. Sed did her washing today, I helped do the housework.

EVELYN BROWN shakes.

Tuesday 30th. Pleasant morn but windy later. Helped to do the work. Frank Brown called this morn, went up to the old place after hay. Mrs. Sullivan and I went up to the cottage this morn.

Wednesday. Quite a nice day. The Snow is leaving us slowly. Did up the work after breakfast. Swept my room and the hall's, did my washing. Have not accomplished much this p.m.

Thursday 1st. April. Cool and windy. Took the Stage for Wolfboro. Took dinner with Aunt Kate, then took the South Wolfboro Stage and came down to Ada's found her very low, and looking poorly indeed.

EVELYN BROWN carries chair slightly downstage, places it and sits facing stage left.

Friday April 2. Fine day. Lela doing cookies and I did sweeping and cleaning up. Helping care for Ada. (*EVELYN BROWN grimaces.*) Giving her meals and such like.

Saturday 3rd April. Fair. Parkie Lizzie and I did the work together. Parkie took Lela up to W. to take the train.

Sunday April 4. Fair and cool. Helped Parkie do the work and care for Ada, then Lizzie and I went in to Church to hear Mr. Potter speak. (*EVELYN BROWN comes down from grimace.*) After services he and his wife called in to see Ada.

EVELYN BROWN carries chair to the upstage wall of hallway 1 and sits facing downstage.

April 5. A fine day. After we got the work done this morn Lizzie and I went over on the hill for a little walk and to see Mr. Bakers Castle. Frank Stokes working there, so we went in. L. came home this noon on the train.

Tuesday 6th. Fair and warm for the season. Lela and Lizzie working me doing what I can find to do.

Wednesday 7th. Cloudy with a little rain. Afraid to start for home for fear of getting wet and taking cold. Helping around the house a little.

April 8th. Fair, but very windy and cold. Helped Lela (*EVELYN BROWN shakes then moves into grimace.*) about the housework, and did a little sewing for Ada.

Friday 9th. Stormy Snow and rain. Intended to have gone home today late this p.m. Lela and I called in to see Annie Edgerly a minute. Have not done much today. Ada seems a little better.

April 10th. Cold and windy. This a.m. left South Wolfboro. Parkie and Lela came up to W. with me. Called to the Store to Charlie, Corliss, Frank Field's (*EVELYN BROWN comes down from grimace.*) and took dinner with Aunt Kate. Came up to Melvin on the Stage, was cold when I arrived.

EVELYN BROWN stands and pivots the chair to look out hallway 1, she sits.

Sunday. Fair and a little warmer. Charlie Sed and I walked up to the Lakie Cottage. Called to Bertha's when we came back.

Monday April 12. Fair with some wind. Sed and I been washing today. And did the other work together.

Tuesday 13th. Fair. Called in to see Aunt Lydia this morn. Working around the house this a.m. This p.m. Charlie helped me up to the cottage about setting up bed.

April 14. Rainy day. Helping around the house and did my ironing. Did some stitching this afternoon.

Thursday 15. Rain and cloudy this a.m. clearing in the p.m. working around the house this forenoon. Cleaned up after dinner then went up to the cottage and worked a little while. Got a letter from Ada.

April 16. Pleasant this morn. Worked around the house all the forenoon. (*EVELYN slowly crosses from hallway 6 to hallway 4. This action lasts through the next two entries.*) After I got the work done up after dinner went up to the cottage and fixed a bed. Mrs. Moulton here visiting today.

17th. Cloudy, with later a pouring rain Sed and Edith Caverly start for Boston, Charlie took them down to the Centre. Then they went from there with James Dow. Have been to work hard all day cooking and cleaning up. Mrs. C. Caverly called.

Sunday 18th. Warm and pleasant this morn, cooler in the p.m. After I got the work done up, read some, took a walk through the Cemetery and Charlie and I went up to Mr. Hilliard's Cottage and also mine.

EVELYN BROWN carries chair to downstage left and sits facing front.

April 19th. Fine day. Washing and doing the usual housework. Thundershowers this p.m. Charlie hauling wood for Mrs. Fernald. Rec'd a letter from Eliza and a postal from Lela Ada about the same. Sits up a little.

Tuesday 20 April. Warm, partly cloudy. Doing usual housework and most of my ironing. Went over to the Office this morn. Mrs. Sullivan gave me a call this a.m. Wrote a line to Mrs. C. Coop.

EVELYN enters blindfolded through door 2 and walks a clockwise half circle on the top half the stage, exiting through door 7. [The use of the blindfold in this scene is an addition to the original script. Extra text from an earlier version of the script was added here to compliment the blocking shown in Fornes's drawings.]

Wednesday 21. Cool. Working at housework as usual. Finished ironing. Went out to the cottage this p.m. Painted and ironed. Called to Aunt Lydia this morn.

Thursday 22 April. Threatening weather but not quite as cold. Doing the usual work (*EVELYN crosses from door 7 and out door 2.*) also swept the halls, Charlie's room and mine. Went up to the cottage this am and varnished bureau and some picture frames and painted the second coat. (*EVELYN re-enters door 2 and makes a counterclockwise circle upstage, she exits door 2.*) Went to the Office for the mail.

Friday 23 April. Cloudy this morn with a little rain. Have done the usual work around the house. Then this p.m. went up to the cottage and painted a chest. Received a letter from Ada.

Saturday 24 April. Fair and cool. (*EVELYN reenters door 2 circles clockwise starting upstage and then traveling downstage.*) Have done the usual Saturday's work cooking and cleaning up. Mrs. Bennet called this morn. Also Frank, Verna and Lizzie called on their way up to the old home, and called when they came back. (*EVELYN arrives next to EVELYN BROWN as the last of the dialogue ends. EVELYN BROWN stands. EVELYN takes off her blindfold in silence. She crosses to stage right and exits through hallway 1.*)

EVELYN BROWN carries the chair downstage center. She sets it down and climbs onto the chair. She pauses then trembles and emits a silent scream. She looks right and left. She climbs off the chair and carries it out through door 2.

TABLE SETTING

[In the original script, the rest of the play consists of Fornes's drawings with very few stage directions.]

EVELYN enters with mop and bucket on wheels from hallway 9, followed by EVELYN BROWN who enters with a broom and a dustpan from hallway 1. They mop and sweep the stage, EVELYN from down center right to upstage, EVELYN BROWN sweeps upstage left to downstage left.

They notice one another and trade the broom for the mop at center. EVELYN sweeps upstage, EVELYN BROWN mops down stage left to center. The work is thorough and industrious. At a certain point EVELYN exits and reenters through door 2 trading broom for hand broom and sweeping dust into dustpan.

EVELYN BROWN leaves with mop and bucket through door 8 with Evelyn following.

They both enter through 9 with table 1. EVELYN enters first. They set table 1 center stage, parallel to the lines of 1 and 9. Both exit, EVELYN through door 2, EVELYN BROWN through door 7.

EVELYN BROWN enters through 8 with the dustpan and hand broom. She cleans the downstage side of the table. EVELYN enters through hallway 1 with a tablecloth. She spreads it on table 1, taking care that the cloth is even, and the corners are sharp. EVELYN exits through door 2. EVELYN BROWN finishes and exits through 7 with the dustpan and hand broom.

EVELYN BROWN enters through hallway 9 with six plates and begins to set the plates on table 1 clockwise starting upstage left. EVELYN enters through hallway 1 with six settings

of silverware. She follows EVELYN BROWN, setting the knives. EVELYN BROWN exits through hallway 6. EVELYN continues setting the forks and then the spoons. EVELYN BROWN re-enters through hallway 9 with a tureen and sets it on the center of the table. They finish simultaneously and then come upstage center of table 1. They turn upstage and look at door 5. They face one another. They look out at the audience. EVELYN exits through 2, EVELYN BROWN follows.

They enter through hallway 1 with table 2. EVELYN is downstage of the table while EVELYN BROWN is upstage of it. They set it downstage right, parallel to the angle of the wall.

EVELYN exits through door 2. EVELYN BROWN exits through door 7. EVELYN BROWN re-enters through hallway 9 with the dustpan and hand broom. EVELYN enters through 1 with a medium sized tablecloth for table 2. EVELYN lays out the tablecloth. EVELYN BROWN sweeps downstage left of the table.

EVELYN exits through door 2. EVELYN BROWN exits through door 7 with the dustpan. EVELYN BROWN enters through door 8 with four plates. EVELYN enters through 1 with four settings of silverware.

EVELYN BROWN sets the plates on table 2 clockwise, starting upstage left. EVELYN follows EVELYN BROWN, setting the forks. EVELYN BROWN exits through 7 crossing upstage of table 1. EVELYN continues to set the knives, and then the spoons as EVELYN BROWN enters through door 8 with a small table 3 and sets it downstage left. EVELYN exits through door 2.

EVELYN BROWN exits through door 7. EVELYN re-enters through hallway 1 with tablecloth and sets it on table 3. EVELYN BROWN re-enters 9 with the dustpan and brush. She cleans downstage left of table 3. EVELYN exits through door 3. EVELYN BROWN exits with dustpan and brush through door 7.

EVELYN enters through door 2 and moves two plates from table 1 to table 3. EVELYN BROWN enters 8 with two small plates. She replaces the two plates that EVELYN just placed on table 3. EVELYN moves the tureen from table 1 to table 2. EVELYN BROWN moves the extra plates from table 3 and stacks them stage left on table 1.

They cross to opposite tables, EVELYN BROWN to table 2, EVELYN to table 1. EVELYN takes the stacked plates and resets the two open spaces on table 1. Meanwhile EVELYN BROWN takes two sets of silverware from table 2 and moves them to table 3. EVELYN exits through door 2.

EVELYN reenters through hallway 1 with two settings of silverware, she fills in the empty spaces on table 2. She crosses stage left to the downstage edge of table 3 and they both carry the table downstage, in front of, and slightly to the left of table 1. They both exit through door 7.

They both reenter through hallway 9 carrying table 4 which already has a tablecloth on it, EVELYN BROWN first, EVELYN second. They place the table 4 stage left parallel to the wall. They both cross, EVELYN BROWN to table 1, EVELYN to table 2. They both take two plates from each table which they then transfer to table 4. EVELYN BROWN leads, laying the plates up and downstage ends of table, moving clockwise. EVELYN follows her, laying plates stage left then stage right. EVELYN BROWN takes two silverware settings from table 2. EVELYN takes silverware from table 3. They both set table 4. EVELYN leads. They both move clockwise.

EVELYN transfers the tureen from table 2 to table 4. EVELYN BROWN transfers two plates from table 2 to table 1, filling the empty spaces. They move table 1 slightly upstage center. EVELYN BROWN exits door 3, EVELYN through hallway 4.

They enter from hallway 1 carrying table 5, EVELYN BROWN first, EVELYN second. They place table 5 down, centerstage and slightly in front of table 1. EVELYN takes silverware from table 2 and places it on table 3, while EVELYN BROWN takes tablecloth from table 2 and places it on table 5. While EVELYN BROWN straightens the tablecloth, EVELYN leaves through door 2.

EVELYN BROWN transfers the tureen from table 4 to table 3. As she finishes, EVELYN appears through hallway 1 with another tablecloth for table 2, which she spreads with care. EVELYN BROWN takes two plates from table 4 and places them on table 5 on the stage left and stage right sides. She then takes two plates from table 3 to replace the blank place settings of table 4.

EVELYN takes two place settings from table 1 and places them with the two plates at table 5. EVELYN BROWN takes two place settings from table 3 and places them in the blank places on table 1. Meanwhile EVELYN moves the tureen from table 3 to table 5. They both exit, EVELYN BROWN through door 3, and EVELYN through door 8. The doors close at the same time.

They both enter from upstage, EVELYN BROWN through hallway 4 and EVELYN through hallway 6. They begin unsetting table 1. EVELYN BROWN starts with the plates and moves counterclockwise, EVELYN taking the forks and knives behind her. EVELYN takes the stacked plates and puts them on table 2. EVELYN follows her with the forks and knives and places them on table 2. EVELYN BROWN returns to table 1 to pick up the spoons, still moving counterclockwise. She crosses to join EVELYN at table 2, further downstage and they both carry table 2, pivoting it so that the table, carried by EVELYN BROWN stage right, is halfway out of hallway 1. They place the table down, EVELYN BROWN exits, unseen, through hallway 1, EVELYN exits through door 2.

EVELYN BROWN enters through hallway 4, EVELYN enters through door 3. They both pick up table 1, EVELYN downstage, EVELYN BROWN upstage, and carry it down stage right, placing it where table 2 stood before. They cross towards stage left, EVELYN BROWN

coming stage left of table 3, and both carry table 3 so that it is halfway out of door 7. Again, EVELYN BROWN is upstage and exits, unseen, out of door 7.

EVELYN BROWN crosses to table 2 and begins to pick up the silverware. EVELYN BROWN appears upstage through hallway 6, goes to door 5 and opens it. The open door is filled with light. EVELYN pauses and turns. She places the silverware down on table 2 and turns, slowly walking upstage to door 5. She sits on the steps leading to door 5, stage left. EVELYN BROWN remains standing and they look through the door. They pause.

EVELYN stands. EVELYN BROWN shuts the door. EVELYN exits through hallway 4. EVELYN BROWN crosses down to the downstage left corner of table 4 and begins removing two plates and carrying them to table 1 where she re-sets them. Meanwhile EVELYN enters through door 2 and crosses to table 4 removing the forks and knives from the empty places that EVELYN BROWN has cleared and carries them across to table 1. EVELYN BROWN sets the two plates on the long sides of table 1. EVELYN crosses to set the knives and forks with the plates on table 1. EVELYN BROWN crosses stage left to take the remaining two plates from table 4. She carries them back to table 1 and sets them on the short ends of the table. EVELYN repeats the cross to table 1 to take the remaining forks and knives and place them back on table 1. EVELYN BROWN crosses back to table 1, taking all the spoons, moving clockwise. She reaches table 1 as EVELYN crosses to table 5. EVELYN picks up the tureen from table 5 and brings it back to table 1. EVELYN BROWN circles table 1 clockwise placing the spoons. EVELYN places the tureen on table 1 as the lights fade.

END OF PLAY