

List of Characters

Casting will be gender-blind

| Character | Size | Notes | Scene (casting) |
|--|--------|---|---|
| Francis | Lead | Monologue Recommended | Monologue, Scene 2, Scene 5, Scene 6, Scene 7 |
| Caligari | Lead | Monologue Recommended | Monologue, Scene 1, Scene 3, Scene 7 |
| Cesare | Medium | Has a physical interaction with Jane; Monologue Recommended | Monologue, Scene 7 |
| Jane | Medium | Has a physical interaction with Cesare | Scene 2, Scene 4 |
| Paperboy/girl 1 Paperboy/girl 2 | Medium | | Scene 1 |
| Mrs. Werner | Medium | Monologue Recommended | Monologue, Scene 4 |
| Mr. Werner | Medium | | Scene 4, Scene 5, Scene 6 |
| Officer Boltz | Medium | | Scene 6 |
| Inspector | Medium | Monologue Recommended | Monologue, Scene 6 |
| Allan | Medium | | Scene 2, Scene 7 |
| Officer Grün | Small | | Scene 6 |
| Town Clerk | Small | | Scene 3 |
| Clerk 1 | Small | | Scene 3 |
| Clerk 2 | Small | | Scene 3 |
| Jane's Friend | Small | | Scene 4 |

Characters Profiles

Francis

Becomes determined to uncover the truth about Dr. Caligari and Cesare. Francis shares a strong bond with Allan, his best friend, and is in love with Jane. However, Jane didn't feel the same way about him. He even entertains the thought that Allan's absence might improve his chances with her, but this proves to be a mistaken assumption. Eventually, we discover that Francis is actually one of Dr. Caligari's patients, and the story is revealed to be one of his hallucinations. Or is it? The plot invites multiple interpretations, offering a variety of mysterious outcomes.

Allan

Enthusiastic and a bit impulsive, Allan lost his parents a few months ago. He seeks fun and distraction to escape his grief, although death remains one of his deepest fears. Francis is the only person he has left — his best friend and emotional anchor. Allan is also in love with Jane, and unlike Francis, his feelings are mutual. This shared affection introduces a layer of tension and emotional complexity between the three, especially as Francis quietly struggles with jealousy and longing.

Dr. Caligari

Manipulative and enigmatic, Dr. Caligari is the director of a psychiatric asylum. He becomes obsessed with an old manuscript detailing the story of a man named Caligari, who traveled from town to town with a somnambulist, using him to commit a series of murders. When Cesare, a real somnambulist, arrives at the asylum, Caligari sees an opportunity to recreate this dark tale and embody the persona of the original Caligari. His fascination with mind control and altered states of consciousness drives him to conduct disturbing experiments, merging the line between science and ethics. Through his manipulation of Cesare, he believes he has the power to control others' minds, raising questions about authority, free will, and the nature of sanity.

Cesare

Somnambulistic and emotionally detached, Cesare exists under the complete control of Dr. Caligari. He is kept in a coffin-like cabinet and only awakens to fulfill his master's commands, most notably, to commit murder. Little is known about Cesare's inner world; he appears more as a vessel than a person. Yet, in a moment of hesitation, he refuses to harm

Jane, suggesting a glimmer of autonomy. This subtle act raises important questions: Is Cesare merely a puppet, or does some fragment of his own will still remain?

Jane

Jane lives with her parents and brother. She has been close friends with Allan and Francis for a long time, but harbors romantic feelings for Allan, feelings that he shares. Tragically, before either of them can confess their love, Allan dies, leaving Jane devastated by the missed opportunity. Her grief is quiet but profound. Later, we discover that Jane is actually one of the patients in Dr. Caligari's asylum. The reasons for her institutionalization remain unclear, and it's uncertain whether the love triangle and her relationships with Allan and Francis are real or merely fragments of Francis's hallucinations.

Paperboys/Girls

As good chess players, they are competitive and smart, but when a common goal arises, they quickly shift gears and form surprisingly effective alliances. Their humor is peculiar, often dry or absurd, and they bring a playful energy that contrasts with the darker tones of the story.

Town Clerk

Rigid and bureaucratic, the Town Clerk is deeply committed to hierarchy and formal procedures. He can represent the machinery of civic authority: cold, impersonal, and resistant to disruption. When Dr. Caligari requests a permit to present his exhibit at the fair, the Clerk responds with arrogance and superiority, reinforcing the social power imbalance between them. His strict adherence to protocol makes him a symbol of institutional control, and his eventual murder by Cesare can be interpreted as a retaliation against that very system.

Mrs. Werner

Devoted to her family's well-being, Mrs. Werner is gentle and caring, though somewhat passive in the face of troubling events around her. After the loss of her husband and the death of her eldest son, she falls into a deep state of grief and depression. In an attempt to treat her condition, doctors subject her to a medical procedure, one that ultimately leaves her with lasting emotional scars and psychological instability. Her presence in the story is quiet but a symbol of unresolved trauma and the dangers of misguided treatment.

Mr Werner

Mr. Werner plays an important role in Francis's journey to uncover the truth about Dr. Caligari. He supports Francis throughout the investigation, serving as a link between him and the bureaucratic system. Though emotionally reserved, his actions reflect a genuine concern for the safety and well-being of those around him. According to his wife, Mrs. Werner, he was once a respected member of the military, but died during one of his missions.

Inspector

Rigid, attached to procedures and bureaucracy. Can be influenced by authority figures (like the Commissioner). Once a highly respected figure in the police force, his life took a tragic turn due to an untreated mental disorder, leading him to commit a devastating act: taking the lives of his wife and fellow officers. The psychiatric treatment he received afterward left him scarred, afflicted by trauma and psychological triggers that still haunt him. Though he maintains a façade of control, there are cracks in his composure that hint at a fragile inner world.

Scene 1

Paperboy1 *(raises a newspaper high, calling out dramatically)* Ladies and gentlemen! Here are the news of the day! The Holstenwall Fair is coming to town! Witness spectacles never seen before, attractions that defy reason itself!

(Some people approach to buy newspapers)

Paperboy2 *(notices the commotion and jumps in)* But don't read his paper before hearing this! The Great Mystery of the Fair! A magician who vanishes in front of your eyes, and then returns in the form of a raven!

(Part of the crowd shifts toward Paperboy2, buying newspapers. The buyers exit the scene.)

Paperboy1 Ah, but there's something he didn't tell you! I have exclusive news: The Labyrinth of Shadows! Where the paths are never the same, whoever enters may never find their way out! Dare you try?

(Again, part of the crowd rushes to buy more papers, then exits.)

Paperboy2 And I have even more exclusive news: The Boneless Man! A terrible but curious attraction! He folds up like a ball and twists like nothing you've seen before! A must-see! Yes! Tomorrow at the fair!

(everyone buy newspapers and exits the scene, leaving only the paperboys.)

Paperboy1 And I made 50 marks! Incredible! F-I-F-T-Y! Fifty!

Paperboy2 Well, look at that... 50 for me too!

(pause)

Paperboy1 This is unbelievable! My salesmanship is incomparable! I'm sure I sold more newspapers than you.

Paperboy2 "Salesmanship"? You just threw random words around and hoped for people to buy it!

Paperboy1 Excuse me, my friend, but The Labyrinth of Shadows is a fact. You might not be brave enough to enter, but some are!

Paperboy2 Oh, sure! And how does this labyrinth work, exactly? If someone walks in circles three times, they just vanish?

Paperboy1 Exactly! No! Yes! That's why there are rules! *(pause, Paperboy2 wants to know the rules)* Number one: Never walk in circle three times!

Paperboy2 That is the dumbest thing I've ever heard!

Paperboy1 Dumb?! And what about your Boneless Man?! What does he wear? Does he unfold himself and turn into a coat?

Paperboy2 Excuse me, he wears perfectly normal clothes!

Paperboy1 Normal... how?

(Caligari enters and watches, tries to hide himself)

Paperboy2 *(pauses for a second, then makes something up)* Well. He folds himself before putting on his shirt, obviously!

Paperboy1 Oh, of course! That makes total sense!

Paperboy2 Well, at least my attraction doesn't involve people disappearing for no reason!

Paperboy1 That's called mystery! You should learn to appreciate it!

Paperboy2 Oh sure, I love mystery, especially when it involves people vanishing without a trace! What a fantastic attraction for families!

(They stare at each other for an awkward moment, sigh, and go back to counting their coins.)

Paperboy2 Anyway, congrats on your earnings!

Paperboy1 *(suddenly sad)* It doesn't matter. Tomorrow it will have no value at all.

Paperboy2 Don't give up, my friend. Our luck will change *(change mood)* And the real problem is: tomorrow I'll sell more papers than you!

Paperboy1 I doubt it. My talent is incomparable.

Paperboy2 Of course! Your talent for nonsense.

Paperboy1 It's not nonsense, my friend. If people believe it, then it's true!

(Paperboy1 exits confidently, carrying his newspapers.)

(Paperboy2 hurriedly grabs his own pile of newspapers, but in his rush, accidentally drops one.)

Paperboy2 Oh, right! If people believe it, then it's true, huh?! Fine! So tomorrow, on the news: Woman sees the future after eating strange bread at the fair. How about that?

(Caligari gets the newspaper. Look at it with a mysterious and enigmatic expression and leaves)

Scene 2

ALLAN: *"The Magician who vanishes"*, *"The Boneless Man"*. This fair sounds fun! Can you believe this? Let's go, Francis!

FRANCIS: I can believe the noise, the vendors shouting, loud music. It seems to be crowded.

ALLAN: That's the point! It's life! Francis, I've been buried in my books for an eternity now. My eyes hurt from reading and my head hurts from thinking.

FRANCIS: We could go for a walk by the river. It's quiet there. And we can talk. Don't you think you need to talk about what's happened? I might have something to talk about myself.

ALLAN: No! I don't want quiet. I have enough quiet at home now. You know... since my parents... I don't want to talk about this. I want noise. Chaos! Look! *"Spectacles that defy reason itself!"*. Ha! Remember last year? Jane entered that pepper-eating contest, lasted 40 seconds, and nearly died screaming, blaming us for not stopping her madness!

FRANCIS: I remember. Things were... easier, back then.

ALLAN: Easy? Well, then maybe tonight is your lucky night! Who knows, maybe you'll find a pretty girl to talk to!

FRANCIS: Oh, I wouldn't count on it. It seems all the best girls are already spoken for, Allan.

ALLAN: Spoken for? What is that supposed to mean? Francis, what is wrong? I was just trying to...

FRANCIS: There is something! Something I need to tell you.

ALLAN: What? Tell me!

FRANCIS: I don't know if I should, or if this is the right moment. I just...

ALLAN: Francis, you're my best friend, the best person I have met in my whole life. You can trust me.

FRANCIS *(pause)* Listen. I know you do love Jane.

ALLAN: *(pause a bit, thinking about what to say)* Yes. I...

FRANCIS: But I love her too.

(pause. Allan is conflicted)

ALLAN: I understand. She's incredible. I don't know what to say, actually. Why didn't you tell me that before?

FRANCIS: I thought you might be upset. I even prepared myself for... I don't know. I wondered if this would change anything.

ALLAN: Why would it?

FRANCIS: Because feelings complicate things. Because love is never simple.

ALLAN: She's wonderful, Francis. I won't lie, I have feelings for her. But they don't erase what we have, what we've always had.

FRANCIS: You mean that?

ALLAN: Of course I do. We've been through too much together. Listen... This decision is for her to make. Whatever happens, I need you to promise we'll still be friends.

FRANCIS: You really mean that?

ALLAN: You are my best friend, and this is more important to me than anything else in this world. You are the only one I can still call family.

FRANCIS: Thank you, Allan. Then I promise.

————— this scene can also be performed up to here or from here —————

(Jane approaches)

JANE: Francis. Allan. Are you sharing secrets in the night?

FRANCIS: Perhaps. Where are you going?

JANE: To the fair! I heard some whispers about the one called Cesare. Isn't that exciting?
(*show one journal page*)

ALLAN: (*grab the journal and throw it on the floor*) Don't go there!

JANE: Allan, stop it. What is wrong with you?

ALLAN: Sorry! I just don't feel right. I should go home

Francis: I can go with you.

ALLAN: Don't worry, friends. You should go home and rest, I just need to get away from all of this for a while. (*to Jane*) Sorry. Promise me you won't go there, please.

JANE: Ok, I promise.

(*Allan leaves*)

FRANCIS: Things change too quickly, don't they?

JANE: What do you mean?

FRANCIS: Yesterday, everything felt simple. I knew where I stood, where you stood. Where we all stood.

JANE: And now?

FRANCIS: Now, I don't know. If even I did. (*pause*) You have feelings for him, don't you?

JANE: Who? Allan? No... I...

FRANCIS: I know. I've known for a long time. I tried not to. I tried to pretend, but you never looked at me the way you look at him.

JANE: Francis, it's not that simple.

FRANCIS: Love never is. I should have said it sooner, but I love you, Jane.

JANE: Francis...

FRANCIS: I know I'm not him. But that doesn't change the way I feel about you.

JANE: I care about you, Francis. I always have. But...

FRANCIS: But not the way I want you to.

JANE: I don't want to hurt you...

FRANCIS: Then tell me. If things were different, if he wasn't here, would you see me?

JANE: I don't know.

FRANCIS: *(smiles, trying to hide feelings)* That's enough of an answer.

JANE: Francis... I don't want to lose you. I want us to stay friends, whatever happens.

FRANCIS: It's all good. I don't want to lose you, neither. Better having you as a friend than not having you in my life. I can live with that.

JANE: I need to leave. Shall we visit Allan tomorrow? I'm worried about him.

FRANCIS: Sure! Let's do that!

JANE: Good night... I'm... Sorry. Good night.

FRANCIS: Good night.

Scene 3

TOWN CLERK: Analyze it.

CLERK 1: Reading.

CLERK 2: Reviewed.

TOWN CLERK: Sort it.

CLERK 1: Organizing.

CLERK 2: Filed.

TOWN CLERK: Mark it.

CLERK 1: Signing.

CLERK 2: Stamped.

TOWN CLERK: Copy it.

CLERK 1: Copying page one.

CLERK 2: Three copies made.

TOWN CLERK: Deliver it.

CLERK 1: Messenger dispatched.

CLERK 2: Arrival in six days.

(Caligari enters)

TOWN CLERK: Verify it.

CLERK 1: Double-checking.

CLERK 2: Commas corrected.

TOWN CLERK: Forget it.

CLERK 1: Forgotten.

(Caligari lifts his hand, signaling for attention.)

CLERK 2: Gone forever.

TOWN CLERK: Wait.

CLERK 1: Holding

CLERK 2: Paused.

TOWN CLERK: What do you want?

CALIGARI: *(handing over a folded paper):* A request. I'd like to see about renting a tent at your Town Fair.

TOWN CLERK: It says here you are a doctor

CALIGARI: Yes! Of course, my proposed exhibit is entirely educational.

TOWN CLERK: And what do you propose? Another cheap trick?

CALIGARI: No trick. Something extraordinary, a somnambulist.

TOWN CLERK: Somnambulist? A sleep walker?

CALIGARI: If you would like to put it this way.

(pause. Then Town Clerk erupts into laughter.)

TOWN CLERK: A man who sleeps? A sleeping man?! That's not a performance, that's a blessing!

(Still laughing, shaking his head.)

TOWN CLERK: What does he do? Falls asleep on the stage to amaze the audience?

CALIGARI: He sees.

TOWN CLERK: Right! Of course! A sleeping man who "sees." That's even better! I even have a name for it: I call it "dreaming" *(To Clerk 1, still laughing)* You, deal with this nonsense! My shift is over! *(he exits, still laughing)*

(Caligari watches the whole scene, his expression turning to anger and disgust toward the Town Clerk.)

(Clerk 1 approaches Caligari, who reaches out to hand him the paper. A few seconds later, he pulls out a stack of money and gives it to Clerk 1.)

(Clerk 1 hesitates, looking at the paper and money. Then, slowly, he walks to the Town Clerk's desk. As if it were a throne.)

CLERK 1: *(pressing a stamp onto the paper, monotone, but victorious):* Approved.

CLERK 2: *(Immediately):* Resume.

Scene 4

Mr. WERNER: (*reads newspaper*) Another increase. If this continues, soon we'll be trading shoes for bread.

Mrs Werner: It's the times, dear. Everything gets more expensive eventually.

Mr. WERNER: That's not 'eventually', that's robbery, I'm scared.

Mrs Werner: At least appreciate that it's fresh. Some don't have the luxury.

Mr. WERNER: I'd appreciate paying what it's worth.

(*enters Jane*)

JANE: Hi! Morning you two. What are you complaining about?

Mrs Werner: Probably about you waking up so late.

JANE: I barely slept.

Mrs Werner: Why?

JANE: I don't know. I felt strange. Like a bad dream, but I wasn't dreaming. Just a feeling...

Mr. WERNER: Hmm... it passed?

JANE: Just a bit. I'm feeling strange.

Mrs. WERNER: Come, eat something, dear. That might help.

JANE: You went out last night, didn't you? Did you go to the fair?

Mrs. WERNER: Oh, yes!

JANE: And how was it?

Mr. WERNER: It wasn't bad. It wasn't good either.

Mrs. WERNER: It was so beautiful! You should have seen it. The food is very good this year, and there were some interesting performances!

Mr. WERNER: Performances? Never mind! They were just a bunch of charlatans.

Mrs. WERNER: Don't say that, not all of them.

JANE: Did you see the somnambulist? Everybody was talking about him.

Mr. WERNER: That sleepwalker? Cesare? I don't know, Jane, he's just part of the show.

Mrs. WERNER: But the way he spoke. There was something very intriguing about it.

JANE: What did he say?

Mr. WERNER: Nothing worth repeating.

Mrs. WERNER: Don't listen to him, dear. I tell you everything later. And we can go there together, ok?

JANE: Sure! It's so exciting!

Mr. WERNER: Have you seen your brother? He should have been awake already.

(Jane is about to say something. Enters Jane's Friend)

Jane's Friend: Mr and Mrs Werner! Miss Jane! A tragedy has happened.

Mrs. WERNER: What is it? You look pale!

Mr. WERNER: Speak, woman! What happened?

JANE'S FRIEND: I don't know how to say it... but... Something terrible...

Mrs. WERNER: Terrible? What do you mean?

JANE'S FRIEND: It's Allan! He's dead.

JANE: Ahhh! No!!! How? Where is he?

JANE'S FRIEND: A knife. In his chest. They found him in his house today.

JANE: No. No, that's not true! He can't be!

JANE'S FRIEND: It's true! I saw him! It was terrible.

JANE: I need to see him.

Mr. WERNER: Jane! Better not.

JANE: You don't understand, Dad, I need to see him! *(she leaves)*

JANE'S FRIEND: Jane! *(follows)*

Mr. WERNER: Jane!

Mrs. WERNER: Jane! Please wait!

Scene 5

FRANCIS: I need to talk to you.

Mr. WERNER: What a tragedy, Francis. What a tragedy. First, the Town Clerk, and now Allan. Where does this end? What's happening with this world?

FRANCIS: I know something. Something important.

Mr. WERNER: What do you mean?

FRANCIS: I tried not to believe on it, but that's the only explanation.

Mr. WERNER: Calm down, Francis. Tell me...

FRANCIS: At the fair. Yesterday. Something strange happened. You know that crazy psycho, Cesare?

Mr. WERNER: Yes! I know.

FRANCIS: It was him! He and Caligari. They said Allan would die. And now. It just happened.

Mr. WERNER: What are you talking about, Francis? I was there. I don't remember him saying that.

FRANCIS: I'm telling you, he did. I heard it myself.

Mr. WERNER: That's a serious accusation.

FRANCIS: I know, but Caligari is involved. He has to be!

Mr. WERNER: Francis, are you sure about all of this? I know Allan had some serious...

FRANCIS: I know! But he was feeling better! He was much better! This is clear as day. This man, Caligari, he sent this freak to Allan in the middle of the night.

Mr. WERNER: Have you told this to the police?

FRANCIS: No. I'm afraid they won't believe me, they won't do anything.

Mr. WERNER: You need more evidences. Something stronger than words.

FRANCIS: Then help me! Please! Talk to the Commissioner.

Mr. WERNER: These are complicated times, Francis, this is not that simple.

FRANCIS: Use your influence, you are in the army. Maybe they'll listen! Please!

Mr. WERNER: Calm yourself, Francis. Ok?

FRANCIS: *(almost a whisper)* Mr. Werner. I beg you.

Mr. WERNER: Calm down, Francis. I'll take care of this. OK? I believe you.

FRANCIS: Thank you. Please!

Mr. WERNER: For my daughter's name, I'll make sure this is taken seriously. We both go together, all right? We both go together and we'll solve this.

Scene 6

FRANCIS: Excuse me. I...

OFFICER BOLTZ: (*very slowly*) Excuse ME! Do you have an appointment?

FRANCIS: What? No, of course not! There's no time. There's...

OFFICER BOLTZ: You'll need to take a number.

FRANCIS: Number? We don't have time for this! There has been a murder. Two, in fact. Maybe more.

OFFICER BOLTZ: And are you the murderer?

FRANCIS: What?! NO! I'm trying to report one. His name...

OFFICER GRÜN: Is this regarding a stolen bear? Someone already reported a bear.

FRANCIS: Bear!? No!! Are you even listening to me? The murderer is called Dr Caligari. He's exhibiting a somnambulist, Cesare, at the fair. And I believe... I know he is controlling him to kill.

OFFICER GRÜN: You suspect a sleepwalker?

FRANCIS: I know how it sounds, but, listen, he's using him to kill people. We saw it. I was there. He predicted Allan's death. And Allan died.

OFFICER BOLTZ:: Sleepwalking homicide. Right. That's... new.

FRANCIS: We need immediate action. Arrest him. Search his trailer. Do something!

OFFICER GRÜN: Wait, wait, wait... There is a procedure.

FRANCIS: Of course there is. Of course. Always a procedure while people die! You sit behind mountains of paper while a murderer is free. Petty bureaucrats in uniform!

(*Pause*)

OFFICER GRÜN: I ask you to fill out this form, using a black pencil and no cursive letters

OFFICER BOLTZ:: And as this is related to a Sleepwalking homicide, you need to fill out this one.

Mr. WERNER: Gentlemen, perhaps this will help. *(He pulls out a folded envelope.)* A letter of request. From the Commissioner. Himself. Stamped and signed.

OFFICER GRÜN: Oh. A letter. From above. Must be serious.

OFFICER BOLTZ:: We must call the inspector

(He rings a large bell)

Mr. WERNER: Sure, I'm aware about the procedure.

INSPECTOR: What's this. What's this! What's this?

FRANCIS: Inspector, thank heavens...

(Inspector does one movement, and Francis stops. Points to the offices, one goes to him and whispers something in his ear. Francis seems very impatient. Points to the letter, Mr. Werner gives it to him.)

INSPECTOR: Hmm. Hm. Hmmm. This is indeed a Class-A authorization. So let me see if I understand. You suspect that a sleepwalker... a somnambulist... is committing crimes.

FRANCIS: Yes!

INSPECTOR: And you say that this man, Dr. Calligraphy...

Mr. WERNER: Caligari!

INSPECTOR: ...is responsible for the crimes.

FRANCIS: Yes!

INSPECTOR: And you request one officer from my already full of work office to help you search Mr Calligraphy house?

FRANCIS: Yes!

INSPECTOR: Where is the evidence?

FRANCIS: Evidence? Inspector, listen to me! This is extremely important, if we don't do anything more crimes will happen, and we will be responsible for it.

INSPECTOR: Tsc, tsc... This is not that simple, Mr...

FRANCIS: Francis! Francis Schneider.

INSPECTOR: Very well, Mr Schneider. I need to ask you some questions.

FRANCIS: Me? Why? Am I a suspect now?

INSPECTOR: No... Not exactly. But it seems you knew the victim very well, correct?

FRANCIS: Yes. Since we were children.

INSPECTOR: We need to find out as much from you as we can about his last whereabouts. What he was doing when all this happened.

FRANCIS: We spend the whole day together at the fair yesterday. I'm telling you! You have to believe me, I'm telling you the truth.

INSPECTOR: Don't you think it might just be a coincidence? Things like this happen all the time. We need to have more concrete evidence.

FRANCIS: No! No! There was something there! Something not right.

INSPECTOR: We'll continue looking into this situation. Thank you for your time.

FRANCIS: Situation? He was my friend.

INSPECTOR: Yes. I understand that. Like I said. We'll continue to look into it. I appreciate your time.

(Francis is about to argue again. Mr Werner interrupt him)

Mr. WERNER: Francis... We better go.

(they exit)

Scene 7

Dr. CALIGARI: You wake. You sleep. You dream. You spent your days planning, thinking, and wondering about the future... a future that maybe can never come. But what if? What if you know? Hmm? You might not know, but Cesare knows! For twenty-three years, he has not tasted the sun nor felt the wind! He has lived where none dare to: between the realm of the mortals and eternity! And today he will reveal secrets... yes, the secrets of our very lives. Today, before your very eyes... He will awaken! *(pause)*

(Caligari opens Cesare's coffin. Audience murmurs.)

Dr. CALIGARI: Cesare... can you hear me? Cesare, I am calling you! I... Dr Caligari... your master... awake for a moment from your dark night.

(Cesare slowly wakes up, his movements unnatural, dreamlike. We hear murmurs from the audience. After some time, they freeze; only Cesare moves)

CESARE: *(slowly walks through the people on the stage, at the end of his monologue, he has returned to the initial place and everyone move again)*

What sleeps is not I; I lie in a borrowed breath
A soul held quiet, bound and trapped in death

What dreams is not I, but a will not quite mine,
A whisper that echoes through halls lost in time

What wakes is not I, but a shell shaped by art not mine,
A frame that rises each day with a borrowed sign;

What stares is not I, but eyes lost in the night,
A shadow that follows, just out of sight;

Dr. CALIGARI: *(in the same previous mood):* Ladies and Gentlemen, Cesare, the Somnambulist, will answer any question you ask. He knows every secret... he knows your path and can look deep into your future. Don't hold back... ask away. Come, come, come. *(Allan wants to ask, but Francis tries to hold him)* Who wants to know the mysteries of the

future? *(notices Allan and Francis)* Stop! Let him ask, obviously there is something he needs to know. Come, come, ask my fine young man.

ALLAN: Tell me. How long do I have to live?

CESARE *(pause, he is terrified)*: The time is short. You will die before dawn!

(Gasps ripple through the crowd. Pause. Allan laughs.)

ALLAN *(mocking, shaking his head)*: I will die before dawn? And then what? How? Fired? Drowned? Murdered?

Dr. CALIGARI: The future whispers, my friend! It does not shout, it just reveals!

ALLAN: Oh, come on! This is absurd! Fine. If dawn is my last hour, then I'll make it a damn fine night!

(He steps back, turning away.)

ALLAN: You demented fool. Superstition! Nothing more!

(He exits with Francis. Dr. Caligari watches him go, his smile gone.)

Dr. Caligari *(recovering, lifting his hands)*: That's all for today! Tomorrow we'll be here! Same place... same time. The fair continues... but remember... fate sees beyond your laughter.

Monologues

FRANCIS:

Promises. Choices. But how do you stay next to someone who is always looking beyond you, waiting for someone else to arrive?

Allan... My best friend, we shared a lifetime. If she had never existed, this would never have happened. No fracture, no shadow between us. But it's not her fault. Nor his. Mine. For feeling, for wanting.

But if Cesare was right? Then maybe there's still a chance. Maybe she'll look at me differently.

No! Can thoughts shape the world? Because to think it is to wish it. And to wish is to want. And wanting... God, help me, is the first step to doing. Have I already betrayed him? Not with hands, but with thoughts?

No! No! I will learn to live with what is given, not with is wished.

Mrs. WERNER

He said he'd be back before the garden dried up. He took only a picture and the little medal around his neck. I should have hidden his boots, or locked the door. But no. I waved. I waved and let him go. I always let them go.

Then came the letters. Shorter every time. One day a package arrived, with his belongings and his name. I lost *the* sense of time. One hour turned into a day, years became weeks. I only knew how to sleep. Sleep inward. Wake backward. I was a wall. I became glass. Then fog.

After some time, they brought me to the place where doors don't make noise. They said they would erase the ghosts.

It was so quick... A blink. A fold. And I was not here anymore. And now, sometimes, their names dance on the tip of my tongue, but slip away.

Shhh... Did you hear it? They are coming. They say they're here to help. But... what if they take what's left? What if they erase the last shadow?

I can still remember. I promise! Please, don't let my memories go! I remember! Wait...

Inspector:

I was the head of Section 4. Twenty-seven men reported to me. I knew every street in the district, every pattern, every threat.

The voices came. At first, they whispered in the static of the radio. Grew louder. Said my wife was lying. Said my men weren't real. And then the voices told me to shoot at them; they promised me that by doing this, the voices would shut up. They didn't.

The doctors said I was sick. That there was a new treatment, one that would make me see the world correctly and, maybe, avoid prison. I was only worried about the voices.

I remember the straps. The smell. The counting. I tried to speak. I fought. But they were too many.

I sank into a world where no one could reach me, so deep inside my own mind that even I am a secret to myself. What am I without a memory? What am I without wishes? Dreams? Desires? But here, they cannot find me. They cannot terrorize me... with... that... thing!

(pause)

NO! NO! I can hear them. They are coming again. I feel it. The hum. The straps. Not again!

CALIGARI (in self-reflection)

What moves in your mind is not you, but my quiet voice. I shape your doubts, I feed your fear with gentle words. You walk as if you choose your path, but I hold the map. You smile and cry, believing it is your heart, yet each beat answers the pull of my own will.

They call me cruel, but they cannot know the weight of living in every mind at once, hearing every hidden wish and desire. They don't know the power. The possibilities. The price. To rule the quiet rooms of thought, that is my power, and you, lost in your own head, will never understand what it means to be me.

CALIGARI

You wake. You sleep. You dream. You spent your days planning, thinking, and wondering about the future... a future that maybe can never come. But what if? What if you know? Hmm? You might not know, but Cesare knows! For twenty-three years, he has not tasted the sun nor felt the wind! He has lived where none dare to: between the realm of the mortals and eternity! And today he will reveal secrets... yes, the secrets of our very lives. Today, before your very eyes... He will awaken! *(pause)*

CESARE (in self-reflection)

What stares is not, I carry a heartbeat that is not mine. Each pulse that beats in my chest answers another's command. I wear this flesh like a mask shaped by the hands that guide me through motion and silence.

If I could grasp a single desire, it would shine like a morning star. I would step beyond this stage of puppets and strings, define my own horizon, and fill the world with my own. But I have no thirst for wanting, no hunger for being. What I might become, or do, dissolves before I can wish it, leaving only the shape of emptiness where a soul should stay. But it is better the way... better this way.

CESARE

What sleeps is not I; I lie in a borrowed breath
A soul held quiet, bound and trapped in death

What dreams is not I, but a will not quite mine,
A whisper that echoes through halls lost in time

What wakes is not I, but a shell shaped by art not mine,
A frame that rises each day with a borrowed sign;

What stares is not I, but eyes lost in the night,
A shadow that follows, just out of sight;