

Michael Chokhov

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CHARACTERIZATIONS
FEELING OF TRUTH
TEMPO
BRIDGES AND TRANSITIONS

Adventures of Samuel Pickwick, Esq.

CHARACTERIZATION:

For Jingle the light quality must always be there, but also the quality of being master of the situation, whatever it is. When he is not absorbed and obsessed by his imaginary world, he is dominating and mastering every situation. When he is obsessed by his imagination, he is like a child as astonished by his images as anyone - he never lies the same way twice. He does not boast at all - he believes in what he says. He does not want to make an impression by showing off - he enjoys his images. Choose from the drawings of the legs and hands and arms for this creative spirit which is Jingle. The whole play will be divided into certain wholes and incidents.

Rachel must try to find a character which is like a frightened bird, but not a small one - a tall one, like a crane or a heron. Very tall, and very attentive to everything. She must entice Tupman absolutely seriously. It is absolutely serious for her, and she must grasp it immediately or it will be too late. She is working on him more than enjoying herself.

Scene II. This is the most important scene in the play because all the lines are brought out here. All the love themes and all the threads which will later be developed in the play.

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Jingle must try to discover what is going on in his soul, and find out what it is he wants. This will be the objective for his character. He is the first person in this scene and must be - if he is not, the play will fall to pieces. Other scenes will not be interesting otherwise. When we see him spying silently, we recognize him as the mainspring. His part is divided in two - the first part when he orientates himself and the second part when he begins to be acting - first by spying and then by doing his work. He is very concentrated because he plays a very dangerous game.

Rachel has something tragic in her - all spinsters have something tragic in them. Without this tragic quality, they would not be spinsters. Emily is a little coward, but there is nothing tragic in her; she is a little frightened rabbit.

There is one big "Moonlight Sonata," but in different keys. When Jingle and Rachel run away, everyone comes out of the bedrooms and various places in a state as though they had been asleep and cannot grasp what is going on. They cannot understand in the deepest sense. They are lost entirely, and run after Jingle and Rachel in chaos.

Scene III. This is a mystical atmosphere - bad mysticism in which Stiggins swims. A mystical fog.

Scene V. In the Prison. The psychology of Sam and Mr. Weller is that they hate Stiggins and are filled with a

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desire for revenge. In his presence they become different people - they understand each other perfectly - electric sparks flying between them - they take Stiggins humorously, and at the same time they hate him. Mrs. Weller is absolutely blind, and she thinks Sam and Mr. Weller are sinners because they do not recognise the shepherd and the leader.

Stiggins does not speak his words personally - it is as though they come through him - he is bound with another world. It must come from his heart. Imagine around him a great halo - bony hands and body - he actually has no body, only inspirations - small, brown body and very big halo - he imagines that there are rays coming from his hands and arms - a primitive magician. He appreciates every one of his movements.

Mrs. Weller is like a lady of fortune with a marvelous bosom which she carries with dignity. She is absolutely sure of herself, and there is a joy of life about her. She is a body without spirit, just as Stiggins is a spirit without body.

Sam and Mr. Weller have the one objective - to beat Stiggins - therefore, their humor is a little bitter. Mrs. Weller and Stiggins represent a couple - the law of oppositions is essential for them - polarity. Stiggins is as if preaching in the desert - naked.

Scene VI. This scene between Weller and Sam about

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the death of Mrs. Weller is one in which the desire for revenge on Stiggins grows.

FEELING OF TRUTH:

The feeling of truth means to follow certain inner suggestions and not to act before you feel it. To act and react on things before this moment means that there is no feeling of truth. Let things go on and follow them in your psychology. The feeling of truth requires that we follow the inner voice before we begin to act - then when the moment comes, the inner feeling of truth and the outer acting will merge and run smoothly. Don't be afraid of the space between the inner and outer acting, it will come more quickly later on.

Scene IV. The Court. When the Barrister appears, he speaks to everyone, to the whole world, like a child. He thinks he has said something very important, very clever. He likes his business of speaking. It is a big psychological event for him - he fishes for compliments. An open-hearted creature and with something which resembles thinking - something between thinking and seeking for words. He is round like a ball - he does not walk, he ambles and rolls - his hands are somehow round.

When Mrs. Bardell sings, it is with the joy of life. There are unpleasant moments with Tommy which spoil the joy

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of life for her, and she is quite sharp towards the boy. She is serious when she speaks about her physical condition. When Sam comes, she is absolutely open - all her woman's wiles are there, and she is flirting very openly. Mrs. Cluppins is like a policewoman who spoils everything. With Mr. Pickwick she, Mrs. Bardoll, is absolutely closed and as-if modest, but when she realizes he is leaving, she gives herself to him.

TEMPO:

The tempo is not something which should stop our creative spirit - quite the opposite - the more you will develop the background, the more able you will be to act without hurry. When the hurry comes, it means that you have closed yourselves to this background. The tempo will be in our power if we feed it with our imagination.

EXERCISE AND TRANSITIONS:

Imagine the moment clearly and at the same time follow the bridges and transitions, one being inspired by the other.

BRIDGES AND TRANSITIONS:

As an example, take this fairy tale. There are four tailors who have become tired of sitting and sewing. They get a great interest for the world around them. One day they decide to stop this dull business and go out into the world and find happiness. So one morning they leave their shop and

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start their venture. At that moment they find that without needles and cloth and their strange sitting position, they feel very lost - they feel they don't know what to do. They get a tremendous fear of being lost in this wide world, and the four feel they become one as their fear grows. From this fear they get the feeling that one of them is lost. They begin to count each other, and they count only three - the fourth is missing! This frightens them, but they don't dare tell each other. The bridges and transitions are: they start out on their adventure - the feeling of being lost - the feeling of coming closer together - and then the fear that one of them is lost.