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Andrew Seifert



Giacomo Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, Production Considerations:  
Based on the University of Washington's 2006 Production

Andrew Seifert

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

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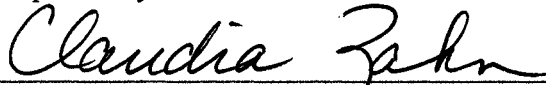
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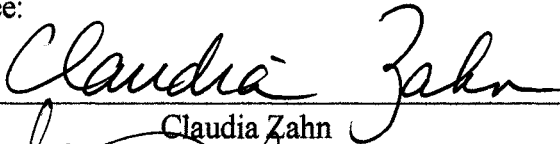
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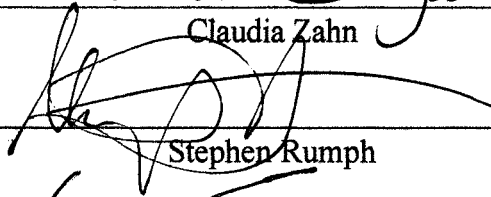


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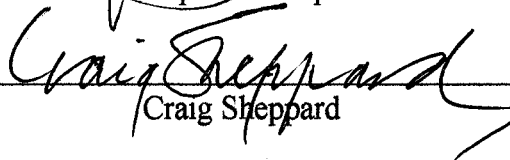
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**Abstract**

Giacomo Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, Production Considerations:  
Based on the University of Washington's 2006 Production

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This study's objective was to organize and present the often fleeting and nebulous thought process involved in directing and/or producing an opera at the collegiate level. Using the author's 2006 production of Giacomo Puccini's *Suor Angelica* at the University of Washington, this study and its supporting documents expose one director's vision for a particular opera, but also serve to propose an organized rubric which can be used to analyze the direction and production of any collegiate operatic offering. Musical considerations are touched upon, but dramatic intention and implication are at the forefront of the study.



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Support from Alex Danilchik, Bob Bohler, Thomas Lynch, Geoff Korf, Deborah Skorstad, Deb Trout, Josie Gardner, Anne Stewart, Sarah Nash Gates, and the entire University of Washington School of Drama made the production a pleasure. In the University of Washington School of Music assistance over and above the expected was provided by Peter Erös, Meena Hwang, Rhonda Kline, Shelby Rhoades, Philip Kelsey, Judy Tsou, Claire Peterson, Jane Eaglen, Tom Harper, and Juliana Rambaldi.

Neither the production in question nor this study of it would have been possible without the guidance and support of Claudia Zahn.

The cast of the 2006 University of Washington production of *Suor Angelica* was: Mariatana del Rosario (alternately Suor Angelica and Suor Genoveiffa), Joo-Young Jung (alternately Suor Angelica and Suor Genovieffa), Kathryn Weld (Zia Principessa), Maria Mannisto (Zelatrice), Katie Copland (Badessa), Kathryn Morgan (Cercatrice I), Sarra Sharif (Cercatrice II), Elizabeth Scott (Infermiera), Kelsey Bergey (Maestra delle

Novizie), Aimeé Bertheau (Conversa I), Kaitlin Ehlers (Conversa II), Margaret Gordon (Novizia), Claire Mars (Virgen), and Jady Crane (Bambino).

## **DEDICATION**

To my parents and my brother.

## INTRODUCTION

Cloistered nuns are shrouded in secrecy, even today; and their lives were even less accessible when Giacomo Puccini and Giovacchino Forzano set out to write *Suor Angelica* as a part of *Il Trittico* in the second decade of the twentieth century. This probable roadblock was remedied quite simply: Forzano decided that *Suor Angelica* would be a completely original libretto relying only on the audience's most basic knowledge of the conventions of a Catholic convent. Since the opera is without specific source material, even a modern audience is prepared only by their common perceptions and knowledge of nuns and cloistered life in general. Early-twentieth-century Italy was saturated with catholicism to an even greater degree than it is today and the Italian opera audiences of the day would have had a broader knowledge of the hierarchy and distinctions of the sisterhood than a contemporary American audience. Since *Il Trittico* was set to premiere at New York's Metropolitan Opera, Forzano and Puccini would have been counting on this lack of factual knowledge and enjoyed the freedom with which they could create religious characters without dependence on or even connection to their real-life counterparts. It is therefore to the delight of the stage director that *Suor Angelica* is pure fiction and only ties itself to the most general of Catholic and mystical traditions. The opera is a playground for the imaginations of a production team and audience.

## I. CLASSIFYING A FICTIONAL SISTERHOOD: CHARACTERS

The fictional nuns of *Suor Angelica* are perhaps best viewed as a hybrid of the Franciscans and the Carmelites. Though the Catholic church has never stated explicit distinctions, notable gender and religious scholars observe the salient trends of these orders.<sup>1</sup> Franciscan nuns are, for the most part, the praying nuns; they often memorize long sets of prayers and hymns and repeat them as offerings for the religious. Carmelite nuns are considered the working nuns; they often freely leave the convent to aid the local community or use their confines as an alms processing plant of sorts. Other distinctions are easily partnered with these: Franciscans are usually cloistered and Carmelites usually are not; Franciscans generally do not entertain visitors and Carmelites may; and Franciscans are usually administered by men (monks of a monastery, or other) while Carmelites administer over themselves by way of hierarchical structures.

A modern director may even venture as far as adding contemporary readings such as: Franciscans are more “conservative,” whereas Carmelites are more “liberal;” It can be said that the Franciscans are the female sensibility of the Catholic church, whereas Carmelites are the female face of the Catholic church. Whether or not these contemporary readings bleed into the real-life sisterhood itself is hard to know, but Catholic nuns throughout history have abided by three solemn vows: poverty, chastity, and obedience. Catholic nuns will say that everyone in the sisterhood is held to the exact same standards – the emulation and teachings of God, Mary, and Jesus – but since they belong to a faith-based community, interpretations abound even within the same orders. The interpretation of the extent of these solemn vows is where a theatrical or operatic

<sup>1</sup> Franciscan and Carmelite distinctions and inceptions are heavily discussed in: Silvia Evangelisti. Nuns: A History of Convent Life. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007. and Jo Ann Kay McNamara. Sisters in Arms: Catholic Nuns through Two Millennia. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.

director's mind may soar when dealing with *Suor Angelica*'s fictional sisterhood.

The nuns in Forzano and Puccini's story are never explicitly said to be cloistered or belonging to a given order. Instead, contradictions arise when some nuns are told only to speak in prayer, while others gossip incessantly; some nuns are told never to leave the confines of the convent, while others do so readily. The composer and librettist allow the nuns of *Suor Angelica* to be both cloistered and not. They are prayers, but also workers. They are both silent and are not. Whatever they are, they are all-inclusive and free for interpretation.

This examiner chose to view the specifics of how the nuns cohabit and interrelate in *Suor Angelica* through the lens of a primary schoolyard model. The hierarchical structures and interrelations of a primary school's administration and student body are easily recalled by a cast of almost any age. It is advisable for a director to share such a model with the cast, as its immediacy is quite easy for a cast of any age to grasp without much trouble. Schoolyard memories are often quite rich for any age group; most every female has been a schoolgirl at one point or another. Impovisatory and mannerist details will undoubtedly stem from the highlighting of this idea. The younger nuns (the lay-sisters [*conversi*] and novice [*novizia*]) can easily be seen as the kindergartners. Their frivolity and bravery of innocence can therefore be unbridled as they experiment (like Sister Dolcina does) or ever-hesitant as they test their boundaries (like the novice does). As with any young entities in such a defined cultural society, the younger nuns would learn many of their habits by the aping of shared customs and brave mimicry of their elders. Though the terms *lay-sister* and *convert* are muddy throughout history with regard to how advanced through the vows the nuns are, it is clear that the young nuns in *Suor Angelica* are rather fresh, but intending to complete the journey of their calling.

The schoolyard model is extended by the fact that the young nuns (kindergartners) clearly have a “teacher.” The mistress of the novices [*maestra delle novizie*] holds a position of stature, but perhaps only as seen through the eyes of the novices and converts. She is responsible for their social upbringing and familiarizing them with the everyday trials and traditions of the convent. Subtly, but almost exclusively, she is charged with carefully reminding the young nuns of their solemn vows. The mistress also bridges the gap between the age distinctions of the nuns. Forzano and Puccini clearly cast her as an intermediary when she jokes with her charges, but they also allow her to be hooked by the collecting sisters’ gossip.

The collecting sisters [*cercatrici*] and the nurse [*infermiera*] are in the working class of nuns. They are older than the converts and novices, but not elders with regard to convent administration. Taking dramatic cues straight from the score and libretto, these sisters offer much to a director. The collecting sisters embody the spirit of the homecoming queen and cheerleading captain. They are instigators of both gossip and peace; they feel worldly because they are of the chosen few who get to come and go in this fictionally cloistered-yet-not convent. The nurse is quite easily viewed by others as a do-gooder and a suck-up, but she would probably imagine that she is simply being as pious and helpful as possible. She is that scorned student who only got so far in her field before settling for the lower-level comfort of vocational nursing instead of pressing her real goals and ambitions.

In keeping with the schoolyard model, administration is needed. This role is filled by Mother Abbess [*badessa*] and the monitor [*zelatrice*]. Representing the “power” within the convent, these two women function quite differently as they pursue a seemingly matching goal. The monitor is easily viewed as the dean of students; she is the

disciplinarian. It is most often her job to punish the sisters' wrongdoing and allow them the benefits of leisure when that is appropriate. Though the audience may not be wholly conscious of it, it is important for a director to guide the actress playing the monitor in a way that insures that she realizes her *full* responsibilities: the monitor is the one person who is responsible for the sisters' religious upbringing and constancy, not just the bearer of punishment. When viewed in these terms, the monitor can become a much more sympathetic character, always with a purpose behind what can be confused for mere coldness.

If the monitor is the interior administrator of the convent, then the abbess is the public face and guide of the convent. With regard to the schoolyard model, Mother Abbess is the "good cop" principal to the monitor's "bad cop" dean. Whenever a crisis evolves from the outside in, the abbess is the one to handle it. This is directly evident within *Suor Angelica* as the major event of the story has to do with the outside pressing in on the convent. The abbess has the benefit of lack of negative contact with the sisters (she leaves that to the monitor) and she is able to maintain a motherly role and often revel in her many "children." It just so happens that on the very day that Puccini and Forzano decided to set the story of *Suor Angelica*, the abbess has to assert her administrative muscle and counsel perhaps her favorite child to be strong and face the skeletons in her closet.

Sister Genevieve [*Genovieffa*] is much more difficult to classify. More than anyone, she is a purely functionary character who Forzano uses in a liquid and convenient way. She is not a superior and is most often a bridge from Sister Angelica to the rest of the nuns (or vice versa). She can quickly become quite transparent unless the director allows him- or herself to be informed by the scene in which she admits to having desires.

Genevieve is the only sister who truly exposes herself and her interior fully and publicly. She is, in all actuality, the paradigm of this sisterhood. Genevieve *is* pure and *is* honest and does not have to constantly remind herself and her sisters of those facts. In the schoolyard model, she is the noble best friend and the ever-trusted confidante; she is without even a hint of untrustworthiness. She is not the leading player because she is much more difficult for an audience to relate to than Angelica, the more “human” and empathizeable of the two.

Sister Angelica is a formidable creation. In the beginning, she is seen as a virtually perfect sister; she even manages to make her initial act of tardiness a show of her most pious behavior. This is the audience’s perception, but it is paramount that a director realizes that Angelica would have been considered a prostitute by papal and monastic standards.<sup>2</sup> Having a child outside of wedlock was prostitution, solidly so in Puccini’s time and without any fluidity in the time that Forzano set *Suor Angelica* (the seventeenth century). Since so very many women were considered “prostitutes” by the Catholic church, in 1227 Pope Gregory IX founded the order of St. Mary Magdalene (the most famously reformed prostitute in biblical history).<sup>3</sup> The church even went as far as classifying different degrees of prostitutes’ potential salvation within the sisterhood. During his world travels in the 1730’s and 1740’s, Jonas Hanway noted that European convents had three classes of former prostitutes: “one of St. Magdalene, who makes vows; one of St. Martha, who [is] not admitted to make vows; and one of St. Lazarus, who [is] detained by force.”<sup>4</sup> By these standards, Angelica would have definitely been

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<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Evangelisti 26.

<sup>4</sup> Sherrill Cohen. The Evolution of Women’s Asylums since 1500: From Refuges for Ex-Prostitutes to Shelters for Battered Women. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1992.

“one of St. Magdalene,” but most of her mystery comes from the fact that though she is outwardly “reformed,” she carries the memory of her son with her at all times. The act of conceiving her son weighs heavily, but Angelica seems not to consider the life of her son a damned existence born of pure sin.

It is beautifully ironic that this troubled soul is the one that takes the counselor role, when considering a schoolyard model. Her experiences, though unknown to the rest of the sisters, give her the tools to aid them with what are comparatively minor problems. when considering a hidden childbirth that would be viewed as a mortal sin in the eyes of the church. Unfortunately, it is the day the audience sees as “today” in which her son’s birth and her classifiable prostitution come from her past to haunt her in the living form of her aunt.

Though her title is not justifiable in terms of the libretto, Angelica’s aunt is referred to as a princess. The audience is never clued into exactly what she is the princess of, but she is unmistakably identified as an aristocrat. Such a fact sheds even more light on the questions that surround what exactly brought Angelica to the convent: it was the fashion of aristocracy to offer their young lineage to the sisterhood in hopes that it may increase their own *post mortem* rewards.<sup>5</sup> Three potential scenarios are painted: first, Angelica was hidden until her child was born, then offered to the convent as an aristocratic sacrifice without mention of her child; second, she was sent to the convent specifically to have the child there; and third, she bore and birthed the child under immense public scrutiny, then was sent to the convent as a confessing repent. The first scenario would have kept Angelica’s pregnancy within the privacy of the family and is therefore refuted by the fact that the princess mentions a “stained” family name; it is clear

<sup>5</sup> for the traditions of aristocratic “offering” of family members see Evangelisti 62-63 and/or McNamara 464.

that the birth was known about, though perhaps not within the convent walls. The second is highly unlikely due to the fact that the sisters' gossip would be well-founded fact and not mere speculation if the child was born within the convent. So the third scenario is not only the most likely, but also the most directable when it comes to the scene between Angelica and her aunt. The princess comes to claim Angelica's portion of the family estate upon the coming of her sister's impending marriage, but Angelica only agrees to sign over her rights upon hearing of her son's tragic death. The princess leaves her niece and takes away Angelica's very will to live out her days in solitude; it is on this day that she can no longer be comforted by the mystery of her dreams and the petitions of her prayers.

An audience may leave a performance of *Suor Angelica* with the thought that the second half is all that is needed to make the tragedy convincing, but indeed it is the character development (through objective arc) of the first half of the opera that invests them so deeply. The seemingly mundane dramatic exposition of the sisters' everyday lives sets up a context in which the pivotal drama of the second half of the opera (centered around such an overriding titular character) can play out. Even if a single-viewing audience does not have the time or capacity to delve as deeply into each character as is possible, a saturated director/actor exploration of character is still critical. The director must explore a variety of options for each character and come up with some sort of objective breakdown in which each character's pursuits are explored in an equally highlighted manner; each actor must be given adequate tools. This is the only way that he or she will have the tools to guide a performer at *any* given time. Table 1 shows how a director can view each character's state of being at their story's starting point and ending point, and their Stanislavskian super-objective (the tendencies leading toward their most

pertinent want or need).<sup>6</sup> Also, the idea of an active character spine (popularized by director Harold Clurman) can compliment a Stanislavskian approach.<sup>7</sup>

If a director or producer wanted to create their own version on Table 1, the following four thoughts are essential: to figure a character's state of being at the start of their story think, "s/he starts in a state of \_\_\_\_\_;" to figure a character's super-objective think, "at all times s/he wants and/or needs \_\_\_\_\_;" to figure a character's spine think, "throughout the opera s/he is going to try to \_\_\_\_\_;" and to figure a character's state of being in the end think, "the story of *this day* ends and s/he is in a state of \_\_\_\_\_." If a director or actor requires some sort of linear approach to this information it is best concentrated in this way: "The character starts out \_\_\_\_\_ (in a state of being) and s/he is always attempting to \_\_\_\_\_ (mention the super-objective) by \_\_\_\_\_ (mention the spine) so, in the end, s/he ends up \_\_\_\_\_ (in a state of being)." With this, it is important to realize that actors can be quite confused by superfluous information. There should not be a sense that a director should give a performer "too much" in order to give them choices. Interesting and intelligent choices are born out of exploration and not by simply mandating that a performer pick an option from a list and play it. To avoid this, Table 1 seeks to create concentrated mantra that can be constantly recalled and used as a leaping-off point for character genesis. Regardless of a part's size or relative "importance" to the central story, a complete character breakdown is still critical in order to inspire a charged and full performance for each actor. This is also an easy way for a director to let an entire cast know that everyone (regardless of billing, number of lines sung, or if they have an aria or not) is substantial.

<sup>6</sup> the idea of the "super-objective" is introduced and discussed at length in: Constantin Stanislavski. An Actor Prepares. New York, NY: Routledge, 1989. and continued to be explored and elaborated upon throughout the same author's Building a Character and Creating a Role

<sup>7</sup> Harold Clurman. On Directing. New York, NY: Fireside, 1972. 74-78.

Table 1. Character Objective Breakdown**Sister Angelica - *Suor Angelica***

*start* - living in her head and longing for the dream of her son

*super-objective* - getting back to her son

*spine* - to hide herself away in order to commune privately with her son

*end* - forced to “speed things along” when earthly communion with her son is no longer possible

**Sister Genevieve - *Suor Genovieffa***

*start* - intrigued by her connection with Angelica, she is trying to explore her further

*super-objective* - ironing out problems; she is completely outside of herself

*spine* - to pull Angelica out of herself and immerse her into the convent

*end* - she realizes that Angelica’s brand of bliss comes from inside, not a social exterior

**Monitor - *Zelatrice***

*start* - untrusting of the nuns’ behavior and forever testing them

*super-objective* - instill a sense of penitent and reflective admission of weakness as a pathway to redemption

*spine* - to guide by strong and fully-conscious discipline

*end* - realize that there is much more to piety than discipline; it can be actively pursued, not only patiently expected

**Mother Abbess - *Badessa***

*start* - caring for all of her charges and trying not to single anyone out

*super-objective* - creating evenly-humanized yet celestially-minded people

*spine* - to guide by humble and observant example

*end* - holding true to herself and her goals, despite what her philosophy may inspire in the nuns (specifically Angelica)

Table 1, continued

**Nursing Sister - *Infermiera***

*start* - trying to please and yet discover an identity

*super-objective* - acceptance; she wants appreciation, but cannot take it

*spine* - to search for qualities in others that are virtuous enough (in her mind) to incorporate

*end* - embracing her patchwork virtuousness and realizing it *is* an identity

**First Collecting Sister - *Cercatrice I***

*start* - exploring how much attention she can garner while still appeasing the superior nuns

*super-objective* - attention by way of validation

*spine* - to distract herself with levity in order to forget that her shallowness is in direct conflict with her being a nun

*end* - enlightened to a deeper purpose in life by Angelica's acquisition of attention without a conscious effort

**Second Collecting Sister - *Cercatrice II***

*start* - in perpetual flux and always adapting to be "acceptable" in any situation

*super-objective* - a status of her own; a need to be "the one known for \_\_\_\_\_" (anything)

*spine* - to search for her own identity, apart from that of the counterpart

*end* - more of a singular entity away from the other collecting sister; ready to be actually humble and not a chaser

**Mistress of the Novices - *Maestra delle Novizie***

*start* - enjoying the youthful innocence of her charges; she plays

*super-objective* - an instillation of joy (not just rules) in the novices and lay-sisters

## Table 1, continued

*spine* - to empathize with her "students" in order to show them that an elder sister can have a sense of childlike joy  
*end* - prideful of her charges' development to handle Angelica's manic moment with maturity

**First Lay-Sister - *Conversa I***

*start* - a massive ball of energy; childlike abandon  
*super-objective* - an enjoyment of her pre-convent behaviors while incorporating an interior piety  
*spine* - to figure out the extremes of how far she can stretch her frivolity; she's trying on a personality  
*end* - forced maturity in the face of immense fear at not understanding Angelica's mania

**Second Lay-Sister - *Conversa II***

*start* - search for behaviors; she is "searching in the dark" for identity  
*super-objective* - to figure out how actively one must "pursue" penitent behaviors rather than letting it happen  
*spine* - to please by conforming and submitting to whomever she is with  
*end* - decided that she can stand on her own and be introspective

**Novice - *Novizia***

*start* - genuine interest in "fitting in" and doing everything "correctly"  
*super-objective* - becoming immersed into the convent  
*spine* - to search for and explore behavior in an attempt to understand the sisterhood  
*end* - increased humility and understanding; she no longer has to follow everyone at all times because she has figured out her individuality

Table 1, continued

**Princess - *Zia Principessa***

*start* - apprehension about being in this holy place; overcompensating for her anxiety with extra stiffness

*super-objective* - a hasty way to wash her hands clean of Angelica

*spine* - to force Angelica into giving up her last attachment to the outside world by exposing her (Angelica's) lack of societal forgiveness

*end* - solemn pleasure; if it had to go that far, so be it; the end justifies the means

## II. SISTERHOOD OF THE EARTH: COSTUMES

When costuming *Suor Angelica* a director must immediately challenge him- or herself and the costume designer to see beyond the relative simplicity of what it means to dress a large groups of nuns. There is still much that can be implied by theatrically considering the servicewear of a penitent and introspective population. Again cued by Puccini and Forzano's strides to fictionalize this convent, the look of the general dress can also be fictional and functional with regard to the plot.

As the nuns are workers and literally close to the earth, the incorporation of earthtones offers an inspired choice. While dark brown can echo the dress of real nuns and cloistered monks, a lighter brown or greenish beige would be distinctive to a fictional order. A standard white accent may be reinterpreted through an earthy sepia and shaded down every so slightly. Appendix D shows how robe-like underlayers are used to set a muted canvas of basic use while the apron-like overlayer is significantly darkened to imply that it could withstand being knelt upon or having hands repeatedly wiped on it. The rugged nature of brown earthtones suggest not only an ability to withstand harsher conditions, but also an implied willingness from the wearer to be down in the earth.

Fabric is another important clue to the style in which these sisters live their lives. If a sturdy yet giving fabric such as hemp is used (as is pictured in Appendix D), the sense of wearable evidence of willingness to work is heightened. This may be on a subconscious level for an audience, but the hemp's hand and lay are just rigid enough to convey a visual sense of structure and protection, especially since the nuns will often be on the ground. Hemp or a like fabric will tent due to its relative hardness and the actress will need to handle it at times and tame it. In contrast to the slightly harsh and protective bodywear, the heads and necks of the costume pieces (know as the habit, in Catholic

dress of the sisterhood) can suggest the nuns' simplicity and softness. Obviously, a soft and breathable neck structure is paramount when dealing with singers and a responsible costume designer will respond by freeing jaw movement and clearing the area around the ears to their greatest ability. The particulars of the nuns' habits may also be freely fictitious with regard to length and color, but, as perhaps the most iconic part of female ecclesiastical dress, a director and costume designer will want to balance creativity with a constant reflection on audience interpretation and whether or not clarity is still at the forefront.

The general look of the opera's dress must be established by the class of elder nuns. In general, they will be a bit more structured than the younger nuns and their habits will incorporate some form of darkness to hint at their devirgination with regard to marriage to God. Also, a well-structured neck piece can hint slightly at age and stature depending upon the placement of folds and the closeness to the chin. One would want to get the throat pieces as high on the jaw as a singer will allow. The younger nuns will have a habit of white (since they have not fully entered a union with God) and less structure, if any, in their neck pieces. Other than the habit, it is wise to keep all of the nuns in the same bodywear. Since rank and hierarchical structures are easily established by behavior, action, and pursuit of goals, it is perhaps most interesting to have identically-bodied nuns hint at variations on a theme. If the elder nuns are all given wildly different personalities (by way of what they pursue) then their visual similarities are able to fall into the audience's subconscious and establish a tight-knit (if not repressive, at times) community.

This community depicted as an earthtone canvas is interrupted only twice. First, by the princess and second, by the miracle. The latter is perhaps the most open for interpretation. Since the Virgin and the child are usually thought of as props (they are

purely functional and iconic), their dress would be easily dehumanized and, cued by their celestial properties, idealized. This does not hint at their function though. The miracle, whether it be real or hallucinatory, is seen from Angelica's perspective and therefore would attest to her honesty by being "true." The Virgin is a woman and the child is a child. Iconic understanding comes from Puccini (and probably the lighting) and an audience actually needs very little "help" in buying the identities of these characters. The Virgin's dress should probably introduce some of the only color into the work-friendly convent, but she is still a girl from Nazareth with tough fabrics and functional simplicity. The child was integrated into Angelica's aristocratic family until he died and will thus belong to that world. White may seem an obvious choice for a celestial being, but even after deep thought and debate it is still the most inspired choice. When themes like purity and piety are being set up by the whiteness of the nuns' habits in contrast to their earthtone bodywear, it is almost essential that this is echoed in the innocence of the child. Such starkness can also be linked to nakedness and an abandonment of self-consciousness. It can also beautifully juxtapose the princess.

Angelica's aunt is an invader of every kind as she brings a shockingly new look and attitude to the story. She is wearing mourning clothes – eternally for her own sister and also thematically for Angelica's son – so she is in black. Mystery and rigidity surround her, but her brand of humility, even though she chooses to cover herself up like the nuns, is to a different end than that of the nuns. The princess is more interested in a show of righteousness than in utter humility and the costumer can tell a great deal of her story with the use of accouterment and structure. Since the princess must enter as a focal point and immediately launch into her "business," any amount of expository aid that is offered by the clothing is helpful. Textures and intricate details give the impression that

the princess is harboring the idea that stature is directly related to visual presentation. Opulent jewelry and beading show how the princess elevates herself and needs a showy exterior to mask her shallow interior. A black veil heightens her mystery of purpose. An ornamental walking staff echoes her age and literally augments her presence. As the princess's spine suggests, societal opinion and expectation weigh heavily on her and her expectations with regard to Angelica. It is therefore no surprise that her outward extravagance would echo her need to ornament and elevate herself as much as acceptably possible. Every detail can be labored over as it is beneficial when such economic storytelling is necessary.

Another aspect of storytelling that the princess supplies is historical placement. In the world of dress, she is the character who has the potential to force a period onto the piece. Ecclesiastical dress is timeless and nuns are therefore ageless. This is not so when regarding aristocracy. When placed, as the contemporary production in question is, at the time in which *Suor Angelica* was written and not in the seventeenth century as Forzano stipulates, there is not a question of whether Angelica is royalty or not. So the title of "princess" (with a notably lowercase *p*) is honorary and harkens back to a long blue-blooded history. Noble dress at the turn of the twentieth century was changing rapidly as the bustle was diminishing out of fashion and, therefore, existence. It is without question that even in 1910 the princess would be wearing a formal gown of mourning, but there is ample flexibility when considering what decade the dress would be from specifically.

As her antiquated title and the way in which she is constantly referred to with classification would suggest, the princess portrays herself in the light of her formidable years. Creative math would be needed to first approximate the princess's age: Angelica had a child seven years ago (around 1900) when she was probably around 18 (pre-

marriage age) and when the aunt was around 45 (one assumes that she is the older sister by the way that she speaks of Angelica's mother); after this, it is assumed that the aunt was probably a debutante in the early 1880's, precisely the point at which the bustle was reemerging as the height of exaggerated opulence in noble fashion.<sup>8</sup> The princess would fondly pine for her former glory and such an idea should be allowed to influence her dress, even "now," in the early 1900's. Appendix D shows how such an idea can be interpreted and integrated into the princess's personal style. She can easily be veiled, accented, prideful, vain, and antiquated all with one look at a fifty-something's attempt at the dress of her prime. Her coldness and formality invades the earthly and earthy convent; she bring unquestionable alienation and haughtiness into the humble dwelling.

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<sup>8</sup> Douglas A. Russell. Costume History and Style. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1983. 376-381 and Akiko Fukai, ed. Fashion: A History from the 18th to the 20th Century. China: Taschen, 2006. 266-269.

### III. THEIR TERRESTRIAL HAVEN: SCENERY

Unapologetic practicality exemplified by character and clothing is easily carried over to the scenery. Forzano requests very little in his libretto and even his opening suggestions and use of a *parlatorio* for the princess's scene can be tapered back if necessary. Figure 1 shows the scenic footprint for a fully functional convent courtyard in which all necessary action and location can be played.

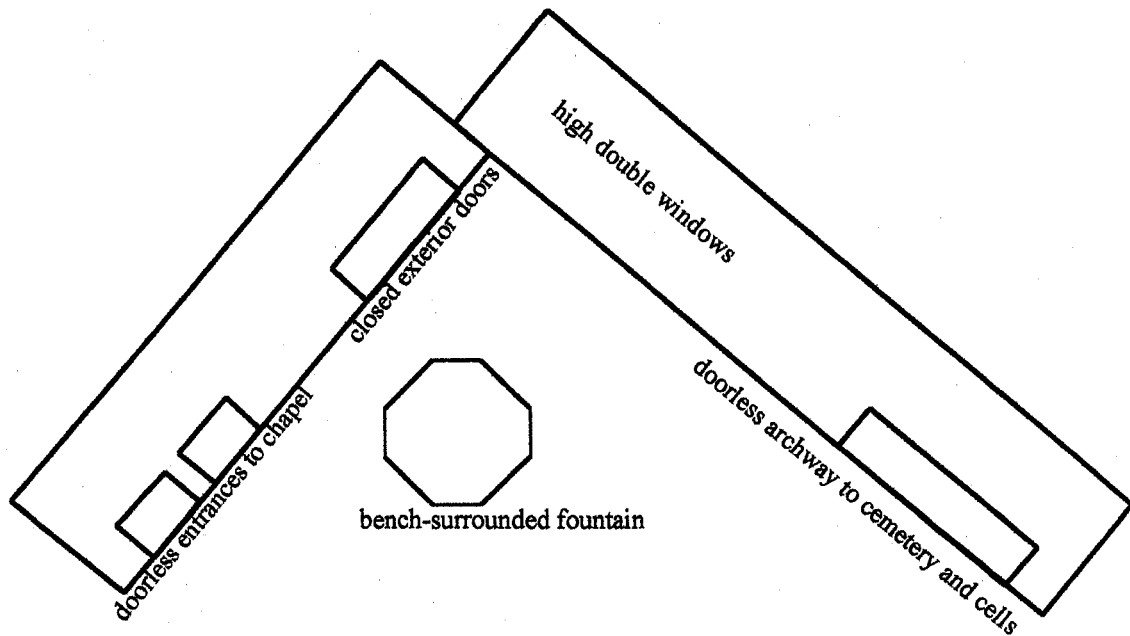


Figure 1. Footprint of a Scenic Design for the Courtyard

Specifically, the audience is looking at what can be described as an “interior exterior.” For all intents and purposes it is the central courtyard within the convent walls. The nuns are presumably surrounded by structure, but it is quite clear that the space is open to the elements, hence the light of day brightens the space. Right of center

sits the fountain and its bulk is often counterbalanced by Angelica's frequent down left positioning (see Appendix B for specific blocking considerations). The expanse created by the scenery's basic lines is meant to dwarf and humble the nuns. With this, height should also be carefully considered. Extra height at the center likens to a cathedral and height at the two ends seems counter-architectural, but adding a bit of extra height to one wall or the other will give a sense of grand scale looming and foreboding. Angelica is subtly trapped by her life's secret and not so subtly trapped by this daunting structure. For this reason the leftmost wall or "her wall" (since her "domain" is often to the left) is taller than the right wall which belongs to the rest of the nuns and highlights their lack of depth and introspection. The other nuns long for the outside world, but Angelica must blanket herself from it in an attempt to hold together what little sense of pleasure she can.

There is forever a sense that even within this open-air setting the closed doorway at the top of the stage offers a seemingly unbreakable gateway to the outside world. Only intrusions may break the plane of this exterior doorway (the princess first, then the miracle). In the one instance that a nun crosses that particular threshold – the abbess going to see who is ringing the entrance bell – the rest of the sisters push just up to it, but are shied away by a seemingly Pavlovian impulse to resist. One can imagine how many times they have been told that longing for the pleasures of the outside world is impious. All things considered, this doorway is the path to the exterior world, but this does not mean that there is immediate exterior beyond it. A long structural hallway or receiving foyer is imagined just beyond.

The other doorways are within the perimeters of free entrance and exit. For this reason, they stand doorless and conceal nothing in an attempt to highlight the unashamed nature of the sisterhood. Nuns enter and exit the chapel in the most pious manner and its

double threshold aids in slowing the natural flow of bodies down to a reflective and trickling double line. In perfect juxtaposition straight across the playing space is the vacuous opening that is used to allow large groups of social sisters to surge into the recreational courtyard and back out toward their living space beyond. Though piety can easily be observed when using this far-left archway, it is most often associated with large exciting scenes: the return of the collecting sisters and their cart, the palpitating nurse in search of remedy, and the mass exodus inspired by the mysterious visitor and enforced by a wave of the abbess's hand. The left wall is considered just that, a wall. There is no sense of structure beyond it and it is therefore a boundary that separates the cemetery and living quarters (deeply solemn and prayerful places) from the recreational courtyard.

Recreation must still be focused through the general lens of simplicity and earthly reverence. Appendix E exposes some research imagery that harkens to this idea, clearly cued by the basic choices made with regard to costuming. The texture, color, and starkness of the scenery should be used as a perpetual reminder of piety behind even the silliest scenes played in front of it. The elemental and earthdrawn nature of cool stonework is amplified by adding beige and brown stucco accents. Taking the color scheme away from pure gray and introducing earthtones to the walls inspires a sense of strong rooting and even the possibility that this structure came straight up from the firmament itself. Abstraction is heightened by a lack of finishing features on doorway and archway edges and at the upper completion of the walls. The simplicity of the scenic earthiness is never interrupted by stark edges and seems to melt eternally onward, upward, or downward as it joins the rest of the natural elements that surround it. It is utterly complete in its unending and consummate expanse.

Such a simple scenic canvas is easily adapted and can be used to effectively do

away with the vague requirements that Forzano sets forth for other locations. Seemingly, the most “other” scene is that between Angelica and her aunt. The libretto stipulates and Mother Abbess specifically says that Angelica will commune with the princess in the *parlatorio*. This is not an absolute necessity and an attentive director may find that interesting choices are born out of situations in which “going to another location” is absolutely impossible for budgetary reasons or otherwise. Even though the other nuns are rapt in solemn prayer within the chapel, when the princess’s scene is placed in the usually-public arena of the courtyard there is a deliciously added sense of looming and impending embarrassment for Angelica. Not only do the gossiping sisters know that Angelica has her first visitor since she came, they are also merely feet away through the chapel doors when the bombshells are dropped. Simply stated, there are no hiding places offered. A nun is supposed to be without interior anxiety and the ever-public nature of a single setting tests piety and honesty. This is not to say that a wide variation of defined areas should not be emphasized within the grand scheme of the set. Architecturally, the scenery is immovable, but a lighting designer can effectively create and highlight a wide variety of microcosms within the given playing space.

## IV. TIMESPAN AND MIRACLE: LIGHTING

Timespan economy is placed upon *Suor Angelica* simply due to its length. Still, a grand-scheme idea of plotting specific times of day is not impossible, even though a conductor will usually allow the opera to fall between fifty and seventy minutes. Through-composition teamed with radically contrasting dramatic function in each scene allows the mind to accept that perhaps even twenty-four hours worth of time in the world onstage can be fit within the opera's one hour of playing time. Table 2 shows how the concentrated musical and dramatic action of *Suor Angelica* can be spread over a span of twenty-four "stage world" hours:<sup>9</sup>

Table 2. Mapping the Time of Day throughout the Score and Libretto

1. page 1 = dawn cued by ringing bells
2. page 5 = sunrise cued by coming out of the chapel
3. page 12 = morning sun cued by the release into recreation
4. page 21 = high noon cued by the sisters going to Bianca Rosa's grave
5. page 27 = afternoon heat cued by Dolcina's playful "admission" to the sin of gluttony
6. page 39 = bright Western summer sun cued by the return of the collecting sisters
7. page 51 = dusk cued by the abbess excusing everyone except Angelica
8. page 56 = moonlit night cued by the princess's entrance
9. page 73 = midnight cued by Angelica signing the parchment
10. page 89 = morning glow cued by Angelica coming to her "laboratory"
11. page 97 = hint of dawn cued by the angelic voices
12. page 101 = miracle blast at a new dawn cued by the miracle

<sup>9</sup> Table 2 refers to the pagination of: Giacomo Puccini. *Suor Angelica*. Libretto by Giovacchino Forzano. English version by Herbert Withers. Reduction for voice and piano. Italy: Ricordi, 2006.

Table 2 should be considered only as a reference and by no means be taken to suggest that a specific time of day needs to happen at an exact given moment – there is even a small bit of leeway when considering exactly where the blast of the miracle should happen. It is most desirable to imagine that the opera needs only three lighting cues: the lights slowly fade up as the day progresses, then slowly fade down as the night progresses, and the miracle invades all. It is, of course, unreal to lock a lighting designer into such specifics, but a strong opinion about the grand-scheme will be appreciated as a launching point; interior cues will be kept to a minimum and remain as organic and natural as the sisters themselves.

Specific consideration must be taken on a few issues, though. First, the fountain must not only be a focal point of lighting (through the high windows of the set pictured in Figure 1) because it is so heavily referenced in the text. It is also the sisters' "water cooler," set up to juxtapose a social meeting place against Angelica's lonely "laboratory" that she shares with only her plants. The fountain is one of very few things that is in relief to the scenery's clean, unending lines and it can be given added emphasis by lighting. Gossiping sisters can leer over (and down) at Angelica from it, pious sisters can convene to pray for Bianca Rosa on it, and recreational sisters can bask in its ability to raise them that much closer to the midday sun.

Second, specific areas can be specifically isolated when specially lit: Angelica's "laboratory" of collected plants at downstage left, the statue of the Virgin which stands between the chapel and exterior doors is ever-looming, and the princess's cold countenance. This isolation can be achieved by the use of spotlights, but a sharp ring of lighting is undesirable. When producing the opera, this examiner coined the term "follow brightness" to indicate an extra incandescence as it aids the audience's eye and is not

meant to specifically encircle any given character. Spot operators should be instructed to defuse the light through a run barrel or frosted gels whenever possible. The clean lines created by fully-focused follow spots would counterbalance the organic nature of costumes, scenery, and general lighting far too much.

The last specific consideration that must be taken with regard to lighting is the miracle. A designer may be allowed to strongly counter the general and realistic lighting of the rest of the opera. It has already been decided that the miracle will come through the coveted exterior doors high in the playing space and it is most desirable to have the miraculous source of the miracle's lighting come from there as well. An argument can be made that the miracle should fill the space from all directions in order to hint at its overriding celestial powers, but a director must not forget Sister Angelica's characteristics. Using her point of view and knowing the type of truly penitent and introspective woman that she is, the director must not choose for the audience his or her own miraculous vision. A single-source lighting approach from behind the entering Virgin and child achieves many things which are in keeping with Angelica's character. The Virgin and child are not exactly "people," but rather quasi-faceless ethereal entities to the audience; we are not allowed to share as fully in them as does Angelica. Since Angelica's dying body is reaching into the light, the audience's emotion comes from empathy with her and not from awe in the face of the miracle; this is in strict keeping with the organic and realistic nature of the rest of the opera. It is not the audience's miracle to own, only to voyeuristically interpret. Even as the human entities of the miracle turn into the light to exit, their backs are to the audience and Angelica as she peacefully dies in the brightness.

## V. CELESTIAL ACTIONS: DRAMATIZATION

Before a director can effectively begin the rehearsal process for *Suor Angelica*, he or she must first consider the overarching dramatic function of the piece. One must not be lulled into a false sense of security that such a short opera will simply “take care of itself” if it is sung well and staged according to Forzano’s suggestions. The compact nature of the show lends itself to even more concentrated structures. In an attempt to identify these, Table 3 suggests act and scene breakdowns and also includes overarching objectives that a director uses for each dramatic division:<sup>10</sup>

Table 3. The “Acts” and “Scenes” of *Suor Angelica*

- Act I = pages 1-11 (6:15) the mundanity and order of everyday life
  - objective: to expose the everyday lives of the sisters and define their hierarchical role within the society
    - Scene i = pages 1-5 (3:35) the schoolbell rings
      - objective: to humble the sisters and show their submission to God through their prayers
    - Scene ii = pages 5-11 (2:40) opening lessons and announcements
      - objective: to corral each sister and assert the monitor’s ruling hand over them
- Act II = pages 11-56 (19:15) the pleasures and surprises of *this* day
  - objective: to contrast situations in which the sisters are expectant and comfortable to situations in which they are surprised and caught off guard
    - Scene i = pages 11-19 (3:50) recess
      - objective: to lull the audience into the sense that today is much like any other day

<sup>10</sup> again, pagination is according to the 2006 imprint of the Ricordi edition of *Suor Angelica*

Table 3, continued

- Scene ii = pages 19-26 (3:55) debates on desire
  - objective: to emphasize the sisterhood's (and especially the elders') bias against dissent
- Scene iii = pages 27-32 (1:45) hallway gossip; passing period
  - objective: to display the audacity with which the sisters openly gossip
- Scene iv = pages 32-38 (2:40) the nurse needs guidance
  - objective: to elevate Angelica as the problem-solver of the group
- Scene v = pages 39-51 (3:45) activity for community service class
  - objective: to whip the story back into a false sense of everyday mundanity
- Scene vi = pages 51-56 (3:20) the mysterious visitor is announced
  - objective: to explode the reserved nature of the nuns by introducing an outside force
- Act III = pages 56-76 (16:00) the invasion and guilt of so long ago
  - objective: to lower Angelica from the perfect picture painted by the simple fact that she is a nun; to make her a character that an audience can empathize with
  - Scene i = pages 56-65 (6:40) exterior invading interior
    - objective: to flaunt the princess's alien appearance and airs
  - Scene ii = pages 66-67 (2:55) the lessons will never be over
    - objective: to focus and calm the audience by stilling the princess as she "knocks the wind out of Angelica's sails"
  - Scene iii = pages 68-71 (2:25) the reason for everything
    - objective: to clarify Angelica's "crime" in order to explain her "punishment"
  - Scene iv = pages 71-76 (4:00) wishing cannot make it so
    - objective: to parade the wide extents of Angelica's strength and weakness in front of her aunt

## Table 3, continued

- Act IV = pages 76-86 (7:30) “to be or not to be”
  - objective: to travel through Angelica’s search for determination
  - Scene i = pages 76-82 (4:45) solitary reflection; what is left to do?
    - objective: to make plain Angelica’s newfound resolve
  - Scene ii = pages 82-86 (2:45) the misunderstanding of happiness
    - objective: to juxtapose the sisterhood’s “normal” behavior (coming to Angelica for help) with Angelica’s “abnormal” behavior (wildly assuring the sisters of her happiness)
- Act V = pages 86-105 (8:50) the fears and rewards of tomorrow
  - objective: to unapologetically expose Angelica’s decisiveness
  - Scene i = pages 86-95 (5:35) a crime of passion
    - objective: to rush Angelica into drinking with abandon
  - Scene ii = pages 95-105 (3:15) fear and vision
    - objective: to paint Angelica’s dream of redemption without actually showing where exactly she is going in death

Clearly, Table 3 follows Gustav Freytag’s pyramid of dramatic structure.<sup>11</sup> Each “act” falls along the lines of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and dénouement. The fact that such an analytical structure can be laid over *Suor Angelica* is a testament to its fine construction. Also interesting is the fact that, like the musical trend of the late Romantics to call back an interior climax just before the end of a piece, the climax of the aunt’s appearance is echoed by the stronger theatrical explosion of the miracle. Angelica chose to go out with a whimper, but after her poison-induced protestation and begging, she is given an explosion.

<sup>11</sup> though Freytag’s formula is discussed in detail throughout the dramatic canon of research (Gustav Freytag. *Die Technik des Dramas*. Leipzig, Germany: S. Hirzel, 1890), for the Shakespearean usage referred to here see: A.C. Bradley. *Shakespearean Tragedy*. London, England: Penguin Books, 1991.

Now a director's vision and voice can start to lay itself over the bones and connective tissue of form. Nothing must be forced; a good application of design elements can make directing the piece quite straightforward. Costumes tell the audience that these are nuns. The actors will immediately respond with sense-memory and *be* nuns the moment they step into costume. Scenery exposes the simplicity in which the sisters are surrounded. Lighting attests to a functional, real-life day that an audience can relate to. These nuns are real people living in real circumstances; it is enough to allow them to play out the given drama in the given dramatic circumstances. If a particular action leaps off the stage as a contemporary gesture or misread, then it is of course appropriate to put it to a stop; the over-dramatization that Puccini's music seems to inspire in the contemporary world will sometimes find singers aggrandizing their mannerisms. Within an opera that includes – perhaps as its hallmark – the coming of the Virgin Mary, there is no need to dramatize behavior beyond naturalism.

As one peruses the appendices at the end of this document (specifically A through C), an application of the following two terms is present: selfishness (acting in one's own interests) and distraction (acting in a way that consciously masks any problems that reality may force into one's life). At one point or another each of the characters experiences these two states of being in varying degrees of overlap and juxtaposition. For this reason these words must be viewed through a positive lens and never seen from their usual pejorative angle. There is innocence and unconsciousness to both selfishness and distraction within the sisterhood. One should never think that these are immoral women who are willingly breaking the simple and solemn vows which they swore to. No one is malicious, they are all simply masters of their own sense of being.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> this idea is explored deeply throughout: Ayn Rand. The Virtue of Selfishness. New York, NY: Signet, 1961.

Angelica is selfish in the way she views why she is at the convent (to hide away from a painful past), the elder nuns are selfish in the way they try to force a communal sense among the sisterhood (even though each uses wildly different tactics), the younger nuns are selfish in their nonstop attempt at competitiveness over one another, and the princess is selfish in the fact that she longs to free herself from a life full of the aching shame that Angelica's mistakes give her – she stands out since hers is the pejorative kind. Angelica is distracted away from her communion with her son by the rules of the convent and the guilt under which she labors, the elder nuns are distracted away from their pious behavior by the temptation of mystery that surrounds Angelica, the younger nuns are distracted by the habitual playfulness of their recent lives outside of the convent, and the princess is distracted by her embarrassment of Angelica and her pride of stature. In the end, Angelica's unapologetic resolve teaches the entire convent that a person can be content upon coming to a singular, life-defining decision. Ironically the nuns are taught humility by the greatest "sinner" among them just before they leave the playing area for the final time. Angelica is left alone to face her decision to alter the rut of distraction and selfishly acts to an irrevocable end.

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## APPENDIX A: ACTIONS, ADJUSTMENTS, AND ACTIVITIES

The following appendix is an example of what a director can create in order to exhaustively plan the intention (by way of active pursuit of an objective) of any given character at any given moment. Each verso page includes three columns: (1) a list of clear and concise actions, giving any character something to pursue at any moment; (2) a list of adjustments which serve as clarifications or elaborations on the actions; and (3) a list of the given activities taking place at each moment. Each recto page includes the libretto. The given actions, adjustments, and activities that occur during each moment of the libretto are represented linearly in rows across the verso and recto pages.

The character names are abbreviated as follows:

SA	= Suor Angelica - Sister Angelica
G	= Genovieffa - Sister Genevieve
Z	= La Zelatrice - The Monitor
B	= Badessa - Mother Abbess
I	= Infermiera - The Nursing Sister
CeI	= Cercatrice I (Suor Osmina) - Collecting Sister I (Sister Osmina)
CeII	= Cercatrice II (Suor Lucilla) - Collecting Sister II (Sister Lucilla)
M	= La Maestra delle Novizie - The Mistress of the Novices
CoI	= Conversa I (Suor Dolcina) - Lay-Sister I (Sister Dolcina)
CoII	= Conversa II - Lay-Sister II
N	= Una Novizia - A Novice
P	= La Zia Principessa - The Princess, Sister Angelica's Aunt
V	= La Vergine - The Virgin Mary
Ch	= Un Bambino - A Child

**ACTIONS****ADJUSTMENTS****ACTIVITIES**

(M to N)

to lead by example

N follows M into the chapel, mimicking her every move and position

(Z and B)

to tally all of the sisters

shocked that some sisters are noticeably missing

B send Z to look at all of the doors; all other sisters enter the chapel

Z gives up her search after a deep sigh and shake of her head

hastily Z enters the chapel before the prayer starts

(CoII)

to convince CoI to come to chapel

fearfully checking in with the doors to the chapel all the while

(CoI)

to calm CoII

“come on, it’s no big deal”

constantly pulling CoII back toward the “bird”

(SA)

to usher the lay-sisters into the chapel

firm, but with a smiling, playful scolding; “tisk, tisk”

the lay-sisters run to the chapel door and make no special gesture at the doorway as they join the rest offstage

*(The curtain opens. The bells ring. The sisters enter the chapel and sing.)*

THE SISTERS

*(inside)*

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee. Blessed art Thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, pray for us sinners . . .

*(Two lay-sisters, who are late, cross the stage; they stop a moment to listen to the birds that sing in the trees, then they enter the chapel. Sister Angelica, who is also late, comes in and goes toward the chapel.)*

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(SA) to lavish in this solidarity	taking in the complete expanse of the courtyard	making sure to pass the top of the fountain and the statue of the Virgin
(SA) to prostrate herself	totally unapologetic and with no fear or reservations about going fully to the ground	she does this and enters the chapel
(Z) to chastise	preaching "over" their heads, literally laying down the law	
(CoI) to confess	"sister in humility" is a bit of a mocking jibe to Z, it mocks her earlier line	CoII remains completely still, then tries to shrink back and disappear
(N) to silently beg her teacher for answers	this is just one <i>more</i> thing she does not understand	since Z turns away again, this is the novices chance to sneak in a question

SISTER ANGELICA

Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

*(She makes an act of contrition by kneeling and kissing the ground outside the chapel door, then she enters the chapel.)*

THE SISTERS

*(inside)*

Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. May it be so.

*(The sisters leave the chapel two by two and make a small group. The monitor comes to the center.)*

THE MONITOR

*(to the two lay-sisters who crossed the stage earlier)*

Sisters in humility, you missed quindene and so did Sister Angelica, but she made the full act of contrition. Instead, you have sinned in distraction and you have lost a day of quindene!

A LAY-SISTER

I acknowledge my sins and ask for much penance. The greater it is, the more thanks I will give to you, sister in humility.

THE MISTRESS OF THE NOVICES

*(aside to the novice, explaining)*

--Whoever arrives late to choir, must bend and kiss the ground.--

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(M) to placate		she bends forward to "whisper" to the novice
(Z) to lord it over them	annoyed, but controlled and biting it back	turns back over to them, suddenly
(CoI and CoII) to submit		Z silently crosses around the back of the group of sisters
(Z) to surprise	without looking directly at CeII until she tells her to leave	CeII exits without a fight; a submissive pushover
(M) to amuse	leaning down to offer this with a tap on the novices shoulder, not to answer any kind of questioning	

*(The lay-sisters await their penance.)*

THE MONITOR

*(to the lay-sisters)*

Say the memorized prayer twenty times for the afflicted and the slaves and for all of those who live in mortal sin.

A LAY-SISTER

With joy and fervor!

THE TWO LAY-SISTERS

*(with enthusiasm)*

Lord Christ, spouse of Love, I wish only to please You now and at the hour of my death!  
Amen!

THE MONITOR

*(to Sister Lucilla)*

Sister Lucilla, get to work. Leave us and observe silence.

*(Sister Lucilla leaves.)*

THE MISTRESS OF THE NOVICES

*(aside to the novice)*

--That punishment is because she laughed in choir this evening and made other's laugh, too.--

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(Z) to scold	this is the first sister that she meets eye to eye and is completely direct to	CeI rises and faces the monitor, she is a bold one in comparison to the others
(CeI) to defend herself	with an immediately remorseful retraction	clasping her hands over her mouth and turning away
(Z) to cut CeI down to size	puffed up chest and upturned chin; she looks down on the sister as if she is going to pounce	Z presses even closer and CeI goes in haste toward the cloister door
(SISTERS) to comfort		CeI turns and "begs" the monitor to have pity, but she is cold and CeI stomps out in a tirade
(Z) to bait everyone and lure them in	relishing in it, she is almost flirting as she lords this power over them; it is a prolonged pleasure that she savors	
	a sigh of relief	

THE MONITOR

*(to Sister Osmina)*

Sister Osmina, you kept two scarlet roses hidden in your sleeves while in the chapel.

SISTER OSMINA

*(without control)*

That is not true!

THE MONITOR

*(severely)*

Sister, go to your room. Do not hesitate! The Virgin is watching!

*(Sister Osmina leaves. She is silent as she goes toward her room and all of the sisters watch her go.)*

THE SISTERS

Queen of Virgins, pray for her . . .

*(Sister Osmina slams the [offstage] door to her room.)*

THE MONITOR

And now, sisters in joy, since it is pleasing to the Lord and to happily return to our work for love of Him, enjoy yourselves!

THE SISTERS

Amen!

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(SISTERS) to distract themselves and each other; to play		games are played, books are read, and some even simply bask in the early sun
(SA) to embellish	not only her practical actions, but also her attitude are wistful and light; she is quick on her feet for once; again, she is unafraid of the earth and kneeling upon it	placing plants and flowers at the statue of the Virgin, at the doors to the chapel, on the fountain, and by the large cloister doors before she settles with a few to work with
(B and Z) to mediate	these are the monitor's charges, but they are the abbess's "children"	Z checks all around for the appropriateness of the young sisters' behavior, but B simply enjoys the games and leisure
(G) to illustrate	she is telling a story by literally "taking the stage;" she is a captivating storyteller	everyone relishes in G's story; they start to take it up themselves and take her lead by illustrating it to each other

*(The white figures of the sisters scatter throughout the cloister and the arches. Sister Angelica works with the earth and her plants and flowers.)*

SISTER GENEVIEVE

*(gaily)*

O sisters, I want to tell you that a ray of sunlight has entered the cloister! Look where it is shining, there among the greenery! The sun is upon the flowers! The three evenings of the golden fountain are beginning!

THE SISTERS

It's true, in an instant we will see the gilded water!

ONE SISTER

And then for two more evenings!

## ACTIONS

## ADJUSTMENTS

## ACTIVITIES

(N)  
to interrupt

but this is also apologetic,  
“excuse me, mistress”

M stands to greet her and  
asks her to rise as well

(M)  
to assure

by telling N that this is a  
good thing and that there is  
no need to worry or be  
concerned

N feigns a return to her  
friends, but is still confused  
and decides to go back to M

(M)  
to hide

this is for M herself; here is  
a thinly-veiled foreshadow  
of what the rest of the nuns  
are about to say

since she knows that this  
quasi-aside is slightly  
embarrassing and darkly  
“adult,” she takes herself  
away from the novice

THE SISTERS

It is May! It is the beautiful smile of Our Lady that comes with the beam. Queen of Mercy, thank you! Thank you!

A NOVICE

*(to the mistress, timidly)*

Mistress, I ask permission to speak.

THE MISTRESS OF THE NOVICES

Only if it is to praise holy and lovely things.

A NOVICE

What grace from the Virgin gladdens the sisters?

THE MISTRESS OF THE NOVICES

A resplendent sign of the goodness of God! For only three evenings a year when we leave the choirloft, God allows us to see the sun that shines on the fountain and turns the water the color of gold.

A NOVICE

And the other evenings?

THE MISTRESS OF THE NOVICES

We either come out too early while the sun is too high, or too late after the sun has set.

**ACTIONS****ADJUSTMENTS****ACTIVITIES**

(B)  
to silence and corral

her solid stature and  
piercing eyes are enough to  
do so

everyone but SA and G sit  
around the fountain and  
reflect with bowed heads  
and folded hands; B simply  
nods to G and G knows  
that she is excused to see  
about SA's silent and  
detached reverie

(G)  
to invite

she is cautious; for SA, this  
is an unexpectedly positive  
attitude on such a solemn  
anniversary

with a bucket of water to  
spread on Bianca's grave, B  
leads everyone out and taps  
G on the shoulder as she  
passes

(SA)  
to admire her plants; then  
to offer herself

talking directly to her  
plants and humanizing them  
until she turns her attention  
to her prayer to Mary

THE SISTER

*(sadly)*

Another year has passed! And one sister is gone!

*(There is a sad silence in the cloister; the sisters go into deep thought and prayer as they try to imagine their departed sister.)*

SISTER GENEVIEVE

*(to Angelica, genuinely and almost simply)*

Oh sister in pious pain, when the jet of water has flowered, when the jet is gilded, wouldn't it be nice to carry a bucket of golden water to the grave of Bianca Rosa?

THE SISTERS

Yes! The sister who rests in peace surely wishes it!

SISTER ANGELICA

Wishes are the flowers of the living. They do not bloom in the realm of the dead because the Virgin Mother helps and in Her goodness, she freely anticipates wishes; even before a wish has blossomed, the Mother of Mothers has already granted it. Oh sister, death is but a beautiful life!

*(She stays concentrated on her thoughts.)*

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(Z) to evade	she completely discredits G by waving her hands, nodding her head, etc.	Z, G, CeI, CeII, and I enter as if they are continuing a conversation and an argument has ejected them into the courtyard
(G) to bargain	by chasing after each of the other nuns and trying to make physical and eye contact	
(Z, CeI, CeII, I) to dismiss	Z sets the example and the others follow suit as much to conform as to agree	they each blast past G in turn and head to the fountain
(G) to explain; to mortify herself to the monitor	she searches each sister for compassion and finally finds some in I	at the end, she goes to bow before the monitor and is eventually excused into the chapel to pray
(CoI) to show off	this "confession" is not penitent; she is performing for Z to publicly make up for her earlier mistakes	

THE MONITOR

We cannot have wishes as long as we live.

SISTER GENEVIEVE

If they are simple and innocent, why not? Don't you have a wish?

THE MONITOR

I don't!

THREE SISTERS

I don't either! I don't! I don't!

SISTER GENEVIEVE

*(with her head up)*

I do; I confess it. My sweet Lord, Thou knowest that before I came here and was in the outside world, I was a shepherdess. For five years, I have not seen a little lamb. Lord, does it displease you if I say that I wish to see a little lamb again; to be able to caress him, touch his cool mouth, and hear him call? If it's a sin, I will offer Thee the Miserere mei. Forgive me, Lord, Thou art the Lamb of God.

SISTER DOLCINA

I also have a wish!

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(Z) to appease	by gesturing CoI into the chapel; Z is rather bored and cold	CoI crosses to the monitor and bows
(ELDER SISTERS) to tease		as CoI passes, the sisters whisper to each other and furl their noses and brows playfully
(G) to provoke	this is done in the gentlest of ways; it is a light prodding	CoI stops before entering the chapel to listen for SA's answer
(SA) to shrug it off	she is neither offended nor excited; matter-of-fact	
(ELDER SISTERS) to release their tensions	this is done by complaining to the younger nuns; they were looming over SA and waiting for a juicy bit of gossip	the group nearest SA storms away from her to join the others by the fountain; this pits SA and G against the rest
(YOUNGER SISTERS) to chase the elders	they are trying to take in and understand this mass confusion and eruption	CoI never ends up entering the chapel; she joins the others

THE SISTERS

Sister, we know your wishes! Some good food; some tasty fruit! Gluttony is a grave sin!  
*(to themselves)* --She is a glutton!--

SISTER GENEVIEVE

*(going to Sister Angelica)*

And you, Sister Angelica? Do you have any wishes?

SISTER ANGELICA

*(turning toward Genevieve)*

Me? . . . No, sister, no.

*(She turns back to her flowers. The sisters gather away from her and whisper.)*

THE SISTERS

May Jesus forgive her; she has told a lie!

A NOVICE

*(advancing, curious)*

Why?

**ACTIONS****ADJUSTMENTS****ACTIVITIES**

(ELDER SISTERS)

to conceal their gossiping

the younger nuns are absentmindedly sucked into this "storytelling" gossip circle

(ELDER SISTERS)

to lure the youngsters

by beginning to exit with shrugged shoulders and wide eyes

the younger nuns follow the elders toward the large SL cloister door as if to exit

(I)

to plead

she runs in and, without shame, she unconsciously kneels on the ground next to SA

(SA)

to calm

taking her hands and searching her to make eye contact and center her

the rest of the sisters, who were about to leave, hang back and lean close in to hear

(I)

to explain

she is vicariously distracting herself and, in doing so, absentmindedly calming herself; this is noticeable as her music fittingly does the same

## THE SISTERS

We know that she has a big wish. She would like to have news about her family! She has been in the monastery for more than seven years and she hasn't had any news! She seems resigned, but she is also tormented! (*getting even further away from Sister Angelica*) In the world outside of the monastery she was extremely rich, as the Abbess says. She was noble; a princess! They wished to make her a nun, it seems, as a punishment. Why? Who knows!

*(The sisters begin to exit.)*

## THE NURSING SISTER

*(rushing in, breathless)*

Sister Angelica, listen!

## SISTER ANGELICA

Oh sister nurse, what happened, tell me!

## THE NURSING SISTER

Sister Chiara was in the garden, adjusting the trellis of roses; suddenly several wasps came out and they stung face! Now she is in her room and she is groaning. Ah, calm her, sister. The pain is tormenting her!

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(SISTERS) to egg I on	by pressing in and nodding empathetically	
(SA) to pacify	the idea strikes SA by surprise, but she takes the cue to soothe I	she runs out to get the plants and the others (except I) follow her, since that is the attractive thing this moment
(I) to relieve herself	this is as much a prayer as a moment of reassurance; she is progressively alleviating her own anxiety	
(SA) to make plain	by making this as matter- of-fact as possible, she assists in calming I	SA breaks off pieces of the plant and examples the logistics of using the cuttings as medicine
(SA) to warn	something is eating at her that comes to a head uncontrollably	she takes herself away from I and falls into her own world of reflection
(I) to ingratiate herself.	she bows low with a hand to her chest	
(SA) to shrug it off	"really, it was nothing;" a bow	I bursts away with the cuttings in hand

THE SISTERS

Poor thing!

SISTER ANGELICA

Wait, I have an herb and a flower!

*(She runs to get herbs and flowers.)*

THE NURSING SISTER

Sister Angelica always has a good remedy, made with flowers. She always finds a blessed herb to soothe pains!

SISTER ANGELICA

*(to the nursing sister, giving her the herbs)*

Here, this is spurge; with the milk that drips from it, bathe the swelling. And with this one, make a potion. Tell Sister Chiara that it will be very bitter, but that it is good for her. And also tell her that wasp bites are only small pains, and that she must not groan because groaning increases the torment.

THE NURSING SISTER

I'll tell her that! Thank you, sister, thank you!

SISTER ANGELICA

*(leaning her head down)*

I am here to serve.

**ACTIONS****ADJUSTMENTS****ACTIVITIES**

(CeI and CeII)  
to rally and present

both are as proud as  
peacocks

a warning bell rings and the  
sisters enter and prepare to  
receive the collection for the  
day; the collecting sisters  
push in a cart full of sacks  
and bundles of food

(CeI and CeII)  
to tease

by parading the chock-full  
cart to the fountain

the sisters chase and/or  
follow the cart as it passes

(CeI and CeII)  
to display; to tempt

it is as if they are traveling  
saleswomen

shaking various packages to  
check their contents;  
checking their inventory

(ELDER SISTERS)  
to admire; to congratulate

humble and curious, they  
innocently loom over the  
delicious items

by the time the elders get to  
the fountain area they have  
to push the younger sisters  
back and up onto the  
fountain itself

*(Two collecting sisters lead in a loaded collecting cart.)*

TWO COLLECTING SISTERS

*(entering)*

Praise Mary!

THE SISTERS

And forever do so!

*(The sisters follow the cart and gather around it.)*

TWO COLLECTING SISTERS

We had a good collection today, sisters.

FIRST COLLECTING SISTER

A sack of oil.

SISTER DOLCINA

Oh, good!

SECOND COLLECTING SISTER

Hazelnuts: six bunches.

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(YOUNGER SISTERS) to gawk	this is done with shared enjoyment and longing; they look to the copious food and to their peers alternately; they are only recently "humble" and meager, seeming to forget that presently	
(CoI) to show off	this is for the sake of N and CoII	she licks her lips, pats her stomach, closes her eyes
(Z) to scold	"for heaven's sake, have some propriety"	she stamps her foot and turns slightly back and up to CoI who simply shrugs her shoulders and silently giggles with her peers
(CeI) to reveal; to unveil	by shaking each package; there is a bit of surprise with each, even for CeI	CeI and CeII take turns handing off packages to everyone except Z and B; each sister takes their package and starts to "work with it" by reappportioning it or by organizing it
(SISTERS) to parade their packages	every collection day it is like a surprise party	

FIRST COLLECTING SISTER

A little basket of walnuts.

SISTER DOLCINA

Those are good with salt and bread!

THE MONITOR

*(disapprovingly)*

Sister!

FIRST COLLECTING SISTER

Here's some flour and here is a bit of cheese which is still sweating milk. It's as good as cake. And a sack of lentils, some eggs, butter, and that's it.

THE SISTERS

Great collection tonight, Sister Housekeeper.

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(CeII) to tempt		she flaunts the branch around CoI, who is still elevated by standing on the edge of the fountain
(CoI) to tempt	it is enjoyment, then instant guilt, then a deflection of that guilt by tempting others	CoI gives berries to some of the sisters, then turns and boldly approaches the monitor and the abbess
(CoI) to insist	suggestive eyes out of the top of her bowed head	she keeps shoving the branch at the monitor
(Z) to throw in the towel	"why not?; it's just one"	
(CeI) to probe	by checking for reactions from each of the sisters as she inspects their work with the packages	weaving in and out of the working sisters

SECOND COLLECTING SISTER

*(to Sister Dolcina, offering her a branch of berries)*

For you, greedy sister . . .

SISTER DOLCINA

*(happily)*

A little branch of berries! *(offering some berries to the younger nuns)* Take some, sisters!

THE SISTERS

Thank you!

THE MONITOR

Oh! If I take a thing, I'll offend!

SISTER DOLCINA

*(offering again, insisting)*

No, take some!

THE SISTERS

Thank you! Thank you!

FIRST COLLECTING SISTER

Who is waiting at the entrance?

THE SISTERS

No one. Why?

**ACTIONS****ADJUSTMENTS****ACTIVITIES**

(SA)  
to test

with dawning realization, this is all sounding more and more familiar; just to make sure, she is checking the facts with CeI

she rises and does not dare to make eye contact with anyone

(CeI)  
to remember and list; to "feed" the information

immediately intrigued by SA's reaction; she wants to get these details right, as each one increases the reaction in SA

pressing over to SA as each of the sisters follow her with their eyes

(SA)  
to assault

by staring CeI down

she pulls CeI slightly downstage as she parses out more and more detail and pays more and more attention to her reactions and recollections

(CeI)  
to escape

this is getting a bit too invasive and a bit scary

she frees herself from SA's grasp and struggles to back up into the relative safety of the numbers of her fellow sisters

FIRST COLLECTING SISTER

Outside the gate there is an opulent carriage.

SISTER ANGELICA

*(turning to the collecting sister, with a sudden sense of fear)*

What's that, sister? What are you saying? A carriage is outside? Opulent?!

FIRST COLLECTING SISTER

It appears to belong to great men. It is certainly waiting for someone who is coming to the convent and maybe at any moment the announcement bell will ring.

SISTER ANGELICA

*(with growing anxiety)*

Ah! Tell me, sister, what was the carriage like? Did it have ivory details? . . . And was it upholstered with dark blue silk that is ornamented with silver?

FIRST COLLECTING SISTER

*(confused)*

I don't know, sister, I don't know: I only saw a carriage . . . and a beautiful one!

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(SISTERS) to gossip	these are "sloppy" asides; there is a disregard for whether SA can hear them or not	
(SISTERS) to compete	by making the post-bell activity a conversation, it immediately becomes a competitive experience; by considering these unselfish means to a selfish end	all of the sisters jump up and they are immediately distracted from SA; G crosses to SA as the others follow B to the exterior doors
(SA) to beg	she searches the sky for this prayer and does not notice G crossing over	
(G) to console	forcing SA's attention into her eyes and away from the distance of her prayer; "this is happening <i>now</i> ," she seems to be saying	
(SA) to snap out of it	this is as much a "thank you" for the promise of prayers as for the jolt back into reality	

## THE SISTERS

*(curiously watching Sister Angelica)*

She's turning white . . . and now crimson! Poor thing; she is affected! She hopes that it is her family! *(the sisters respond to the sound of the announcement bell)* People are coming in! A visitor is coming! For whom? Who can it be for? I hope it is for me! I hope it is my mother bringing us white turtledoves! I hope it is my cousin bringing us some good lavender seed.

*(Sister Genevieve comes to Sister Angelica and the others go to the exit door after the abbess.)*

## SISTER ANGELICA

*(aside, with fervor)*

--Oh, elect Mother, read my heart. Smile to the Savior for me.--

## SISTER GENEVIEVE

*(with great sweetness to Sister Angelica)*

Oh, sister in love, we pray to the Star of Stars that the visitor is for you.

## SISTER ANGELICA

*(emotionally)*

Thank you, good sister . . . Thank you!

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(B) to hush	her power is asserted by singular, sharp, and striking movements, not an overexertion of any kind	a wave of her hand is enough to send the sisters away from the exterior door; eventually even G and SA begin to exit
(B) to summon; to release	juxtaposing actions are achieved as SA is summoned and the other sisters are released with one more swipe of the abbess's hand	all except SA and B leave through the large SL door
(SA) to skirt and delay	she is dipping one toe into the water at a time; she doesn't want to be knocked off of her feet, but she knows what is probably coming	
(B) to assert herself	she is centering SA and trying to get her prepared by steeling her	SA goes to her knees and silently begins to pray the prayer that the rest of the sisters are about to intone

*(From the right, the abbess re-enters to tell the sisters that the visitor is not for them. Everyone is very expectant. Sister Angelica remains with her eyes lifted to the heavens and she is motionless in suspense.)*

THE ABBESS

*(calling)*

Sister Angelica!

THE SISTERS

Ah!

*(The abbess tells the sisters to go away; they do.)*

SISTER ANGELICA

*(finally gasping)*

Mother, speak! Who is it? Mother, speak! I have been waiting for seven years, waiting for one word, one note . . . I have offered everything to the Virgin through full atonement.

THE ABBESS

*(interrupting)*

You must also offer Her the anxiety that you are feeling now!

*(Sister Angelica, affronted, slowly goes to her knees and prays.)*

**ACTIONS****ADJUSTMENTS****ACTIVITIES**

		the sisters cross into the chapel with their prayer-books; SA and B are still
(SA) to convince herself	she does not turn to the abbess or go to her; this is for herself, but taken outside of herself by addressing the abbess	
(B) to "rip off the bandage"	she feels that SA has had the chance to be at peace and now it is time to get this over with	SA approaches the abbess
(SA) to support herself		she falls to the ground as her legs give out
(B) to soothe and reassure	by keeping SA strong and on task, but this is not a motherly soothing, it is a call to "buck up"	
(SA) to pray	finally the prayer commences and SA turns her anxiety over to something outside of herself	her dejected kneeling position becomes a strong, erect kneeling position; she is steeling herself to receive her aunt

THE SISTERS

Lord, grant eternal rest and may eternal light shine down. May she rest in peace. Amen!

SISTER ANGELICA

*(lifting her eyes)*

Mother, I am serene and submissive.

THE ABBESS

It is your aunt, the princess, who has come to visit you.

SISTER ANGELICA

*(with a sigh)*

Ah!

THE ABBESS

In this space one only says as much as obedience will allow, as much as necessity will allow. Here, every word is heard by the pious Virgin.

SISTER ANGELICA

*(sweetly)*

May the Virgin listen to me. May it be so.

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(SA) to calm herself; to center herself	by utterly concentrating on her thoughts, she delays the inevitability of seeing her estranged aunt	the abbess opens the door and excuses herself to the chapel as the princess begins to enter
(P) to judge	by taking an inventory of everything around, from the structure of the convent (she has never been here before) to SA herself	she bows to the statue of the Virgin and crosses down to the space between the chapel doors and the fountain; realizing that there is nowhere for her to sit, she eyes SA and gestures around herself with palms up; SA hastily enters the chapel and reappears with a stool that she places in front of the princess
(P) to preach	she does this by essentially orating her "prepared speech" for SA; it is utterly cold, even eye-contacted anger would weaken the princess and she knows it	her veil is down until she sits and hands SA her staff; eventually the princess pulls a piece of parchment out of her reticule and shoves it toward SA
(SA) to beg	she is attempting to break the princess out of her stilted preaching; this is an attempt to humanize her	SA takes the parchment, but does not consider it in her search for empathy

*(The abbess moves away toward the door. Sister Angelica walks toward the arches of the cloister and anxiously looks toward the door. The abbess re-enters with a dark figure behind her who has all of the airs of an aristocrat. It is Sister Angelica's aunt, the princess. She enters, with the help of an ebony staff as the abbess exits into the chapel. The princess stops and looks at her niece for a moment; she is ever cold and does not show any emotion. Sister Angelica fights her emotion and the old woman pays her no noticeable attention.)*

#### THE PRINCESS

Prince Gualtiero, your father, and Princess Clara, your mother, when they were about to die twenty years ago . . . *(she stops to make the sign of the cross across herself)* . . . entrusted their children to me and the entire patrimony of their family. I was to divide the estate when I thought it was appropriate and I was to do so most fairly. This is what I have done. Here is the parchment. You should look at it, consider it, and sign it.

#### SISTER ANGELICA

*(humble)*

After seven years I remain here. Be inspired by this holy place . . . It is a place of mercy, and a place of compassion . . .

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(P) to snap SA out of it	by cutting SA off, returning to the dark family history, and diverting attention off of SA's penitence; "I am a busy women, you are a sinful child, and I don't have too much time for you"	the princess remains quite still and unaffected
(SA) to escape	she tries to go fully into the dreamlike thought of her sister as a bride and her wedding; is that a flash of envy?	she abandons her attempt to gain eye contact with her aunt and crosses around her to find her own distant focus as she slips into her vision of her sister; finally, she turns to address her aunt directly
(P) to wound	by scolding SA; she washes her hands of SA, "finally someone is righting her wrongs"	
(SA) to threaten	now SA will take her eye contact away from her aunt as soon as the princess wants to give her attention; a shift in who is taking power and who is losing it	as SA blasts past her aunt, she throws the parchment to the ground

## THE PRINCESS

*(with condemnation)*

. . . of penance. I must reveal the reason why I have arrived at this time. Your sister, Anna Viola, is to be a bride.

## SISTER ANGELICA

A bride?! Little Anna Viola, a bride, my little sister, the little one? Ah! It has been seven years; seven years have lapsed! *(in ecstasy)* Oh, my little blond sister is going to be a bride, oh, my little sister, I wish you happiness! *(sweetly)* And who is she wedding?

## THE PRINCESS

Someone who, out of love, forgave the sin that you stained out spotless family name with!

## SISTER ANGELICA

*(with rebelliousness)*

Sister of my mother, you are relentless!

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(P) to chase	this is the <i>one</i> thing that gets the princess to bite and give over some of her control	she rises from the stool every so slightly until she catches herself and settles back
(P) to gain her composure	since she was so rattled, it takes a grand gesture of escape to calm herself completely and attempt to regain the upper-hand	she crosses back to the statue of the Virgin
(P) to accuse and threaten	the princess gives a bald-faced approach without any mystery or hiding	she points directly at SA and crosses to her; finally, a face to face moment between them as the princess "calls her out"
(SA) to protest; then to warn	first she clears her own conscience and then she turns on the one woman who knows the fate of her son	eventually she crosses to shout ( <i>mio figlio</i> ) directly in the princess's face
(SA) to search; then to beg	the image of her son is fleeting, even now as she speaks of him and cannot fully remember his face	with disregard of her aunt's space, SA crosses around, behind, and in front of her as she searches; finally, she is on her knees in her aunt's lap

## THE PRINCESS

*(with anger)*

What are you saying? And what are you thinking? Relentless? Relentless? Do you dare to invoke your mother against me?! *(becoming cold and composed)* At night, I frequently go to our chapel and meditate. In the silence of my meditations, my spirit seems to wander and commune with your mother's in ethereal and mysterious conversations! It is so painful to hear the dead suffer and weep! When the mystical ecstasy disappears, I am left with one word for you: Atone! Atone! Offer atonement to the Virgin for my justice!

## SISTER ANGELICA

*(sweetly)*

I have offered everything to the Virgin, yes, everything. *(mysteriously, with anxiety)* But there is something that I cannot offer: to the sweet Mother of all Mothers, I cannot offer to forget . . . *(shouting)* my son! The child who was torn from me! My son, whom I have only seen and kissed one time! My faraway child! This is the one thing that I have wished for for seven years! Speak to me of him! How is he? How is my son? How sweet is his face? How are his eyes? *(exhausted)* Speak to me of him; of my child! Speak to me . . . of him . . .

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(P) to hide	by escaping SA's gaze wherever she may go	she never leaves her stool; the princess is in utter control as long as she does not show empathy
(SA) to threaten	broken out of her moving madness, SA now has exhausted herself into stillness, but also benefits from the power that that stillness provides	this is an intentional mimic of the princess's earlier protestations of "Atone! Atone!;" she rises in this strength
(P) to explain	this is all rather simple; she is unmoved; she does not crack	utter stillness
(SA) to beg	she begs God, she begs her aunt, she begs the earth, anything and everything	returning to the comfort of the earth, the lowest she can possibly go, physically
(SA) to escape	by "dissolving into the earth"	the princess goes to SA and holds out a pen so that SA can sign the parchment on
(P) to "get this over with"	it is time for action, time to get what she came for; enough talk	the ground; the princess checks the signature before placing the parchment and pen back in her reticule

*(The old woman remains silent.)*

SISTER ANGELICA

*(with tragic anxiety)*

Why are you silent? Why?! Another instant of this silence and you damn yourself for eternity! *(directly)* The Virgin hears us and judges you!

THE PRINCESS

*(directly)*

It has been two years; he was struck by a terrible disease. Everything was done to save him . . .

SISTER ANGELICA

He is dead? *(shouting sadly)* Ah!

*(Sister Angelica falls to the earth on her hands and knees. She continues to sob on the ground where she has fallen. It is now rather dark throughout the stage. Sister Angelica signs the parchment paper. The princess takes it and goes to the door, but before she leaves, she stops to look at Sister Angelica one last time. Finally, the princess leaves. The stage is dark and Sister Angelica is alone.)*

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(P) to purge; to self-absolve	finally a tinge of humanism, but only because SA is consumed by the ground and does not look up	she collects her staff and dares to look on SA for a brief moment before turning; she bows to the Virgin and hastens out
(SA) to comfort	this is for both herself and her gradually materializing son	
(SA) to lavish in a presence	that of her son; he is still high in the heavens	she rises and begins to see him clearly as a defined being, but still high in the sky; eventually his presence descends to earth and seems to swirl about her
(SA) to chase and ask	as if the vision of her son is fleeting; "I want to follow" turns into "I <i>will</i> follow" and she is no longer unhappy	
(SA) to march on; to follow	this is settled; the decision has already been made; this is perhaps the most physical strength that SA has ever had	her son is now a very singular and unmoving presence; she solemnly, but happily presses constantly forward and reaches right out to him

## SISTER ANGELICA

*(on her knees, desolately)*

Without a mother, oh child, you have died. Your lips, without my kisses, paled and turned cold; and you closed, oh child, your beautiful eyes. Not being able to caress me, you formed your arms into a cross; and you died without knowing how much your mother loved you. Now that you are an angel in heaven, now you can see your mother; *(humbly)* you can come down among the earth and I can feel you floating about me. You're here; you kiss me and caress me. Tell me, when will I be able to see you in heaven? When will I be able to kiss you? Oh, sweet end to all my sorrow, when will I be able to ascend to heaven with you? When will I be able to die? *(in ecstasy)* Tell your mother, beautiful child, through the light sparkle of a star. Speak to me, my love!

**ACTIONS****ADJUSTMENTS****ACTIVITIES**

(SISTERS)  
to console

there is a mystery to the fact that SA's back is turned to the nuns as they come into the courtyard from the chapel; the nuns expect the worst, knowing enough about the situation to assume the worst

this is a hesitated march toward SA; she does not turn around, but she remains consumed in the vision of her son; she is traveling imperceptibly and constantly toward it

(SA)  
to focus

she does not even "let the sisters in"

she presses on, slowly and steadily

(SA)  
to console; to dismiss

noting the somber way in which the sisters are approaching her, SA is suddenly broken out of her zone and immediately begins to console the sisters out of their seeming concern for her; this is, of course, a product of the sisters' consolation itself

she stops her slow procession toward her son's image to take the time to make contact with each of the sisters; this is her "goodbye" to them

*(The sisters approach Sister Angelica in silence, but ecstatic happiness.)*

SISTER GENEVIEVE

Good sister, the Virgin has heard our prayers.

THE SISTERS

You will be happy, sister. The Virgin has shown her grace.

SISTER ANGELICA

*(in a mystical exaltation, but not emphatic)*

Grace has descended from heaven; it already lights me and shines! I already see, sisters, my goal!

THE SISTERS

May it be so!

SISTER ANGELICA

Sisters, I am happy! Let us sing! They are already singing in heaven! Let us laud the Holy Virgin!

THE SISTERS

Let us sing! They are already singing in heaven! May it be so!

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(SISTERS) to agree	almost unexpectedly, they are consoled out of any kind of concern or sadness; they are now "allowed" to leave in peace	the sisters leave with G lingering a moment to be sure that SA is okay; finally SA concentrates on her son and suddenly has the need to "get ready" to proceed with her plan; to do so she hastens off stage
(SA) to prepare; to "assemble her puzzle"	she knows generally what she wants to do, but is still working out the logistics; "what do I need and what is most affective?"	re-enters with a mortar and pestle and collects plants that she placed earlier; it is all brought to the DSL corner as SA creates a seeming "laboratory"
(SA) to organize and take stock	there is much care for each plant; SA knows that each of these plants has and will continue to serve her well; she lavishes in each as she personifies them	
(SA) to tour the courtyard	this is her final farewell; the grounds are her domain and this goodbye is much more important to her than the one she gave her sisters	after she takes in the whole grounds, she finally ends up at the US side of the fountain and before the statue of the Virgin

*(The sisters start to exit and finally cross to the place where their rooms are.)*

THE SISTERS

*(inside)*

Let us praise the holy Virgin! Amen!

SISTER ANGELICA

*(from the inside)*

Ah! Let us laud! Grace has descended from heaven!

*(It is night. Out comes Sister Angelica with a mortar and pestle. She goes to the fountain to gather some water. In the small pile of plants that she had made, she assembles and grinds everything together.)*

SISTER ANGELICA

Sister Angelica always has a good remedy made with flowers. My friends, flowers, who in your tiny bosom enclose drops of poison, how much care I have given you. Now you will reward me: through you, my flowers, I will die. *(she stands and turns toward the rooms of the cloister)* Farewell good sisters, farewell! I now leave you forever. My son has called me! He is inside a beam of starlight and his smile has appeared to me. He said to me: "Mother, come to Paradise!" Farewell! Farewell, little church! I have prayed so much inside of you; you have received my prayers and sighs. Blessed grace has descended! I die for my son and I will see him again in heaven! Ah!

ACTIONS	ADJUSTMENTS	ACTIVITIES
(SA) to get on with it; to free herself	there is no fear and no apprehension; it is simply the inevitable in SA's mind	she falls to her knees before the Virgin's statue and happens upon the flowers that she placed there; this is the last ingredient and she takes it to add to her poison; she drinks it down in one gulp, unashamedly
(SA) to repel; then to beg	fearfully, for the first time; this is a "snap out of it" moment	she widens her eyes, drops the poison, and lurches away from her plants; now she must shift her focus to prayer
(SA) to search	utter schizophrenia; "where are those voices coming from?"	she is pushed to the ground by the invasive voices
(SA) to plead	this is the only way she can think of to distract herself away from these voices in her head	from the ground, but slowly reaching up and elevating herself

*(With exultation she embraces the statue of the Virgin, she kisses it, and she takes the flowers from it to her others. She mixes the plants into a poison and drinks it. The stage is quite dark. The act of suicide breaks Sister Angelica out of her exaltation as she realizes the reality of the situation.)*

SISTER ANGELICA

Ah! I am damned! I've killed myself, I have given myself my own death! I am dying in mortal sin! Oh Madonna, save me! For the love of my son!

CHORUS

*(faraway, advancing gradually)*

Queen of Virgins, hail Mary!

SISTER ANGELICA

I have lost all reason!

CHORUS

Chaste Mother, hail Mary!

SISTER ANGELICA

Don't let me die in damnation!

**ACTIONS****ADJUSTMENTS****ACTIVITIES**

(SA)  
to offer herself

there is virtually nothing left; this is as much pleading for salvation as begging to be taken from her earthly pain

she steps forward with arms wide

(SA)  
to foster herself

coming away from the ethereal and more into the human world; this is full pain from the poison that is filling her body

she is thrown back to the earth once again

(SA)  
to reach and search

the final attempt at bridging the real earth with the ethereal; from her lowest point physically, she reaches to the highest plane

the main (realistic) lighting ceases and a singular source suddenly emanates from the exterior doors which are suddenly flung open; the Virgin Mary and a small child step in, hand-in-hand

CHORUS

Queen of peace, hail Mary!

SISTER ANGELICA

Give me a sign of your grace. *(with desperation)* Madonna! Save me!

CHORUS

Oh glorious Virgin, sublime amongst the stars, Thou who created a Child and raised Him.

SISTER ANGELICA

Oh Madonna, save me! A mother prays to you, a mother implores you!

CHORUS

What sad Eve lost, Thou hast restored; that wretched sinners may enter heaven's gates . .

SISTER ANGELICA

Oh Madonna, save me!

*(The miracle begins. The courtyard is filled with light. The doors open and there is a mystical sign of the angels. The Virgin Mary is in the doorway, solemn and sweet, and there is also a blond child, all in white. The Virgin, with a gesture of great sweetness, urges the child forward.)*

**ACTIONS**

(SA)  
to reach

**ADJUSTMENTS**

for the approaching child,  
but beyond him really;  
always distant as if going  
toward somewhere that is  
not of earth, somewhere  
that is found by looking  
through him, not at him

**ACTIVITIES**

the Virgin sends the child  
(who is carrying a single  
flower) toward SA

when the child gets to SA,  
he places the flower in front  
of his mother

the child turns back to the  
Virgin just before SA rolls  
peacefully onto her back;  
the Virgin takes the child's  
hand and exits through the  
brightness of the miraculous  
lighting

CHORUS

Glorious Virgin, hail Mary!

SISTER ANGELICA

Ah!

CHORUS

Queen of Virgins!

SISTER ANGELICA

*(in ecstasy, lifting her arms to her advancing child)*

Ah!

CHORUS

Faithful Virgin! Holy Mary! Glorious Virgin! Hail Mary! *(the child takes a step forward)* Purest Mother! Hail Mary! *(the child takes a second step)* Tower of David! Hail Mary!

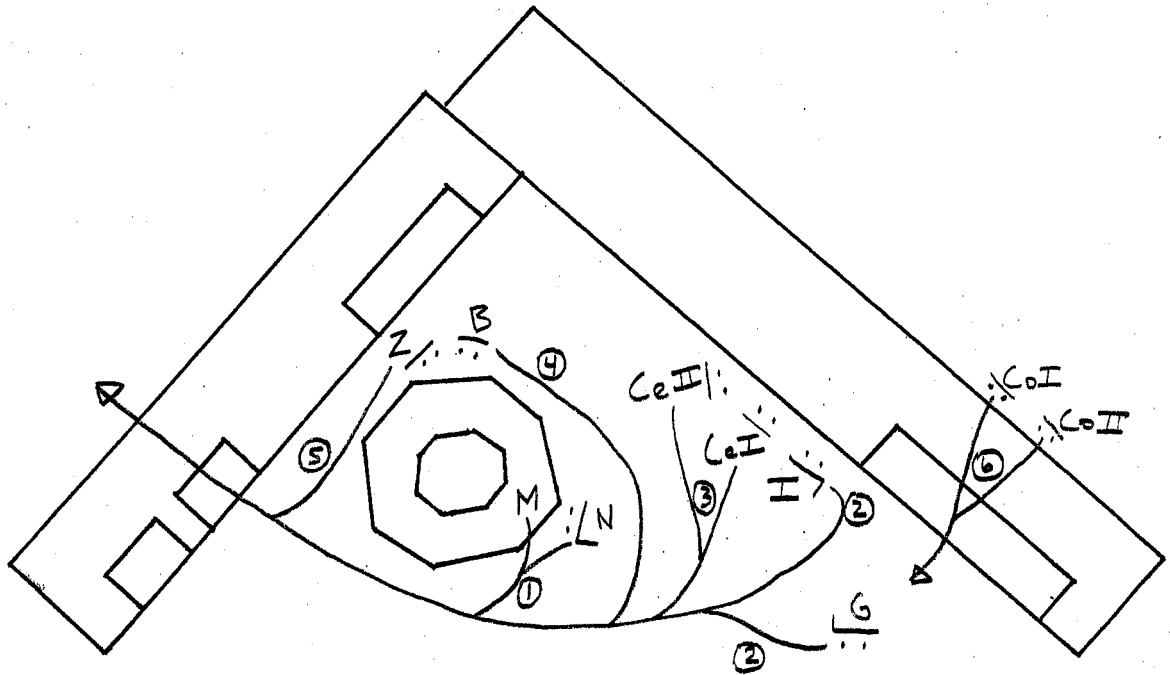
*(The child takes a third step. Sister Angelica falls gently and dies. The miracle shines forth.)*

APPENDIX B: 2006 UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
PRODUCTION BLOCKING

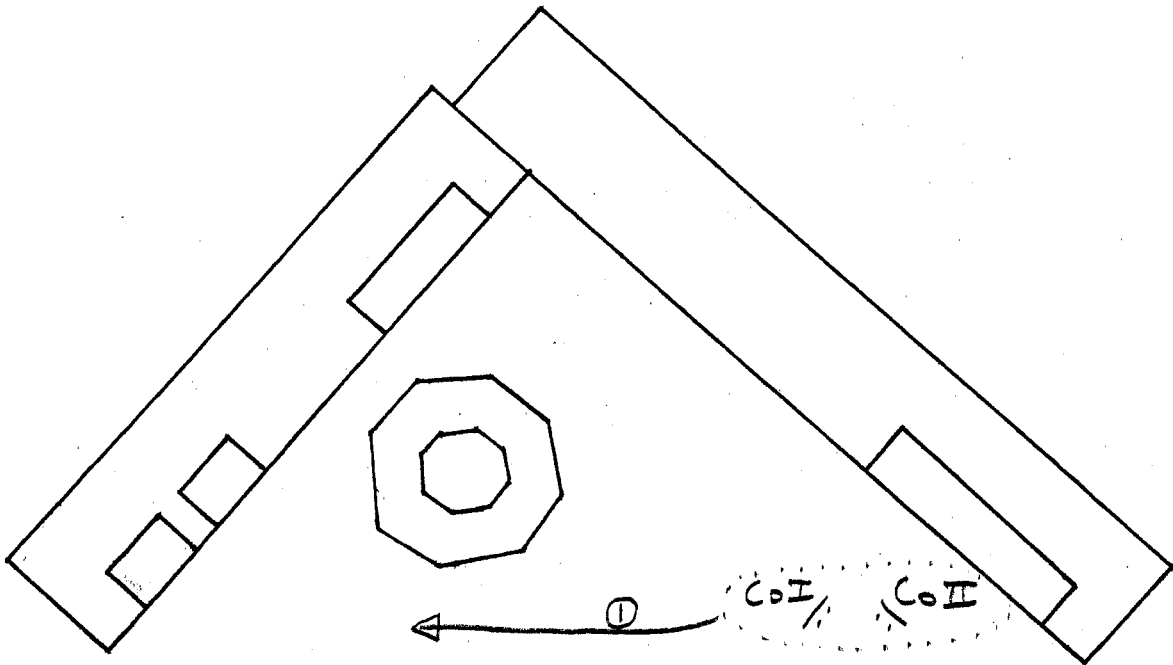
The following appendix is an example of what a director can create in order to exhaustively plan the movement of any given character at any given moment. Each page includes a small footprint of the scenic design with each character represented in their position at the start of the given page of music; arrows show where each character moves during that page. These arrows are numbered in order to alert the examiner to when exactly (with regard to the score) the moves occur. This appendix is meant to correlate with the 2006 imprint of Ricordi's score for *Suor Angelica*, so each textual description begins with a page number, system number, and measure number for easy orientation within the score.

The character names are abbreviated as follows:

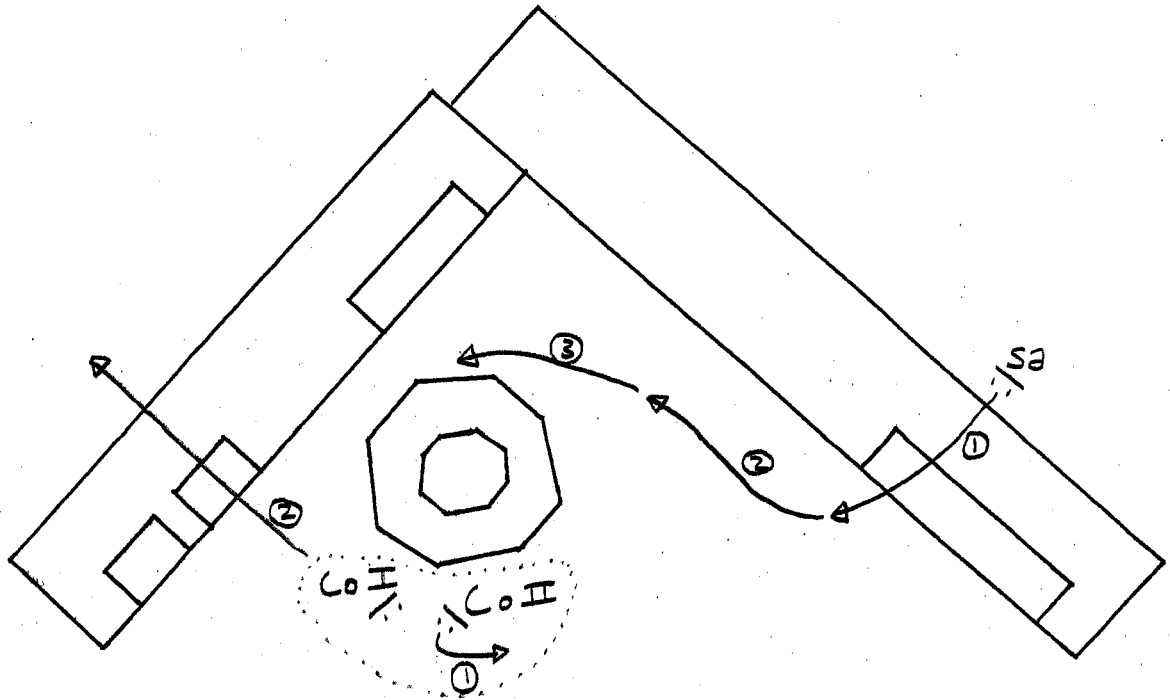
SA	= Suor Angelica - Sister Angelica
G	= Genovieffa - Sister Genevieve
Z	= La Zelatrice - The Monitor
B	= Badessa - Mother Abbess
I	= Infermiera - The Nursing Sister
CeI	= Cercatrice I (Suor Osmina) - Collecting Sister I (Sister Osmina)
CeII	= Cercatrice II (Suor Lucilla) - Collecting Sister II (Sister Lucilla)
M	= La Maestra delle Novizie - The Mistress of the Novices
CoI	= Conversa I (Suor Dolcina) - Lay-Sister I (Sister Dolcina)
CoII	= Conversa II - Lay-Sister II
N	= Una Novizia - A Novice
P	= La Zia Principessa - The Princess, Sister Angelica's Aunt
V	= La Vergine - The Virgin Mary
Ch	= Un Bambino - A Child



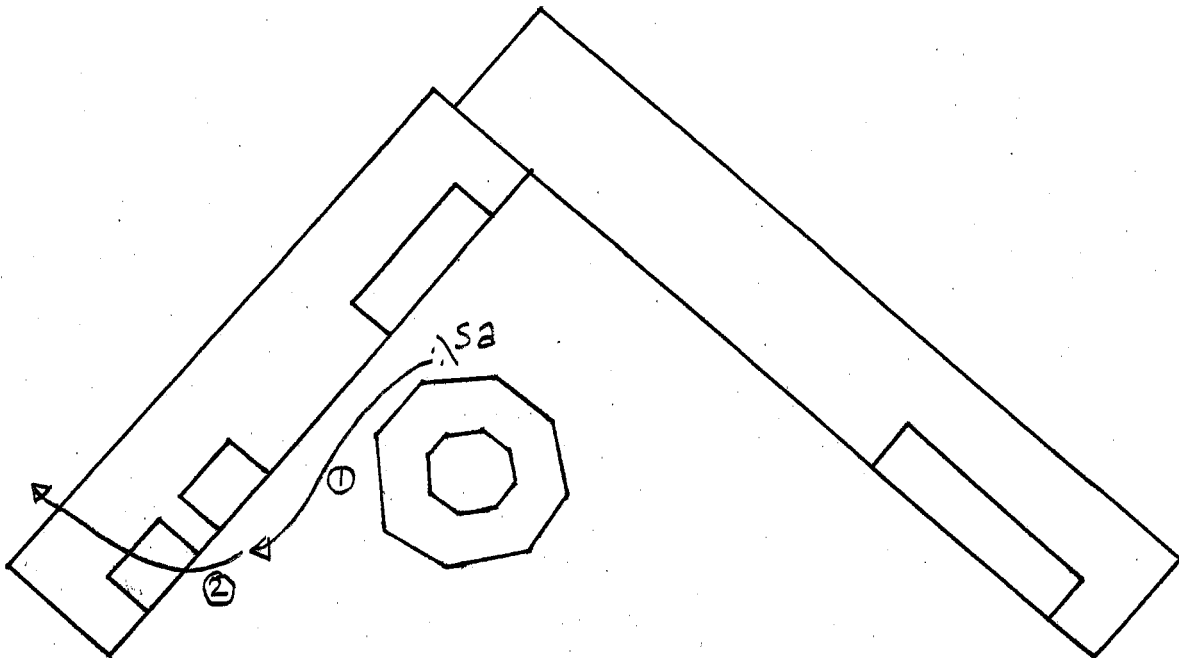
1. 1/1/3 - • M + N = their lesson concludes as the bells ring; since the novice is not yet accustomed to the morning practices, the mistress attends to her graces and discipline as they enter the chapel
2. 1/2/1 - • G + I = reflectively and penitently, they walk proudly with heads bowed
3. 1/2/2 - • CeI + CeII = they have been gossiping and the bells trigger silence in them; embarrassed, they hide a few last remarks to each other under their hands as they cross to the chapel
4. 1/2/3 - • B = goes to "collect up" any remaining sisters before entering the chapel
5. 1/2/4 - • Z = searches the large SL door (some sisters are missing, where are they?); she enters the chapel with lips pressed to prayerful hands
6. 1/3/4 - • CoI + CoII = run in late for chapel; CoI is "in charge" as she pulls CoII along toward the chapel



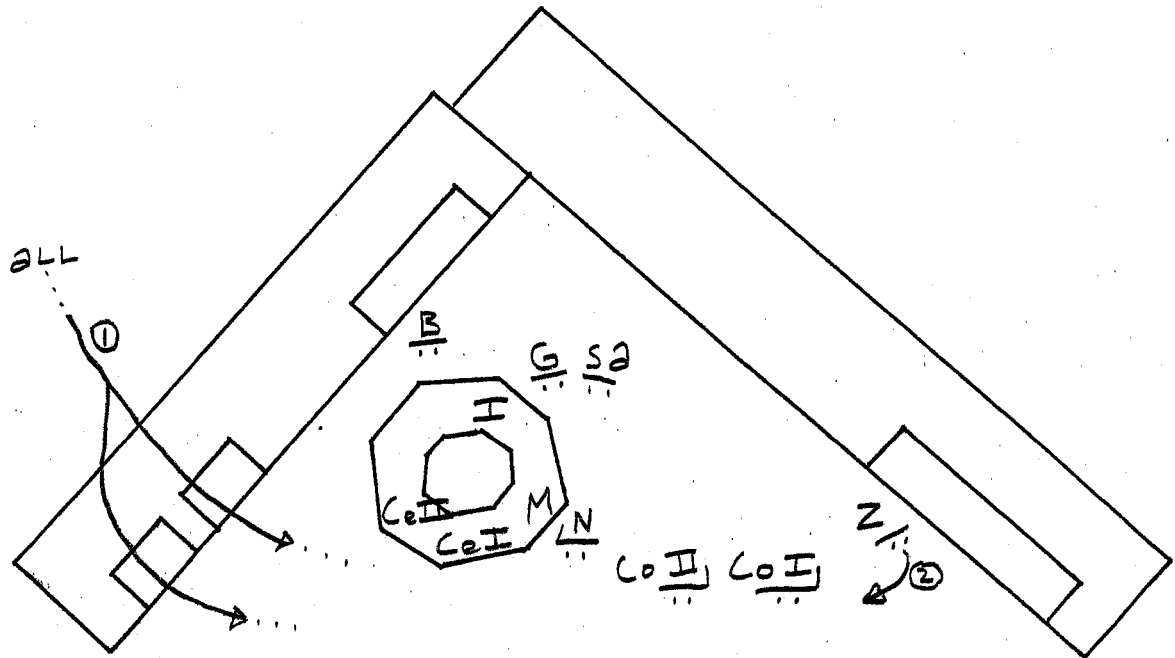
1. 2/2/1 -
- CoI = having heard the bird's song, she pushes CoII back toward SL to enjoy the music; she ignores her sister's pleading
  - CoII = attempts to control CoI and tries to ease her back SR toward the chapel; at moments she stops and scolds CoI with a warning gaze



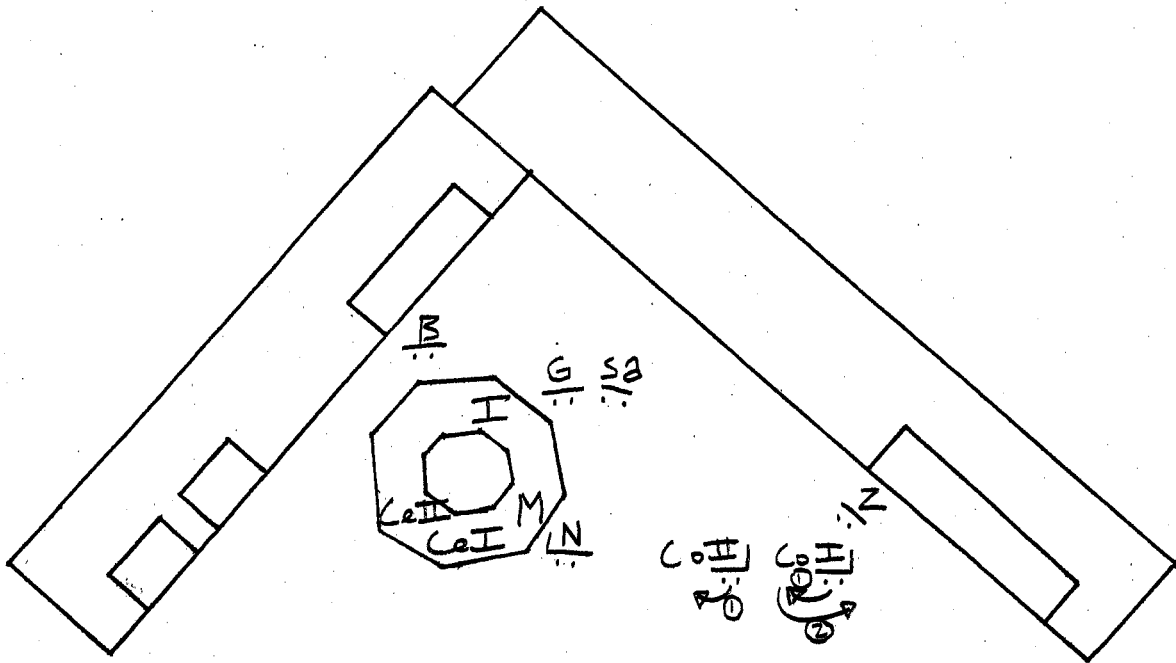
1. 3/1/1 -
  - SA = hastens in, but regains herself upon seeing the lay-sisters; she stops and, looking at them, gestures toward the chapel
  - CoI + CoII = both are immediately sedated and meekly scuttle into the chapel
  
2. 3/1/3 -
  - SA = breathes in through her nose the youthful display of the lay-sisters and the solidarity of the dawn-filled courtyard; the chapel prayers shake her from her reverie and she proceeds
  
3. 3/2/3 -
  - SA = noticing the statue of the Virgin, she stops to prostrate herself slightly and pray in the statues presence



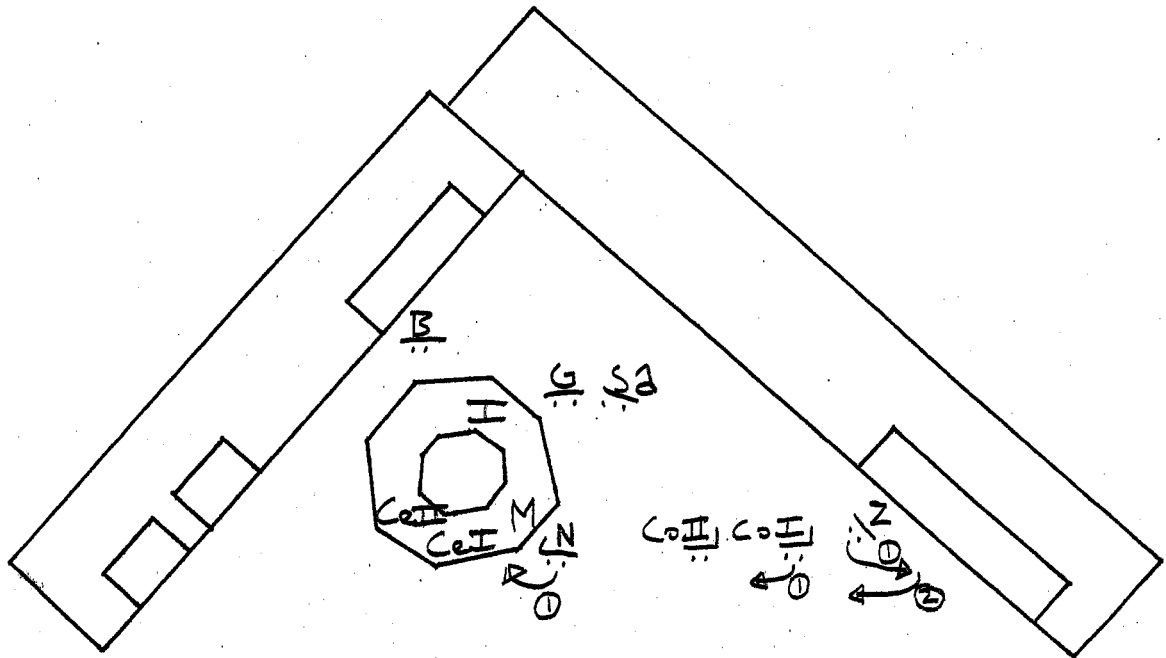
1. 4/1/2 - • SA = goes to the chapel's entrance and, going to her knees, bends fully and kisses the ground before the chapel
2. 4/1/3 - • SA = rises and enters the chapel with head bowed into prayerful hands



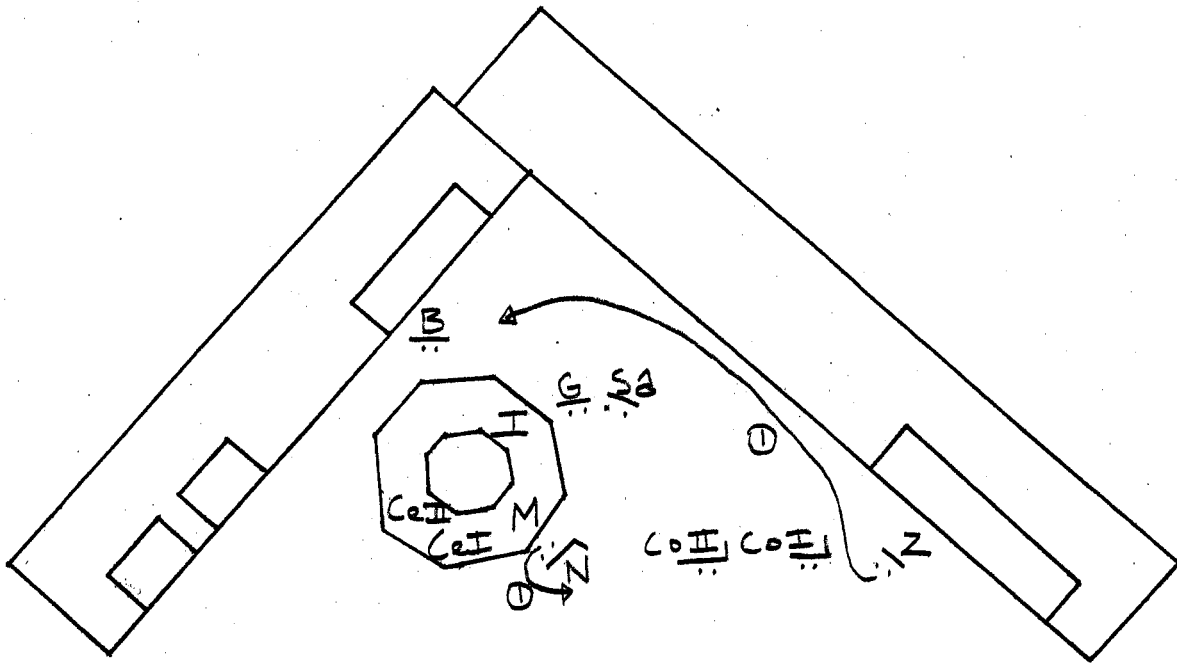
1. 5/1/2 -
- SA + G + B + I + CeI + CeII + M + N = in their order, the sisters assume the positions of a regularly-occurring (not to mention hierarchical) "morning meeting;" some nervously await the day's instructions, some joke with others, some remain prayerful and silent
  - Z = attaining the position far SL of the other sisters, she stands with her back to the rest, staring down into her crossed arms
  - CoI + CoII = heads bowed, they hesitantly pace to the positions between the sisters and the monitor; they kneel, not daring to raise their heads
2. 5/3/3 -
- Z = quickly turning to the kneeling lay-sisters, she gazes over them and out, not down to them; there is no questioning the law that she lays down
  - CoI + CoII = heads jolt up, they frown, their clutched hands fidget



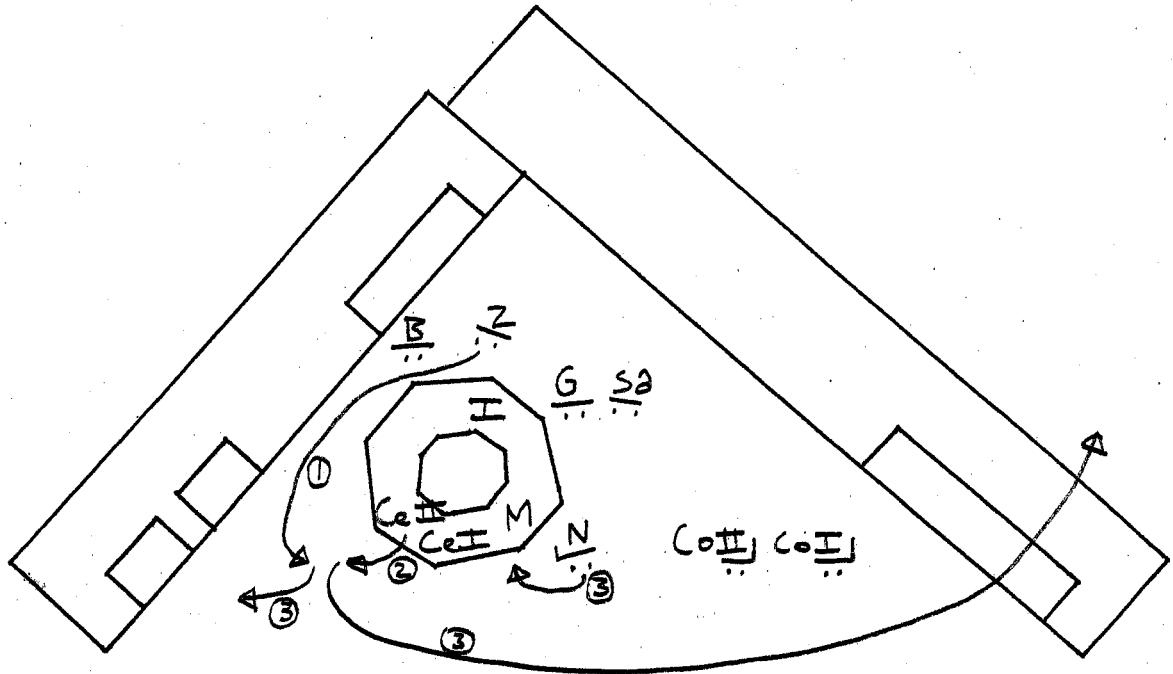
1. 6/3/1 -
  - Z = finally bores her eyes directly down to the lay-sisters
  - CoI + CoII = having their violations laid down, they cower away from the monitor's gaze
  
2. 6/3/4 -
  - CoI = straightens up, faces out (not toward the monitor), raises her folded hands to her own throat
  - CoII = closes her eyes tightly for a moment; "should I have been the first to speak?, I don't have her (CoI) courage"



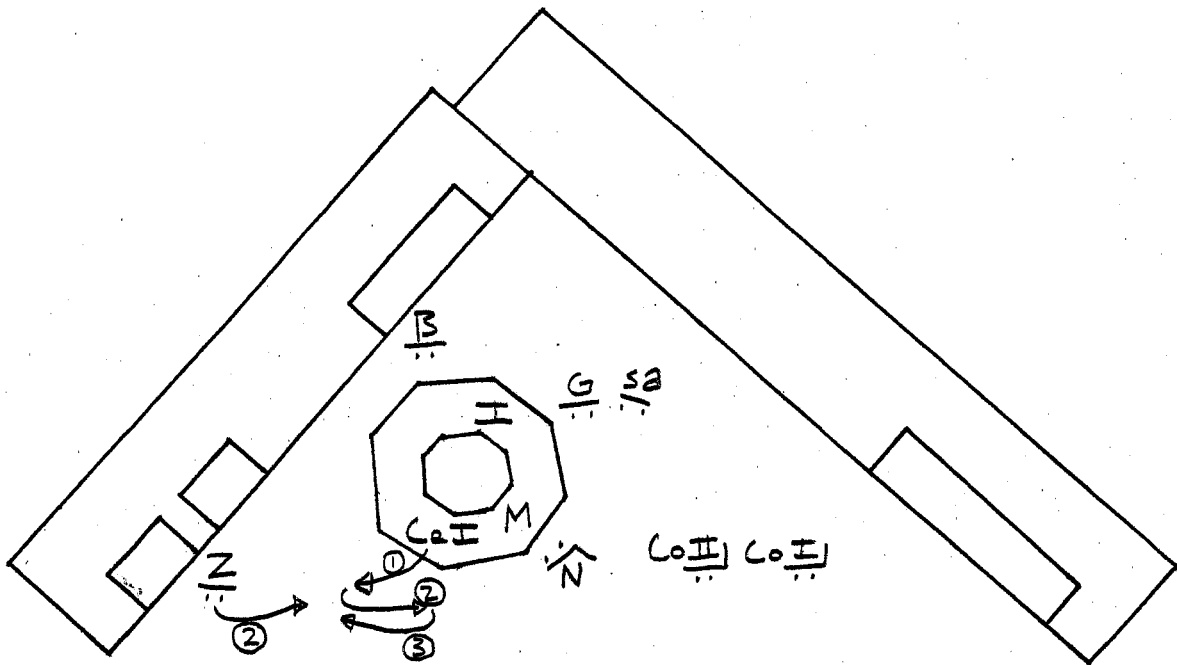
1. 7/1/3 -
- CoI = before humbly sitting back on her legs and turning away, she bravely meets the monitor's eyes, challenging her; *sorella in umiltà* is a mocking recall of the monitor's first utterance
  - Z = she calmly takes her gaze away from CoI, "how dare she challenge my authority;" she has to regain herself with her back turned once again
  - N = turns toward her mistress to ask, "what's happening here?"
  - M = inclining to her young charge; she tells a secret, but also instructs
2. 7/2/2 -
- Z = regains her ground by gazing out over the lay-sisters' heads again; she lays down the punishments and penance



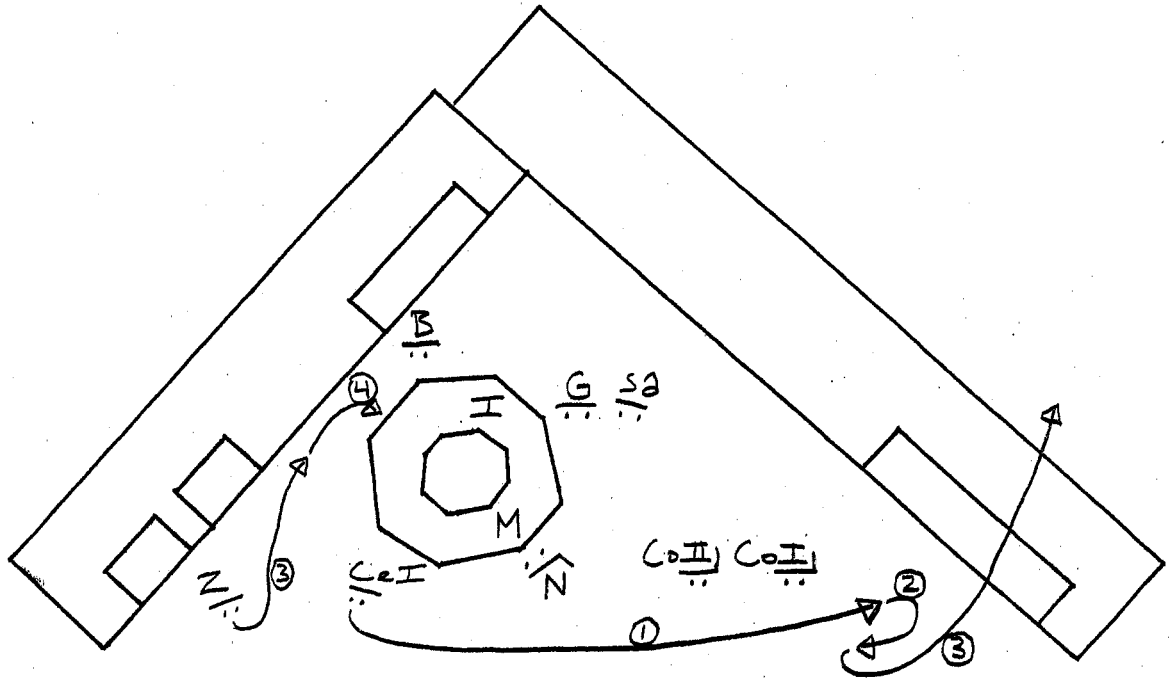
1. 8/2/1 -
  - CoI + CoII = lift themselves to tall kneeling positions, hands pressed together, gaze out and distant
  - Z = checks the lay-sisters form and disappears behind the other sisters
  - N = turns toward her young comrades on the ground and lavishes in their prayer



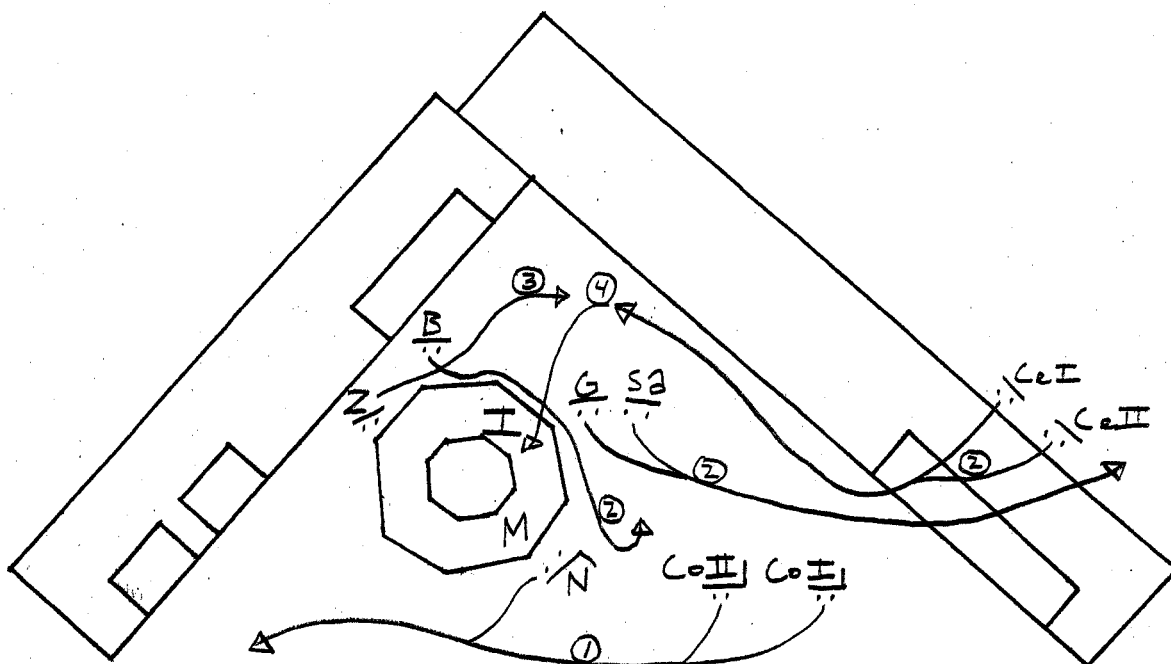
1. 9/1/6 -
  - Z = sweeps forward, as if from nowhere; commands with each step; again, she does not look directly at anyone, but pronounces to all
2. 9/2/2 -
  - CeII = suddenly surprised that she is being spoken to, she is immediately jolted from her seat and rises to anxiously face the monitor
  - Z = makes to send CeII away with a single wave of her hand
3. 9/3/1 -
  - Z = not noticing if CeII remains or is gone, she crosses away, chin up as ever
  - CeII = feigns a gesture of pleading, but decides to retreat instead
  - N = turns to her mistress again, "now what's happening?"
  - M = telling the novice a secret, also instructing



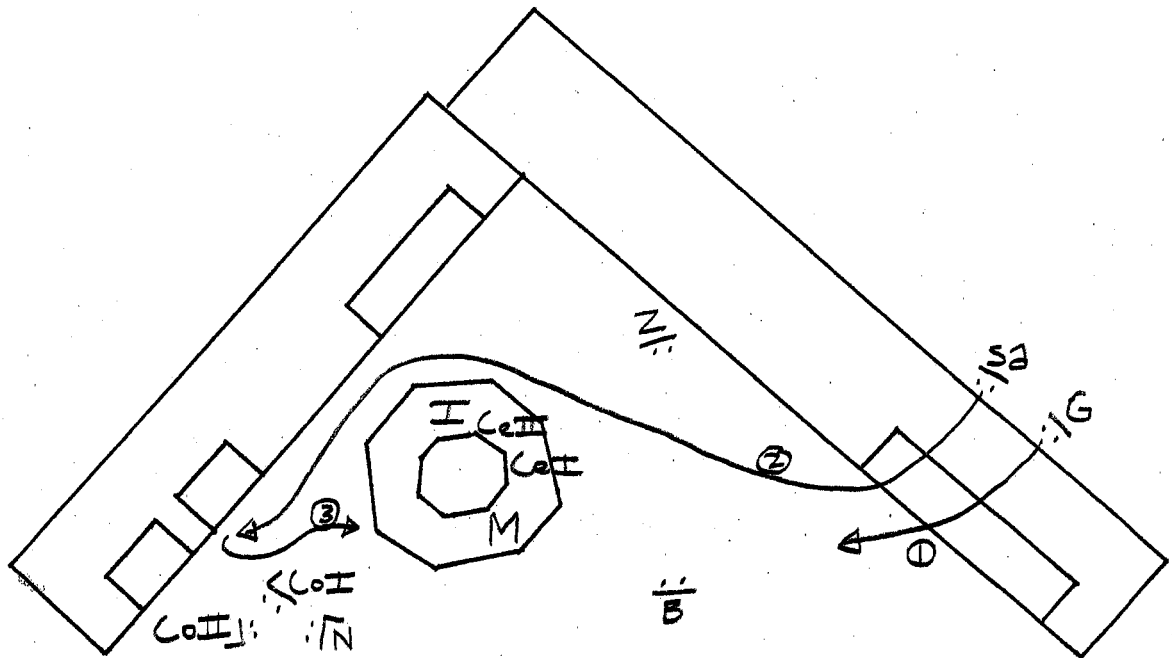
1. 10/1/1 -
  - Z = remains away from the sisters, but pronounces out
  - CeI = quickly rises and bravely approaches the monitor
2. 10/2/3 -
  - CeI = immediately clasps her hands around her own mouth; closing her eyes, she bows her head
  - Z = pressing up to CeI and looming over her
3. 10/3/2 -
  - CeI = holding her hands out, palms up; mouth open in protest, but not uttering a word
  - Z = unmoved, folds her arms and stares deep into the collecting sister's eyes; challenges her to speak



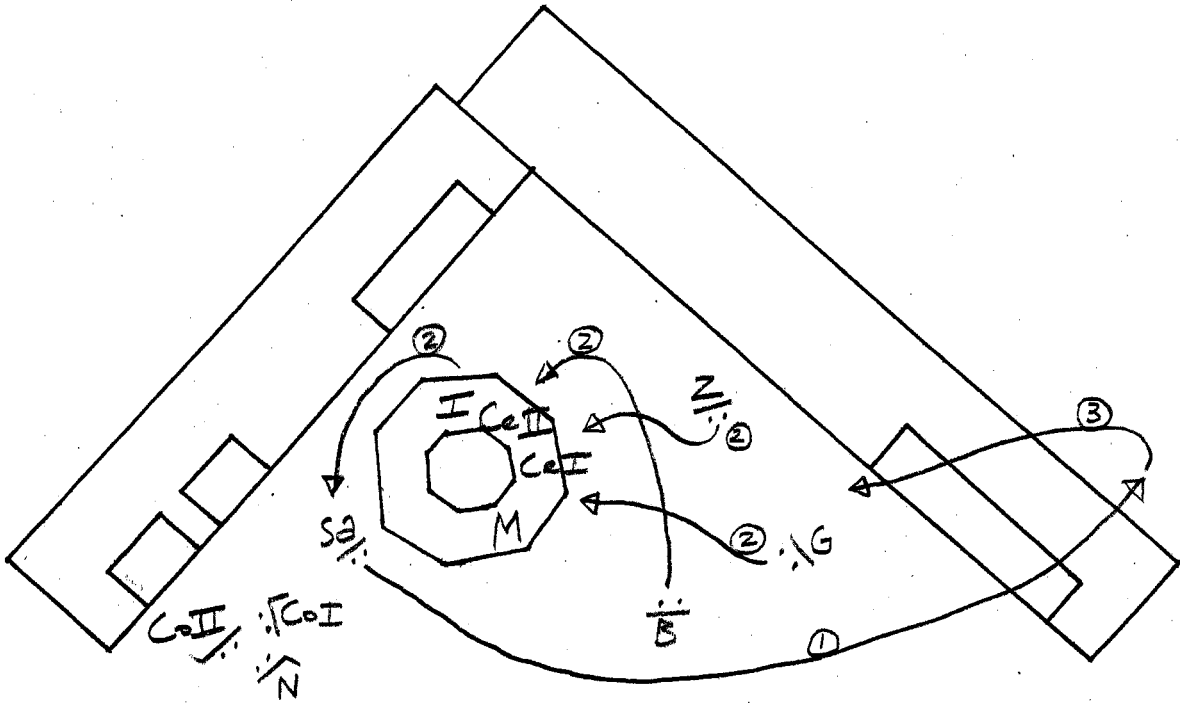
1. 11/1/3 - • CeI = buries her chin deeply and folds her hands; she retreats with her tail between her legs
2. 11/2/2 - • CeI = upon hearing the sisters' prayer, she turns and lifts her head and eyebrows hopefully
3. 11/2/4 - • Z = turns quickly and her eyes pass over the collecting sister as she does so  
• CeI = immediately returning to her penitent attitude, she flies off hastily
4. 11/3/2 • Z = a smile; the sentencing is done and the rest is joy; she baits the other sisters, slowly leaning over them and parsing out bits of enjoyment



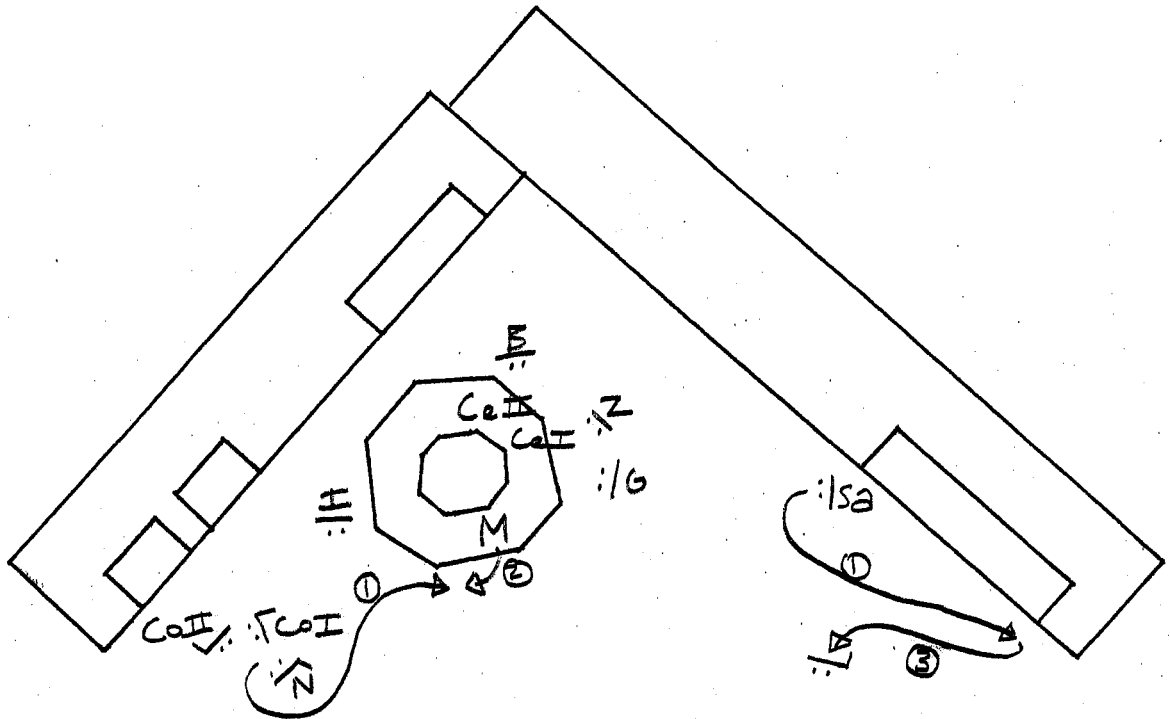
1. 12/2/1 -
  - Z = with a nod to the abbess, she peacefully melts into the background
  - CoI + CoII + N = as if released from a hold, they seek open space to enjoy the early-morning sun and games
  - SA + G = together discuss and decide to go for some plants to beautify the courtyard
  
2. 12/2/3 -
  - B = removes her hands from under her over-layer and clasps them in front of her body; she promenades, enjoying the effervescence with which her fellow sisters and charges enjoy themselves
  - CeI + CeII = heads bowed and hands pressed together, they cautiously approach the monitor
  
3. 12/3/2 -
  - CeI + CeII = hold out their hands palms up toward the monitor (a sign of completion of penance)
  - Z = meets the collecting sisters; excuses them by bowing her head
  
4. 12/4/1 -
  - CeI + CeII = join the nurse at the fountain and begin to play cat's cradle



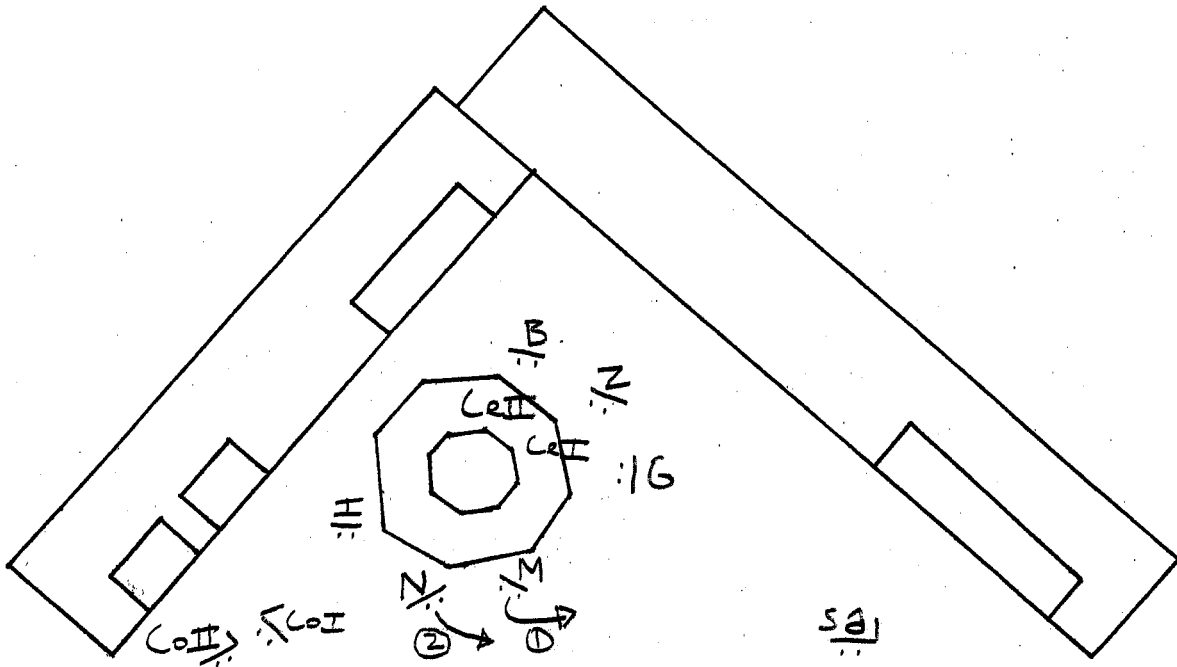
1. 13/1/1 - • G = rushing in with arms wide and chin elevated
  
2. 13/3/2 - • G = leans down slightly, bringing her hands close together; she delivers her story all the way over to the attentive novice and lay-sisters  
 • SA = enters with several potted plants and loose flowers; she places the loose flowers in a vase by the statue of the Virgin and takes a potted plant to the entrance of the chapel
  
3. 13/4/2 - • G = gestures toward the fountain  
 • SA = places the remaining potted plants on and around the fountain



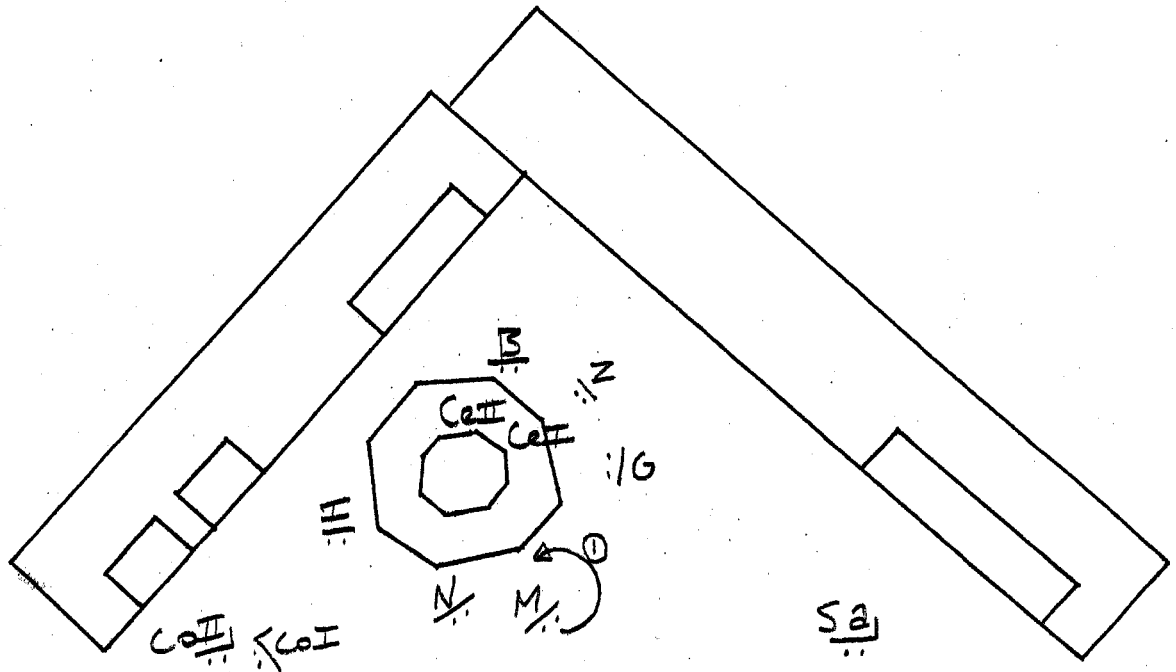
1. 14/1/3 - • SA = jauntily seeks more plants
2. 14/2/2 - • G + B + Z = the story being done, all of the sisters discuss and recollect their own pleasing stories regarding the time of the golden light
  - I = notices that the innocent young nuns are playing a game of graces on the courtyard ground; she decides to read her Bible nearer to them and at times peers over it to watch them
3. 14/3/3 - • SA = enters with more plants; places one on the SR side of the large door



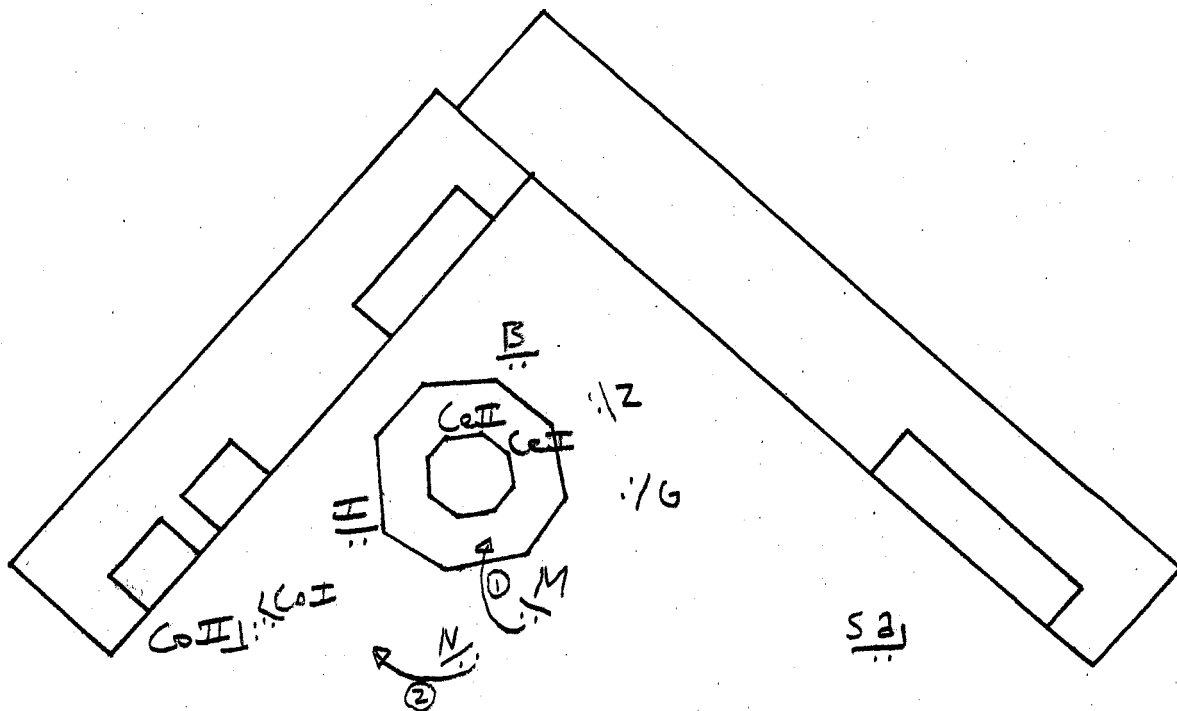
1. 15/1/3 -
  - SA = places another plant on the SL side of the large door
  - N = tells the lay-sisters to wait a moment by holding up an index finger and turns to face their mistress
  
2. 15/2/1 -
  - M = noticing the novice, she pulls herself away from smelling one of the flowers that SA has just placed on the fountain
  
3. 15/2/3 -
  - SA = having finished setting her plants and flowers, she takes the remaining two plants and sets about pruning and shaping them on the ground
  - N = hands folded, head slightly bowed, she hesitantly questions her mistress



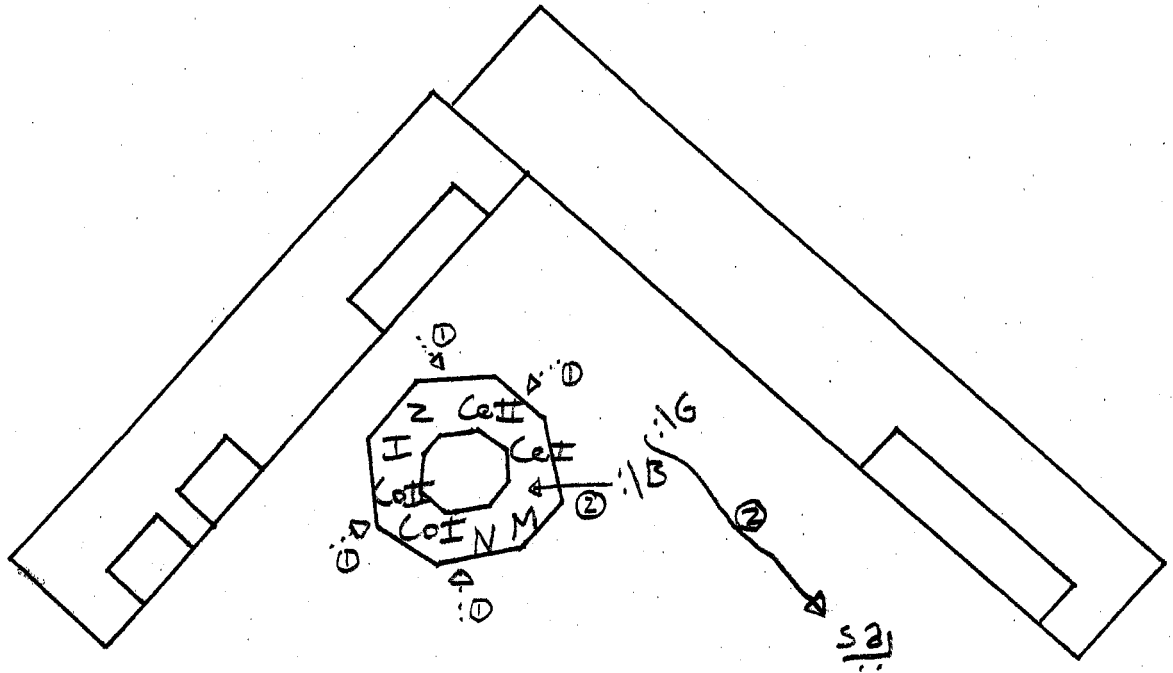
1. 16/3/1 - • M = opening her arms, emulating the vastness that G portrayed in her storytelling
2. 16/3/3 - • N = her eyebrows tighten, she breathes in with her mouth open, she wants to ask a question



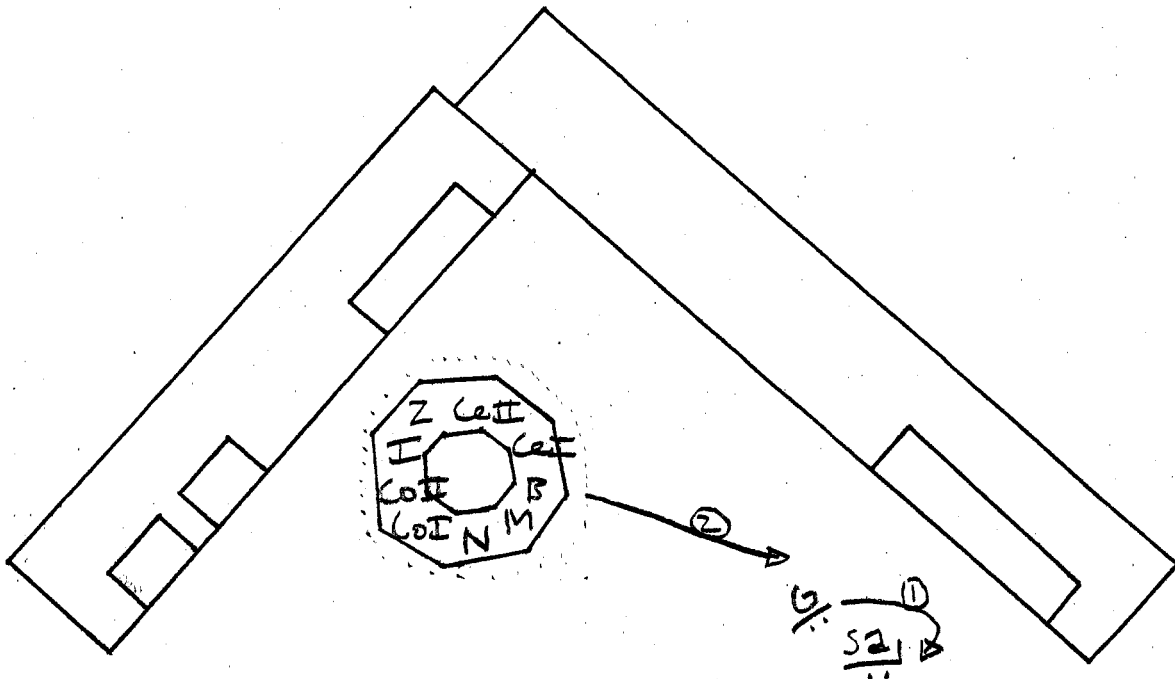
1. 17/3/2 -
- M = searches for the support of the fountain's edge; remembering a distant thought that took place here
  - N = her eyebrows tighten again; she asks the question straight out, as if she's trying to figure it out herself before the mistress can answer



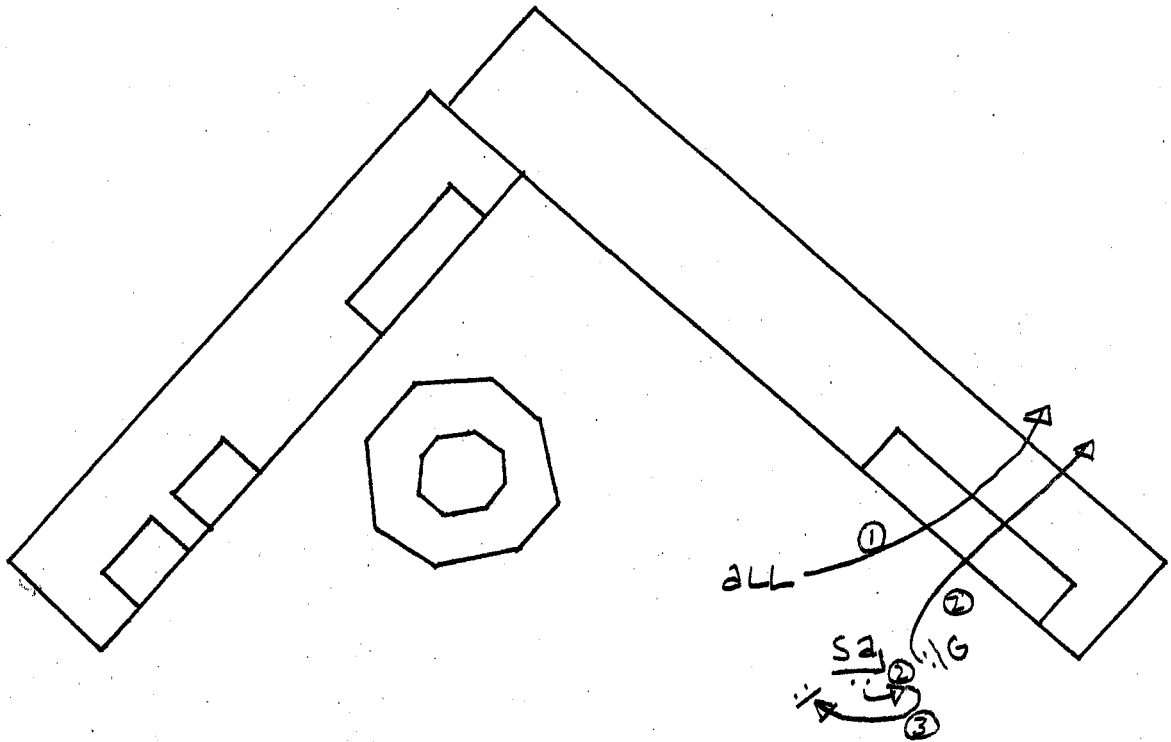
1. 18/2/3 -
  - M = weighing the seriousness of her statements, she finally pats the novice on the shoulder, "that's enough for today"
  - B = calling and corralling the sisters over to the fountain for prayer
  
2. 18/3/2 -
  - N = turns on her heel, stunned that apparently she is the only one that does not know about this special event



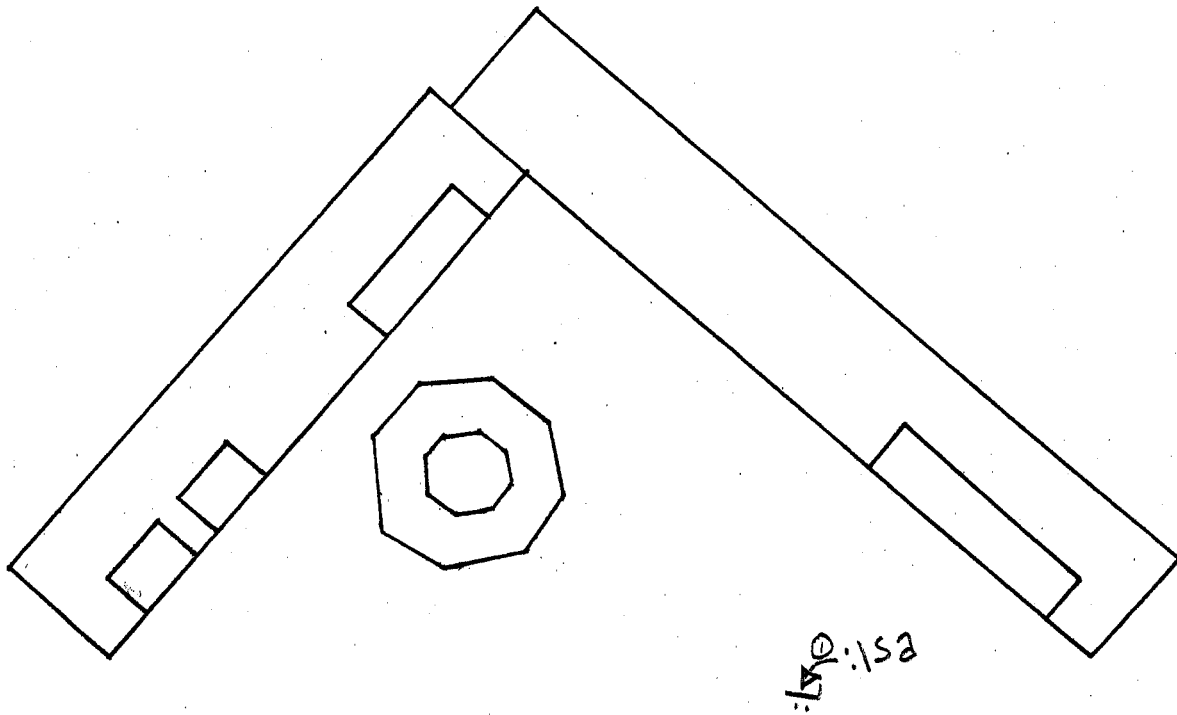
1. 19/1/4 -
  - Z + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII = all assume seated positions around the fountain and maintain a bowed and introspectively prayerful manner; this isn't the first time they have prayed in this fashion
  - N = quick to follow suit, she takes the empty position and follows the others' examples
  
2. 19/2/3 -
  - B = surveys and all but counts the sisters, one is gone; she sends G to go to SA
  - G = bows and hesitantly approaches SA
  - SA = attending to her plants and flowers, blissfully unaware of the seeming ominousness



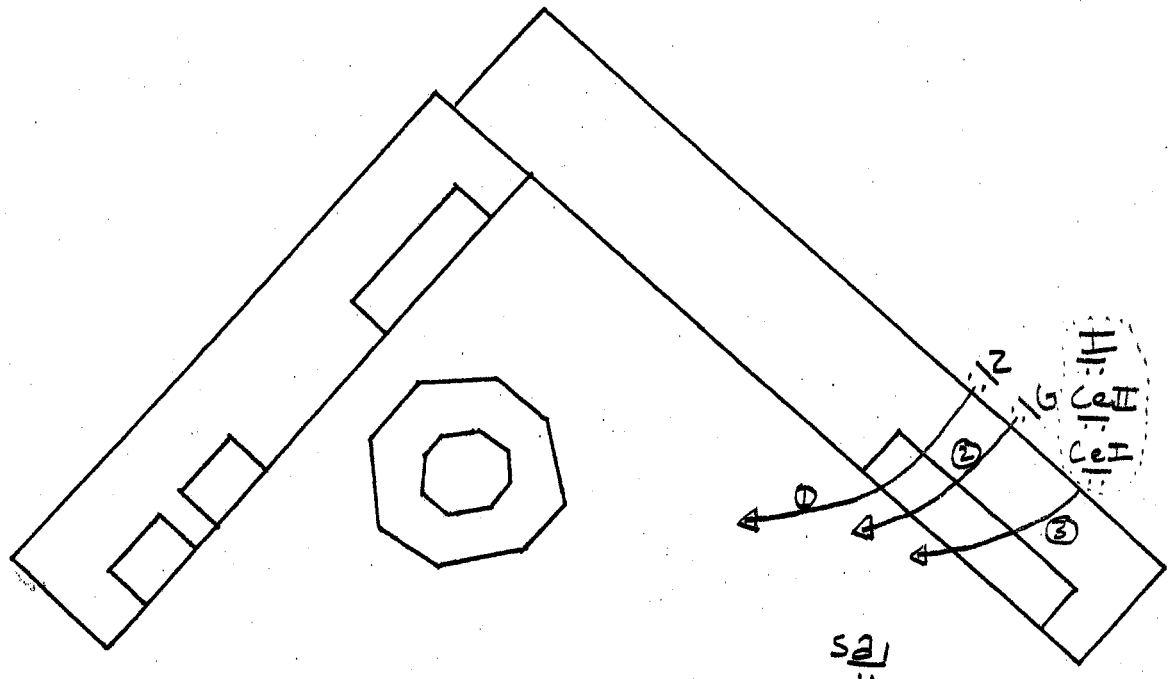
1. 20/1/2 -
  - G = surprised that SA is not moved by her, she travels around her in an attempt to get her attention
  - SA = calmly notices G and slowly inclines her head; smiling, she meets her friend's eyes
  
2. 20/2/2 -
  - B = taking a bucket full of water from the fountain and leading her charges out
  - Z + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = rise from their seats, some make the sign of the cross, some nod and tighten their closed eyes



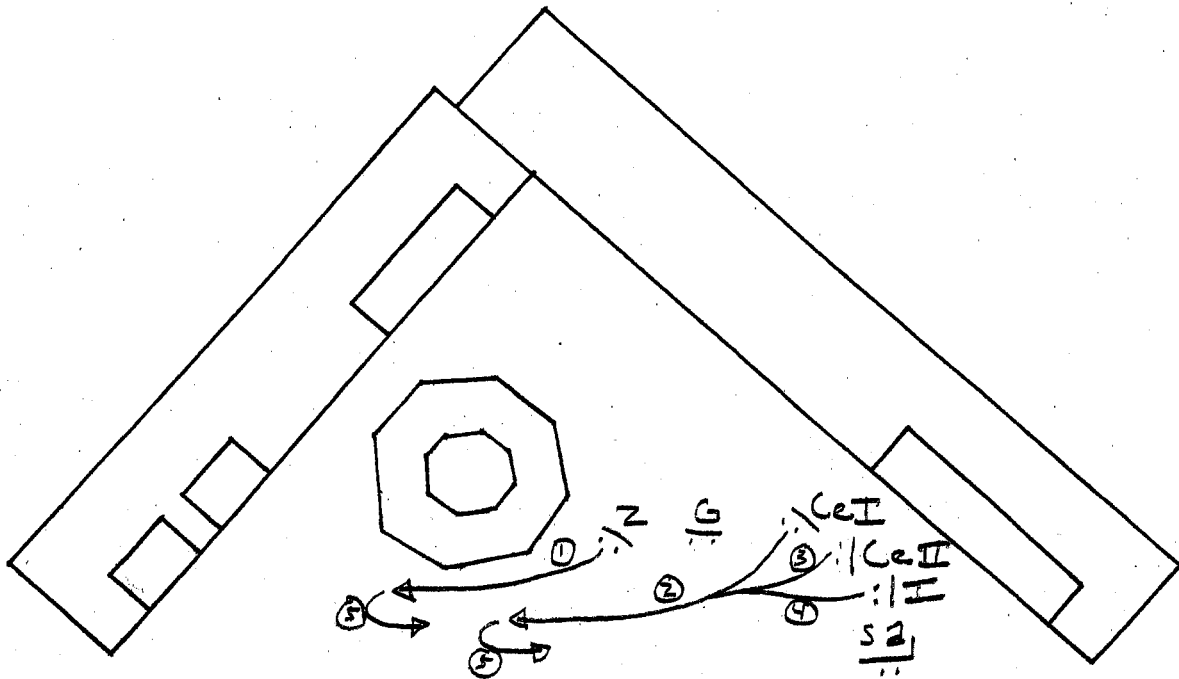
1. 21/1/1 -
  - B = tapping G on the shoulder on her way out
  - Z + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = though they remain with heads bowed and palms pressed together at their chests, the younger nuns cannot help but spy a glance toward SA as they pass her
  
2. 21/1/2 -
  - G = holding an inviting hand out to SA, she follows the others out
  - SA = slowly paces a few steps toward the doorway
  
3. 21/2/1 -
  - SA = suddenly shies away from the doorway and faces out with two fists to her mouth for a moment, she seems to notice her flowers again



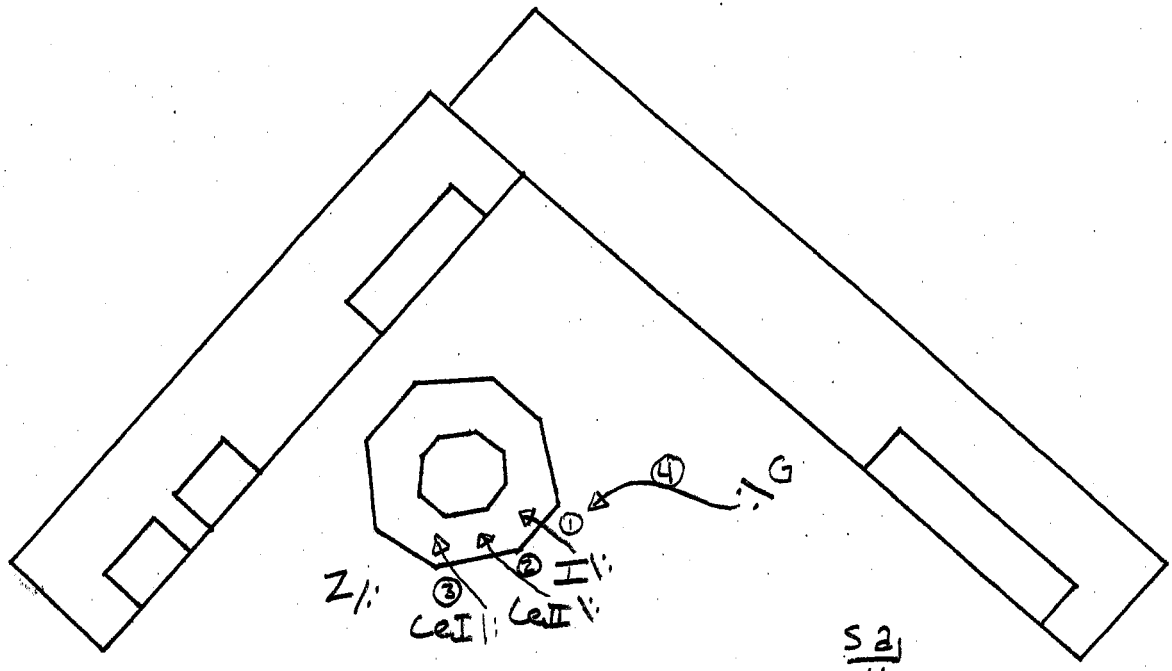
1. 22/4/1 - • SA = unashamedly and with wild abandonment, she falls to her knees with arms wide



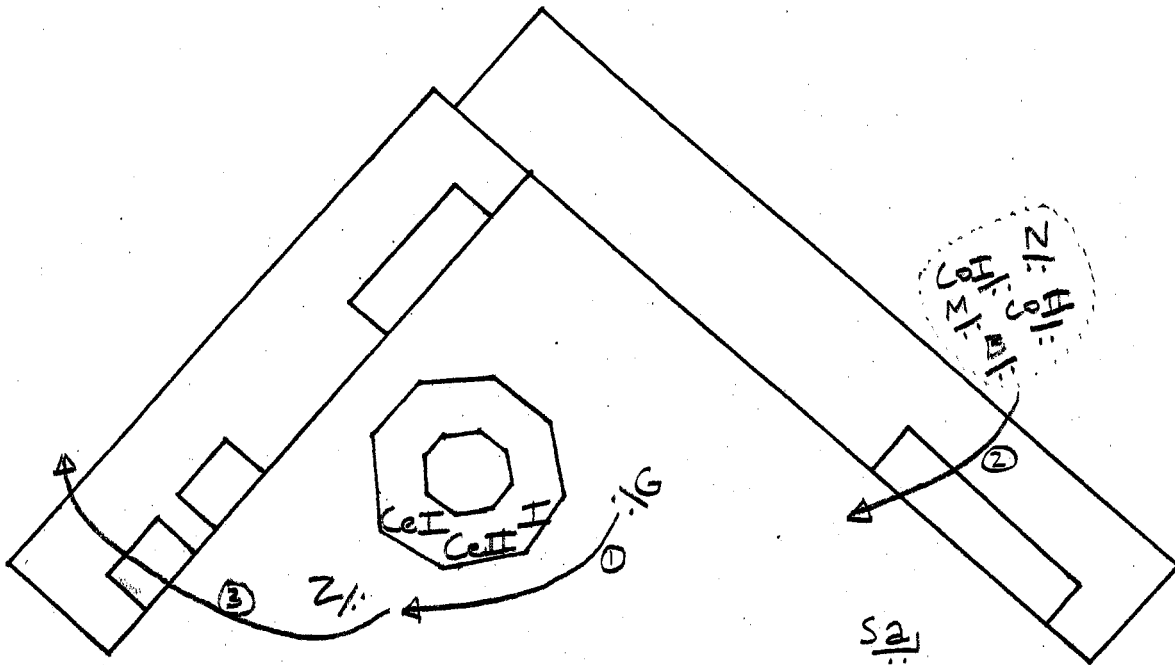
1. 23/1/4 - • Z = racing in and not turning back to speak directly to G's face; we are coming into the middle of an argument that is being carried into the courtyard
2. 23/2/1 - • G = following closely to the monitor and reaching out to her, pleading
3. 23/2/3 - • I + CeI + CeII = lips pursed and hands folded, but fallen low to their middles, the sisters eagerly follow the argument



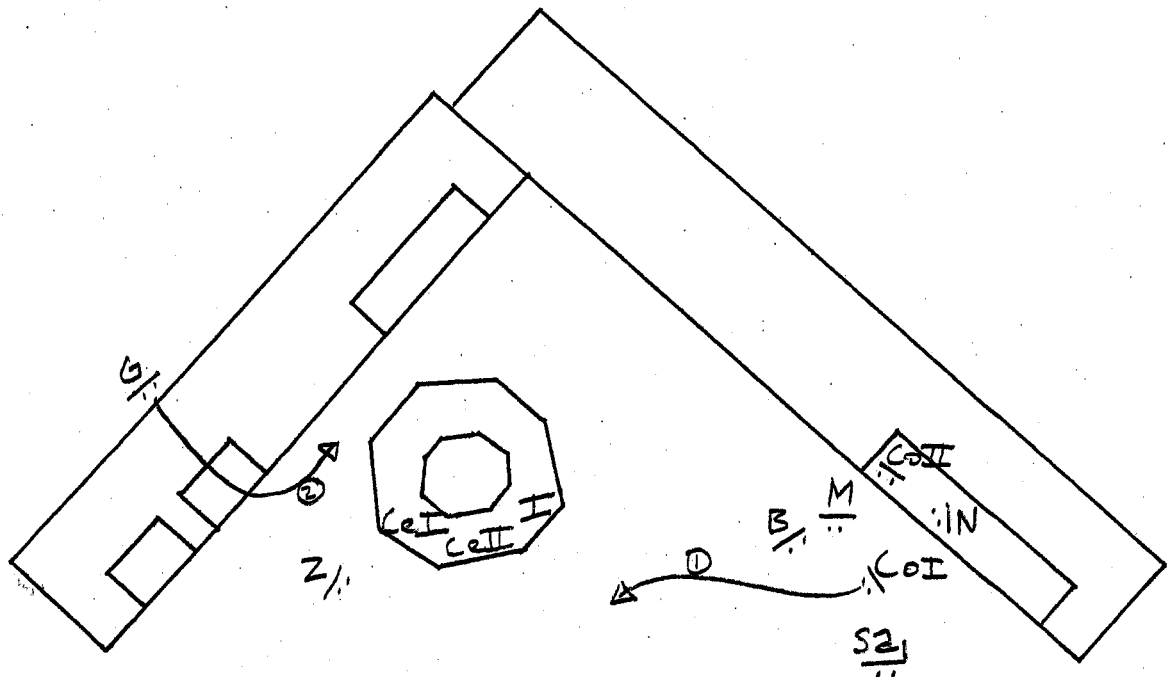
1. 24/1/1 - • Z = momentarily bringing her hand up to her heart, never daring to look back at G
2. 24/1/2 - • CeI = blasting past G, chin rising an extra degree
3. 24/1/3 - • CeII = wipes the air with an open hand
4. 24/1/3 - • I = nodding her head as she passes G
5. 24/2/1 - • G = opening her hands slightly out to her sides and shrugging her shoulders
  - Z = folds her arms and raises her eyebrows as she turns on a dime
  - I + CeI + CeII = the air is knocked out of them; there is not even time to change their demeanor, only time to turn and face G



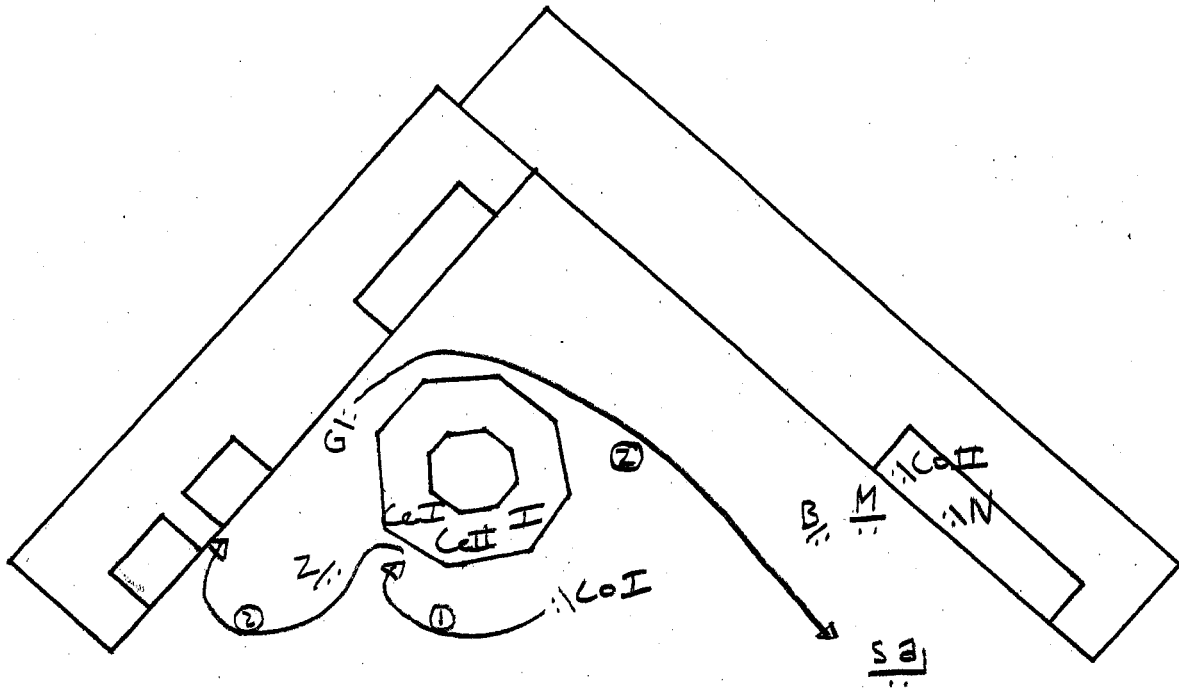
1. 25/1/3 -
  - G = her open hands are not brought higher, she leans toward her sisters, now pleading with them for empathy
  - I = after a few quick nods of her head, her hand is raised to her chest and she goes to the fountain for support
2. 25/2/2 -
  - CeII = notices the nurse's state and goes to comfort her
3. 25/3/1 -
  - CeI = chin raised even another degree, she sits with her arms folded
4. 25/4/2 -
  - G = following her outstretched arms over to the nurse as she noticing that she is moved



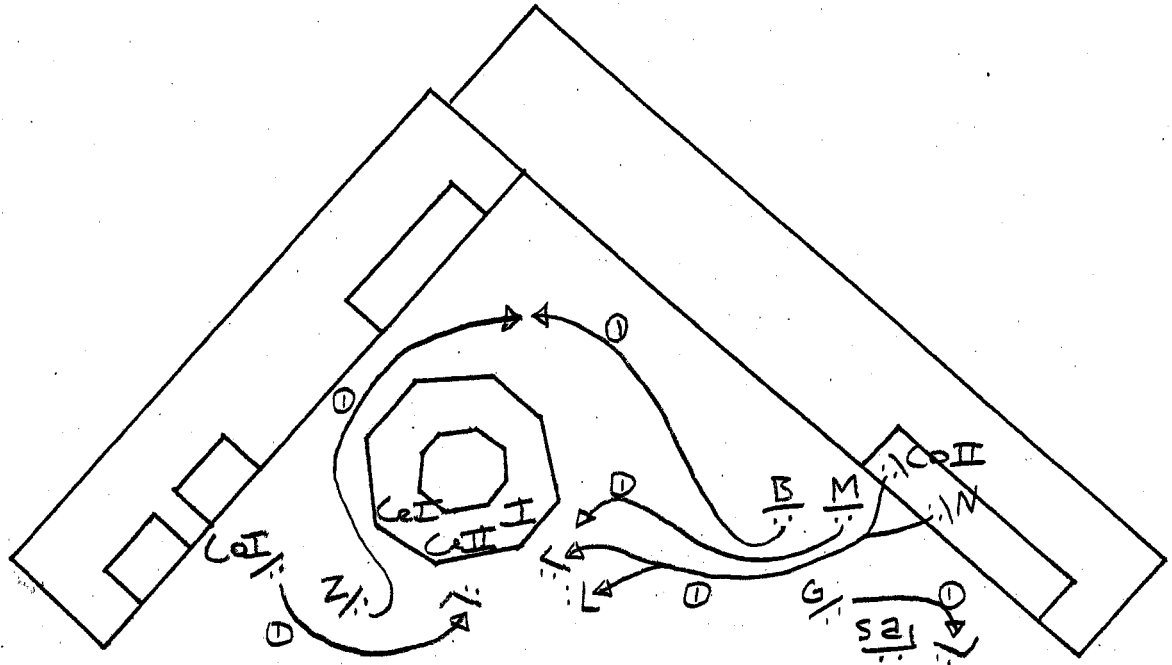
1. 26/2/4 -
  - G = hastily walking toward the monitor and bowing her head for forgiveness
  - I = her head tracks G's cross as she brings an open hand to her mouth
  - CeI + CeII = soften back into relaxed seated position as G passes them
  
2. 26/3/1 -
  - B = holds up a single finger to stop the mistress and her charges; she does not want to interrupt this moment between the monitor and G
  
3. 26/3/3 -
  - Z = bows her head and gestures an open hand toward the chapel door
  - G = flees into the chapel



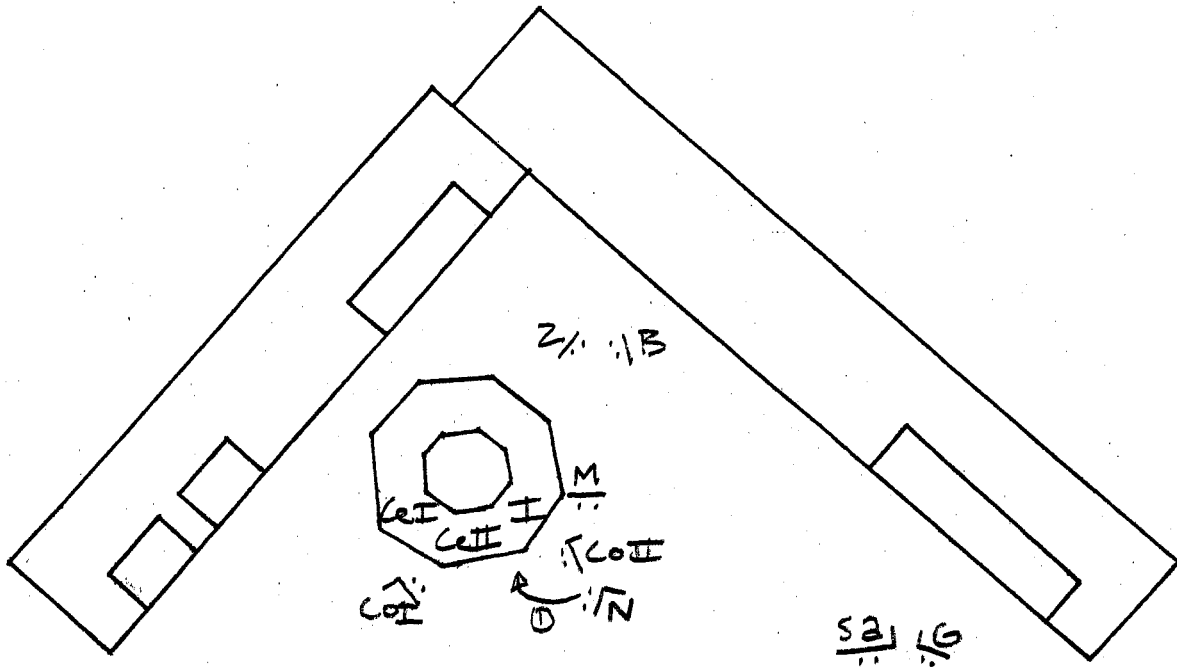
1. 27/1/3 -
  - CoI = skips in the direction of the monitor with her hands behind her back; she's showing off
  - M + B = reach for CoI, but decide to throw their hands up at this display
  - CoII + N = bite their nails and huddle close into each other
  - Z = lifts her bowed head and eyebrows up as she notices the young sister coming
  - I + CeI + CeII = smile, playfully roll their eyes, and giggle a bit; they may even bat a hand toward the lay-sister as if to say, "what's she up to now?"
  
2. 27/3/3 -
  - G = re-enters the courtyard and watches the innocent scene through the top of her bowed eyes
  - CoI = she strikes a penitent pose in the direction of the monitor, but her beaming smile never fades



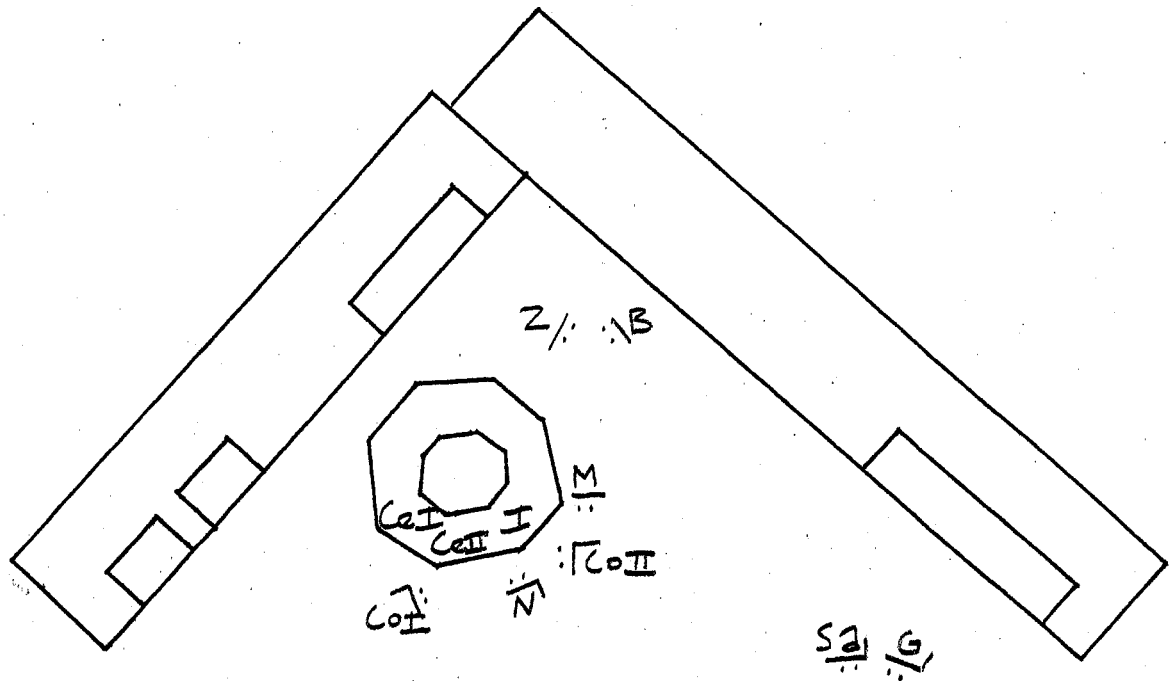
1. 28/1/3 -
  - CoI = skips over for the monitor's blessing, but is stopped for a moment by the collecting sisters
  - CeI + CeII = furl their noses and roll their eyes playfully toward CoI
  
2. 28/2/1 -
  - Z = lazily gestures an open hand toward the chapel door
  - CoI = regains her mock-prayerful demeanor and proceeds toward the chapel doors, but does not enter
  - G = finally inclining her head fully, notices SA; she looks around her to see if anyone else sees SA and then decides to cross to her
  - B + M + CoII + N = as G passes them, they are quick to follow her line of sight and quickly hush as their eyes widen and their bodies incline toward SA



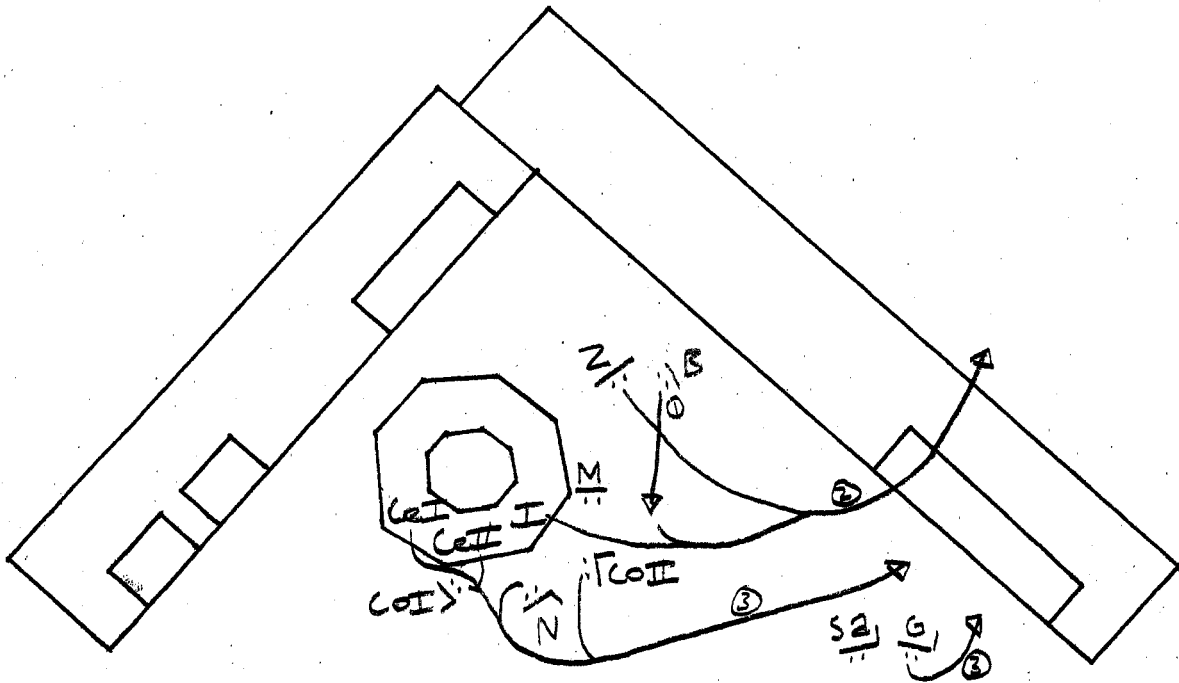
1. 29/1/1 -
- SA = never breaking her reverie, she returns to tending her plants
  - G = crossing around to help SA with a look of concern
  - B + Z + M + I + CeI + CeII = heads are suddenly thrown back, arms are suddenly thrown down to sides; this isn't the first time they have been baited by the prospect of hearing SA's desires
  - CoI + CoII + N = seeing the elder nuns' reactions, they are quick to scoot nearer to beg for details



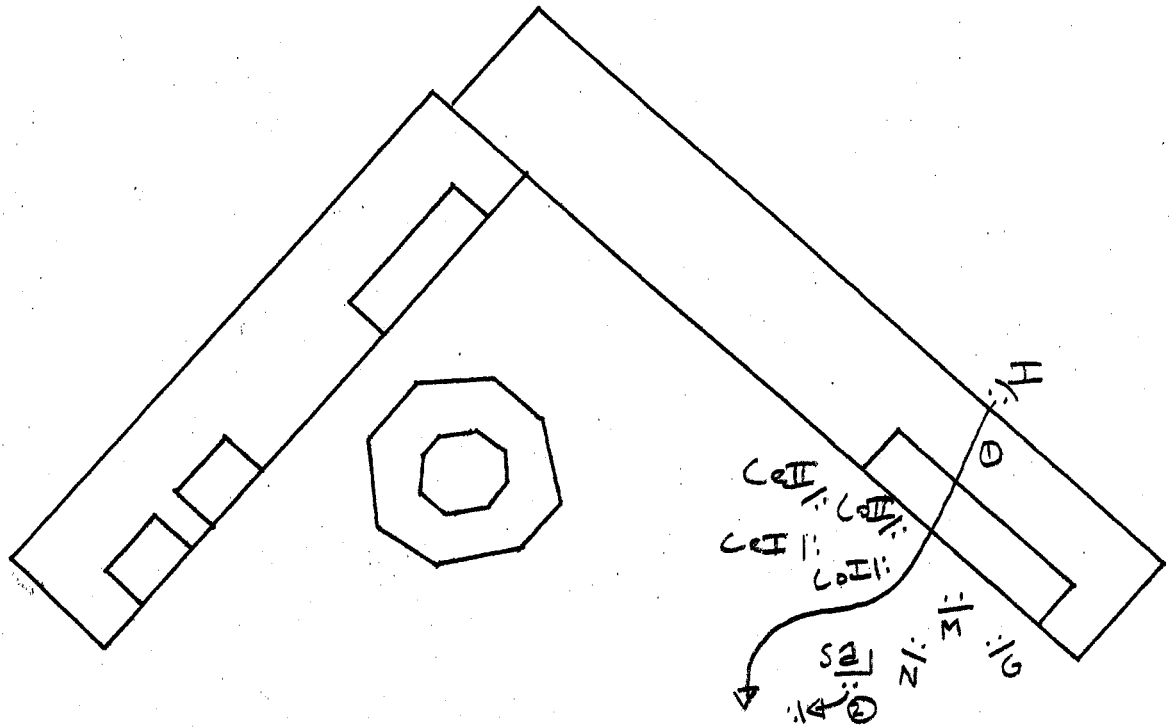
1. 30/3/2 -
- I + CeI + CeII = leaning over the younger nuns with eyebrows raised high and noses reaching upward; they are baiting the young nuns
  - CoI + CoII + N = holding onto every detail and trying to get their heads closer and closer to the gossiping elders



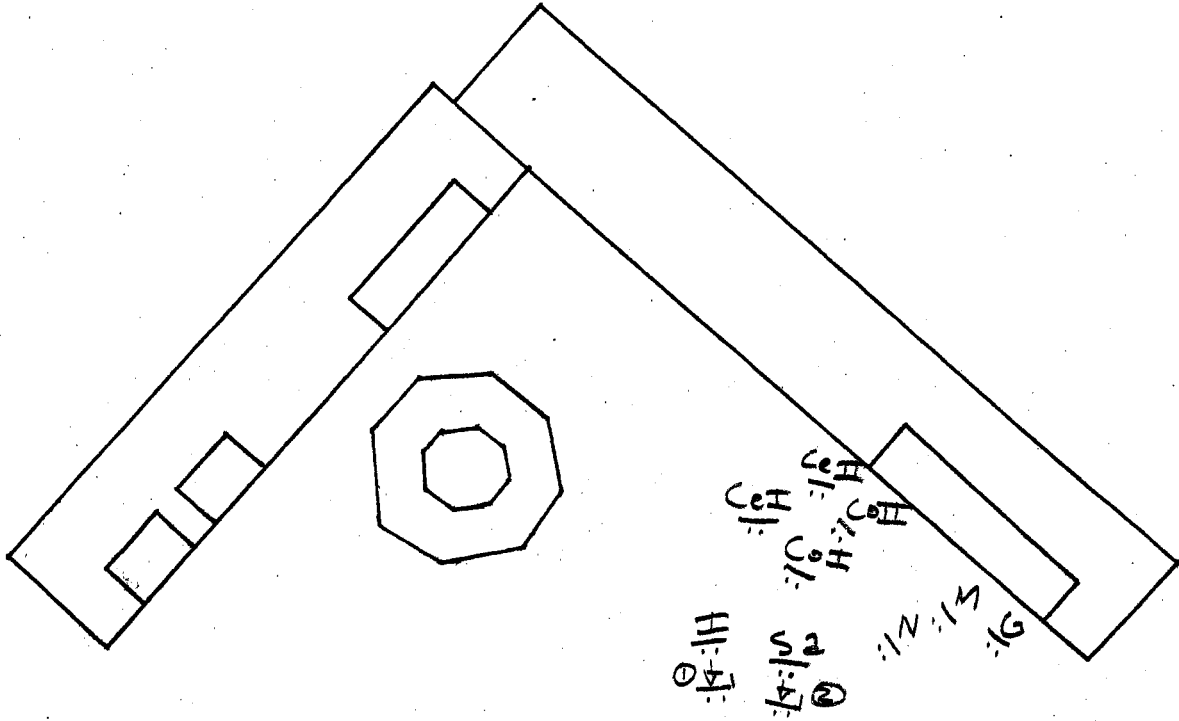
0. 31 -
- I + CeI + CeII = continuing to playfully taunt and bait their younger sisters
  - CoI + CoII + N = occasionally checking over their shoulders to connect the gossip with SA and seeing if she can hear them



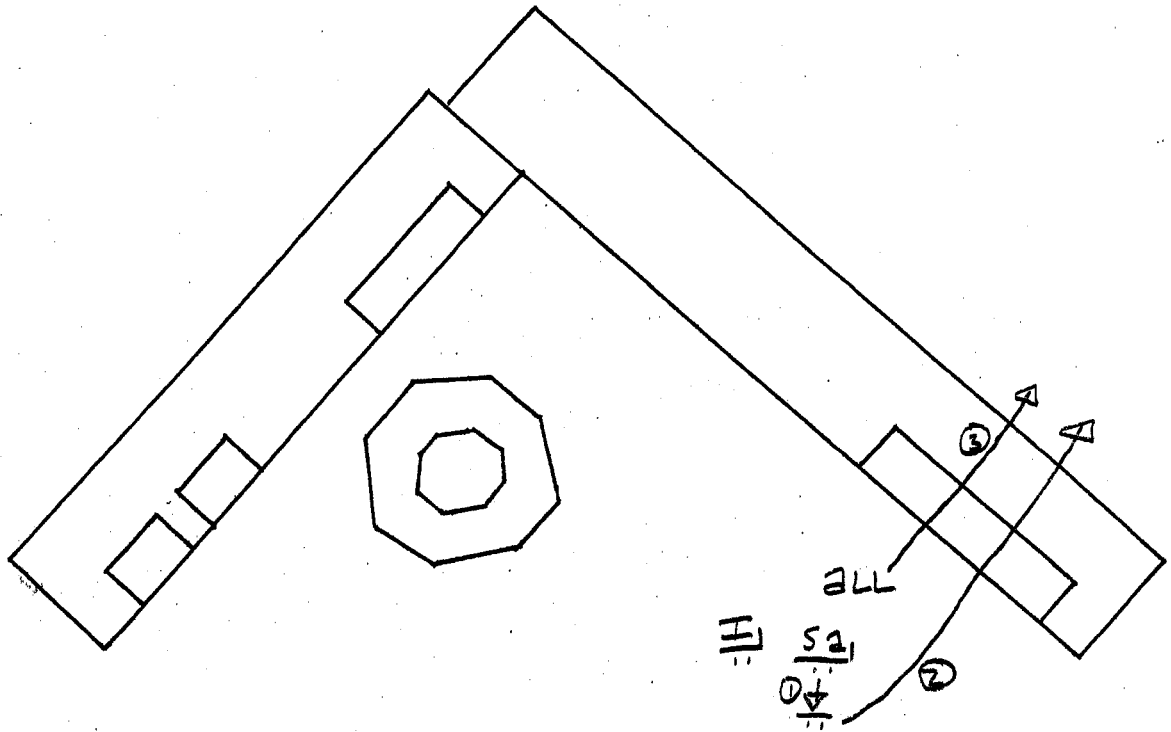
1. 32/1/3 -
  - B = charging into the scene and warning the gossipers
  
2. 32/2/3 -
  - B + Z = snapping their heads around in disgust and marching off
  - I = sheepishly following her superiors and reaching out in apology
  
3. 32/3/2 -
  - CeI + CeII = shrugging as they go toward the large door; checking back in to assure that the young nuns are following
  - M + CoI + CoII + N = battling over who to give their attention to, the collecting sisters and their gossip or SA and G as they pass by
  - G = noticing that everyone is leaving, she looks skyward and nods her head in frustration; bows her head and rises to join the recession



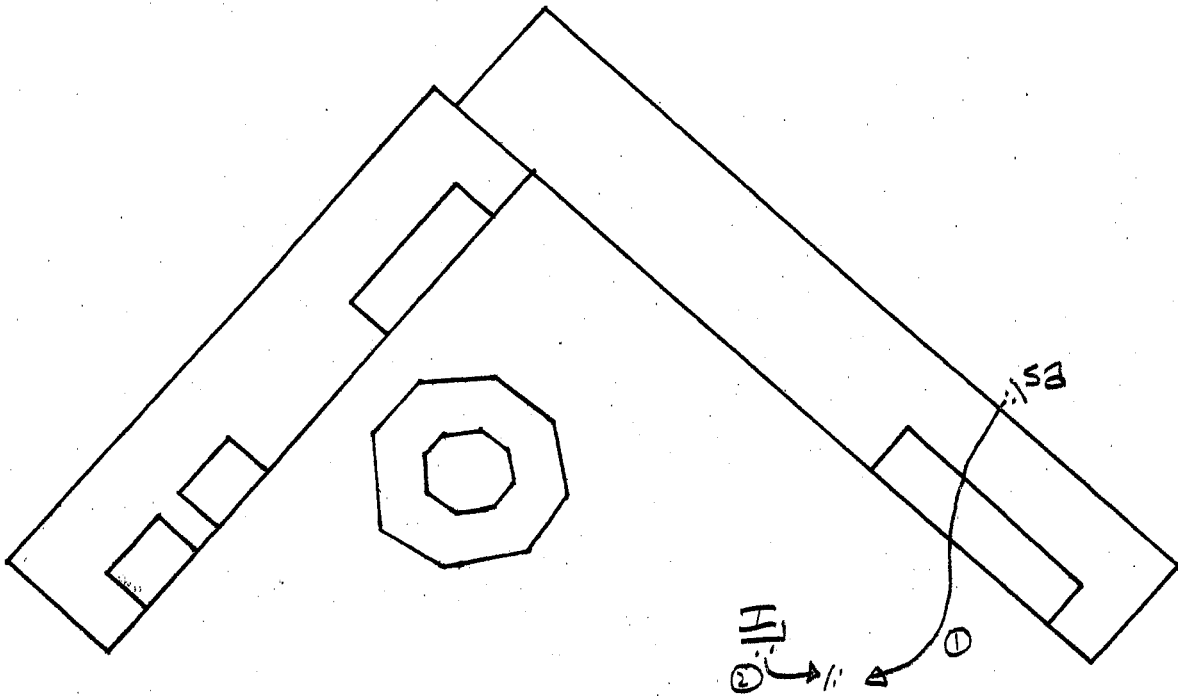
1. 33/1/2 -
  - I = bolts back in, directly toward SA, blasting past all of the other nuns
  - CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N + G = blasted back and around by the very force of the nurse's re-entry; curiously closing in on I and SA
  
2. 33/2/2 -
  - SA = as if shocked from behind, her head pops up and she rises clapping the dirt from her hands
  - I = gulps back to control herself and leans on SA with both hands



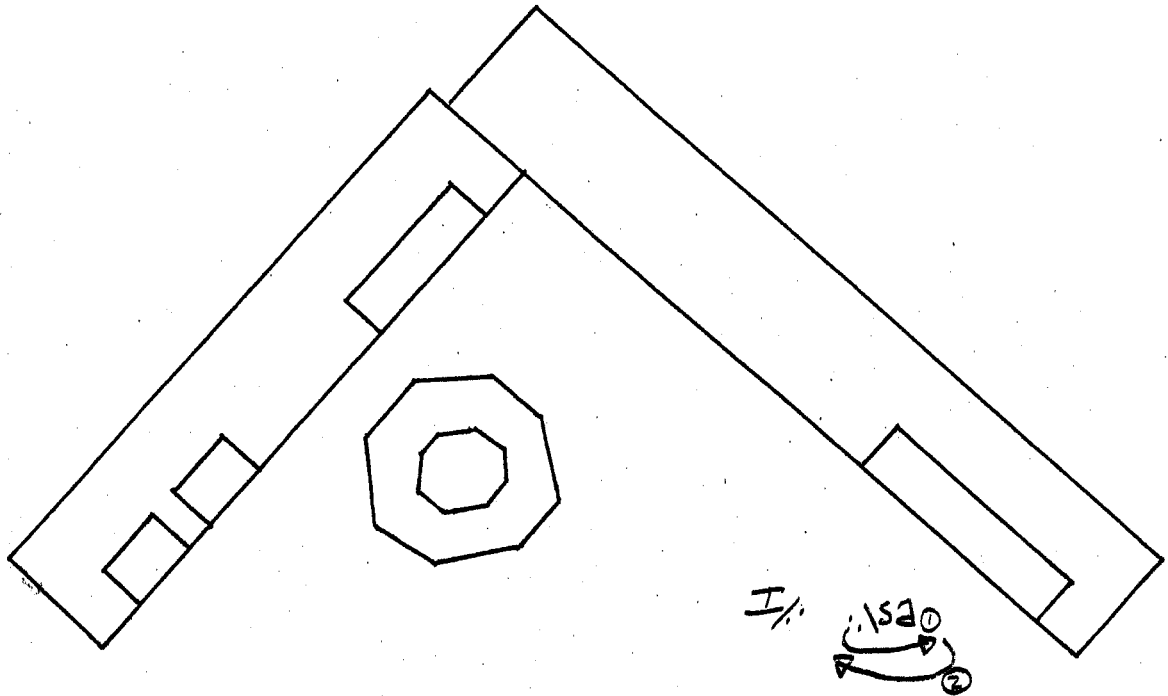
1. 34/3/2 - • I = suddenly her gaze travels away from SA as she realizes the pain of her sister, she sees her ailing comrade as her brow furls in sorrow
2. 34/4/3 - • SA = kneels beside the nurse and lovingly strokes her shoulder  
 • CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N + G = press yet further into I and SA;  
 now they are able to loom over



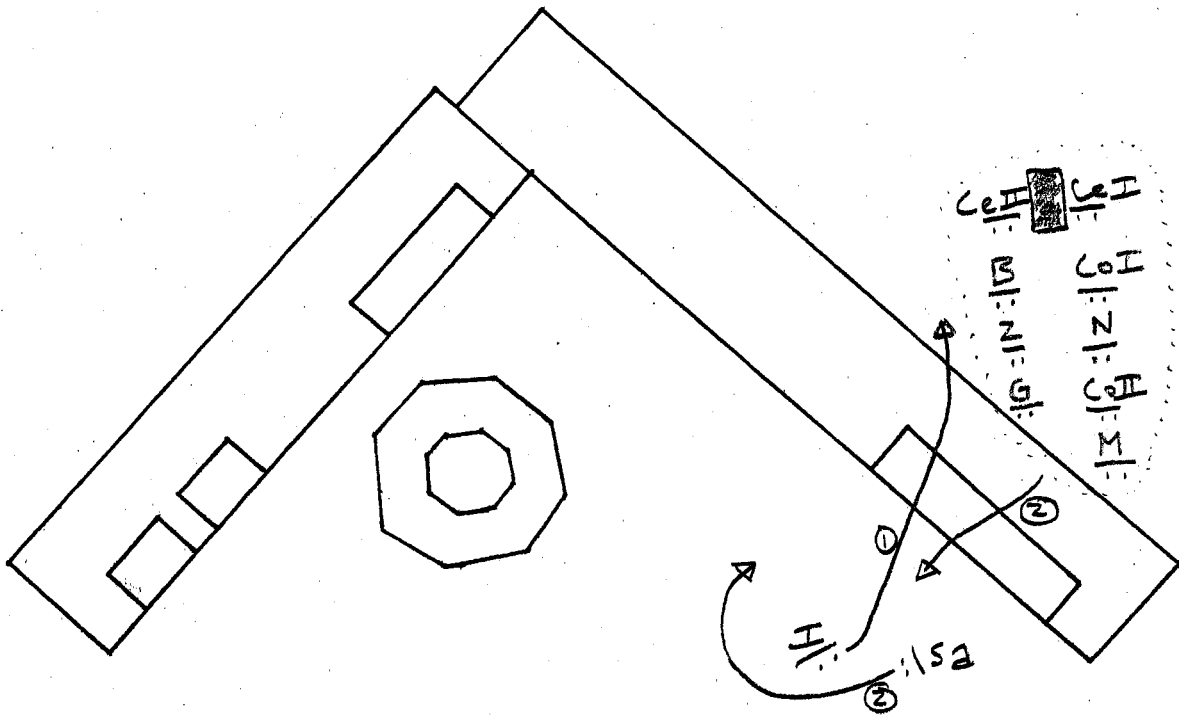
1. 35/1/3 - • SA = rises and quickly jolts her head up with an inhalation, she has an idea
2. 35/2/1 - • SA = turning on a dime, she hastens through the crowd of nuns
3. 35/2/2 - • CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N + G = after a moment of staring at each other, wild nodding precedes a mass exodus, curiously following SA
  - I = assuming a prayerful countenance, erect yet on her knees, chin high; a prayer



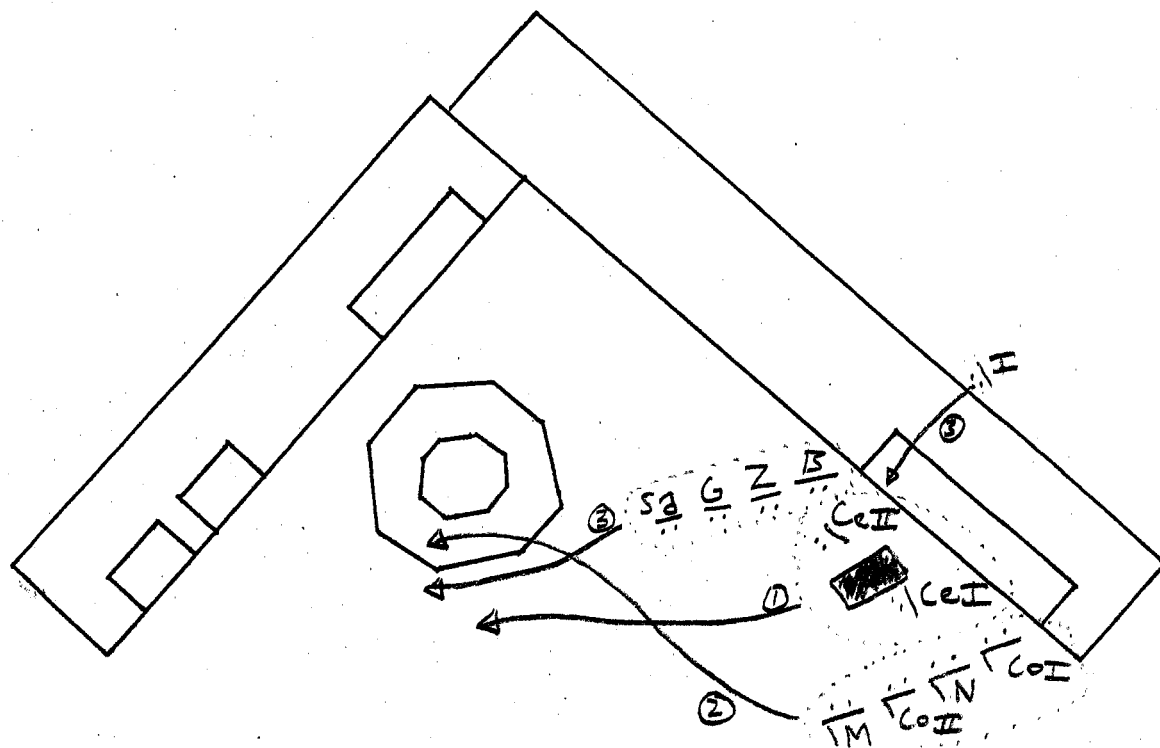
1. 36/1/2 - • SA = proudly displaying a plant in her outstretched arms
2. 36/1/4 - • I = snapped out of her focused prayer; sighing in relief at SA's sure presence
  - SA = hands the nurse a piece of the plant and nods assuredly



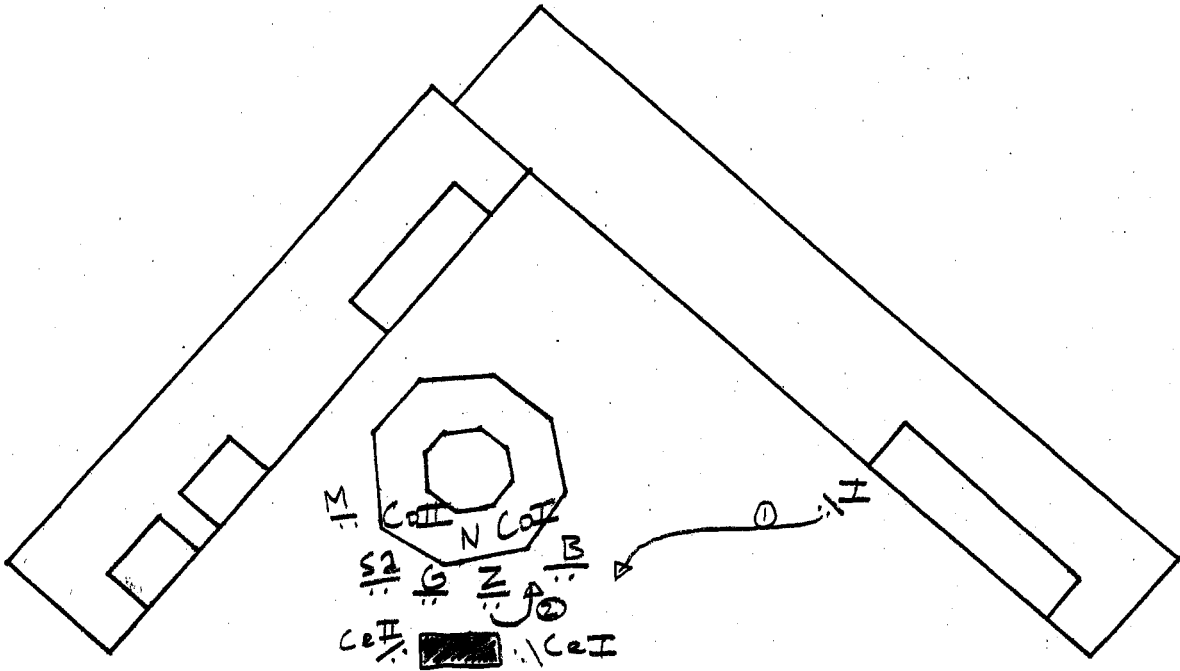
1. 37/2/2 -
  - SA = the smile slips away quickly and she is pulled away from the nurse as if her eyes magnetically fall on some distant point
  - I = lets the hand with the twig now in it fall; follows the direction SA is going with an inclination of her own body
  
2. 37/3/4 -
  - SA = shakes herself out of this temporary stupor and smiles at the nurse, nodding in a matter-of-fact way



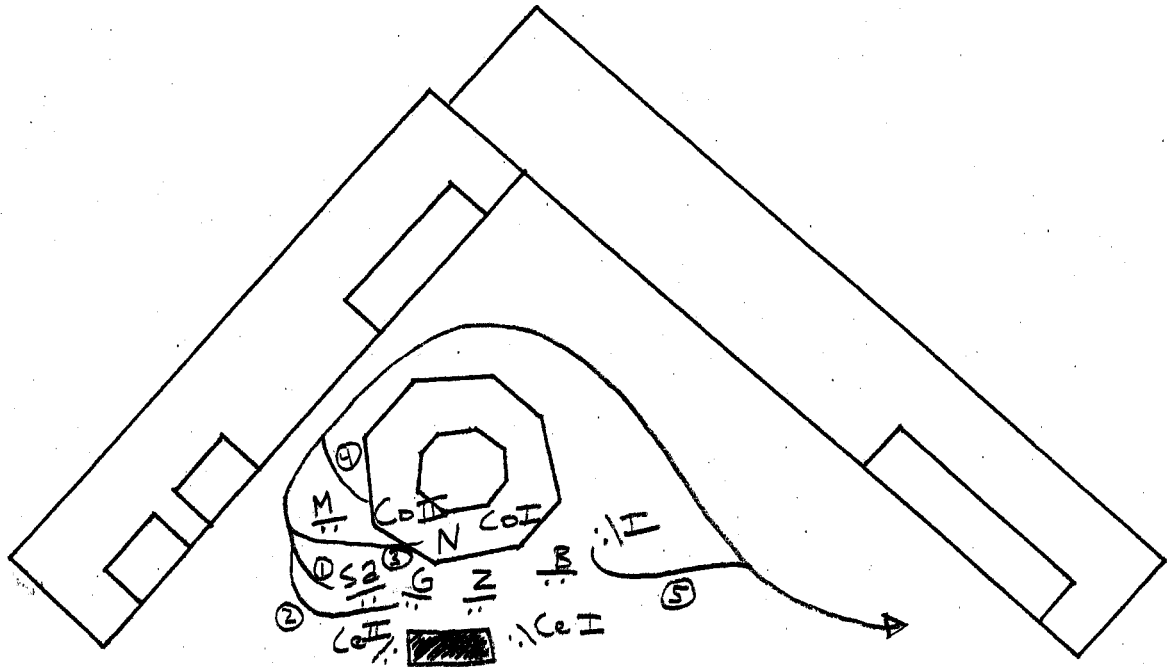
1. 38/2/3 - • I = bows to SA and runs off without delay as a bell is heard ringing
2. 38/2/5 - • SA = places the rest of the plant with the rest of her collected greenery before noticing the cart and assuming her position of reception
  - G + Z + B + M = walk in calmly and attentively turn toward the collecting sisters in the doorway
  - CoI + CoII + N = leap and bound into the courtyard, reminding each other to kneel and prostrate before the incoming gifts
  - CeI + CeII = wheel in their collecting cart and, chests high, sniff the air with a smile



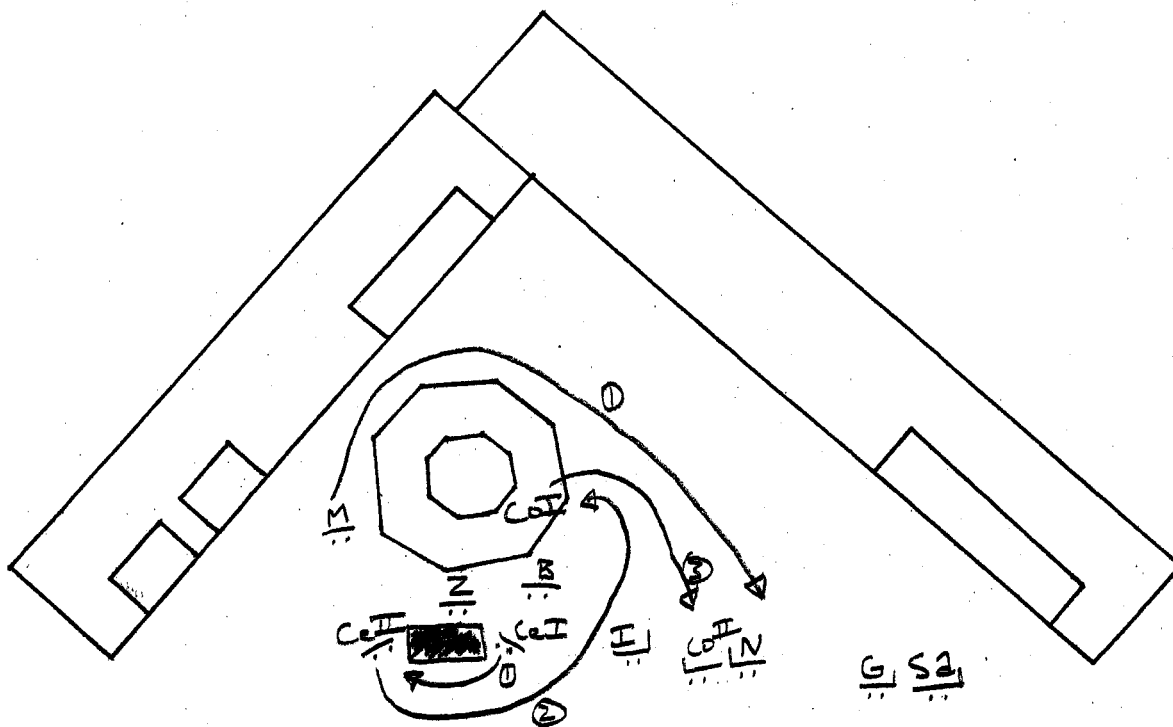
1. 39/1/3 - • CeI + CeII = wheel the collecting cart over to the fountain, all the while playfully scolding anyone who tries to spy into the cart
2. 39/2/2 - • M + CoI + CoII + N = follow the cart and attempt to loom over it as they near the fountain; CoI even attempts to reach in before her mistress warns her with a pointed index finger
3. 39/2/4 - • SA + G + Z + B = pass in front of the younger nuns and by doing so force them up onto the bench of the fountain; the elders fold their hands and await their instructions
  - I = wiping her brow, she returns to the courtyard



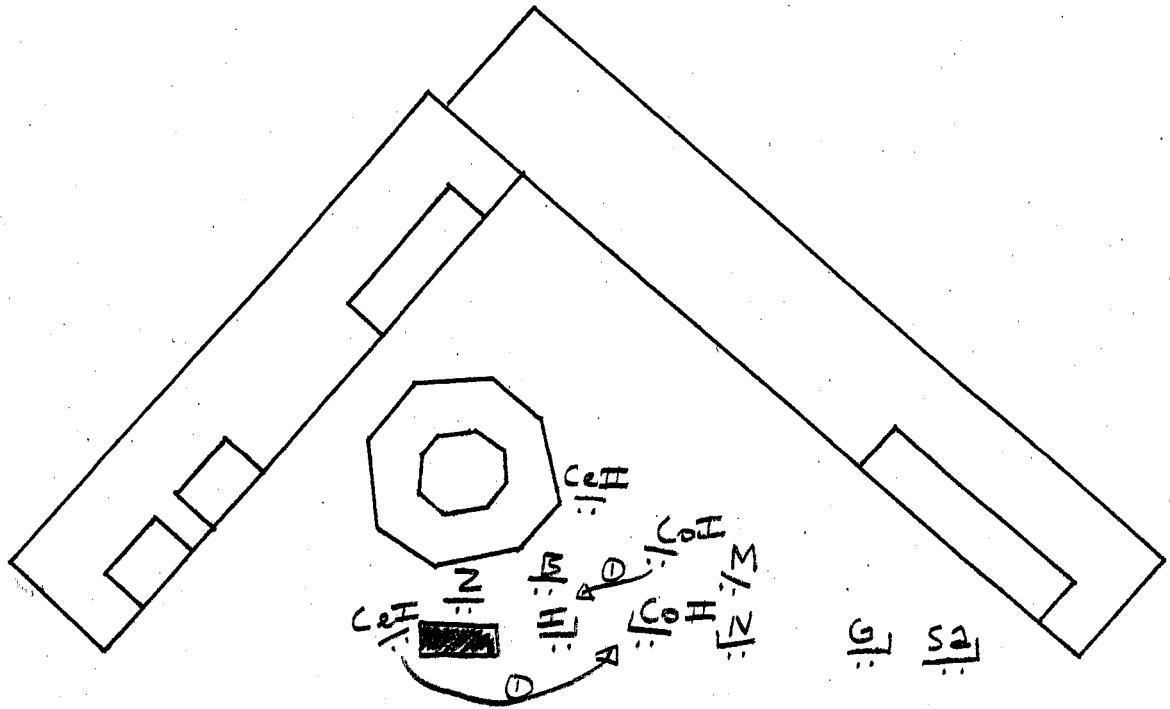
1. 40/1/1 - • I = falling into line beside the abness
  
2. 40/2/4 - • Z = stamping her foot and turning toward CoI with eyebrows raised warningly  
 • CoI = flinches back away from the monitor, but smiles to her young sisters when it is safe



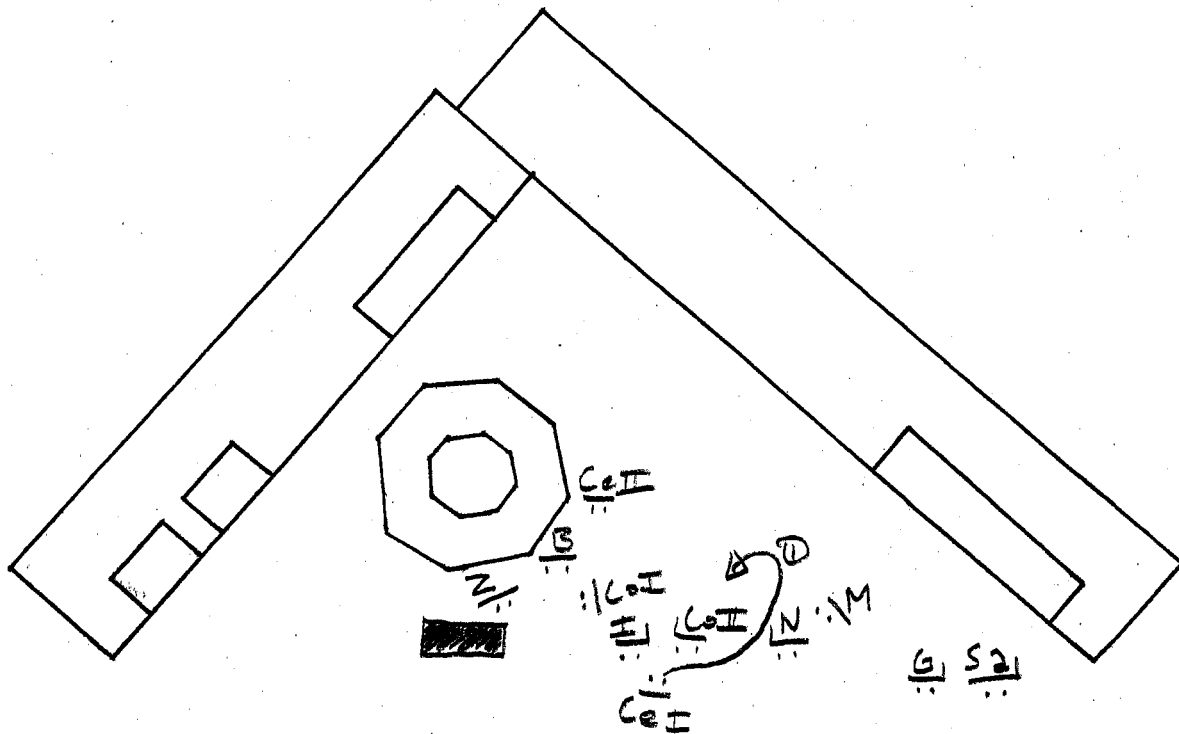
1. 41/2/4 -
  - CeI = reaching into the cart and playfully tossing a sack to SA
  - SA = circling the fountain and opening her bundle as she nears her flowers; she sits and begins to sift through and organize the contents of the bundle
  
2. 41/3/3 -
  - CeI = handing a sack to G
  - G = takes the sack and follows in the fashion of SA
  
3. 41/4/1 -
  - CeI = places a finger to her mouth thinking and hands a sack to the novice
  - N = following SA and G with her sack
  
4. 41/4/2 -
  - CeI = hands a small wooden crate to the monitor and nods toward CoII
  - Z = turns to CoII with the crate
  - CoII = following the others with her crate
  
5. 41/4/3 -
  - CeI = hands a sack to the nurse and slaps her hands together a few times
  - I = following the others with her sack



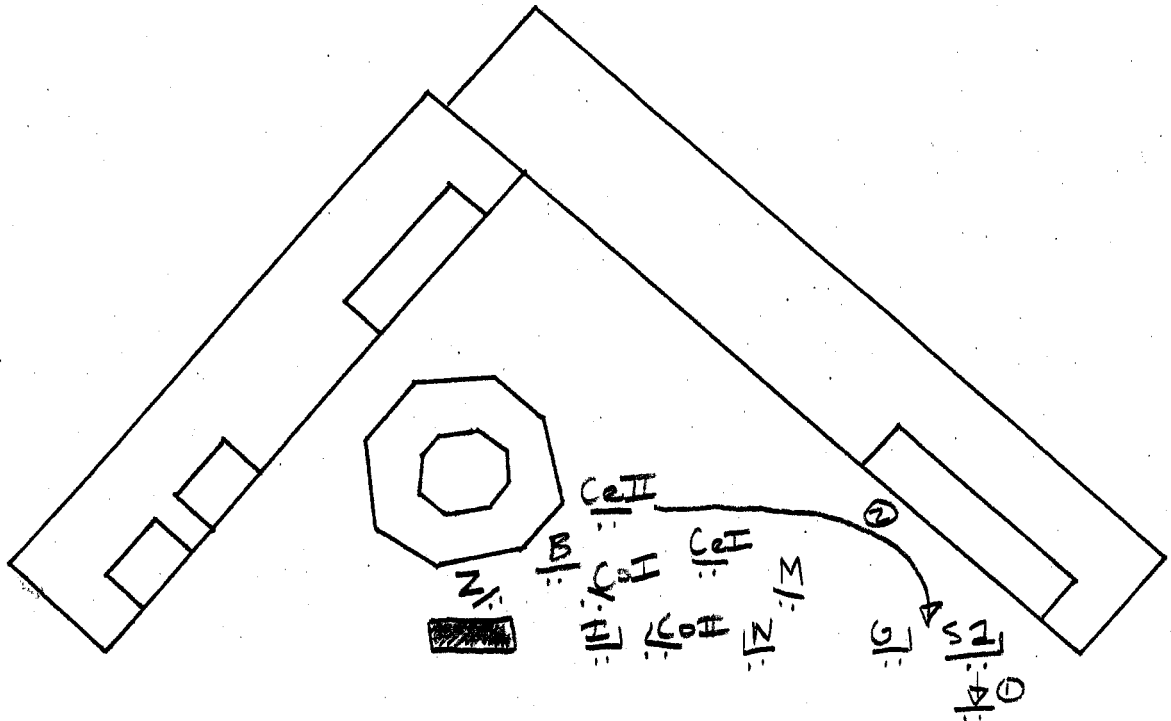
1. 42/1/2 -
  - CeI = tiptoes to CeII and whispers something into her ear
  - M = inspects the work of her young charges and instructs them on the proper handling of their various items
  
2. 42/2/2 -
  - CeII = smiling and wide-eyed, nods to CeI and, holding a branch from the cart behind her back, skulks over to CoI
  
3. 42/3/2 -
  - CoI = proudly brandishing and elevating the branch, she lumbers over to her peers and offers them some berries from the branch



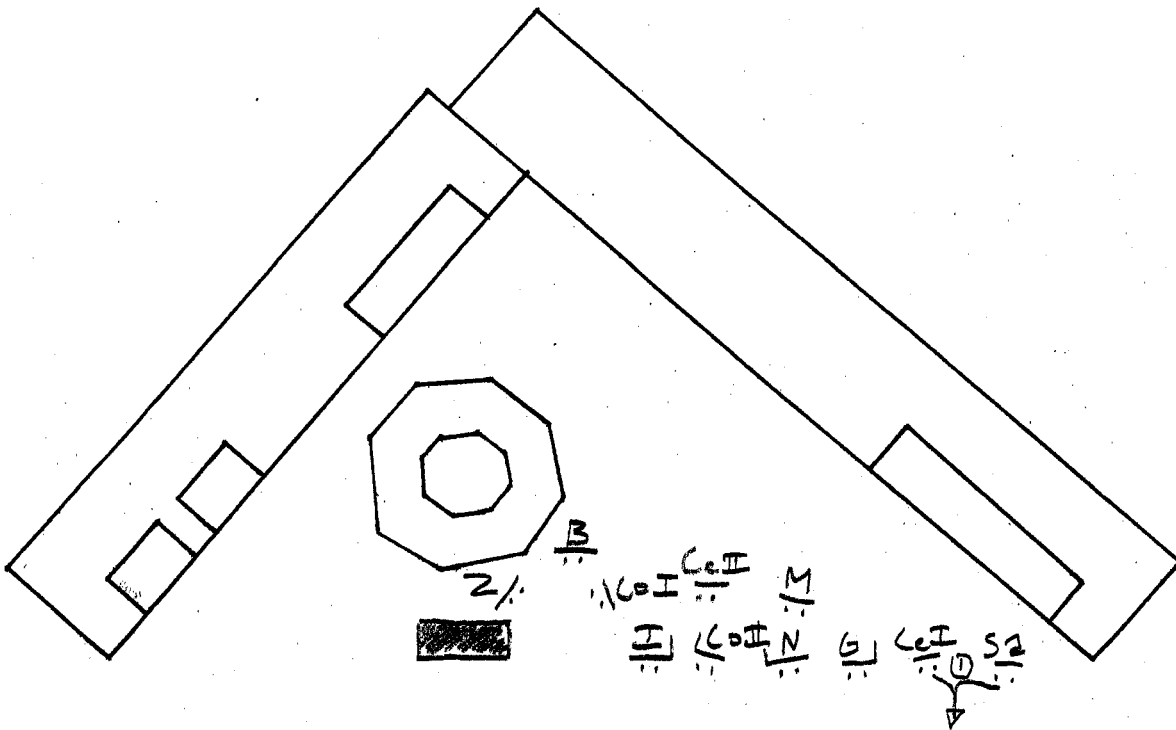
1. 43/2/2 -
- CoI = after nods of thanks to her peers, sheepishly pacing over to the monitor with the branch stretched out before her
  - Z = holding up a single hand and turning away from CoI
  - CeI = makes a final check to see that the cart is empty and inspects everyone's work



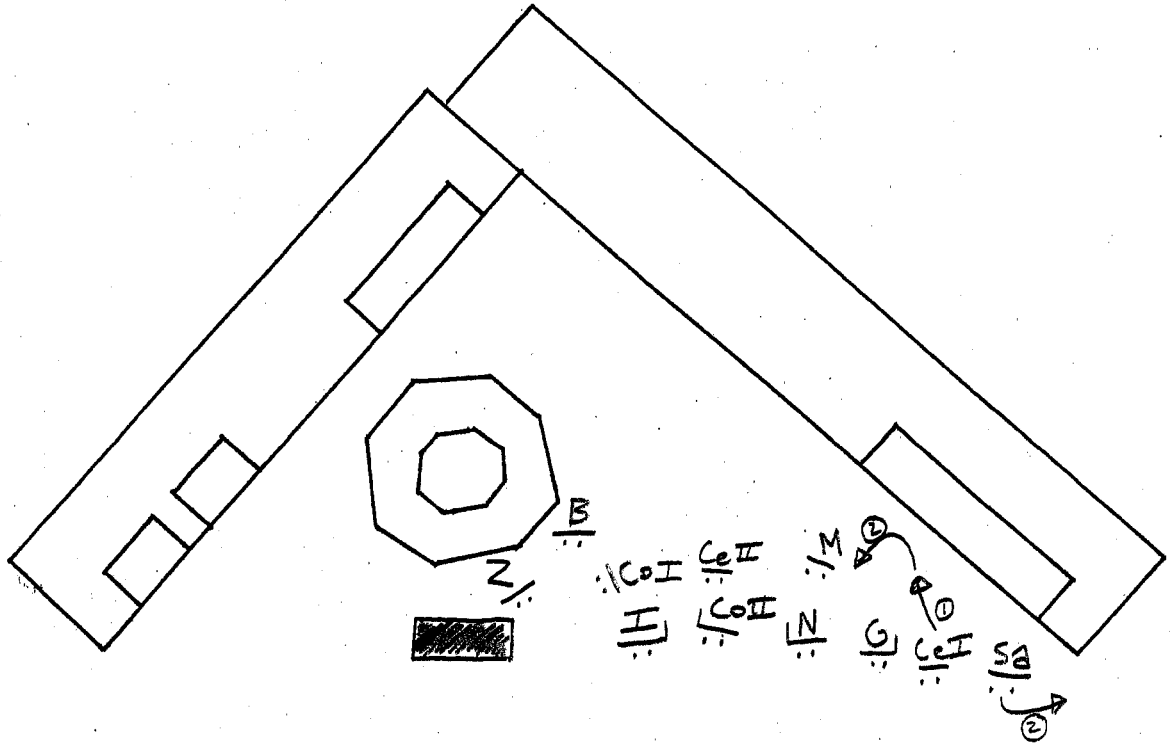
1. 44/2/1 -
- CoI = smiles as she pulls the branch back into herself
  - Z + B = suddenly gaze at each other with tightened brows
  - CeI = peering up and down the line of working sisters, she leans forward



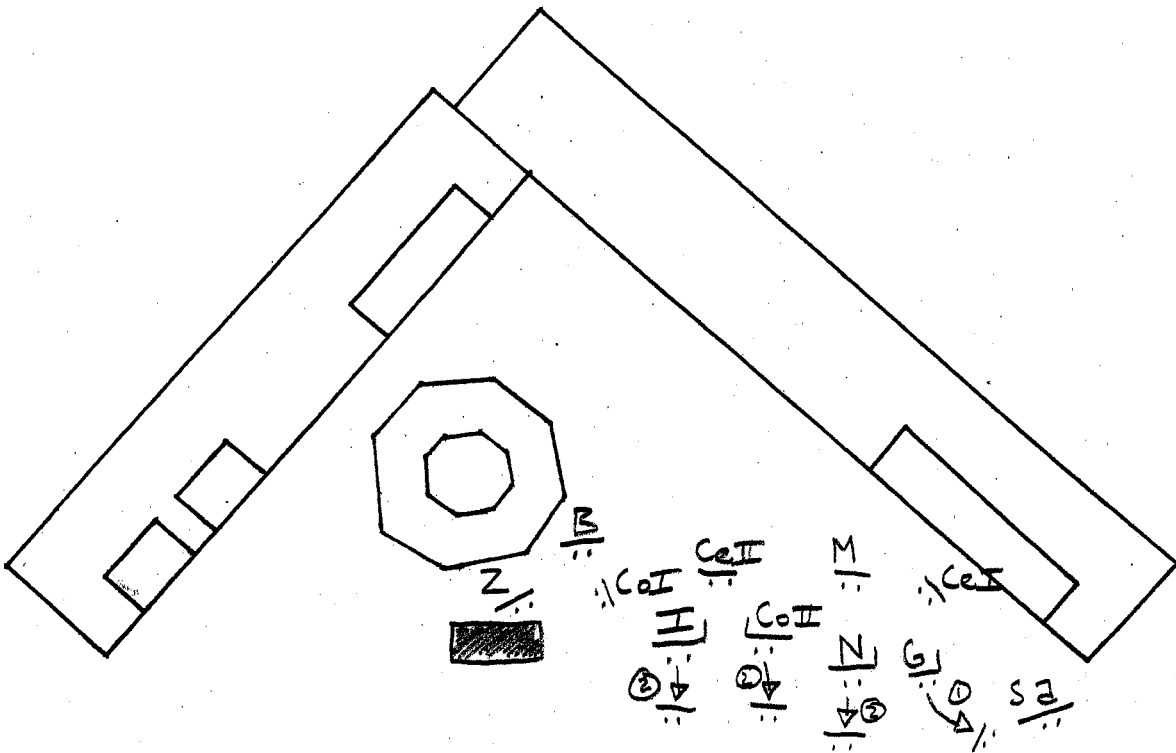
1. 45/1/2 -
  - SA = drops her bundle and brings her hand to her throat as she escapes the rest of the sisters
  - G + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = freeze amid their work at various stages and stare searchingly at SA
  
2. 45/2/3 -
  - CeI = explaining to SA; reaching out to her
  - SA = not daring to turn toward CeI, her other hand joins the one already at her throat; attempts to massage the fear out of her own shoulders



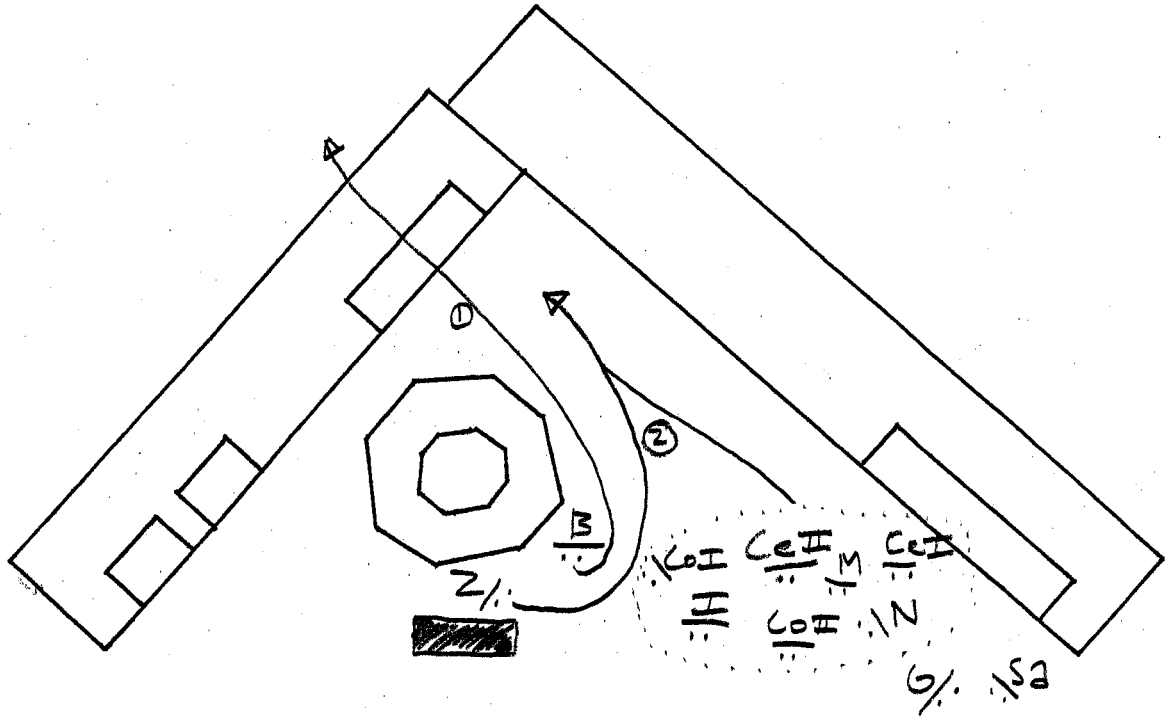
1. 46/1/3 -
- SA = pulling CeI away from prying eyes and begging her
  - Z + B + G + I + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = leaning even further over;  
questioning each other as they strain to hear SA



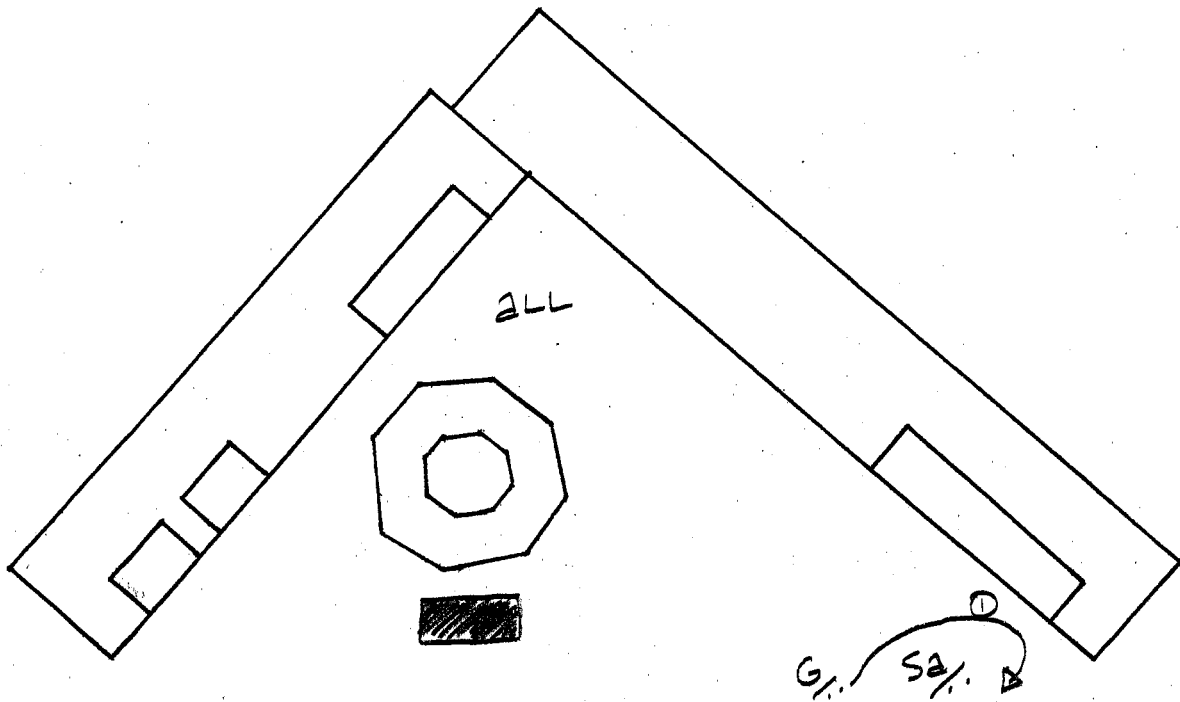
1. 47/1/2 -
  - CeI = freeing herself from SA's hold and backing up with her hands raised
  - SA = staring blankly at the collecting sister
  
2. 47/3/1 -
  - SA = hiding herself from the staring masses and covering her face
  - CeI = melting back into the safety of the masses; reaching to take hold of whomever is closest for comfort
  - Z + B + G + I + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = momentarily pull their gaze away from SA to point at her and rouse one other



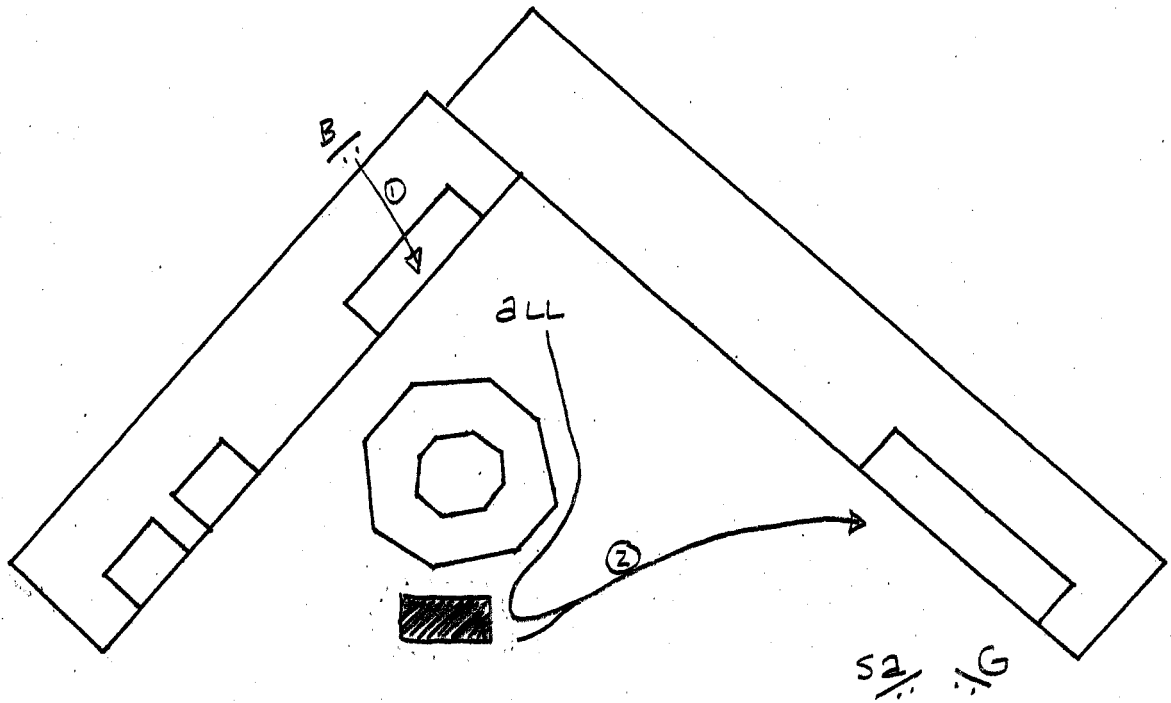
1. 48/2/1 - • G = strokes SA lovingly; calms her down
  
2. 48/3/2 - • B + Z = upon hearing the announcement bell ringing they search each other for any sign of remembrance or relief; this is a surprise visitor
  - I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = immediately their attention is diverted from SA as they begin to straighten themselves up and clean themselves off
  - SA = feigns a swoon
  - G = glances at the US door before realizing that she has to support SA



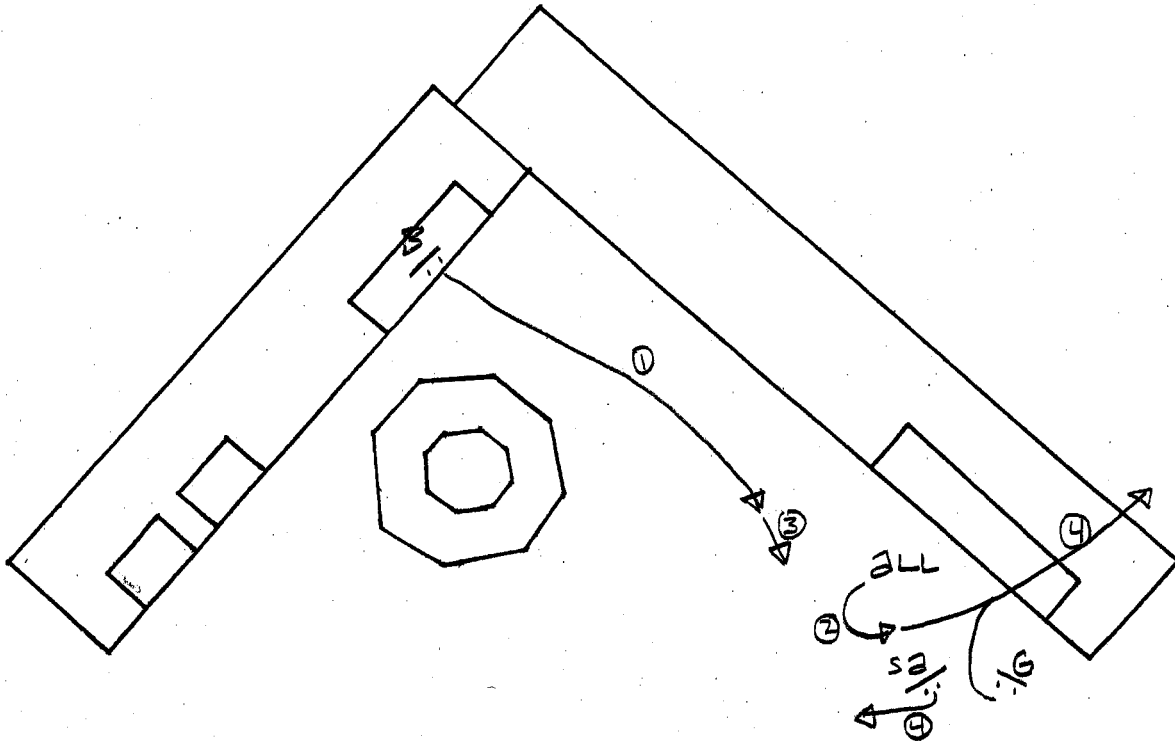
1. 49/2/2 - • B = speedwalks to exit through the large doors
2. 49/3/2 - • Z + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = a massive wave of fabric as everyone presses tightly toward the doors and tries to spy a glance in the small opening left by the abbess's exit
  - SA = searching the sky



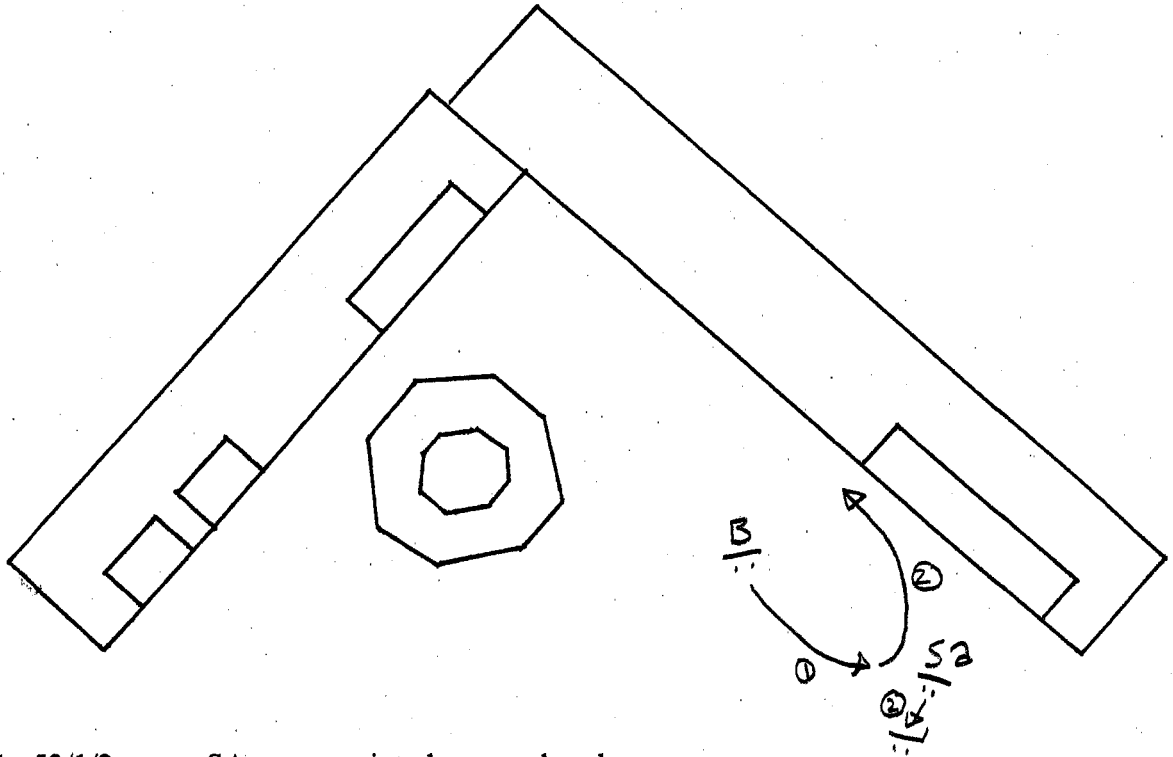
1. 50/2/3 -
- SA = stumbles a bit, but waves G off of supporting her
  - G = grasps both of SA's shoulders; attempts to pull her sister's focus into her eyes



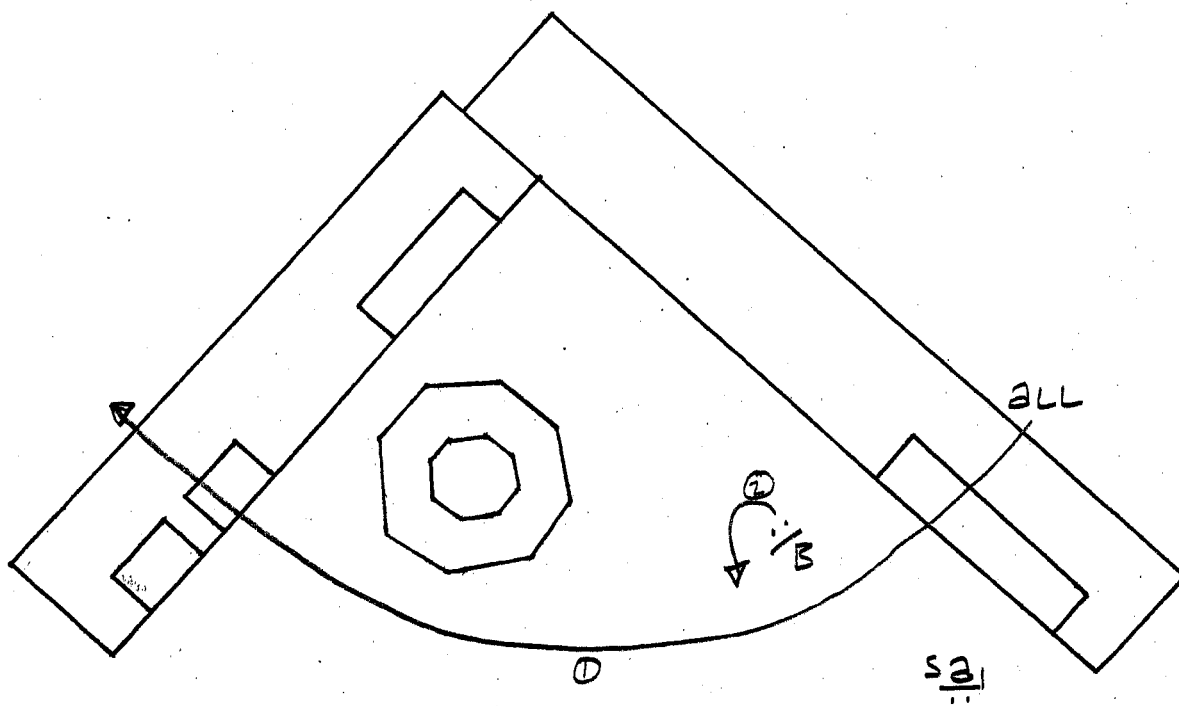
1. 51/3/1 -
  - B = angrily waving everyone off with a single slice through the air
  - I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = deflated on the spot
  
2. 51/3/3 -
  - Z + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = sulk as they throw their disheveled bundles into the cart and make way for the large SL doorway



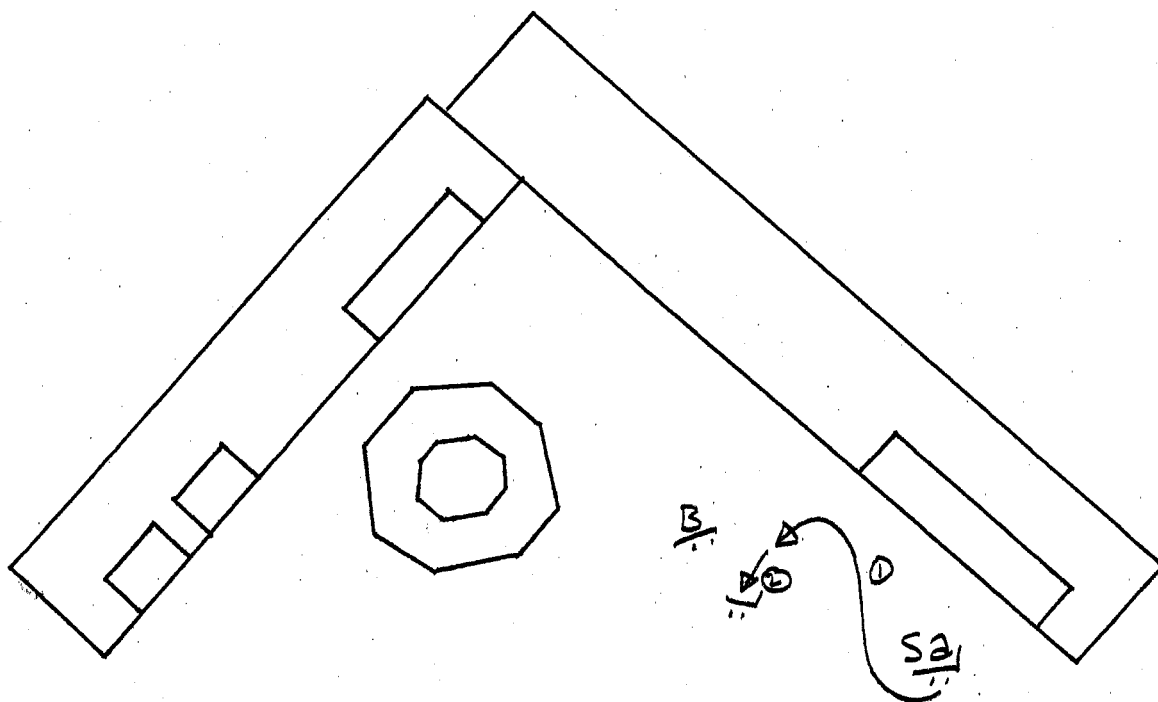
1. 52/1/2 - • B = breathes heavily in and clears her throat
2. 52/1/3 - • Z + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = turn instantly and beg the abbess to let them stay
  - SA = closes her eyes; it is like being stung by a bee
  - G = supports SA's shoulder
3. 52/2/1 - • B = sends everyone away, careful to include G in the gesture
4. 52/2/2 - • G + Z + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = exit probing each other
  - SA = searches among the ground for courage



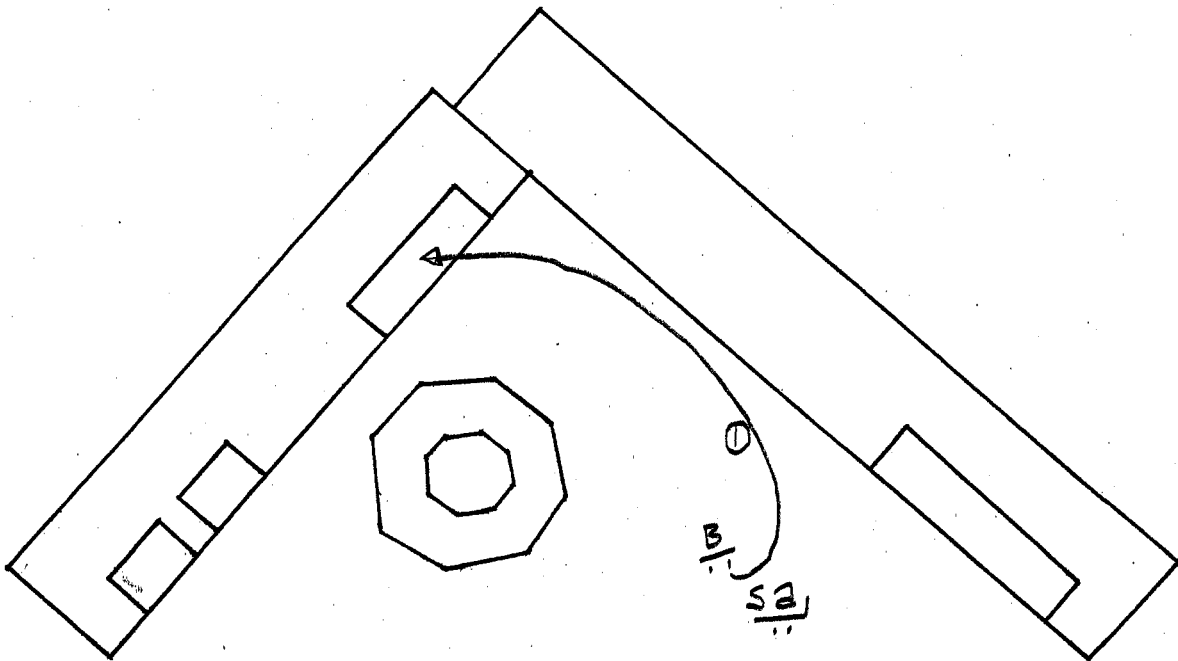
1. 53/1/2 -
  - SA = weeps into her own hands
  - B = rushes in to hold SA, but stops short and instead calms herself; teaching through matter-of-fact tough love
  
2. 53/3/3 -
  - B = instructs SA to kneel and pray; paces in prayer herself
  - SA = prostrates herself on the ground



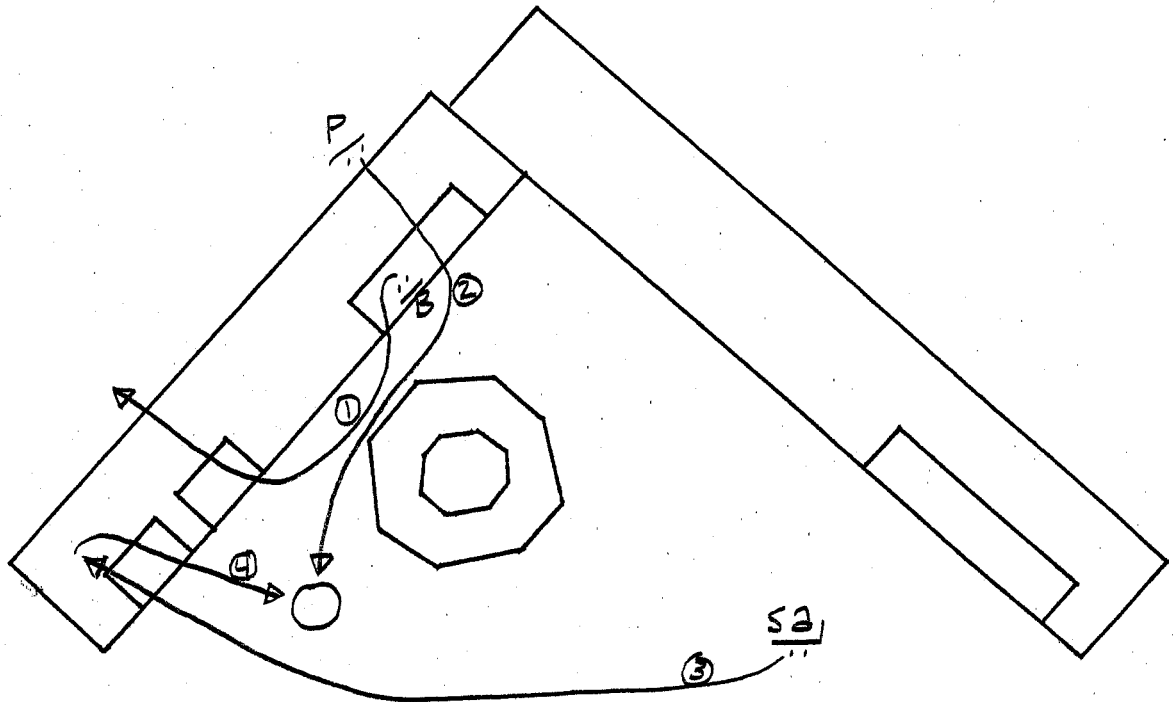
1. 54/1/1 - • G + Z + CeI + CeII + I + M + CoI + CoII + N = a solemn procession into the chapel with prayerbooks in hand
2. 54/3/2 - • SA = regaining the present moment  
• B = plotting each step; weighing her options and tempering her thoughts



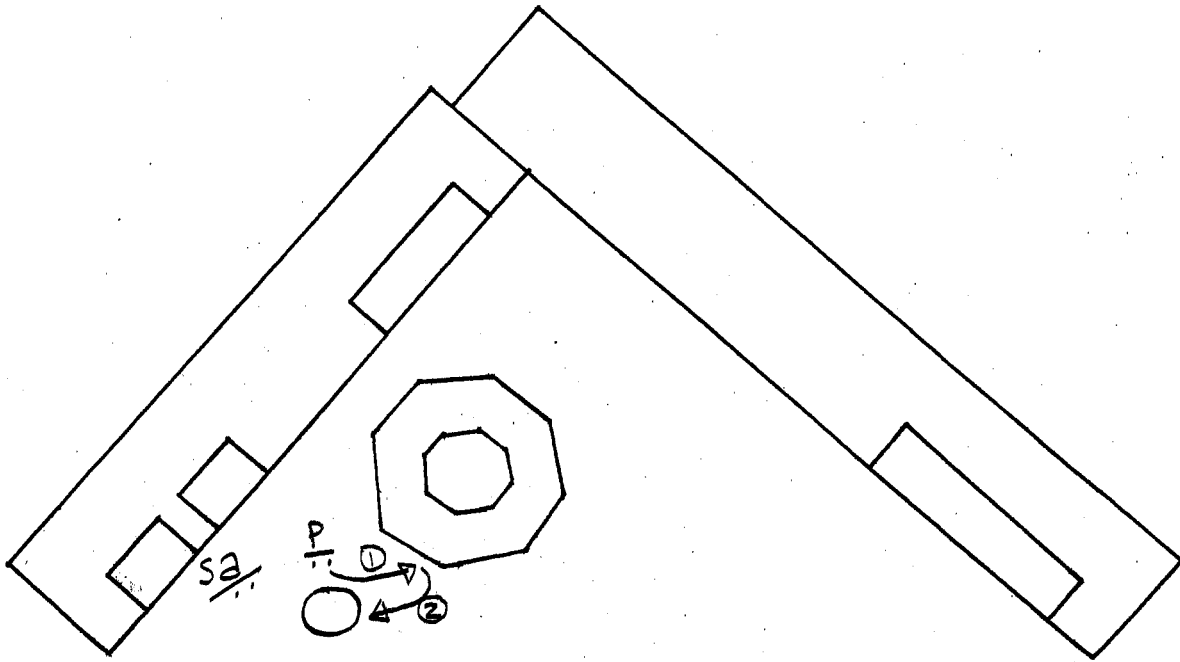
1. 55/1/3 -
  - B = pronouncing this straight out and not looking at SA; this is the messenger laying down the simple facts of a situation
  - SA = searching for sympathy within the abess
2. 55/2/1 -
  - SA = falling to the ground; the wind is knocked out of her



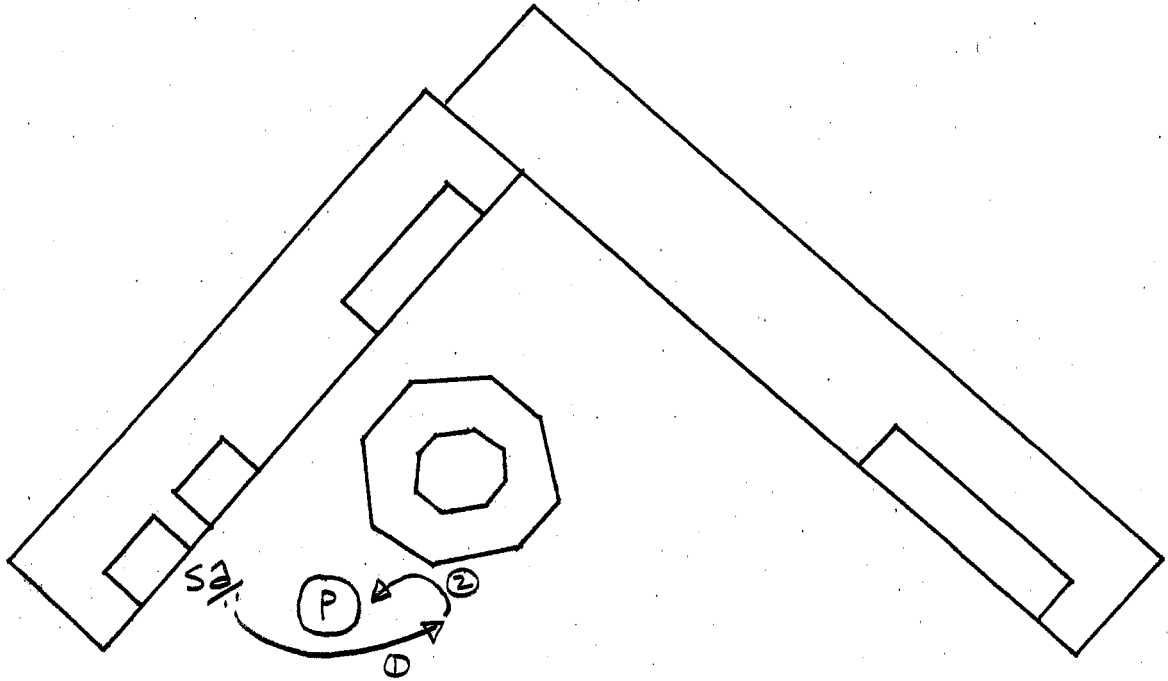
1. 56/3/2 -
- B = striding, almost martially, toward the large doors
  - SA = searches the ground for escape, but remains frozen to the spot



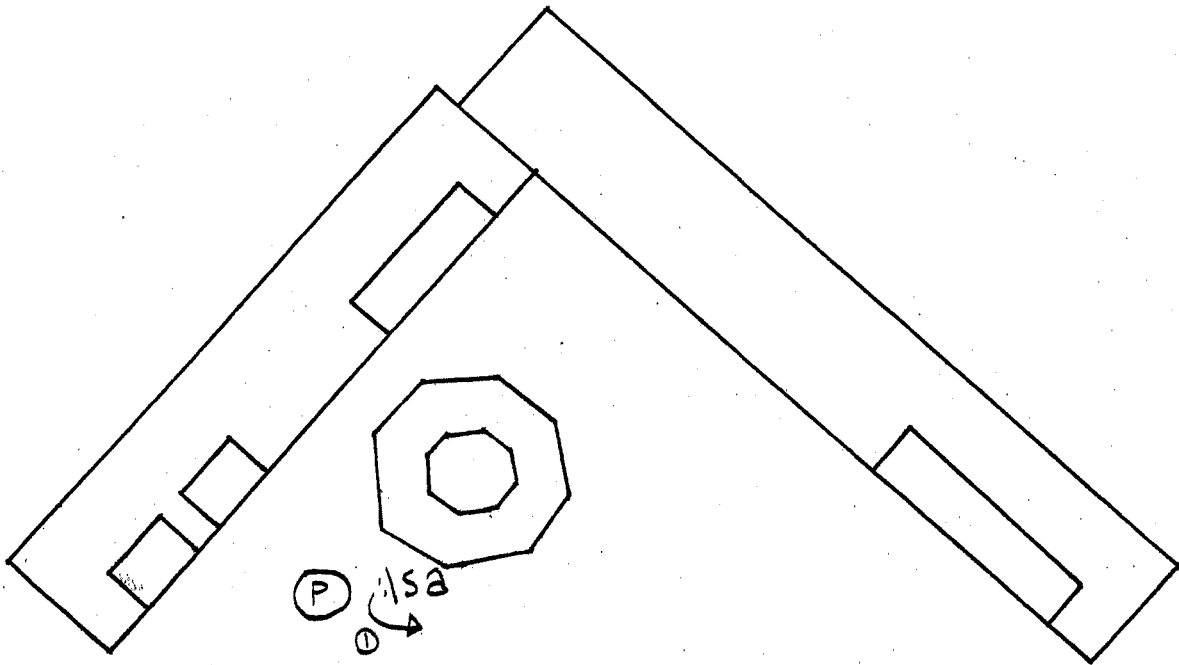
1. 57/1/2 -
  - B = gestures toward SA and hastens into the chapel
  - P = nods gratitude to the abbess
  
2. 57/1/3 -
  - P = bowing to the statue of the Virgin as she passes it and freezing with her arms wide at the edge of the fountain; this is a question in the direction of SA
  
3. 57/2/1 -
  - P = glares at SA through her veil of blackness
  - SA = runs into the chapel hastily placating the princess as she passes
  
4. 57/3/1 -
  - SA = reemerging from the chapel with a stool which she apologetically places in front of her aunt



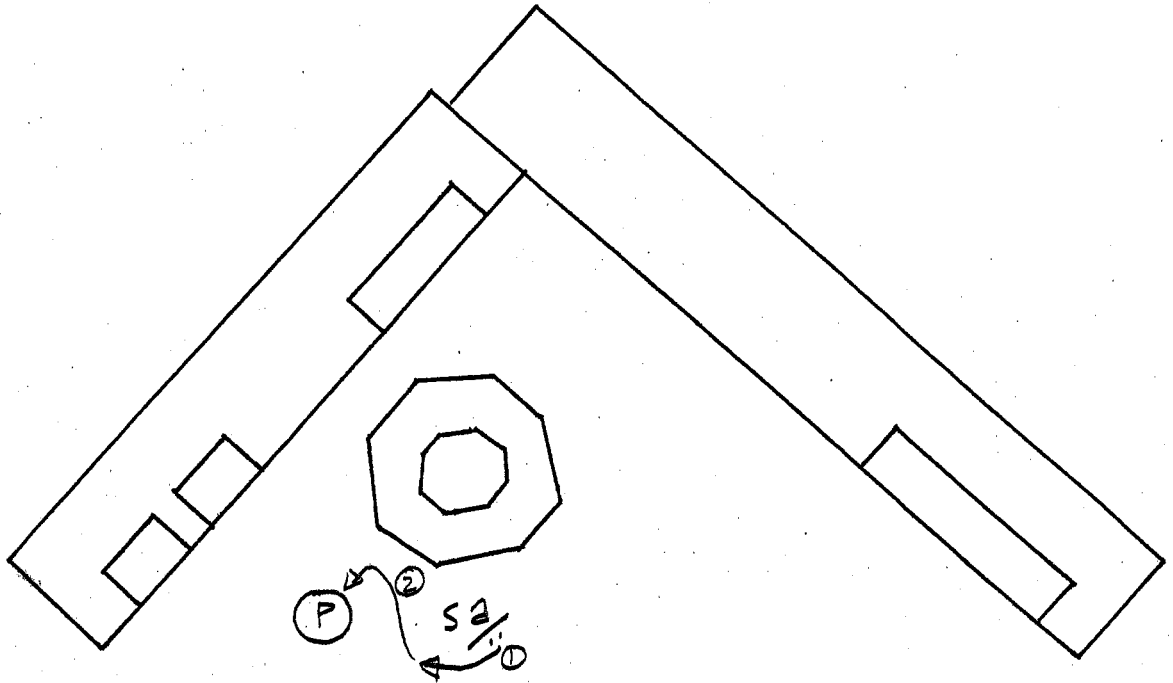
1. 58/1/2 - • P = punishing the fountain's edge by pressing her staff into it
2. 58/3/2 - • P = taking her seat as she makes the sign of the cross in front of her face  
• SA = aiding in sitting her aunt down



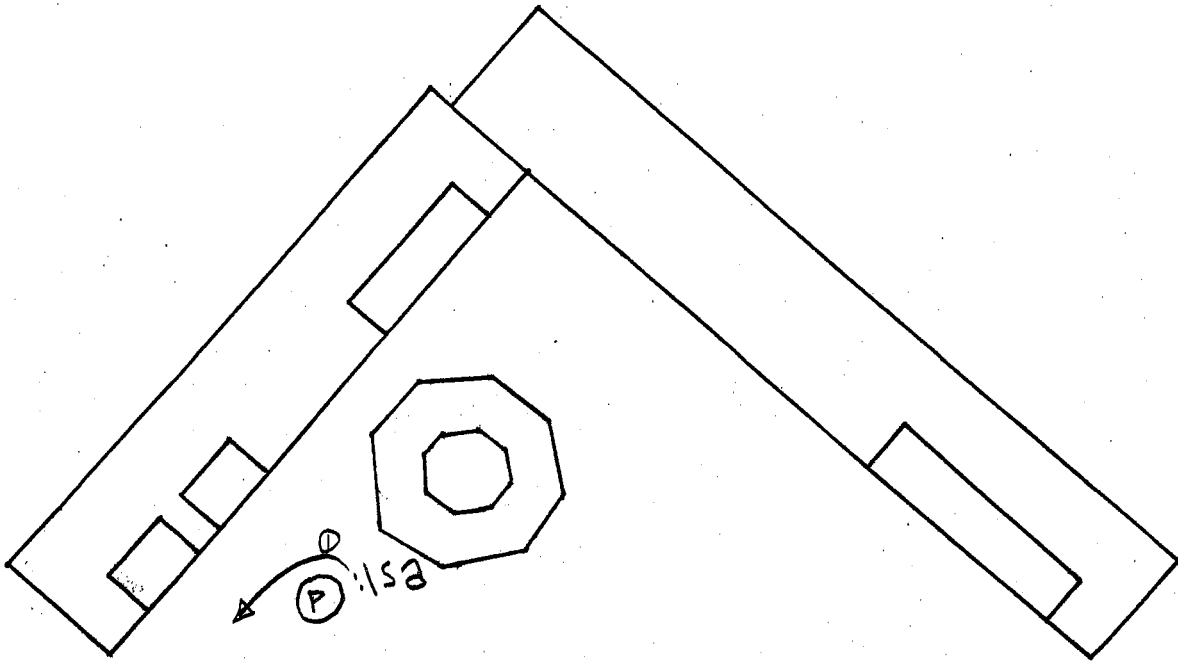
1. 59/1/2 -
  - SA = searches her aunt for signs of warmth as she aids in lifting her veil
  - P = diverts her face from SA's gaze as her veil is lifted
  
2. 59/4/2 -
  - P = whipping a small piece of parchment from her reticule and holding it out toward SA, never looking at her
  - SA = inspecting the parchment, then her aunt



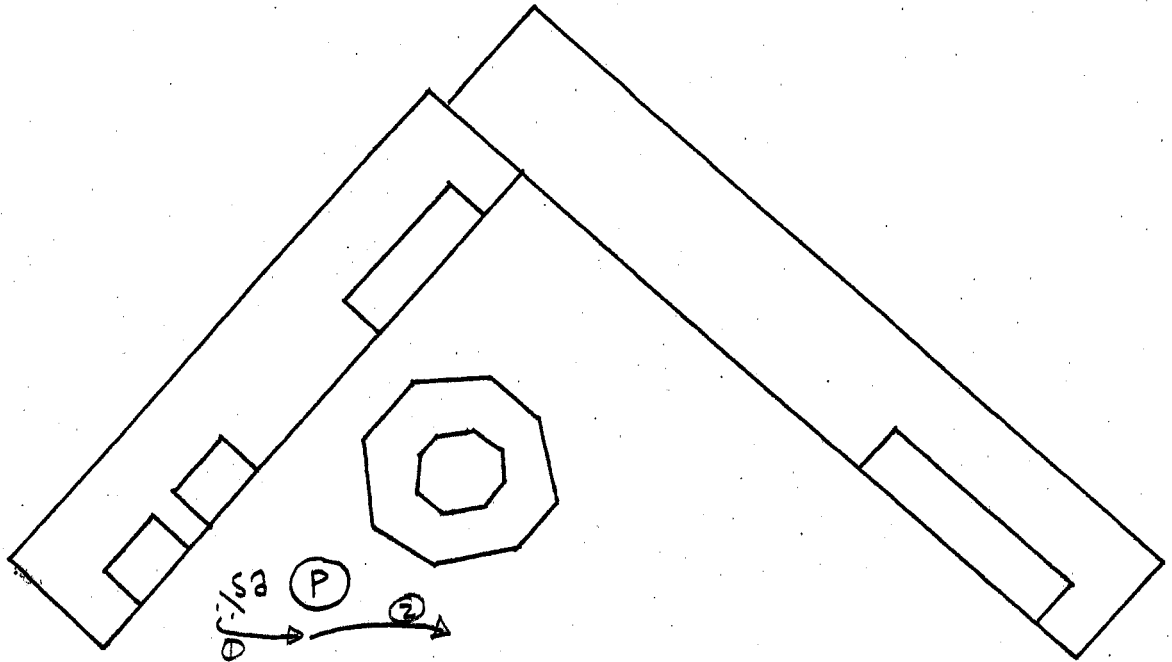
1. 60/1/2 - • SA = escaping her aunt's orders; changing the subject and diverting attention
2. 60/2/2 - • P = searches SA's turned back for a moment, unnoticed
3. 60/3/2 - • P = flinches back away, escaping any potential contact; tightening her reticule strings savagely  
• SA = shot in the back with these words, her eyes close and her head falls forward



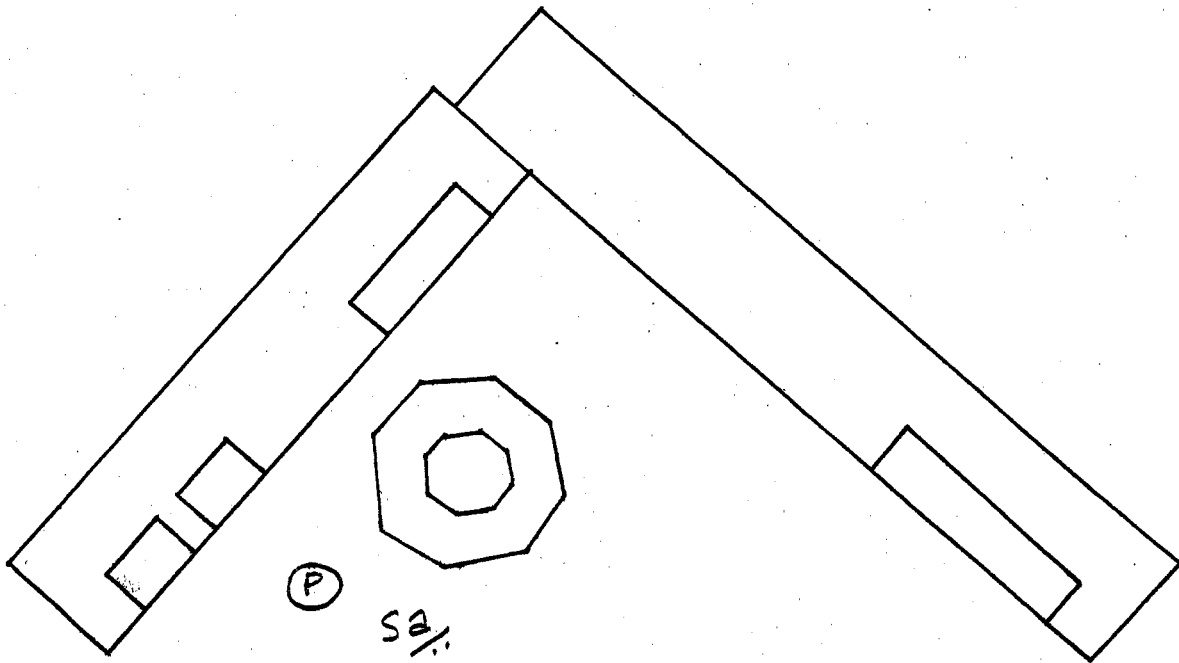
1. 61/3/1 -
  - SA = checking her aunt's demeanor; fearful of deceit
  - P = withholding all emotion
  
2. 61/3/2 -
  - SA = searches for empathy deep within her aunt
  - P = withholding any joy



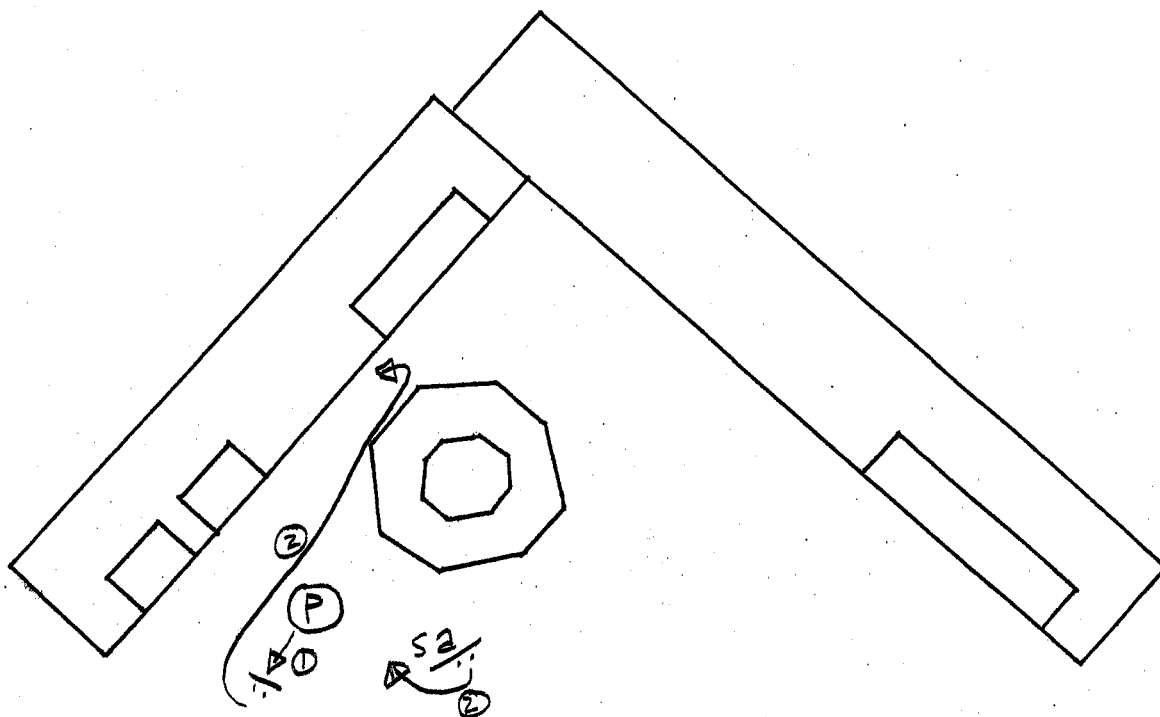
1. 62/1/2 - • SA = shrugs off her aunt's lack of positivity; envisions her sister in the heavens



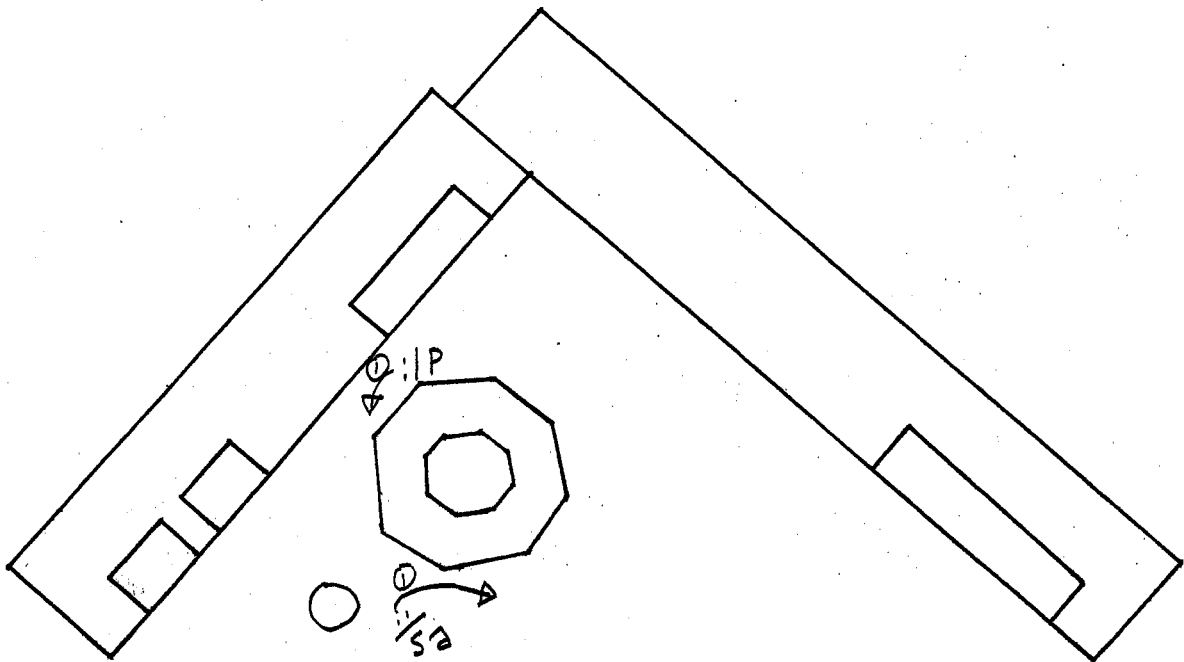
1. 63/1/2 -
  - SA = shakes off her dream-state; interrogates her aunt
  - P = stares deeply into SA's eyes for the first time, challenging her nose to nose
  
2. 63/3/1 -
  - SA = explodes; rebelliously throws the parchment at her aunt's feet
  - P = slices the air with her nose as she whips away from SA



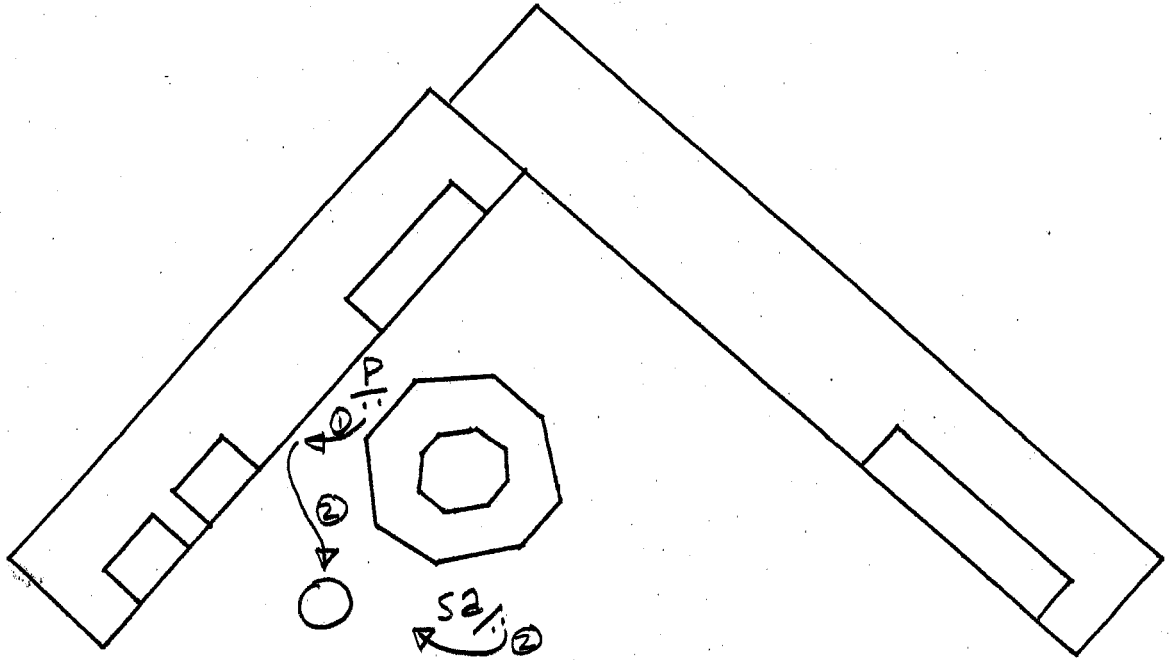
1. 64/2/3 -
- P = ridicules and berates her niece; throws jibes at her back
  - SA = statuesque and steaming



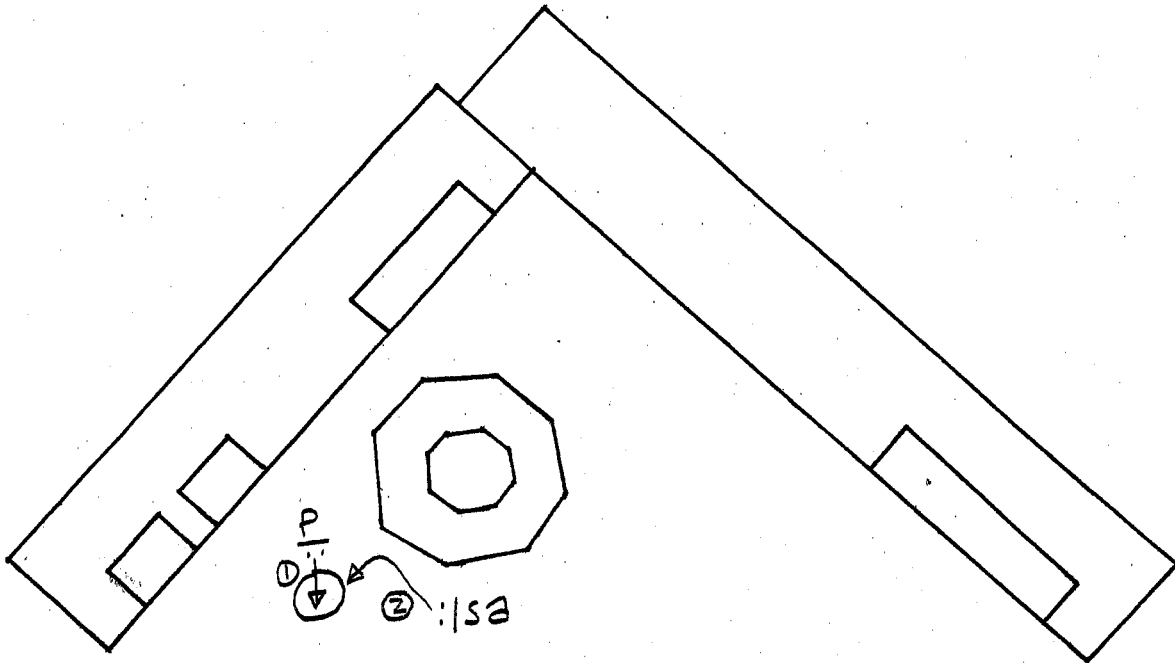
1. 65/2/1 - • P = regains herself by bowing her head momentarily; when it rises again a crackled smile appears
2. 65/4/2 - • P = beats her chest and gives into what seems to be a strong magnetic pull coming from the statue of the Virgin  
• SA = inspects her aunt's grand gesture



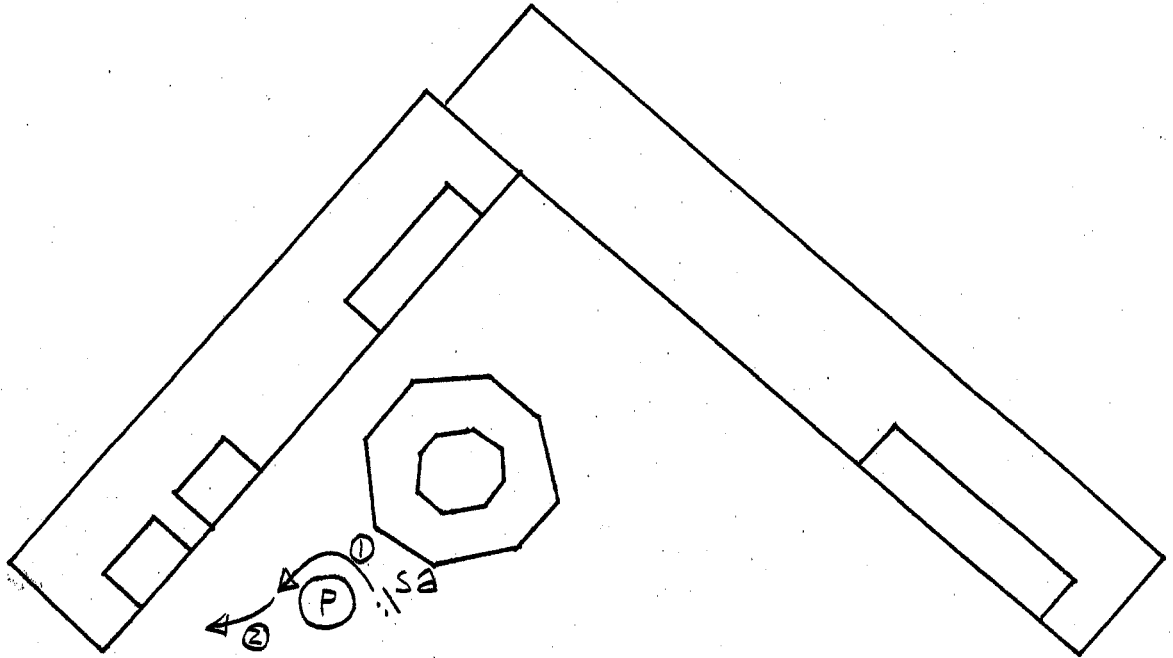
- 1. 66/3/2 -
  - P = cradles her stomach in pain
  - SA = pulls her gaze away from her aunt, disgusted



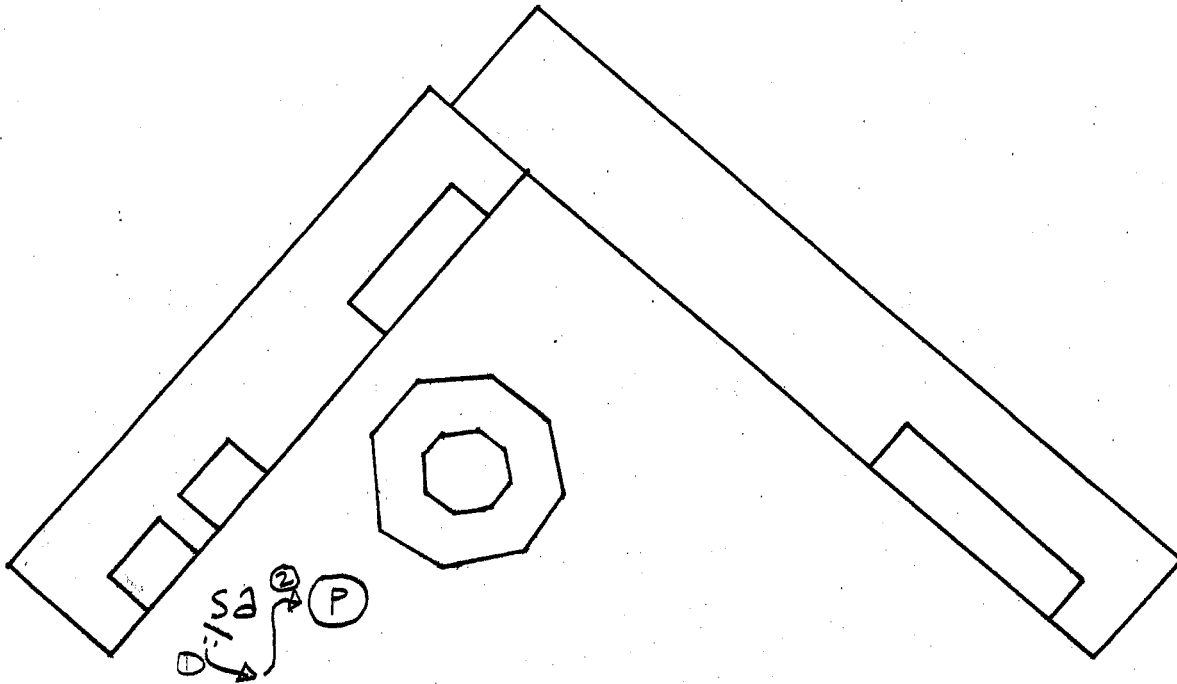
1. 67/1/2 - • P = bows before the Virgin
2. 67/3/1 - • P = turns on her niece and chases her down with menacing fingers extended
  - SA = attempts to deflect her aunt, but winces back a step



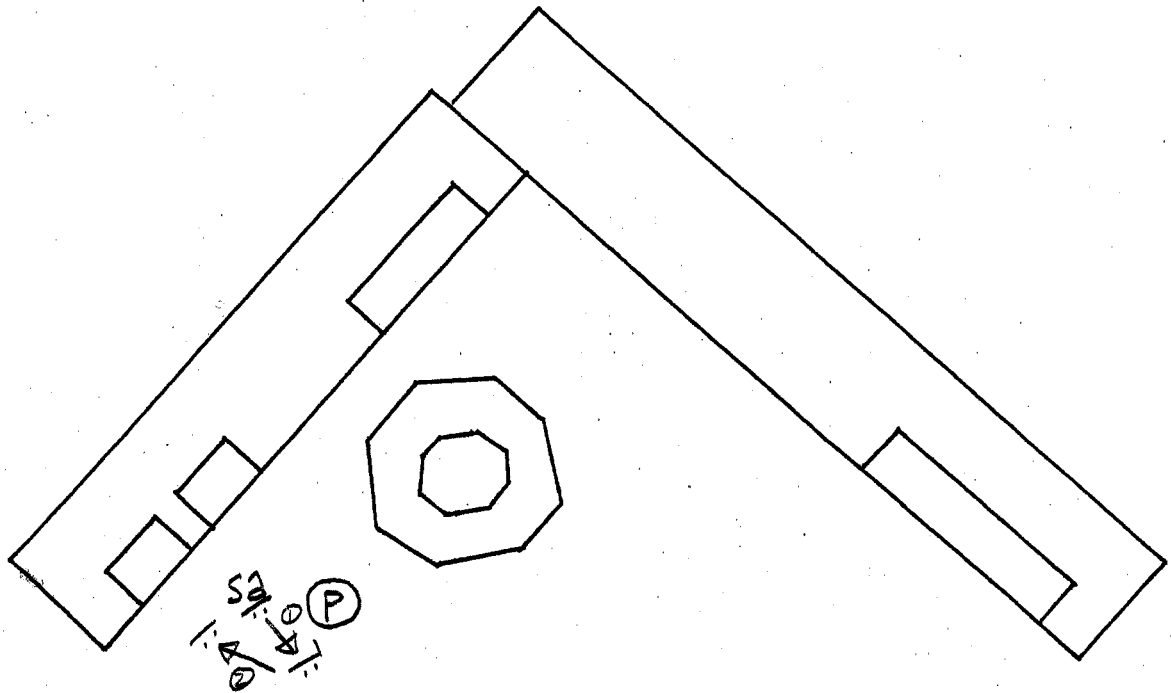
1. 68/2/1 -
  - SA = throws her arms down in conceit
  - P = rests herself on her stool, all but gasping for breath
  
2. 68/4/1 -
  - SA = filling with fire; threatening her aunt
  - P = steeling her face away from SA; biting her lip and raising her chin



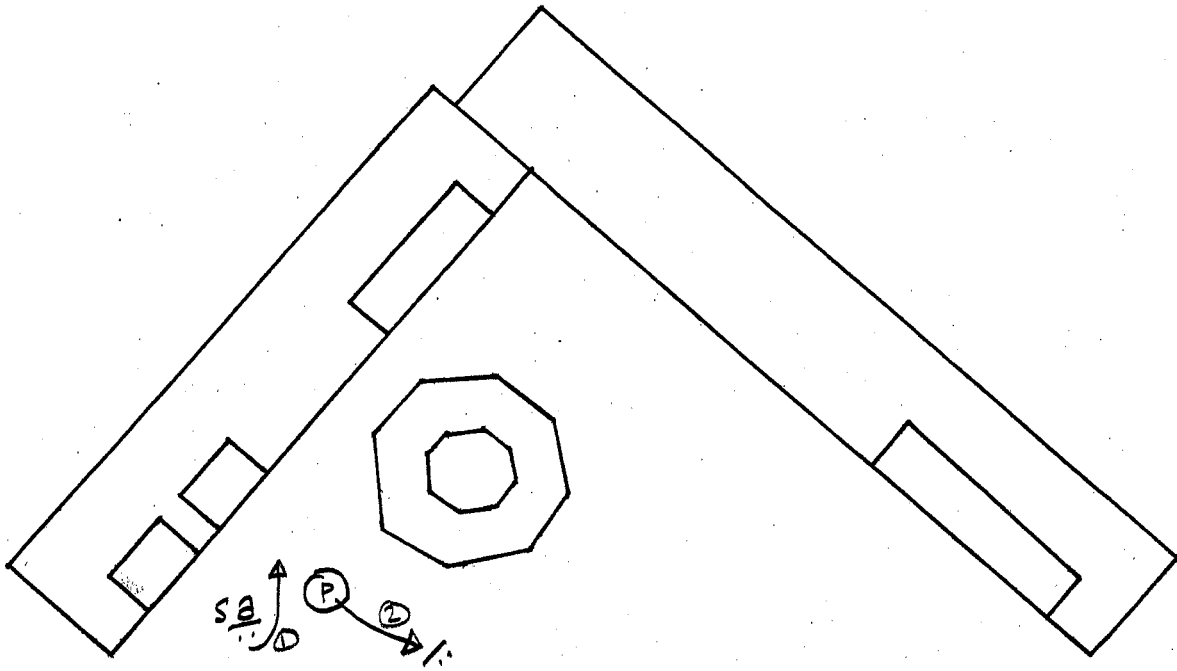
1. 69/3/1 -
  - SA = forcing herself on the princess
  - P = retreating her gaze away in the other direction
  
2. 69/4/2 -
  - SA = painting the picture of her son; reaching for him



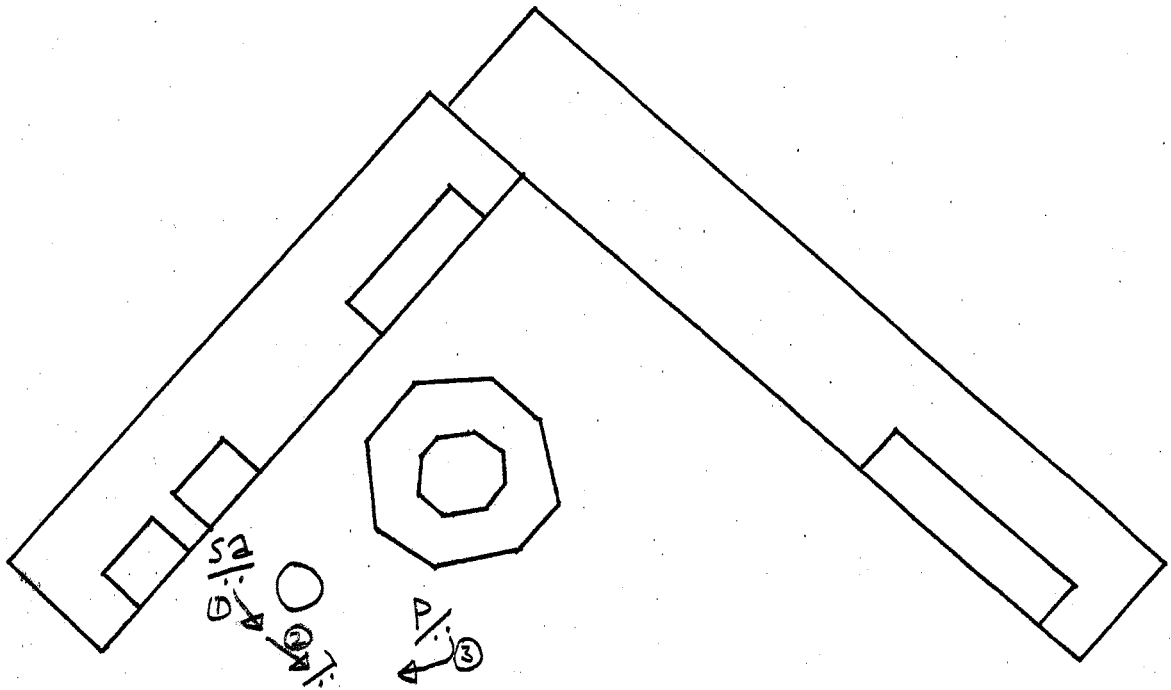
1. 70/3/1 - • SA = begging her aunt
2. 70/4/2 - • SA = pressing in and pleading  
• P = leaning away and pressing her hands deeper into her own torso



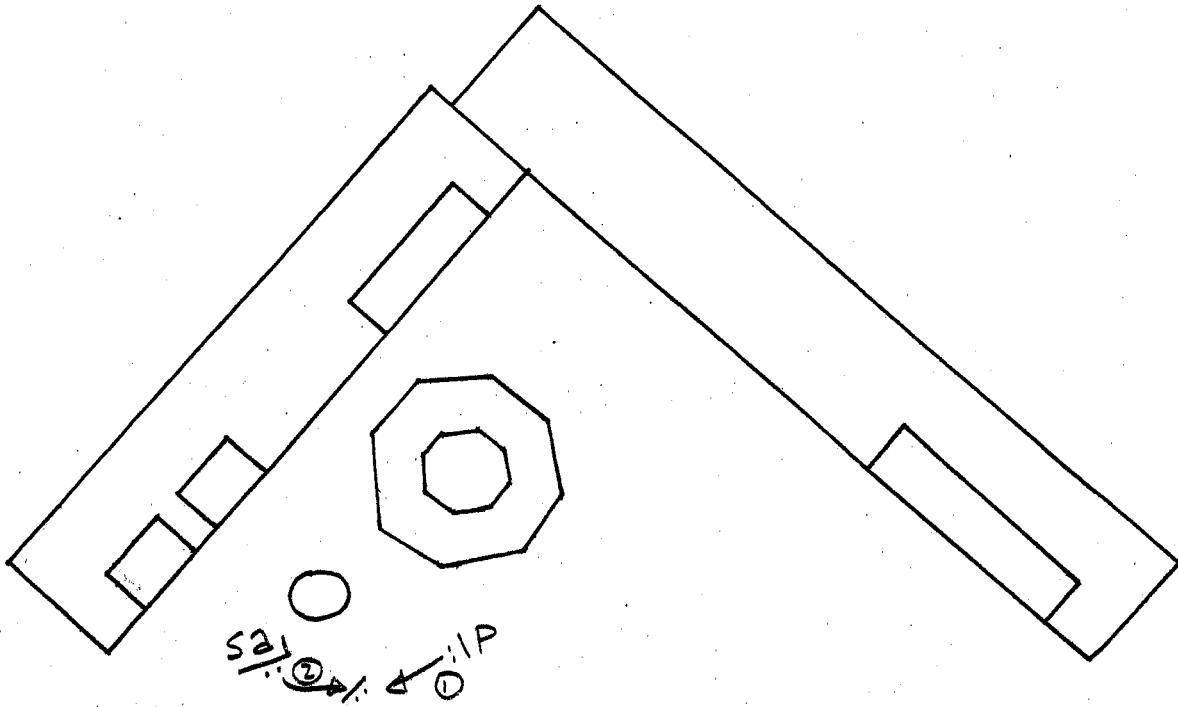
1. 71/2/1 -
  - SA = falling to the ground and into her aunt's lap; exhausted
  - P = recoils back and upward; her gloved hands held high away from the foreign poison in her lap
  
2. 71/4/1 -
  - SA = overtaking her aunt's seated stature and grasping her own head to stop her from strangling the princess
  - P = straightens her garment, allowing her hand to rest back down on her lap



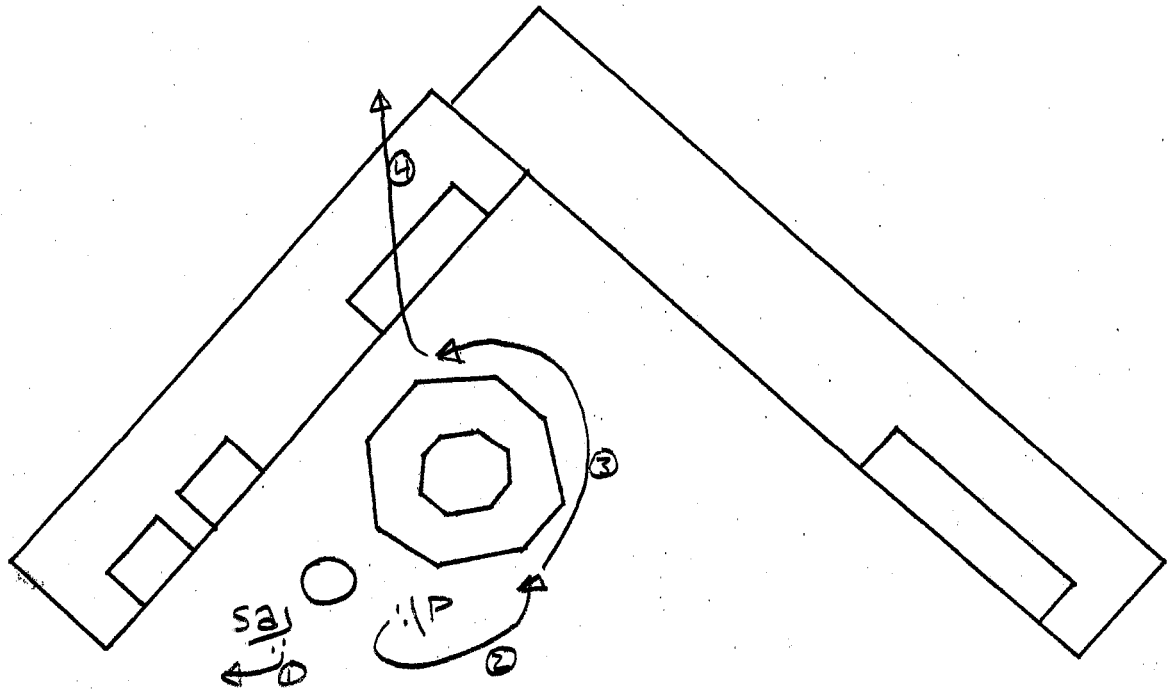
1. 72/2/2 - • SA = hides herself from the princess
2. 72/2/4 - • P = tightening her gloves and reticule, preparing to leave



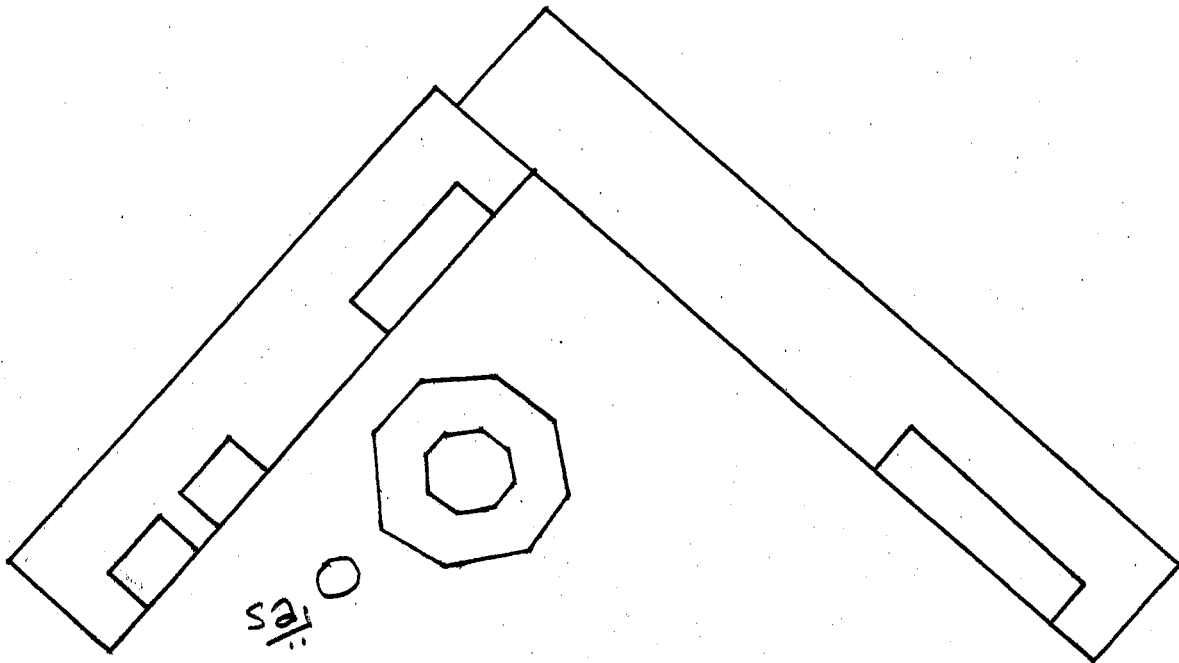
1. 73/1/3 -
  - P = stalking her aunt
  - SA = holds still, preparing for the explosion
  
2. 73/2/3 -
  - P = not a single movement
  - SA = an unapologetic collapse, as if all of her bones had dissolved
  
3. 73/3/2 -
  - P = peers down her nose at her dejected niece as she strides casually over to her



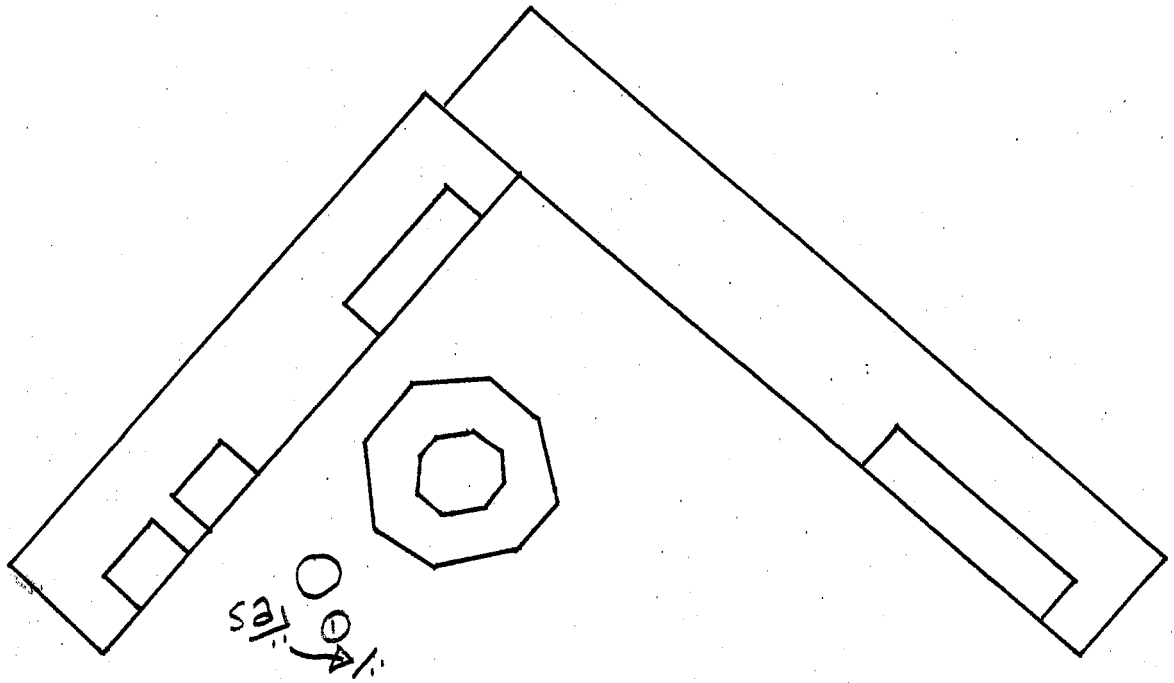
1. 74/2/1 - • P = finds a writing instrument in her reticule and shoves it toward SA
  
2. 74/3/3 - • SA = meets her aunt's eyes before she takes the pen and signs that  
parchment on the ground  
• P = wrings her hands impatiently



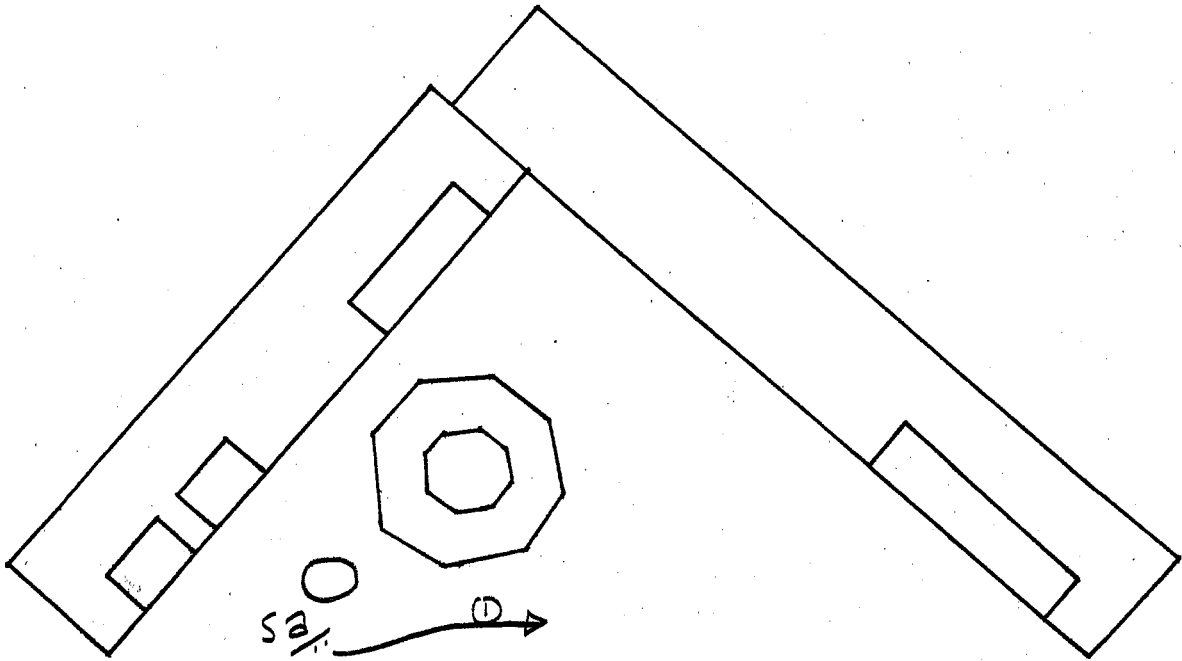
1. 75/1/3 -
  - SA = turns the parchment and pen over to her aunt before she doubles over in pain
  - P = inspects the parchment and ensures that all is in order
  
2. 75/2/2 -
  - P = collecting her walking staff
  
3. 75/3/3 -
  - P = widely promenading to the statue of the Virgin and bowing deeply
  - SA = climbing her hands up the stool; inclines herself slightly in her aunt's direction
  
4. 75/4/2 -
  - P = a brief sniff in SA's direction, but no lingering; she hastens out the large doors



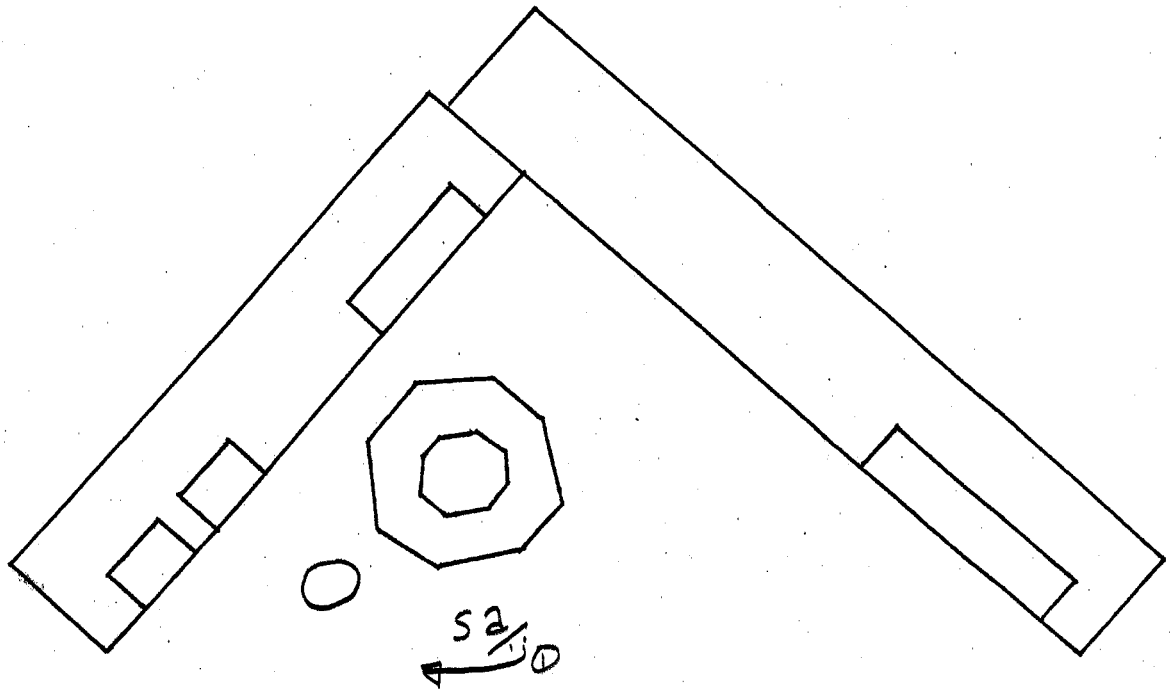
0. 76 -
- SA = cradling her ribs with one hand and massaging a shoulder with the other; effectively holding herself, rocking slightly; soon she sees her son in her lap



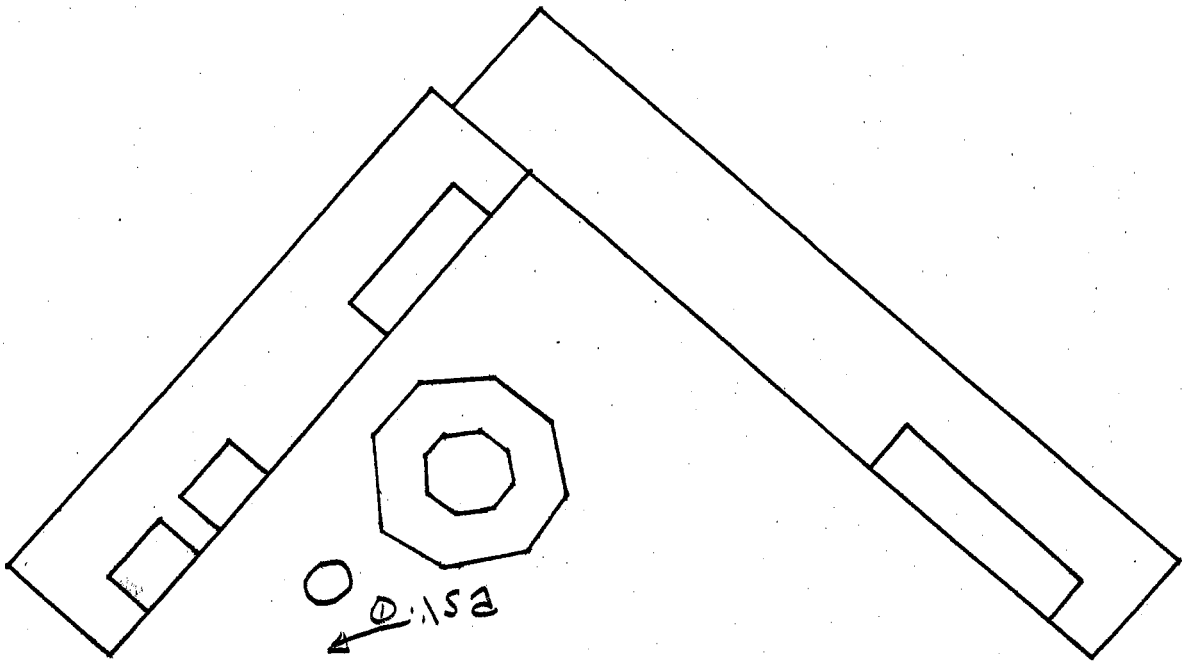
- 1. 77/3/1 - • SA = escaping her previous position; she has frightened herself and is begging instead of praying



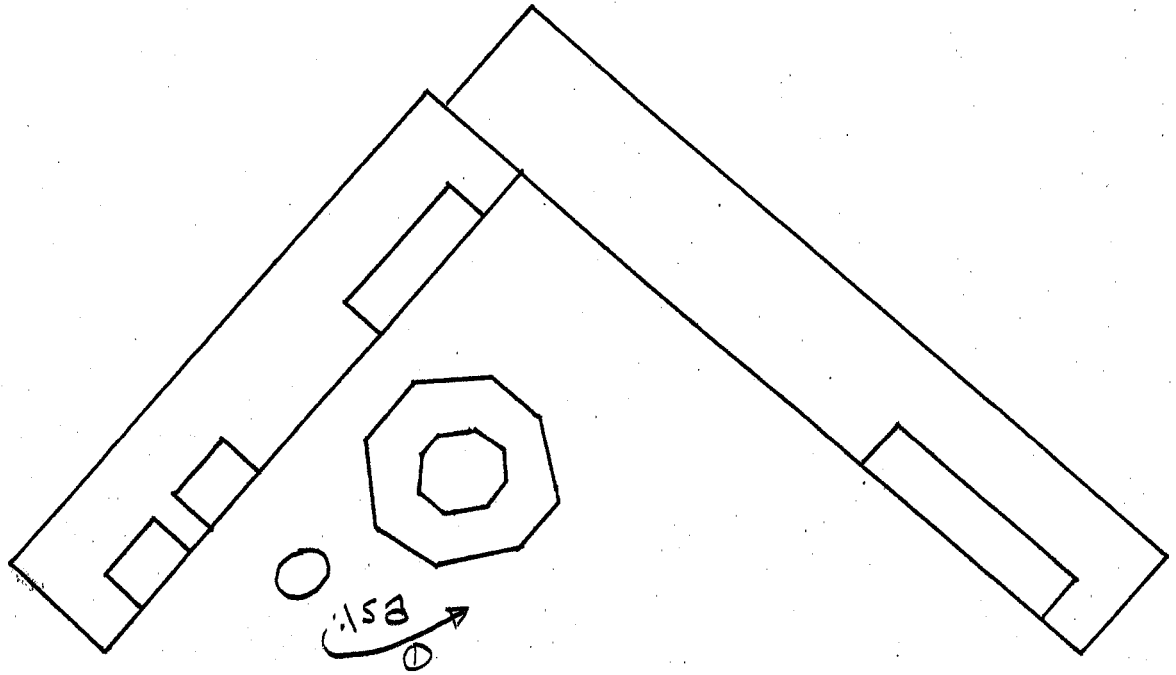
1. 78/1/2 - • SA = she sees him high in the heavens; he is playing peacefully, actively;  
she beams



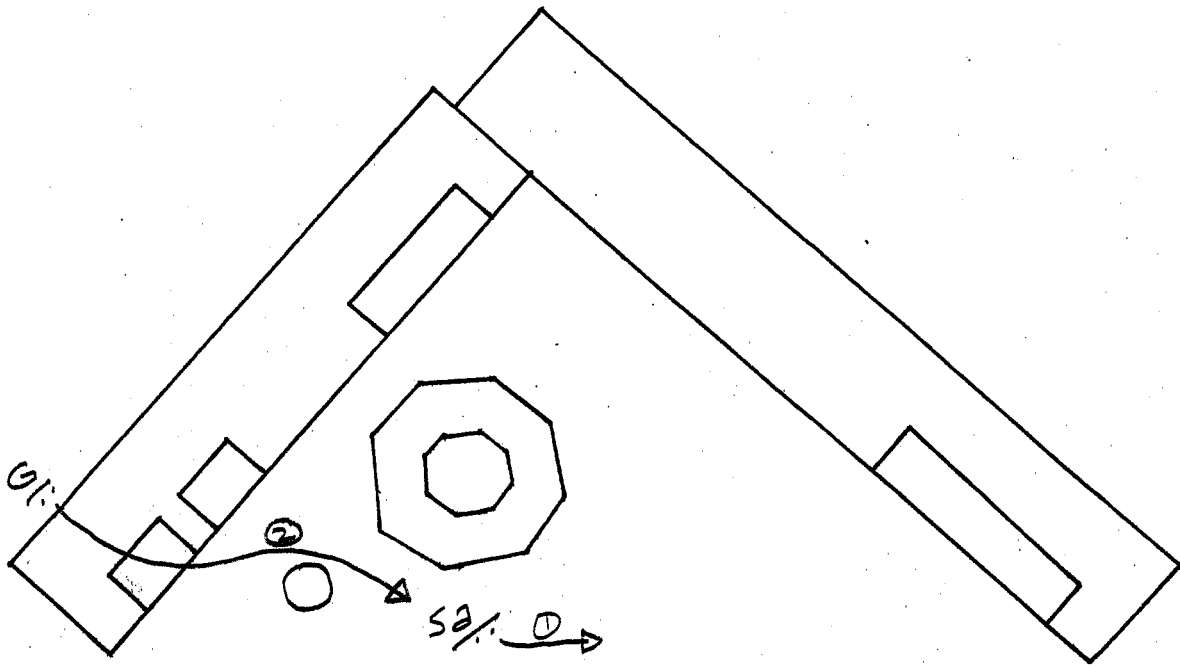
1. 79/1/2 - • SA = he has come down to earth; she touches her own cheeks and neck as she feels him caressing and kissing her; she imagines his arms closing tightly around her



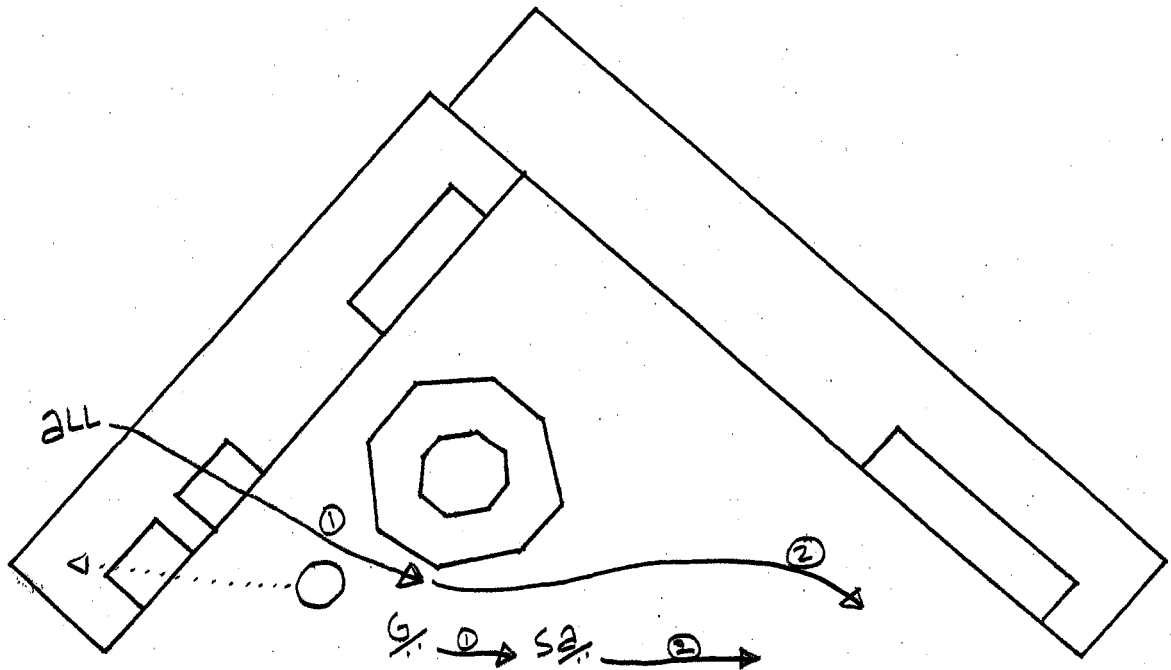
1. 80/2/1 - • SA = abandoning all of that joy and giving herself over to what she now sees as sure fate; her hands drop to her sides; it is resignation, but willingly so



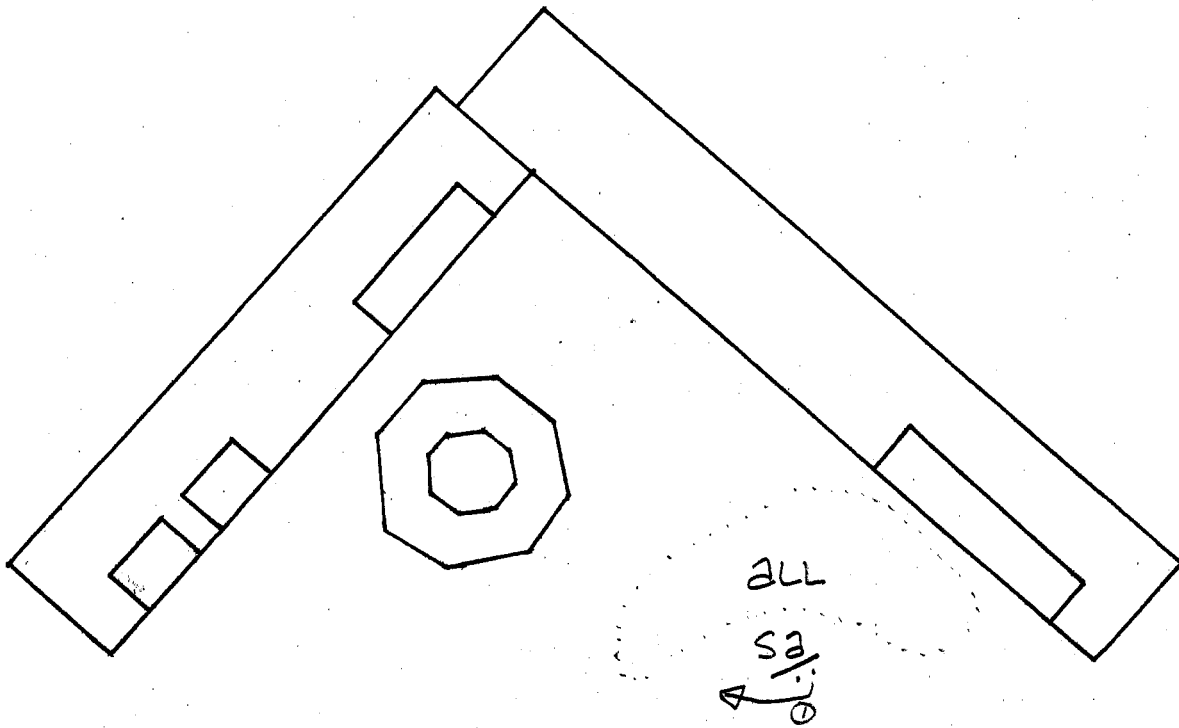
1. 81/3/1 - • SA = reaching for her son; she travels to him, toward a singular and distant point at the end of a tunnel



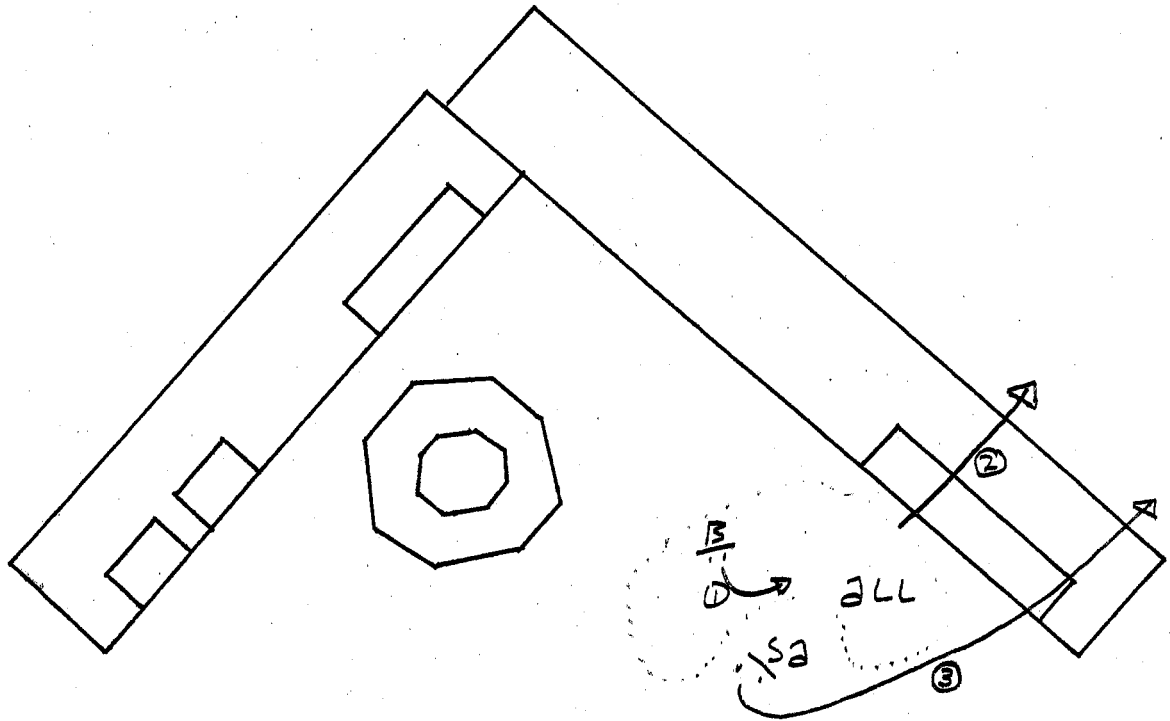
1. 82/2/2 - • SA = arms fully extended, eyes and smile beaming; she presses on
2. 82/3/2 - • G = searching to find whatever is holding SA's attention, she cautiously approaches



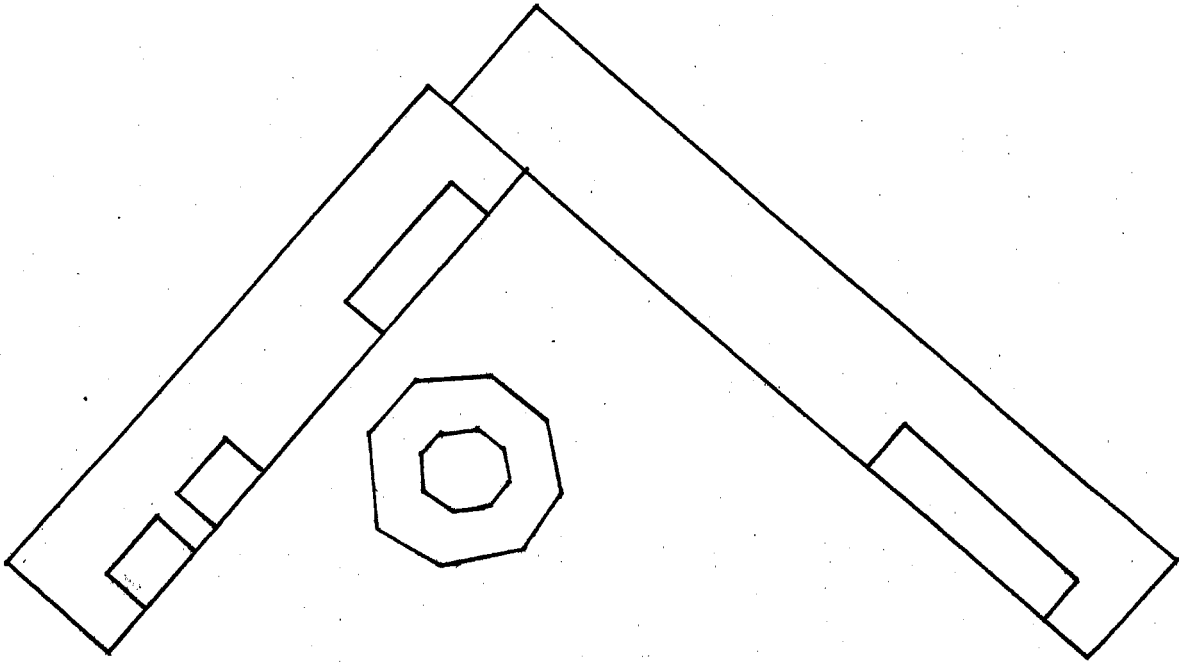
1. 83/1/1 -
  - Z + B + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = exiting the chapel grasping onto one another and peering over one another for a good view of SA
  - G = daring to place her hands on SA's shoulders is one step too far; her hands hover over her friend for a moment before she retreats
  
2. 83/2/2 -
  - SA = pressing on through thick mud, the chains that she is bearing; still reaching
  - G + Z + B + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = search each other for the courageous one who will approach SA first



1. 84/2/3 -
- SA = waving her sisters' calls of compassion off, smiling all the while
  - G + Z + B + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = reaching for her,  
inviting her into their arms

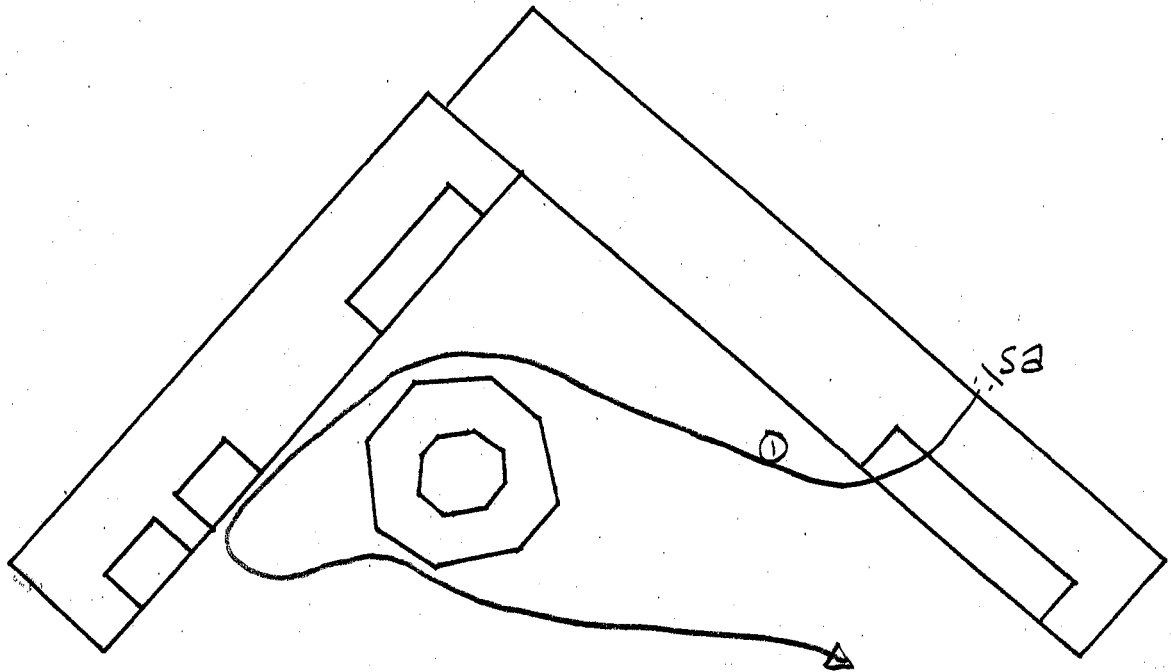


1. 85/1/1 - • B = sending everyone to their chambers, deflecting the unwanted advances for SA
2. 85/1/3 - • G + Z + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = drinking in one more look at SA before turning and going with bowed heads and prayerfully postured hands  
• B = tapping SA's shoulder and stroking the top of her head once before exiting
3. 85/2/1 - • SA = dawning ideas flood her head; her eyes widen and she turns on a dime and hastily exits

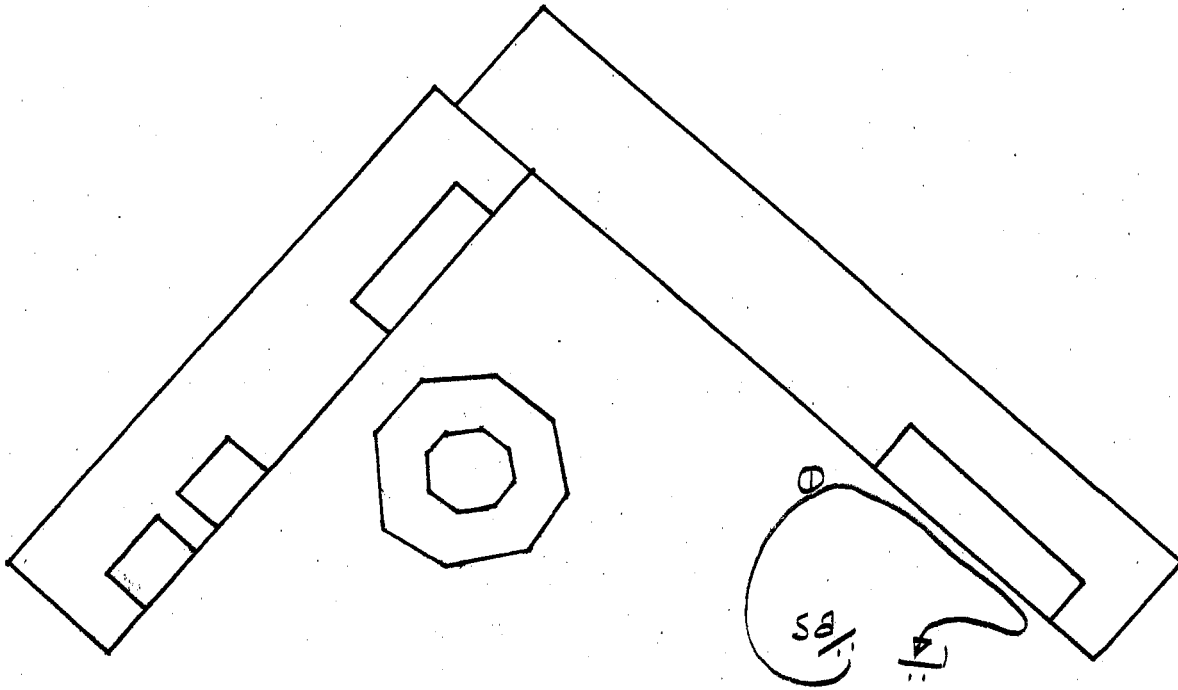


0. 86 -

• SA + B + G + Z + I + CeI + CeII + M + CoI + CoII + N = remain  
offstage

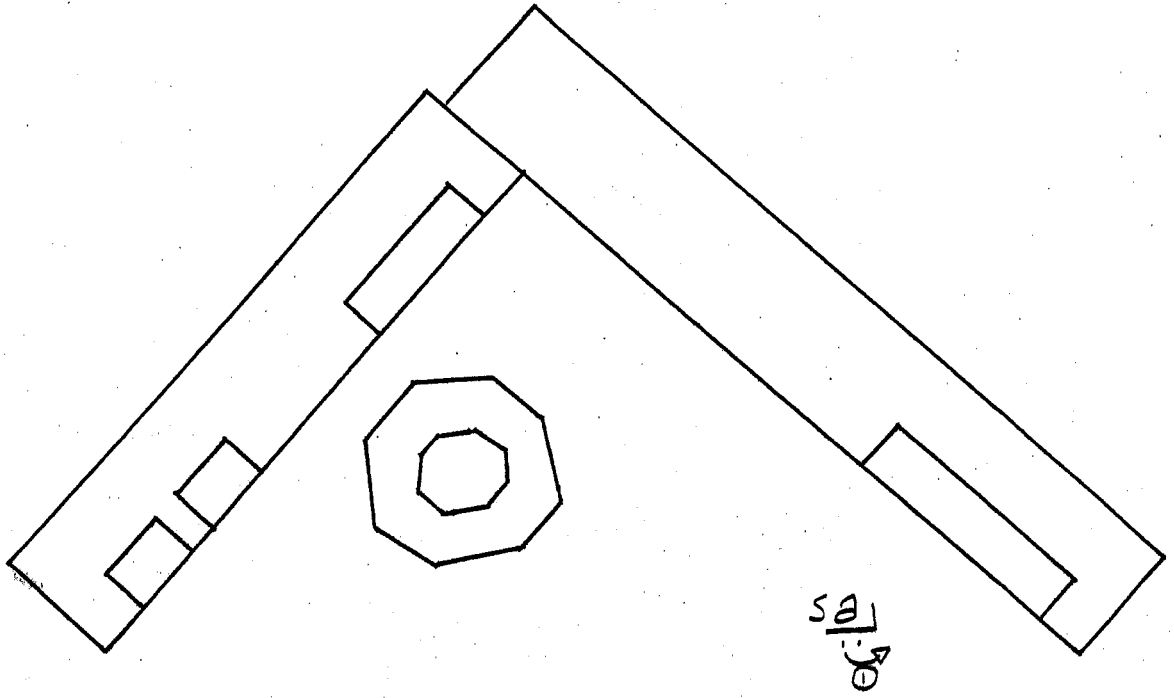


- 1. 87/3/2 - • SA = carrying a mortar and pestle and a lamp, she gathers the potted plants by the chapel door and the fountain



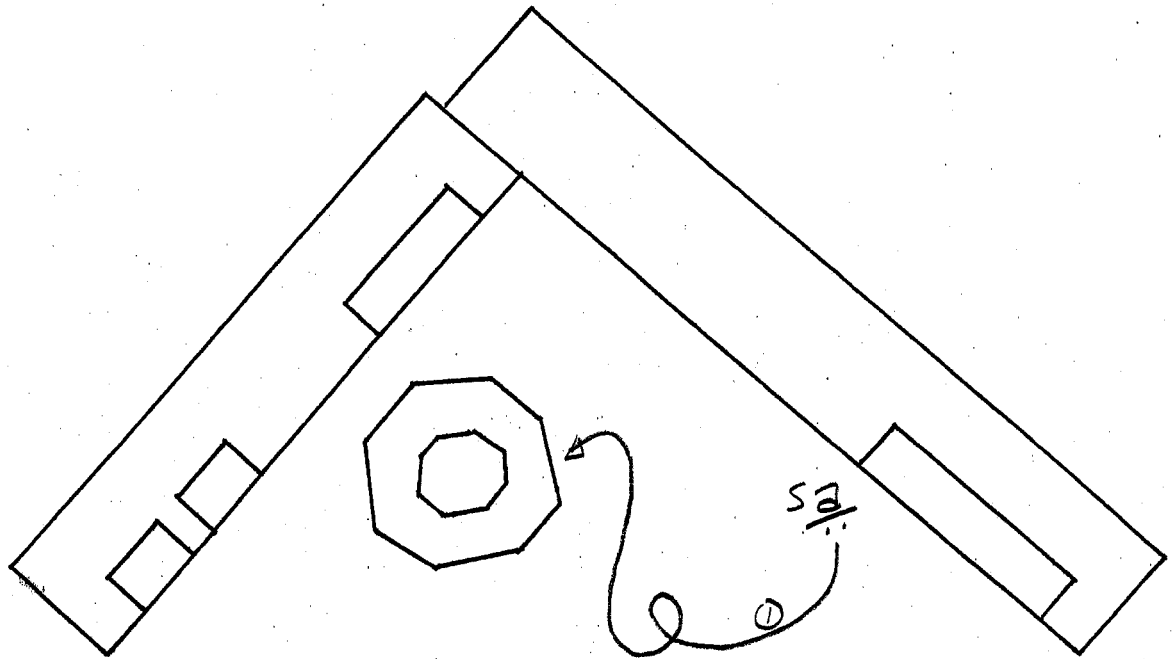
1. 88/1/2 - • SA = the plants that flank the large SL opening are also gathered in and she kneels amongst her several plants, mortar and pestle, and lamp
2. 88/3/2 - • SA = begins grinding various cutting

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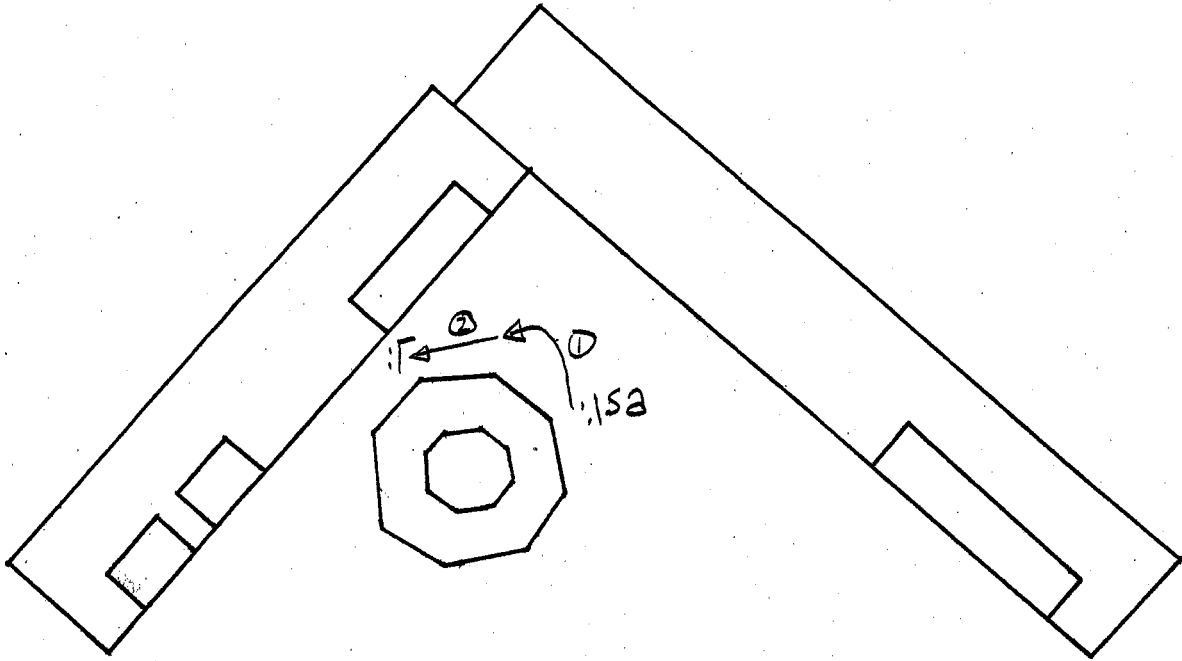


1. 89/2/3 - • SA = petting and praising the assembled greenery

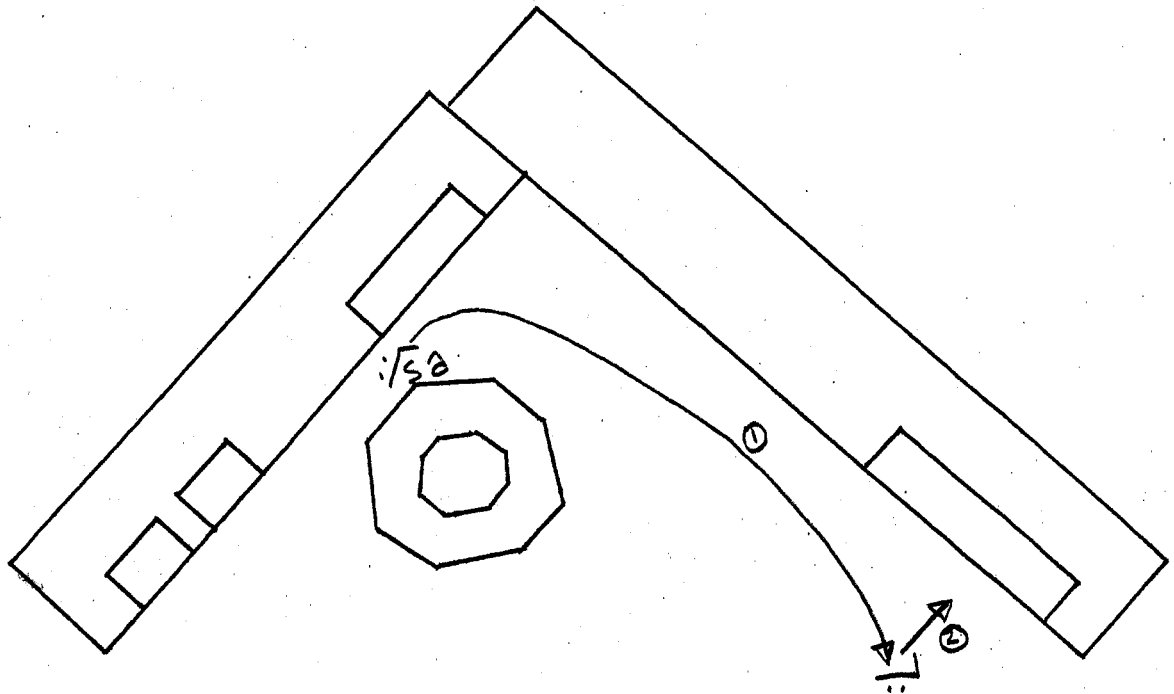




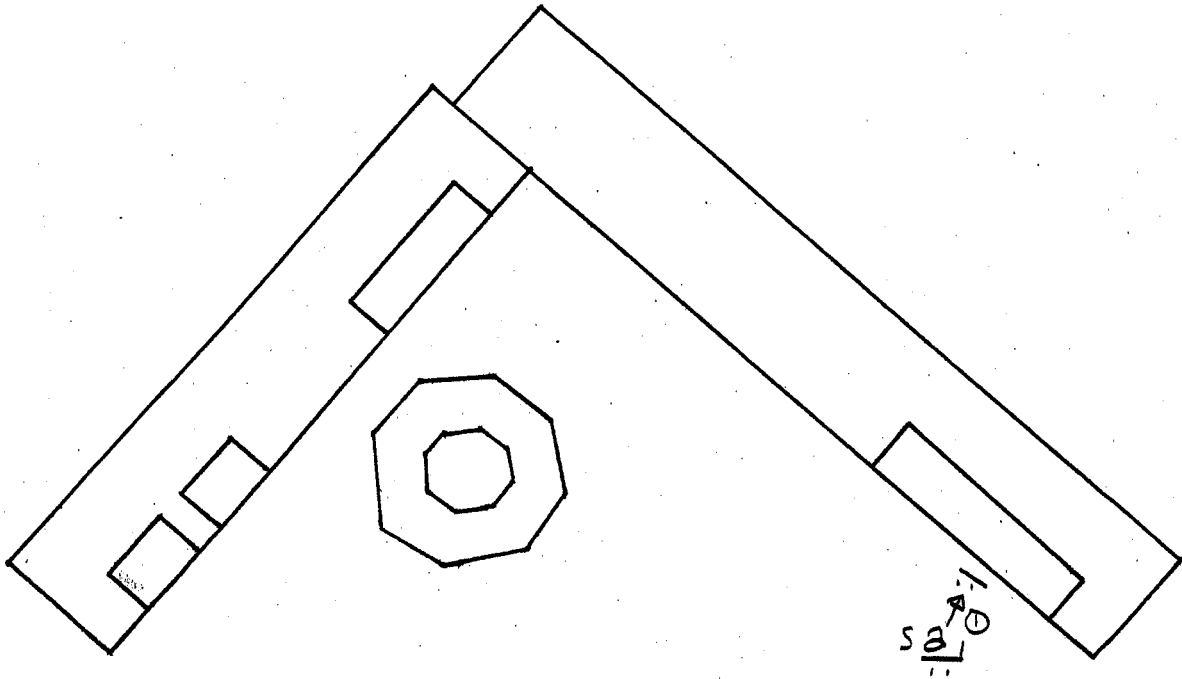
1. 91/2/2 - • SA = dances, skips, and twirls along toward the US side of the fountain



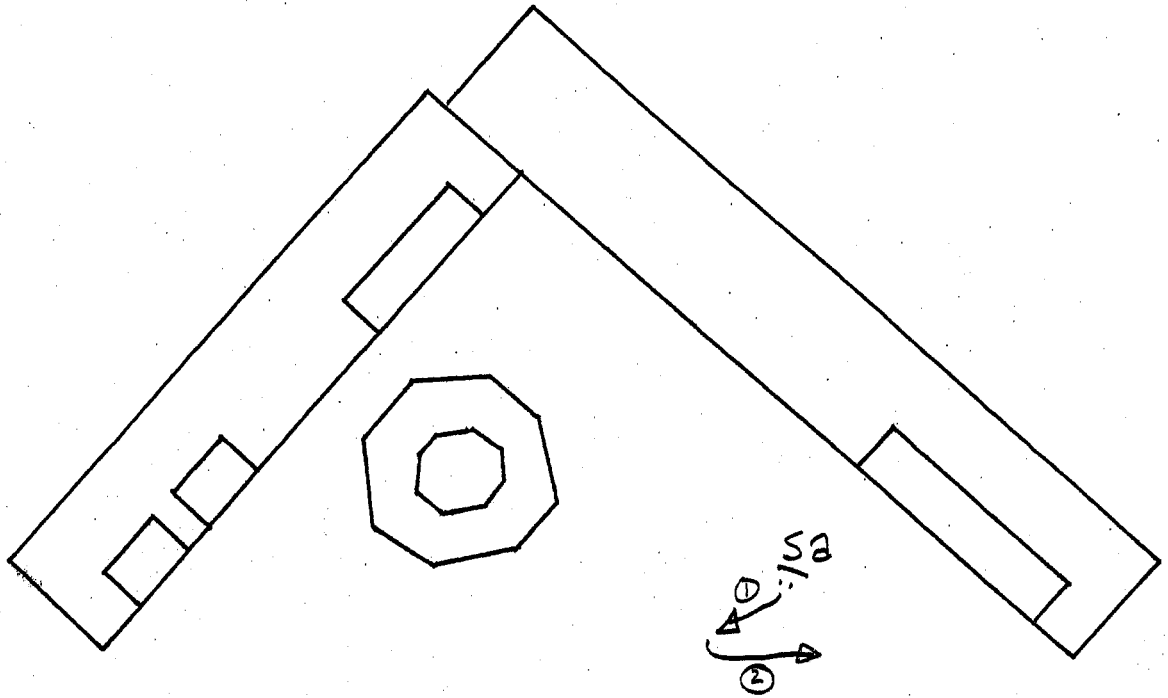
1. 92/1/2 - • SA = turns herself over to the statue of the Virgin with open-armed subjection, but release as well
2. 92/4/1 - • SA = fully prostrates herself at the Virgin's feet



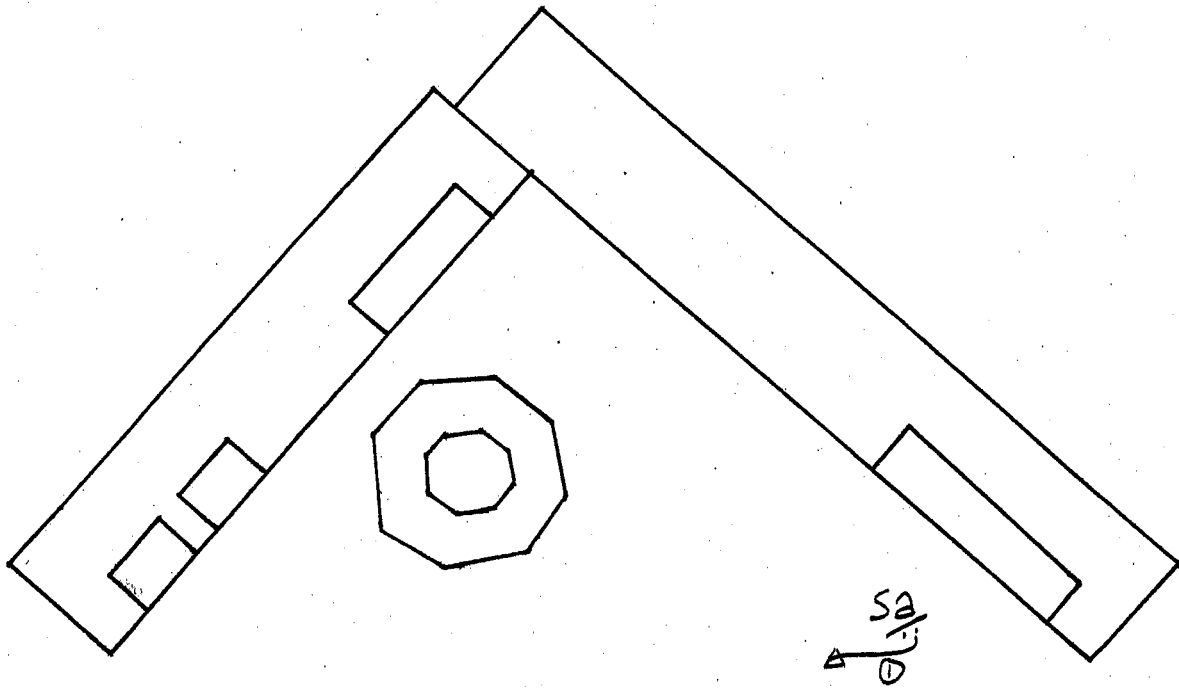
1. 93/1/4 - • SA = roused up from her placation by the very fact that her hands fall upon the flowers that she placed by the Virgin; she runs to her other plants, suddenly struck with an idea; the new flowers are mixed with the others and they are all imbibed without hesitation
2. 93/4/2 - • SA = bliss shocked away by horror; anything is done to repel the mortar and pestle, the objects of self-destruction



1. 94/1/3 - • SA = attempting to wrench her poison out, doubled over; looking for escape in every corner

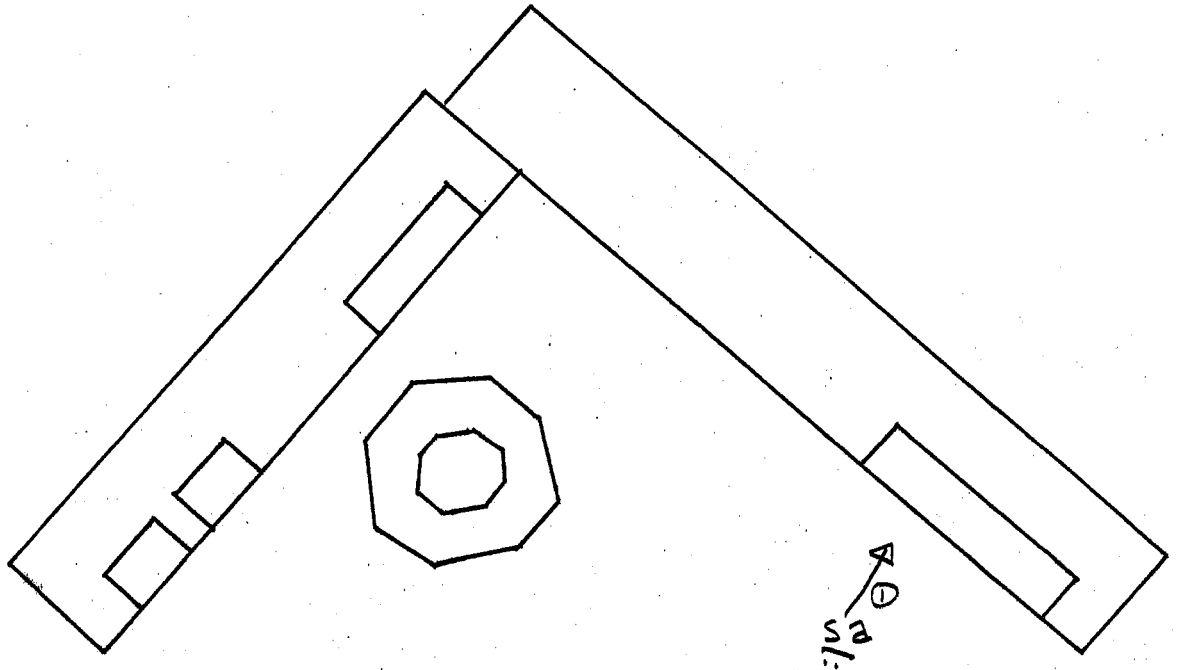


1. 95/1/3 - • SA = covering her ears with wide-eyed fear; escaping from the SL doorway; “is that where these voices in my head are coming from?”
2. 95/2/3 - • SA = in her fear she is pressed forward into her plants and looks horribly down upon them, holding a shielding hand to them

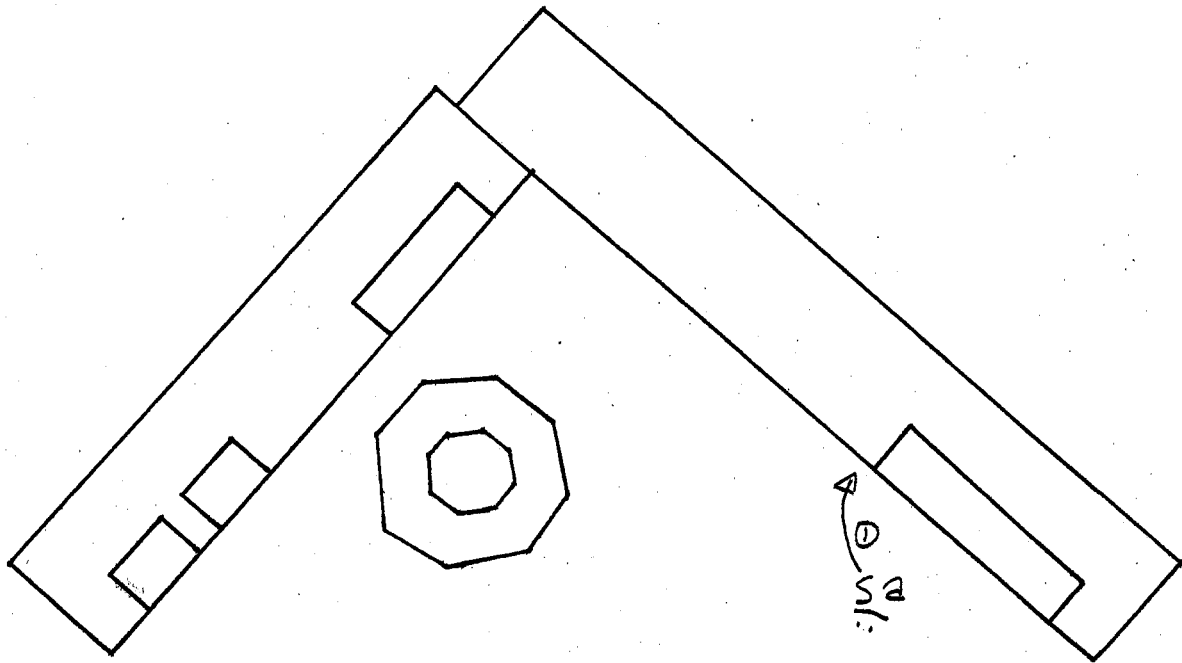


1. 96/1/4 - • SA = begging with arms wide and chin high; she is begging, but also prostrating and offering herself to the heavens

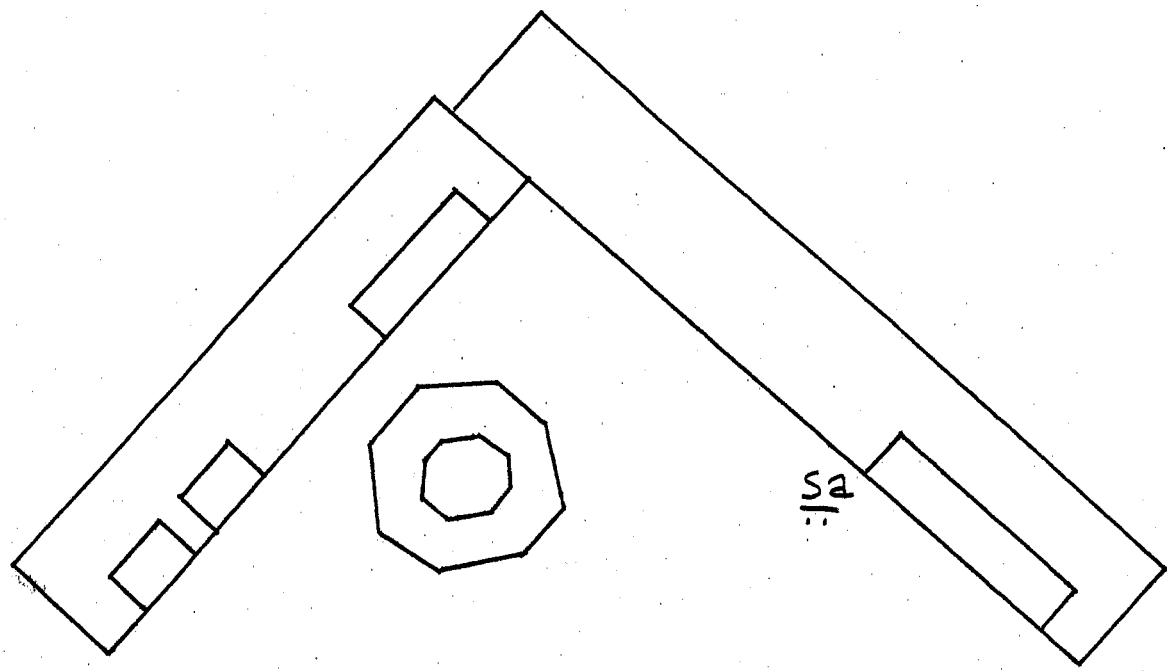
187



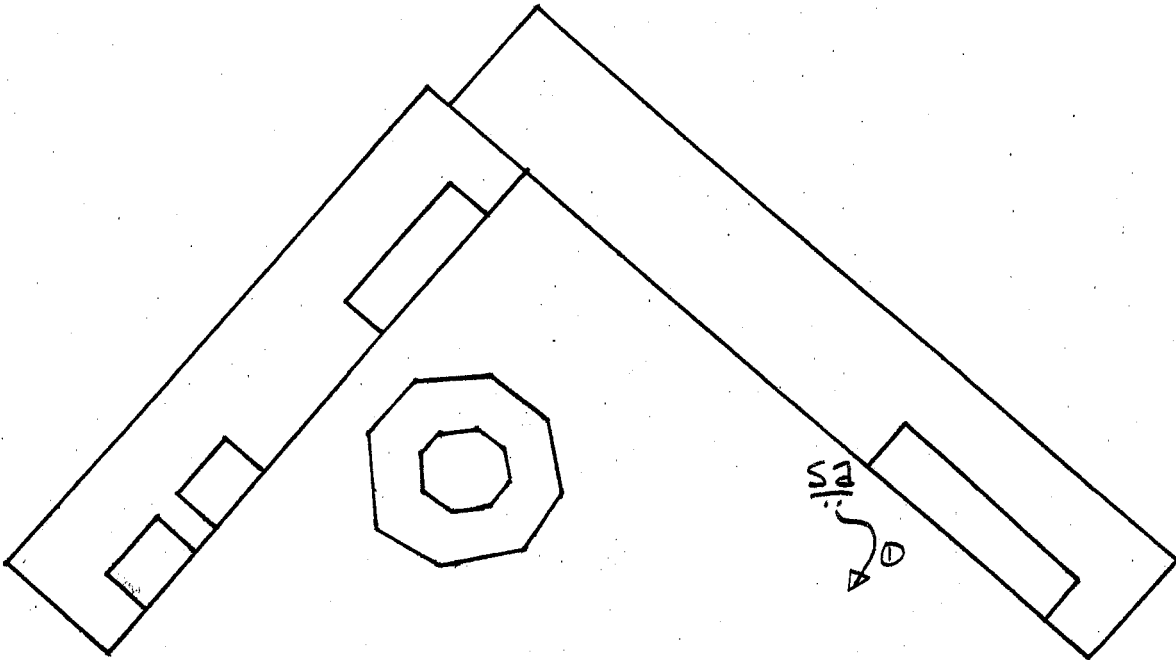
1. 97/1/1 - • SA = doubled over in pain, she is shot back into the wall



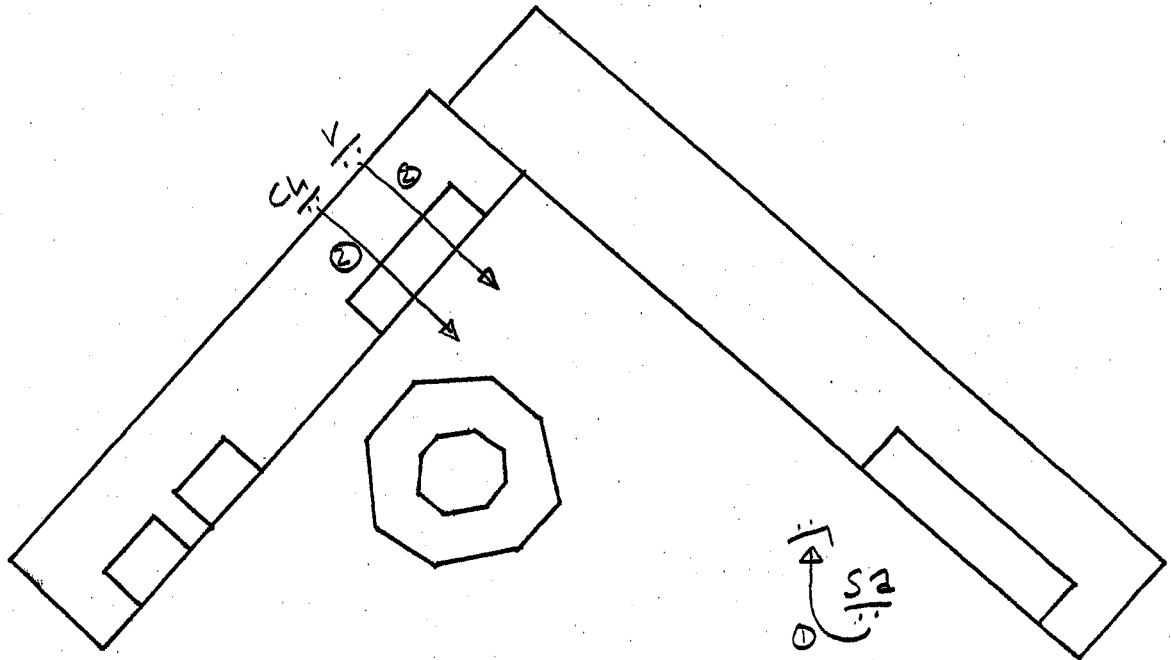
1. 98/1/2 - • SA = out of breath; grasping at the wall, steps, and ground for support



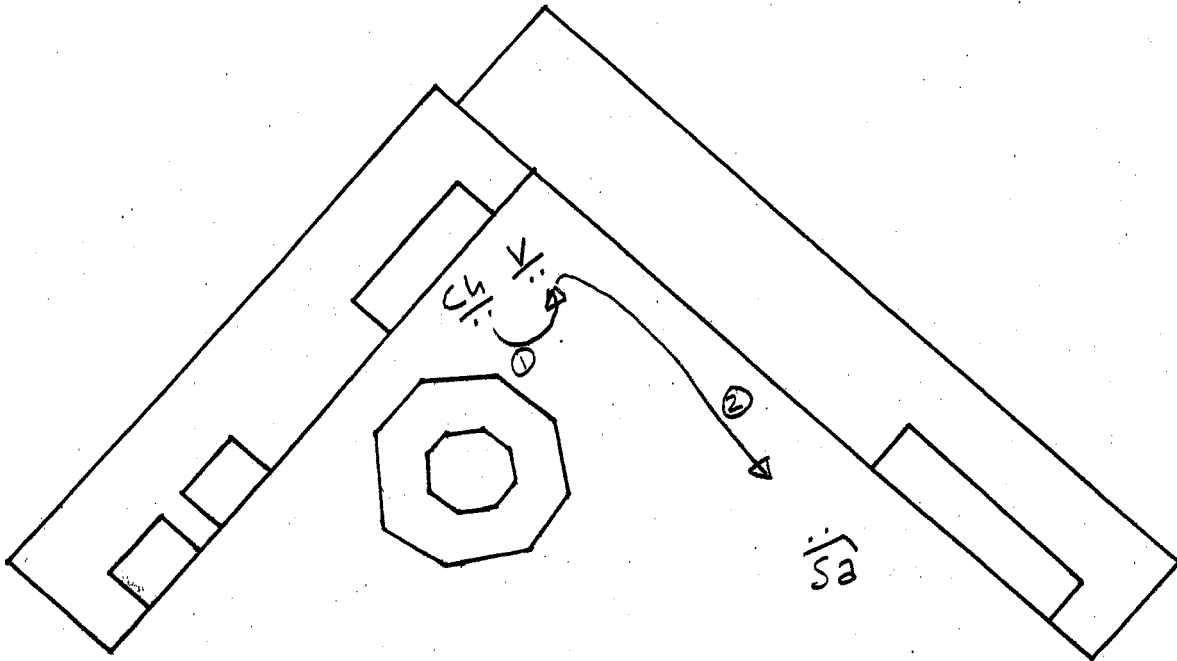
- 0. 99 - • SA = lifting her head, searching the sky; distracting herself, she is pulled to her feet once again



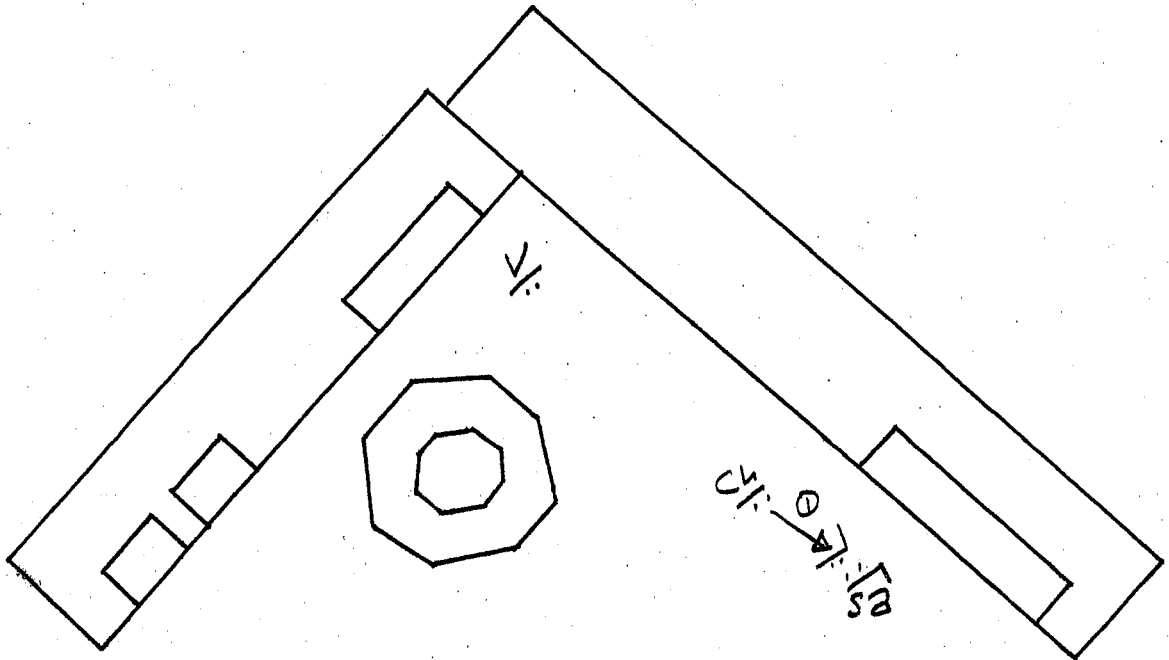
1. 100/1/2 - • SA = reaching for the Virgin in the heavens; she sees the Virgin



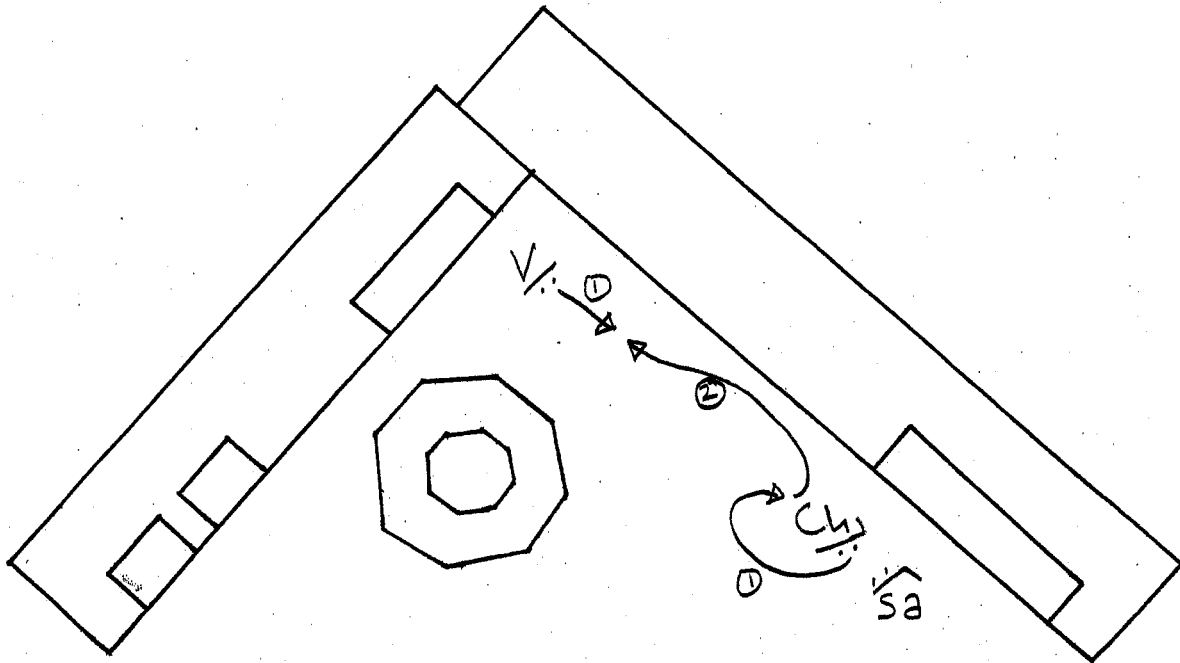
1. 101/1/1 - • SA = no longer able to stand under the pressure, she falls into a blast of light as the large SR doors burst forth
2. 101/1/4 - • Ch + V = pressing forward and down the stream of light cast through the door like a pathway; they are slow and steady with a lofty countenance; nothing about them "heavy" or daunting



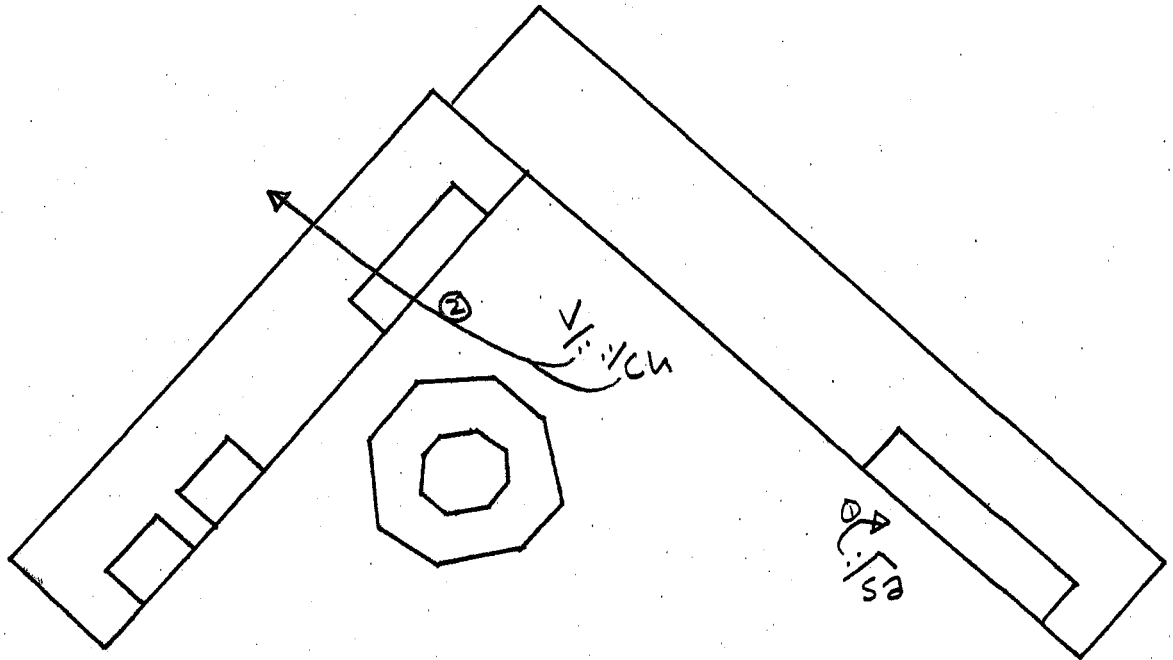
1. 102/1/2 -
  - Ch = asks for permission and bows to his mistress
  - V = bending to the child and leaning an ear toward the child's mouth
  
2. 102/2/1 -
  - V = points the child toward his mother and looks on with pride
  - Ch = hesitantly steps toward his mother, holding his flower proudly before him
  - SA = inclines her head slightly; she begins to reach for her son



1. 103/1/3 -
- Ch = offering his flower to his mother, eventually placing it before her
  - SA = deeply searching the child's eyes and reaching beyond the outstretched flower to try to caress his face (though she is not able to touch him)
  - V = looks on, almost extended to tiptoes in pride



1. 104/1/2 -
  - Ch = turning back to the Virgin, his head is the last thing to turn
  - SA = still reaching and attempting even to crawl a bit; she stammers back to the ground
  - V = stepping forward to receive the child and kindly reaching for him
  
2. 104/1/3 -
  - Ch = taking one last look at his mother, he smiles brightly and nods "yes;" placating his mother



1. 105/1/1 - • SA = she dies face up in the bright spray of light
2. 105/1/3 - • V = takes the child's hand and escorts him out toward the ever-increasing brightness, never turning him back toward his mother

## APPENDIX C: OTHER SCORE AND LIBRETTO BREAKDOWNS

1. Timing and Plot Breakdown

- I. La Preghiera (The Prayer) pages 1-5 (3:35)
- I. 1 - 5 (3:35) no Zia  
(The sisters pray and some are late.)
- II. La Punizioni (The Penances) pages 5-11 (2:40)
- II. 5 - 11 (2:40) no Zia  
(The lay-sisters are punished for being late.)
- III. La Ricreazione (The Recreation) pages 11-38 (12:10)
- IIIi. 11 - 19 (3:50) no Zia  
(The sunlight is explained and the novice learns of the meaning.)
- IIIii. 19 - 26 (3:55) no Zia  
(Angelica sings of the flowers and Genovieffa sings of her own desire.)
- IIIiii. 27 - 32 (1:45) no Zia  
(There is general gossip about Angelica's supposed lack of desire.)
- IIIiv. 32 - 38 (2:40) no Zia, Cercatrice I, and Cercatrice II  
(One of the sisters is stung by a wasp and Angelica comes to her aid.)
- IV. Il Ritorno dalla Cerca (The Return from Alms-Collecting) pages 39-56 (7:05)

IVi. 39 - 51 (3:45) no Zia  
(The alms cart arrives and the royal coach is noticed.)

IVii. 51 - 56 (3:20) no Zia  
(Angelica is called to meet the coach's rider.)

V. La Zia Principessa (The Princess Aunt) pages 56-76 (16:00)

Vi. 56 - 65 (6:40) only Angelica and Zia  
(Zia tells Angelica that her sister is to be married.)

Vii. 66 - 67 (2:55) only Angelica and Zia  
(Zia tells Angelica to pray for repentance in her mother's name.)

Viii. 68 - 71 (2:25) only Angelica and Zia  
(Angelica admits to having a son and to always wondering about him.)

Viv. 71 - 76 (4:00) only Angelica and Zia  
(Zia tells Angelica her son is dead and leaves.)

VI. La Grazia (The Grace) pages 76-95 (13:05)

Vli. 76 - 82 (4:45) only Angelica  
(Angelica laments the fact that her son never knew his mother.)

Vlii. 82 - 86 (2:45) no Zia  
(Genovieffa comforts Angelica as the sisters are called into their quarters.)

Vliii. 86 - 95 (5:35) no Zia  
(Angelica considers and then drinks of her own poison, damning her soul.)

VII. Il Miracolo (The Miracle)

pages 95-105 (3:15)

VII. 95-105 (3:15) no Zia (with Maria and Bambino)  
 (The Virgin Maria appears with Angelica's son and Angelica dies.)

2. Musical Breakdown for a Cast of Twelve Singers

pages 1-4 (Ave Maria ...)

top line: Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Cercatrice II, Badessa

bottom line: Zelatrice, Maestra, Infermiera, Novizia

(on page 4: Conversa I join top line, Conversa II join bottom line)

pages 6-7 (M' accuso della colpa - - - sorella in umiltà.)

*Una Conversa* = Conversa I

page 8 (Con gioia e con fervore!)

*Una Conversa* = Conversa II (split into Conversa I and Conversa II at line 2)

page 11, line 2 (Regina Virginum, ora proea.)

top line: Angelica, Genovieffa, Cercatrice II

middle line: Zelatrice, Badessa, Novizia, Conversa I

bottom line: Conversa II, Maestra, Infermiera

page 12 (Amen)

all nuns except Zelatrice and Cercatrice I

pages 14-15 (pay no attention to distinctions like “three only” or “some of them” etc.)

top line: Zelatrice, Cercatrice I, Novizia, Conversa I

bottom line: Cercatrice II, Maestra, Infermiera, Conversa II

solo line at 14/3/2 - 14/3/3 (E per due sere ancor!) = Badessa

page 18/3/1-18/3/2 top line (Un altr'anno è passato!)

Angelica, Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Conversa I

page 18/3/3-19/1/1 bottom line (È passato un altr'anno!)

Zelatrice, Cercatrice II, Badessa, Novizia

page 19/1/2-19/1/3 top line (E una sorella mancaa!)

Maestra, Infermiera, Conversa I, Conversa II

pages 20/3/2-21/1/2 (Sì! La suora che riposa ...)

all nuns except Angelica and Genovieffa (note: top and bottom lines are in unison)

page 24 (Ed io nemmeno! [then] Io no! [then] Io no!)

third line: Cercatrice I; fourth line: Cercatrice II; fifth line: Infermiera

page 27/2/2-27/3/1 only line to top line (Sorella, li sappiamo i vostri desideri!)

Zelatrice, Cercatrice I, Cercatrice II

page 27/3/2-27/3/3 bottom line (Qualche boccone buono!)

Maestra, Infermiera, Novizia

pages 27/3/-28/1/1 top line (Della frutta gustosa!)

Zelatrice, Cercatrice I, Cercatrice II

page 28/1/2-28/1/3 bottom line (La gola è colpa grave!)

Maestra, Infermiera, Novizia

page 28/1/4 top line (E golosa!)

Zelatrice, Cercatrice I, Cercatrice II

page 28/1/4-28/2/1 bottom line to only line (E golosa!)

Maestra, Infermiera, Novizia

page 29/1/1-29/2/1 bottom line (Che Gesù la perdoni, ...)

Zelatrice, Maestra

page 29/1/3 middle line (Ha detto una bugia!)

Cercatrice I, Cercatrice II

pages 29-31/1/4 (Noi lo sappiamo ...)

top line: Zelatrice, Cercatrice II, Maestra, Infermiera

bottom line: Cercatrice I, Badessa, Conversa I, Conversa II

page 31/2/4-31/3/2 top line (Nel mondo era ricchissima ...)

Infermiera, Cercatrice I, Cercatrice II

page 31/3/2/2.5 - 31/3/3/1 bottom line (Era nobile!)

Conversa II

page 31/3/3/1.5 - 31/3/3/2 bottom line (Nobile!)

Conversa I

page 31/3/3/2-31/3/3/2.5 top line (Nobile!)

Cercatrice II

pages 31/3/3/2.5-32/1/1/2.5 top line (Principessa!)

Cercatrice I

page 32/1/1/2.5-32/1/3 bottom line (La vollero far monaca)

Zelatrice, Cercatrice II, Maestra, Infermiera

page 32/1/4-32/2/1/2.5 top line (sembra per punizione)

Cercatrice I, Badessa, Conversa I, Conversa II

page 32/2/1/2.5-32/2/2/1 top line (Perchè?)

Cercatrice II

page 32/2/2/1.5-32/2/2/2 bottom line (Perchè?)

Conversa II

page 32/2/2/2.5-32/2/3/1 top line (Chi sa!)

Zelatrice

page 32/2/3/2 bottom line (Mah?)

Cercatrice I

page 32/2/4/1 top line (Mah?)

Conversa I

page 35 top system (Poveretta!)

bottom line (measures 1 and 2): Zelatrice, Cercatrice II, Badessa, Conversa II

third line (measures 2 and 3): Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Maestra, Conversa I

page 39 (E sempre sia!)

top line: Angelica, Genovieffa, Conversa I

middle line: Zelatrice, Novizia, Conversa II

bottom line: Maestra, Infermiera, Badessa

page 42 (Buona cerca stasera ...)

top line: Angelica, Genovieffa, Conversa I

middle line: Zelatrice, Novizia, Conversa II

bottom line: Maestra, Infermiera, Badessa

page 43/1/4 middle line (Grazie!)

Conversa II

page 43/2/1 bottom line (Grazie!)

Novizia

page 43/2/3 - 43/2/4 top line (Uh! Se ne prendo un chicco)

Zelatrice

page 43/3/1 - 43/3/2 middle line (la martorio!)

Zelatrice

page 44/1/1 top line (Grazie!)

Conversa II

page 44/1/1 bottom line (Grazie!)

Novizia

page 44/3/1 middle line (Nessuno.)

Infermiera

page 44/3/2 bottom line (Nessuno.)

Maestra

page 44/3/3 middle line (Perchè?)

Badessa

page 47 bottom system-page 49 bottom system

top line: Genovieffa, Novizia, Conversa I, Conversa II

bottom line: Maestra, Infermiera, Zelatrice, Cercatrice II

page 52 second system (Ah!)

all nuns except Angelica and Badessa

page 54 top system (Requiem aeternam dona ei ...)

top line: Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Conversa I

middle line: Infermiera, Cercatrice II, Novizia

bottom line: Maestra, Zelatrice, Conversa II

page 54 middle system (ei. Requiescat in pace.)

top line: Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Conversa I, Conversa II, Novizia  
bottom line: Infermiera, Maestra, Zelatrice, Cercatrice II

page 54 "Amen" two times

all nuns except Angelica and Badessa

page 83 (Sarete contenta, sorella ...)

all nuns except Angelica and Genovieffa

pages 84-86 (E così sia! ... (then on 85) Lodiamo la Vergine ...)

top line: Cercatrice I, Cercatrice II, Conversa I  
middle line: Infermiera, Badessa, Novizia  
bottom line: Maestra, Zelatrice, Conversa II

page 95 (Regina Virginum ...)

top line: Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Conversa I, Badessa  
middle line: Infermiera, Cercatrice II, Novizia  
bottom line: Maestra, Zelatrice, Conversa II

pages 96-98 (Regina pacis ... (then on 97) O gloriosa ...)

top line: Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Conversa I  
middle line: Infermiera, Cercatrice II, Novizia, Badessa  
bottom line: Maestra, Zelatrice, Conversa II

pages 99-101 (ubere. Quod Heva tristis ...)

(you will sing lines three [marked Sop. 1] and four [marked Sop. 2 & 3])

(divisions are oddly weighted because S3 rarely splits from the unison with S2)

Sop. 1: Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Conversa I, Conversa II

Sop. 2: Infermiera, Novizia, Badessa, Cercatrice II

Sop. 3: Maestra, Zelatrice

page 102 top system (Regina virginum!)

(you will sing line three [marked Sop.1, 2, & 3])

Sop. 1: Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Conversa I

Sop. 2: Infermiera, Cercatrice II, Novizia, Badessa

Sop. 3: Maestra, Zelatrice, Conversa II

page 102 bottom system

Virgo fidelis!: Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Cercatrice II, Conversa I, Novizia

Sancta Maria!: Infermiera, Badessa, Maestra, Zelatrice, Conversa II

page 103 - 105 (Gloriosa virginum! ...)

(you will sing lines two [marked Sop. 1] and three [marked Sop. 2 & 3])

Sop. 1: Genovieffa, Cercatrice I, Conversa I

Sop. 2: Infermiera, Cercatrice II, Novizia, Badessa

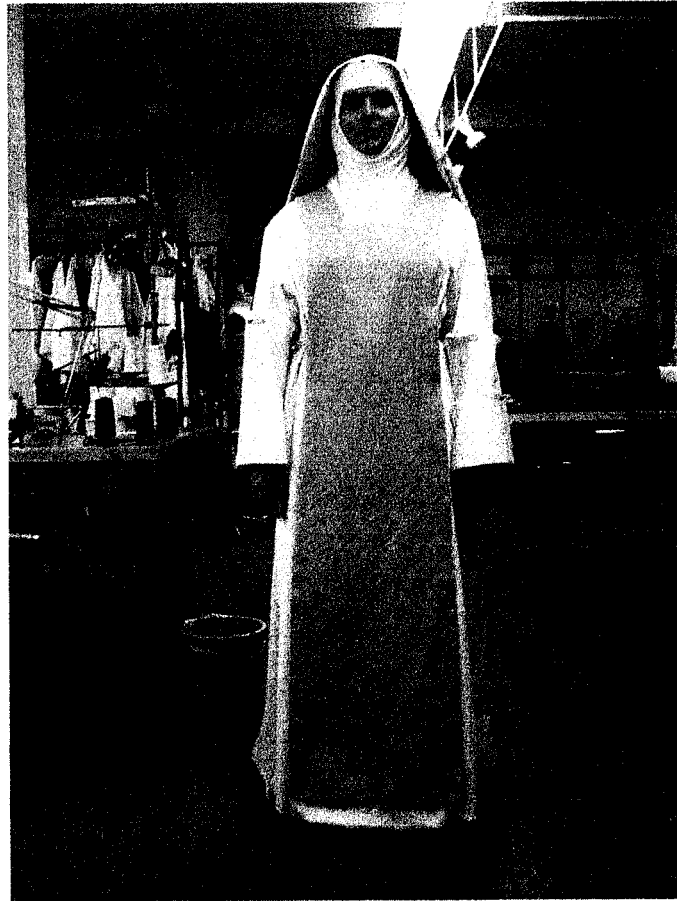
Sop. 3: Maestra, Zelatrice, Conversa II

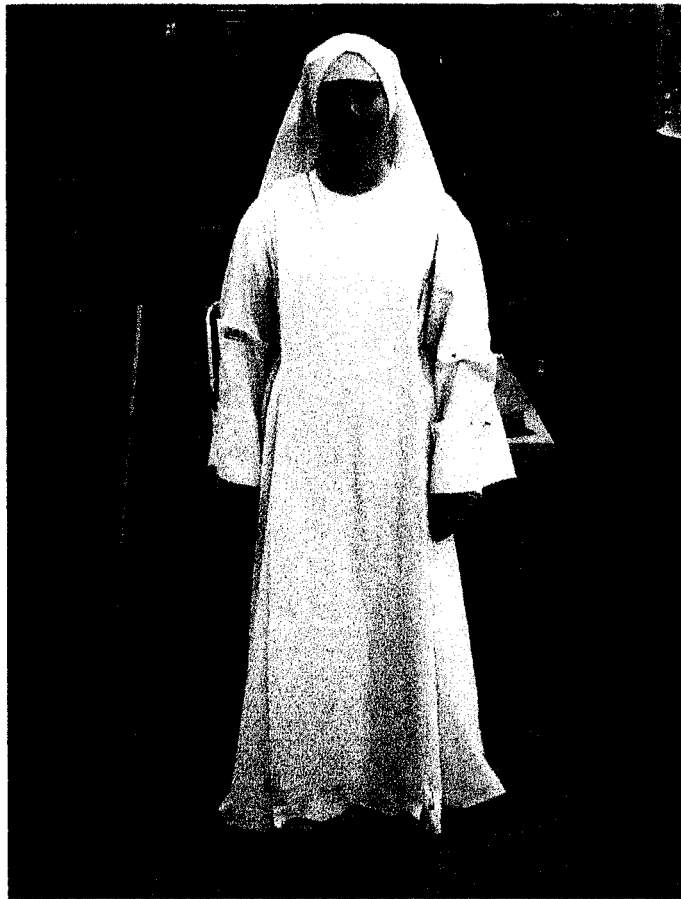
3. Range Listings for *Suor Angelica*

Angelica	soprano	a-c <sup>^^</sup>
Genovieffa	soprano	c-a <sup>^^</sup>
Principessa	contralto	G#-f# <sup>^</sup>
Zelatrice	mezzo-soprano	c-f <sup>^</sup>
Cercatrice I	soprano	d-f <sup>^</sup>
Cercatrice II	mezzo-soprano	d-d <sup>^</sup>
Maestra delle Novizie	contralto	c-e <sup>^</sup>
Infermiera	mezzo-soprano	d-f <sup>^</sup>
Badessa	mezzo-soprano	e-c <sup>^</sup>
Novizia	mezzo-soprano	d-e <sup>^</sup>
Conversa I	soprano	d-f# <sup>^</sup>

Conversa II	mezzo-soprano	b-d <sup>^</sup>
Dolcina	mezzo-soprano	c-eb <sup>^</sup>
Osmina	mezzo-soprano	f-bb <sup>^</sup>

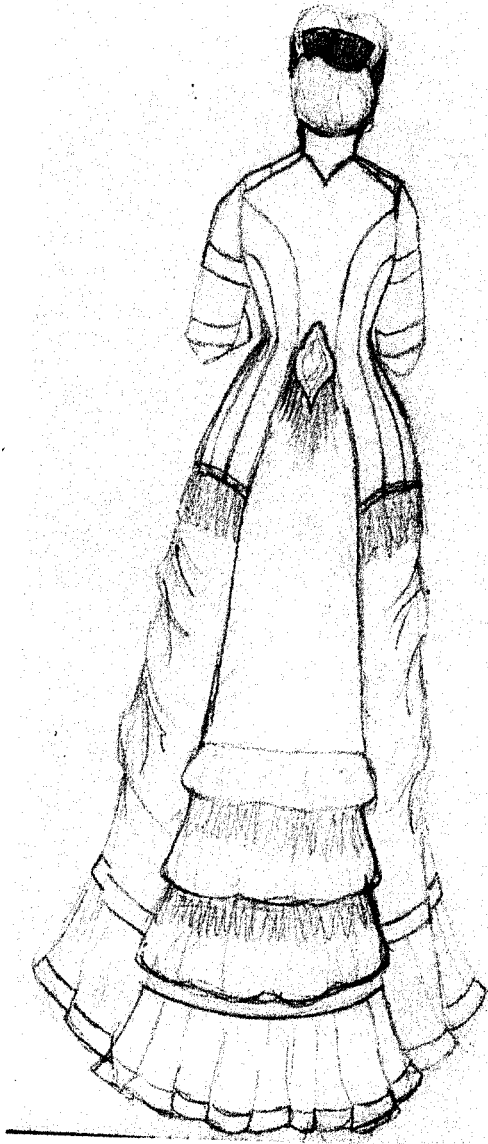
APPENDIX D: COSTUME DESIGN IMAGES





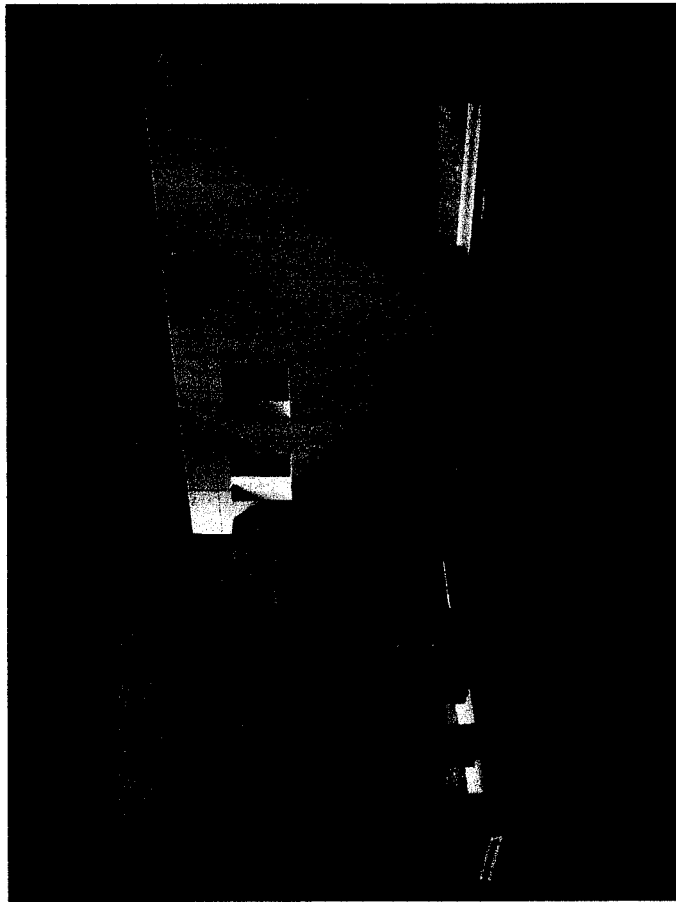






APPENDIX E: SCENIC DESIGN IMAGES







**VITA**

Andrew Seifert was born in Napa, California. At Chapman University, in Orange, California, he earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Conducting (2002). At the University of Washington, in Seattle, Washington, he earned a Master of Music degree in Conducting (2004) and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Opera Production (2007).