

# AMBITION FACING WEST

*Anthony Clarvoe*

**BROADWAY PLAY PUBLISHING INC**

150 W 4th St, NY NY 10014 (212) 772-8334

212 772-8334 fax: 212 772-8358

<http://www.BroadwayPlayPubl.com>

AMBITION FACING WEST

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First published by B P P I : May 2003

First printing, this edition: October 2007

I S B N: 0-88145-368-4

Book design: Marie Donovan

Word processing: Microsoft Word for Windows

Typographic controls: Xerox Ventura Publisher 2.0 P E

Typeface: Palatino

Printed on recycled acid-free paper and bound in the  
U S A

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Clarvoe's plays CTRL+ALT+DELETE, AMBITION FACING WEST, WALKING OFF THE ROOF, THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV, THE LIVING, LET'S PLAY TWO, SHOW AND TELL, and PICK UP AX and his translations of Ibsen's THE WILD DUCK and GHOSTS are all available from Broadway Play Publishing Inc. They are performed across the United States, receiving drama critics' awards in Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston, San Francisco, and elsewhere, as well as fellowships and grants from T C G/Pew Charitable Trusts, the John Simon Guggenheim, W Alton Jones, McKnight, Jerome, and Berrilla Kerr Foundations, Kennedy Center/Fund for New American Plays, and, twice, from the National Endowment for the Arts. Born in San Francisco, he lives with his wife, actress Katherine Clarvoe, and two sons in New York City and the Midwest.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

At a time when the Balkans were disturbing the world yet again, *AMBITION FACING WEST* began as an idea about my family's itinerary from that place through the twentieth century. Many people and organizations contributed their history, memory, and gifts to the play's creation. The first to respond with support were Oskar Eustis and the Center Theater Group/Mark Taper Forum, the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, the Playwrights' Center, and the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota. The New Harmony Project gave me the chance to make it a play. Workshops at Cleveland Playhouse and the Mark Taper Forum took it further. It was a particular pleasure that the first production was directed by Oskar Eustis at Trinity Rep, years after our first conversations. Intiman Theater and Repertory Theater of St Louis followed with generous productions. The Bloomsburg Theater Ensemble gave me the chance to act on what I'd learned from those productions and write this draft for them.

For their hospitality to me and the play in all our travels, my particular thanks to Janet Allen, Melia Bensussen, Tom Bryant, The Chase Fund, Katherine Heasley Clarvoe, William Craver, Gordon Davidson, Frank Dwyer, Liz Engleman, Oskar Eustis, Kip Gould, Susan Gregg, Peter Hackett, James Houghton, Laurie McCants, Mark Ramont, Warner Shook, and Steve Woolf. Thanks too to the many artists and audiences

who shared their own families' journeys and saw their reflection in this one.

This play is dedicated to Erna Radalj Clarvoe.

The world premiere of *AMBITION FACING WEST* was presented by Trinity Repertory Company, Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director, Patricia Egan, Managing Director, on 18 April 1997. The cast and creative contributors were:

YOUNG STIPAN/JIM/JOEY . . . . . Mauro Hantman  
FATHER LUKA . . . . . William Damkoehler  
MISS ADAMIC/YOUNG ALMA . . . . . Elizabeth Quincy  
MARIJA/ALMA . . . . . Anne Scurria  
IVO/STIPAN . . . . . Timothy Crowe  
MRS ADAMIC/JOSEPHINA . . . . . Phyllis Kay  
*Director* . . . . . Oskar Eustis  
*Set* . . . . . Christine Jones  
*Lighting* . . . . . Geoff Korf  
*Costumes* . . . . . William Lane  
*Stage manager* . . . . . Cole Bonenberger

The premiere of this version of AMBITION FACING WEST was presented on 21 January 2000 by the Bloomsburg Theater Ensemble. The cast and creative contributors were:

YOUNG STIPAN/JIM ..... David Snider  
FATHER LUKA/EUGENE ..... Peter Brown  
MARIJA/ALMA ..... Elizabeth Dowd  
IVO/STIPAN ..... Michael Collins  
MISS ADAMIC/YOUNG ALMA ..... Nina Czitrom  
MRS ADAMIC/JOSEPHINA ..... Laurie McCants  
JOEY ..... Pete Rush  
*Director* ..... Mark Ramont  
*Set* ..... Eric Renschler  
*Lighting* ..... A C Hickox  
*Costumes* ..... Lora Dole  
*Sound* ..... Whit MacLaughlin  
*Stage manager* ..... Frankie Ocasio

## PLACES, TIMES & CHARACTERS

*Croatia, 1910:*

YOUNG STIPAN

FATHER LUKA

MARIJA, STIPAN's *mother*

IVO, *the Amerikanac*

MISS ADAMIC

MRS ADAMIC

*Wyoming, 1940s:*

YOUNG ALMA

JOSEPHINA, ALMA's *mother*

STIPAN, ALMA's *father*

JIM

*Japan, 1980s:*

ALMA

JOEY, ALMA's *son*

EUGENE

*Stage: Gravel. Something like water. Wood planking. Sky.*

## ACT ONE

*(Croatia, 1910)*

*(MISS ADAMIC, in a sailor-style dress and pinafore, kneels, guiding a model sailboat with a long wand. At a distance from her, FATHER LUKA and YOUNG STIPAN are sitting in the sun sparkling off the water. MARIJA stands, fists on hips, baskets at her feet, watching YOUNG STIPAN. FATHER LUKA wears a cassock; YOUNG STIPAN and MARIJA wear peasant clothing. YOUNG STIPAN is holding a book. He is stealing glances at the girl as he reads aloud.)*

YOUNG STIPAN: "And wonderfully among them all..."

FATHER LUKA: The infinitive is "to shine."

YOUNG STIPAN: "...shone the son of Aeson for beauty and grace..."

FATHER LUKA: Good.

YOUNG STIPAN: "And the maiden looked at him with..."  
"Secret?" No.

FATHER LUKA: Stealthy, perhaps.

YOUNG STIPAN: "With stealthy glance, holding her bright..."

FATHER LUKA: Veil.

YOUNG STIPAN: "Holding her bright veil aside, her heart...smoldering with pain."

FATHER LUKA: Oh, very good.

YOUNG STIPAN: "And her soul creeping like a dream..."

FATHER LUKA: Flitted.

YOUNG STIPAN: "Flitted after him as he went. So they passed forth from the palace sorely troubled. And the maiden, Medea by name, followed, and much she brooded in her soul on all the cares that Love awakens."

MARIJA: Tell me again what this is good for.

FATHER LUKA: Well. It's a very old story.

MARIJA: I know all the old stories, I've told him stories. Sundays he hears the Gospels from you.

FATHER LUKA: This is a different old story. And he will be able to read it for himself.

MARIJA: Sounds Protestant. I have eggs to sell. *(She picks up her baskets. To STIPAN)* Don't make me have to come find you. *(She goes.)*

FATHER LUKA: You've been working.

YOUNG STIPAN: Thank you for the candle-ends, they helped. Will it get more exciting again?

FATHER LUKA: It depends on what you mean by exciting. Two pages on, you get Medea in her bedchamber, tormented by the pangs of love as is the waiting bride, entirely inappropriate for a boy your age. Where did we leave off?

*(IVO enters, carrying a valise, wearing a vested suit. He joins YOUNG STIPAN in gazing across at the girl.)*

IVO: *(A murmur)* A villé.

*(FATHER LUKA glances up appreciatively.)*

IVO: Yes? Look. *(Nodding toward the girl)* A villé.

FATHER LUKA: How apt, sir. I thought the belief had gone from memory.

IVO: Not from mine.

FATHER LUKA: I am quite the amateur collector of such folk tales.

IVO: (*Regarding the girl*) Ship owner's daughter?

FATHER LUKA: Mm.

IVO: When I was a boy, the ship owners were gods: like us, but much larger, and perfectly formed. They never died. Same name on the manifests, decade after decade. Ivo Pasic. A pleasure to meet you, Father.

(*IVO and FATHER LUKA nod formally to each other.*)

FATHER LUKA: Welcome home.

YOUNG STIPAN: Sir? You are *Amerikanac*?

IVO: Left the farm when I was about your age. (*Holding out a hand to YOUNG STIPAN*) Ivo Pasic. How do you do.

(*YOUNG STIPAN, confused, does not move.*)

IVO: It is the way Americans greet someone new. You take my hand, and we shake them. Up and down.

FATHER LUKA: Why is that?

IVO: I believe it is supposed to mean we have no weapons.

(*IVO and YOUNG STIPAN shake hands.*)

IVO: And then we say our names.

YOUNG STIPAN: I am Stipan.

IVO: Ivo Pasic.

FATHER LUKA: Mister Pasic. The *villé*? Please. Whatever you remember?

IVO: Once upon a time, the old people would say, when the world was a better place than it is today, if a young girl like that one died—God forbid—of a broken heart, she would become a *villé*.

FATHER LUKA: (*To YOUNG STIPAN*) Think of the nymphs of the classical texts.

IVO: They would live on for years—forever, some people said—in the woods and lakes near our village.

FATHER LUKA: So the *villé* lived with the living in friendship.

IVO: When shepherds fell asleep, *villé* watched their sheep and cattle.

FATHER LUKA: Pure, beautiful spirits.

IVO: Farm boys would see them at night in the fields, dancing and chanting, urging the crops to grow tall and thick.

FATHER LUKA: Hm.

(*Each man finds himself looking over at MISS ADAMIC. MRS ADAMIC enters, grandly dressed for a stroll in town, and crosses to MISS ADAMIC. MRS ADAMIC coolly eyes the three men as they stare at her daughter.*)

FATHER LUKA: Ah.

(*STIPAN looks away, IVO touches the brim of his hat decorously, FATHER LUKA raises two fingers in blessing. MRS ADAMIC taps her daughter on the shoulder. MISS ADAMIC stands and courtesies, shooting a glance at YOUNG STIPAN as she does. She starts hauling in her boat.*)

IVO: And no one believes in the *villé* anymore?

FATHER LUKA: Well, with so much war and evil in our land, the nymphs show themselves less often. I think they drift over the old villages, sad young spirits dressed in breeze and moonlight, tending to the newly dead, helping their souls to free themselves, helping them repair the wrongs they committed in the flesh.

IVO: Mm.

*(A church bell rings. YOUNG STIPAN jumps up. The women exit.)*

FATHER LUKA: I have confessions to hear. *(To YOUNG STIPAN)* I expect to hear yours after you get through that next passage about Medea. *(To IVO)* You will be with us a while?

IVO: I think so.

FATHER LUKA: I would love to talk again. *(To YOUNG STIPAN)* Run home before you're missed.

*(FATHER LUKA exits. YOUNG STIPAN bows quickly and starts to go. IVO holds up the book.)*

IVO: Your book.

*(YOUNG STIPAN turns back.)*

IVO: You have a boat?

*(YOUNG STIPAN nods.)*

IVO: Do boys still sail into the Bay of Viganj?

*(YOUNG STIPAN nods. He holds out his hand for his book. IVO keeps holding it.)*

IVO: You still drop hooks overboard? Cook fish on the rocks on the beach? Use shark skin for sandpaper?

*(YOUNG STIPAN nods.)*

IVO: Would your father beat you if he knew you were learning to read?

*(Beat. YOUNG STIPAN nods.)*

IVO: *The Argonautica*. Unusual text. *(He holds out the book.)*

YOUNG STIPAN: Father Luka says that Jason and the Argonauts sailed through here. On their way to the Golden Fleece.

*(A foghorn sounds.)*

IVO: Go.

*(The lights crossfade to:)*

*(Wyoming, 1940s)*

*(Static. YOUNG ALMA and JOSEPHINA are sitting on kitchen chairs. YOUNG ALMA is fiddling with a crystal radio set with a battery and a speaker. JOSEPHINA is wearing a bed jacket and has braces on her legs. She crochets. Metal crutches lean on the back of her chair. A couple of books are on the floor. From the radio, a foghorn.)*

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Out of the fog...

Out of the night...

And into his American adventures comes...

Bulldog Drummond!

*(Static again. YOUNG ALMA growls and fiddles with the tuner.)*

JOSEPHINA: What is happening?

YOUNG ALMA: I should be able to pull in Chicago....

*(Stickty voices, then gunfire)*

JOSEPHINA: Yes, that is Chicago.

*(Shouts, police whistles, more shots)*

JOSEPHINA: Your father did not bring you that radio kit all the way from Washington, DC so you could listen to stupid noise!

*(YOUNG ALMA turns off the radio.)*

YOUNG ALMA: I just thought... Everybody else has had them forever, and I know we can't afford a real one, but... I thought if I built this myself... I thought I could give you music.

JOSEPHINA: Is the supper ready for your Papa?

YOUNG ALMA: Supper is ready, his shirts are ironed, everything's done.

JOSEPHINA: You do not like all the chores, I know—

YOUNG ALMA: It's fine.

JOSEPHINA: I wish *my* Mama was there to give me this teaching. I am making you ready for your life.

YOUNG ALMA: I know.

JOSEPHINA: You want to read to me?

(YOUNG ALMA *picks up a book.*)

YOUNG ALMA: Starting a new one today.

JOSEPHINA: Story book?

YOUNG ALMA: American story book. (*Turning pages*) Contents, notes... Chapter One. (*Looking up*) How old were you when you and Papa got married?

JOSEPHINA: Too young. Why.

YOUNG ALMA: Just curious.

JOSEPHINA: Is this about that Jim?

YOUNG ALMA: Just curious.

JOSEPHINA: Nobody is just curious. Curious wants something. Are you thinking about getting married with that Jim?

YOUNG ALMA: Thinking about it. Not planning on it.

JOSEPHINA: Is there a reason to hurry the thinking?

YOUNG ALMA: What do you mean?

JOSEPHINA: Just curious. Chapter One.

YOUNG ALMA: Chapter One. (*Reading*) "You don't know about me, without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, but that ain't no matter."

*(Japan, 1980s)*

*(Lights up on JOEY, eighties coastal casual. Discman, RayBans, Gameboy, cell phone, all at once. He vibrates.)*

YOUNG ALMA: *(Reading)* "That book was made by Mr Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly..."

*(ALMA enters, in an eighties business suit, talking on her cell phone and smoking a cigarette. As she speaks, the lights fade on YOUNG ALMA and JOSEPHINA.)*

ALMA: *(Into phone, loudly)* Where are you? Man, every time the home office flies people over, guess who gets to show 'em the sights? Take a lot of Type A types to the shrines of Zen Buddhism, makes total sense to me. They have this gravel pit out back, I came out to sneak a cigarette. This connection is terrible, where are you, a tool and die works?

*(JOEY pulls the Walkman earphone from his ear and holds it to the mouthpiece of his cell phone. ALMA recoils from her cell phone.)*

ALMA: Ow!

JOEY: *(Holding up a hand)* Hey, Mom.

ALMA: Smidgen! You made it!

*(She starts toward him. He continues to speak to her through the phone.)*

JOEY: Oh, hey, Mother?

ALMA: *(Stopping)* What did I do?

JOEY: It's not a gravel pit.

ALMA: *(Looking out)* It isn't?

JOEY: It's the monastery garden.

ALMA: It's rocks.

JOEY: It's a rock garden.

ALMA: Good, that's a good thing. Easy to maintain.  
(*Staring*) It reminds me of the Sheraton Atlanta,  
why is that?

(JOEY *shrugs.*)

ALMA: We could hang up.

JOEY: Don't yet? You sound more like you this way.

(*Beat*)

ALMA: Hey, remember when I was traveling, I'd read  
you bedtime stories on the phone?

JOEY: Mm. Where The Wild Things Are.

ALMA: Sure.

JOEY: Wind In The Willows. The Hobbit, Lord of the  
Rings —

ALMA: Sure...

JOEY: The Complete Works of Charles Dickens,  
*Remembrance of Things Past*—

ALMA: *Okay.*

(*Beat. She puts away her phone.*)

JOEY: Huckleberry Finn.

ALMA: Yeah. (*Beat*) How was it in the States?

JOEY: (*Putting away his phone*) It was okay.

ALMA: Okay? That's it?

JOEY: Yeah.

ALMA: Oh, Smidgen, I'm sorry.

(*He shrugs.*)

JOEY: Guess I kind of built it up in my mind.

ALMA: Streets were just paved with pavement, huh?

JOEY: I thought, America, you know, I'll go there, it'll be home. I'll feel at home.

ALMA: No?

JOEY: Everybody's talking about the eighties, "It's the eighties," like a decade is a new place where anything you do is okay, hey no problem it's the eighties, we're in the morality-free zone.

*(He is moving to the music and playing his game.*

*ALMA watches.*

ALMA: How can you hold a conversation?

JOEY: I'm multi-tasking.

ALMA: You're not-any-tasking.

*(He shrugs.)*

ALMA: You want to be here? You're just in time.

War's breaking out.

*(Off his look)*

ALMA: Trade war.

JOEY: Which side are we on?

ALMA: Our side.

*(He shrugs.)*

JOEY: Cool.

ALMA: You shrug a lot.

JOEY: Yeah?

ALMA: It's a tic you've got.

JOEY: Don't do the posture thing.

ALMA: What posture thing.

JOEY: Where you comment on my shoulders and pull them back so I'll be standing up straight. It's a tic you've got.

ALMA: Thank you for telling me, I had no idea, I'll never let it happen again.

JOEY: Mother. If it were a problem I wouldn't have brought it up.

*(She takes out a cigarette and a Zippo lighter.)*

ALMA: I wish you could warn me before the difficult conversations. Now I need another cigarette. *(Looking at him)* Turn that damn thing off!

*(He does. He looks at her. She looks away.)*

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?

*(Lights up on YOUNG ALMA and JOSEPHINA.)*

JOSEPHINA: *(Standing)* Alma!

JOEY: Mom?

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The Shadow knows....

JOSEPHINA: *(As she goes)* Your father does not bring you that radio kit all the way from Washington, D C—

*(ALMA and YOUNG ALMA join her, quietly.)*

JOSEPHINA, ALMA & YOUNG ALMA: —just so you could listen to stupid noise!

*(YOUNG ALMA and ALMA growl softly. YOUNG ALMA fiddles with the radio silently.)*

ALMA: *(To JOEY)* This couldn't be about your Dad?

JOEY: No.

ALMA: No, of course not—

JOEY: I dream about him sometimes.

ALMA: —I'm here, so I'm the one—you have dreams about him?

JOEY: Sometimes.

ALMA: Do you even remember a face?

JOEY: There's a face. I feel myself calling it "Dad."

ALMA: What happens.

JOEY: Dreams are boring.

ALMA: Not yours.

JOEY: Besides, they're not like dreams, anyway.  
They're kind of just real.

*(YOUNG ALMA turns a knob on the radio. A distant orchestra plays the Barcarole from Offenbach's Les Contes d'Hoffmann.)*

YOUNG ALMA: *(Calling)* Better, Mama?

JOSEPHINA: *(Calling, off)* Better if it was Verdi!

YOUNG ALMA: *(Calling)* The Verdi isn't till Saturday.  
*(She pages through her book as she exits.)*

JOEY: It's evening.

*(Sunset slowly fills the stage.)*

JOEY: We're walking by the ocean.

ALMA: Am I there?

JOEY: Sometimes.

ALMA: We did that. Walked by the Pacific.  
Swinging you between us.

JOEY: Sometimes not.

ALMA: But... Okay.

JOEY: Sometimes that's it. But sometimes washed  
up on shore there's a boat.

*(Croatia, 1910)*

*(IVO and YOUNG STIPAN enter, pushing a rowboat.)*

ALMA: *(To JOEY)* A boat?

JOEY: And he says, "Come on."

(As JOEY speaks, IVO and YOUNG STIPAN get into the boat.)

JOEY: Sometimes he helps me in. Sometimes I help him. He rolls up his pantlegs and climbs inside and I roll up my pantlegs and push the prow till the sand lets go and he's floating and I climb in. And we row.

ALMA: And that's how it starts.

JOEY: Sometimes.

IVO: The moment I sailed my little boat into the Bay of Viganj, I was happy.

(IVO settles in. YOUNG STIPAN rows.)

IVO: So quiet I could hear the shellfish below me, opening and closing. I'd lean over the side and watch the fish hunting for food, or I'd lean back and watch the clouds sailing away on the western wind. What kind of marker, did he say?

YOUNG STIPAN: A little orange float.

IVO: Croatia never changes. Boys farm by day and smuggle by night. You're a smart boy. Taking the *Amerikanac* for a sentimental ride in the moonlight, yes? I'm your cover. (*Pointing downward*) Look!

YOUNG STIPAN: The marker?

IVO: No. Even by moonlight, after so long, still clear, right to the bottom. An earthquake made all this, piled up all those big stones. I used to imagine I was looking at some dead city, with white sand glimmering in the streets.

YOUNG STIPAN: (*Looking*) Is that what a city looks like?

IVO: If you could float above it and see it.

YOUNG STIPAN: Like a *villé*.

IVO: Like a *villé*.

*(The music has faded to silence.)*

YOUNG STIPAN: Sir? Why did you leave?

IVO: Do you know Marco Polo was from here?

YOUNG STIPAN: I thought he was Italian.

IVO: He was. His father was here during the Venetian occupation.

YOUNG STIPAN: Goddamn Venetians.

IVO: Heroes come from this place. I think I see the marker.

YOUNG STIPAN: Yes. *(He mans the oars again.)*

IVO: What is it?

YOUNG STIPAN: A casque of cigars and whiskey, the captain said.

IVO: You can do the hauling.

*(YOUNG STIPAN rows.)*

ALMA: *(To JOEY)* And you're happy in these dreams.

JOEY: Yes.

ALMA: You and your old man, heading for adventure.

JOEY: No. We don't head anywhere. We row to the horizon. And then we sit. Dad ships the oars. We just sit. Rocking. Ready to start. But not quite yet.

YOUNG STIPAN: *(To IVO)* What is it like in America?

IVO: Why do you ask? *(Beat)* American boys, all they do is go to school and play.

YOUNG STIPAN: Cowboys and Indians. Have you seen any? Real ones?

IVO: No, the cowboys killed off the Indians, then a lot of German farmers came and killed off the cowboys. Now

their children play cowboys and Indians. Do you know what else they play?

YOUNG STIPAN: What?

IVO: Pirates. They pretend they're out sailing in boats, hauling in treasure.

YOUNG STIPAN: But—

IVO: Stipan. Somewhere in America, a child is dreaming he is you.

*(YOUNG ALMA enters slowly, reading from her book. She carries a bowl.)*

YOUNG ALMA: "I never felt easy till the raft was out in the middle of the Mississippi."

IVO: And you dream to be that American. Don't you, Stipan.

*(YOUNG ALMA sits. As she reads, she snaps the peas in the bowl.)*

YOUNG ALMA: *(Reading)* "I was powerful glad to get away from the feuds, and so was Jim to get away from the swamp. We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all."

IVO: Always been the same. Marco Polo and his father. Jason and Herakles. A boy and a man on a boat.

YOUNG ALMA: *(Reading)* "Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't."

IVO: A boy and a man on a boat. This is how the American dreams he is free.

YOUNG STIPAN: But the American is free already, isn't he?

IVO: The thing about free is that nobody knows when he is.

JOEY: Sometimes Dad says, "Ready?" and I say, "Ready," and he dips the oars. I always wake up then. And it's morning. The dream, when I have it, it's always my last one before the day starts.

ALMA: In real life he never took you anywhere alone.

JOEY: *I know.*

ALMA: *I did that stuff.*

JOEY: Or you read to me about it.

*(ALMA looks at her younger self.)*

YOUNG ALMA: *(Reading)* "You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable, on a raft." *(She continues snapping peas.)*

YOUNG STIPAN: *(To IVO)* Everything I want to do here, there's already a reason I can't.

IVO: What are they, these things you want so badly to do?

YOUNG STIPAN: I don't know. I'd be happy just to be in a place where it's all right to want something. I'd worry about *what* I want when I got there.

IVO: Freedom. Yes, I know just the place.

JOEY: *(To ALMA)* Listen. Are there jobs here?

ALMA: The joint is jumpin'.

JOEY: There's nothing in the States.

ALMA: An American boy who's lived in Japan? The world's got plans for you, kiddo. What are you looking for?

JOEY: Whatever. Anything.

ALMA: But...

JOEY: What.

IVO: *(To YOUNG STIPAN)* Do you know what I dream to be? Of anything in the world?

YOUNG STIPAN: What?

IVO: You.

YOUNG STIPAN: *What?*

ALMA: (*To JOEY*) What are you looking to do, though?

JOEY: Beats me. Advance me enough for a suit, I'll be Joey the Saririman, I don't care.

ALMA: You're supposed to care.

JOEY: I won't make you look bad. You know me, I'll work like a dog.

ALMA: It's not that. It's your life, Joey.

JOEY: I know.

ALMA: Don't you care what happens to it?

JOEY: Sure. Absolutely.

(*JOEY plays with his Gameboy. ALMA looks at him.*)

YOUNG STIPAN: (*To IVO*) You've seen everything, been all over, me—

IVO: I used to be you, once. In the last century. But if I were you, now, I could look forward to being a man in America. With everything about to happen, new century gotten a good running start, wife and a house full of children around me, in a world of peace. I'd give my soul, God help me but I would. Take me with you, Stipan.

YOUNG STIPAN: But—

IVO: Pack my soul, let me slip in your ear for safekeeping, carry me with you in your eyes. Let me be you, Stipan, a generation from now, in beautiful America.

(*As YOUNG ALMA reads, YOUNG STIPAN gets out and steadies the boat for IVO.*)

YOUNG ALMA: (*Reading*) "It's lovely to live on a raft."  
(*She gently swirls her bowl of peas and smiles at a thought.*)  
"We had the sky, up there, all speckled with stars,  
and we used to lay on our backs and look up at them,  
and discuss about whether they was made, or only just  
happened..."

(*IVO steps out of the boat, IVO no longer. He carries a  
suitcase and a folded newspaper. He crosses toward YOUNG  
ALMA, entering—*)

(*Wyoming, 1940s*)