

Dear Prof. Gordon:

An idea for a play, tentative title: *The Mind of Joseph Stalin*.

Synopsis: A psychiatrist psychoanalyzes Joseph Stalin. During the session Stalin recalls past events, revealing his most intimate thoughts which shaped his perception of reality. The champion of the working class is revealed to be adverse to work, contemptuous of those who labor, and terrified of people in general. His entire career is a reaction to a deeply ingrained sense of inferiority and low self-esteem which he covers up by becoming a revolutionary. His bravado is a sham and when confronted by those who see through his phoniness, his response is to lash out at them by any means in order to protect himself. Stalin recalls how he marries, has children, tries to "play the game" but nothing he does eases his sense that he is no good. Intellectuals make him bristle with hate for they remind him of his own intellectual inadequacy. He responds by saying little and waiting for an opportunity to strike when least expected. He surrounds himself with other like-minded people and soon he forms an organization under his control. He includes in his organization a personal bodyguard who doubles as his chief of security. The rules of the organization are simple: he is the boss and his word is law. Anyone who opposes him deals with the chief of security. His followers gladly accept those rules, believing that in Stalin lays the key to power and all the perks that go with it. For they all are opportunists, led by the biggest opportunist of them all. The play ends with the psychiatrist being placed under arrest.

Phil

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