

# ***SMILE LIKE A KNIFE***

(A rogue robotic play in ten scenes; ninety minutes)

**TIME:** The imminent and distant future.

**PLACE:** New York City: a stylized set suggests the interior of the Saxenburg Watch Shop including myriad clocks, watches, and antique dolls.

## **CHARACTERS:**

MONA, a winsome robotic woman with a British accent.

GUNTHER SACHS, an Austrian born watch shop owner in his thirties.

LENA SACHS, Gunther's American cousin, a robotics engineer in her thirties.

ANNA GLAZER, the shop clerk and window dresser in her late twenties.

DETECTIVE RAYMOND BAINES, a civilian attired police officer.

TOVA VARONE, an androgynous biomechatronic tour guide.

ANNABOT, a robotic replica of Anna Glazer.

SLEEPWALKERS, several masked tenants wearing pajamas

**NOTE:** *Anna Glazer and her Annabot should be played by the same actor.  
The Sleepwalkers can be played by the named characters wearing medical masks.*

## **PLOT SYNOPSIS:**

One hundred years from now, a biomechatronic guide is speaking to an audience of tourists who have evolved as a fusion of the organic and mechanic and are visiting the notable landmarks of the island of Manhattan. What they are seeing is a simulated habitat of a drama that took place in the early decades of the twenty first century: In the heart of the city's most prestigious shopping district stands the Saxenburg Watch Shop, specializing in hand crafted mechanical time pieces. The shop is located directly across from a renown residential building where powerful corporate magnates convene and conspire to control global economies. In the shop window stands Mona, an alluring robot equipped with a camera that spies on the constant stream of marchers protesting the country's plutocracy. The shop owner, Gunther Sachs, hires Anna Glazer, a proficient clerk and struggling writer who charms him and his cousin, Lena, a robotic engineer. Lena's outrage at the country's corrupt leadership inspires her to equip Mona with an acoustical beam aimed at a corporate penthouse that inadvertently afflicts innocent tenants, causing a pernicious form of insomnia. The police pursue Lena who flees the country while Gunther is suspected of being an accomplice and seeks asylum in Austria. Anna is left to manage the shop while writing dystopian novels that will become required reading for students at future universities.

**THEME:** The play explores the corrosive effects of a divisive government as well as the human capacity for romance, redemption, and invention.

