

My Brother's Gift

adapted by Claudia Inglis Haas
from the writings and memories of Eva Geiringer Schloss
and the poetry and paintings of Heinz Geiringer

-When you listen to a witness, you become a witness. Elie Wiesel

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My Brother's Gift

This play received the 2019 Old Miner Children's Playwriting Contest "Strike it Rich" Prize for plays about the lives of real children. It received a rehearsed reading at Utah Valley University under the direction of Dr. John Newman.

The Old Miner Children's Playwriting Contest is funded through the generous support of the Tom and Mary Norris Foundation. The contest provides opportunities for Utah Valley University students to evaluate and perform new plays by new and established writers of theatre for young audiences.

Utah Valley University Cast

Heinz Geiringer: Zippy Hellewell
Eva Geiringer: Maren Lethbridge
Mutti (Mother): Shelby Markham
Pappy (Father)/Herman: Ian Webb
Sanne/Official/Sound: Sarah Hatch
Mrs. Jansen/Official/Stage Directions: Anna Thulin

My Brother's Gift (all rights reserved)

CAST:

CAST: 5-11 (3f, 2m or 7f, 4m) extras possible

1945 scenes

Eva Geiringer (f) 16; after Auschwitz

Mutti (Fritzi) Geiringer (f); 45; after Auschwitz

Heinz Geiringer (m) 18; (Memory)

Memory Scenes

Eva Geiringer (f) age 11-15; athletic, devoted to family, survivor, rememberer

Heinz Geiringer (m) 14-17; artistic, gifted, thirst for knowledge and life, loving brother, plays guitar and piano, blind in one eye, afraid of dying

Pappy (Erich) Geiringer (m) 43; entrepreneur, life-affirming, father to Heinz and Eva

Mutti (Fritzi) Geiringer (f) 39; practical, loving, determined, mother to Heinz and Eva

Sanne (f) 12, (Given name: Susanne) Eva's friend, joins everything with enthusiasm

Herman (m) 15, Heinz's friend, a little reticent but loyal

Official – Use up to two actors; (m/f) Dutch or German Official

Mrs. Jansen (f) 20's; Landlady at Heinz's and Pappy's Hiding Place; opportunist

Offstage voices: (or may appear) Scene 2: one-two boys (after ghost scene); Scene 3: extra children in ark; Scene 7: Mrs. Vitner; Scene 9: Nazi Official

DOUBLING FOR CAST OF FIVE

Eva – Past/Eva 1945

Heinz in both memory scenes and 1945 scenes

Pappy/Pappy Memory/Herman/offstage men's voices

Mutti Past Mutti 1945

Sanne/Mrs. Jansen/Official/offstage female voices

TIME:

February 1940 – August 1945

PLACES:

Apartment in Amsterdam

Outside courtyard of the Geiringer's apartment

A Boat

An attic where Heinz and Pappy were in hiding

An attic where Eva and Mutti were hiding

A Cattle Car to Auschwitz

A minimalistic set of levels to suggest the areas and projections are all you need.

The soundscape and projections are integral to the play. This was a loving, boisterous family whose home was always filled with music, storytelling and books.

High-resolution photos of the paintings of the Geiringer family and Heinz's paintings. will be provided. For reference: examples of the projections are shown at the end of the script. Permission from Eva Geiringer Schloss to use them has been granted.

Note about Projections: The play relies on projections to tell the story. They are the focal point of the set and set the tone of the scenes. A few tables and chairs can be rearranged to suggest the rest of the scenes. While I have noted when the projections can go out, you may also choose to leave them in one continuous flow.

Projections: Sent upon request.

SYNOPSIS: Anne Frank's family and Heinz Geiringer's family were neighbors in Amsterdam. After both Heinz and Margot were "called up" to work in a Nazi Labor camp, they went into hiding at roughly the same time. Anne Frank left a diary showing the difficulties of growing up in hiding. Heinz Geiringer left over twenty paintings and a book of poetry which show us both his hope for the future and the terror of the time. Heinz loved the arts. A trained musician, Heinz turned to painting and poetry to utilize his time. He painted on tea towels, pillowcases and any surface that he could find. During the play, we witness his artistic growth through his paintings, poetry and his sister's remembrances. The paintings vary from a nostalgic love of the life he once led to the fears that were now part of his everyday existence. . From the tender age of fifteen to seventeen, Heinz created a body of work that exists to this day. After liberation, Otto Frank formed a close friendship with Fritzi Geiringer and Eva. As the survivors of their respective families, they understood each other. When Otto was given Anne's diary, Fritzi (Mutti) and Eva set out to recover Heinz's (and Pappy's) paintings. The paintings are housed in the Dutch Resistance Museum. Fritzi married Otto Frank and they dedicated their lives to bringing Anne Frank's diary to the world. Today, Eva Schloss travels the world as a speaker of peace and tolerance. She works to bring her brother's artistry to the world and to celebrate her brother's ability to find hope and healing in art. The play celebrates Heinz's life and depicts his journey as an artist and a loving brother.

THEME: Heinz's remarkable paintings show us the power of art under unconscionable circumstances and how art can offer hope and healing.

PROLOGUE

May 1944

Train sounds are heard in the dark. Then voices.
The voices are of HEINZ and EVA.

HEINZ

Eva! I need to tell you about the paintings.

EVA

Breathe, Heinz.

HEINZ

You need to know. They're hidden under the floorboards in the attic – in our last hiding place. When this is over, I want you to retrieve them.

EVA

Together! We shall pick them up together.

HEINZ

Of course. But just in case, I want you to know where they are.

EVA

We'll be free soon. Pappy says peace is near. The four of us will find them together.

HEINZ

I want to believe you/

EVA

/Believe! That's how we will get through this.

HEINZ

Promise me you will get the paintings. I need to know that if I don't make it, my paintings will.

EVA

You'll make it/

HEINZ

/Promise me, Eva!

EVA

I promise.

Scene 1 - August 1945

Lights up in EVA'S and MUTTI'S apartment. EVA (age 16) and MUTTI have just retrieved the paintings by PAPPY and HEINZ. The paintings are on sheets, tea towels, pillowcases – whatever “found” object they could find in hiding. They enter carefully carrying the paintings and papers. The paintings are laid flat with “something” in-between protecting the oils. They put them on the table.

Off to the side, in their attic-hiding place we see HEINZ painting.

PROJECTION 1: Heinz's self-portrait of himself reading.

(EVA holds one up for Mutti to see. MUTTI looks away.)

EVA

Look, Mutti. It's Heinz!

(EVA lovingly passes her hand over the drawings.)

Don't you want to see it?

MUTTI

I can't. Just picking them up from their hiding place was hard enough. I still felt like I needed to hide from the Nazis.

EVA

We had to get them. We promised!

MUTTI

And we kept our promise. They are finally home.

EVA

It's not a home anymore.

Projection of HEINZ out.

MUTTI

It's where we live and care for each other.

EVA

I hate it here! I want my old life back.

MUTTI

We're together and I am trying to move us forward.

EVA

The paintings bring them back to me. I can see Pappy and Heinz painting. They would work so slowly taking care with every stroke.

PROJECTION 2: HEINZ'S drawing of the sitting room in the GEIRINGER'S apartment in Amsterdam.

(HEINZ enters from hiding place. He has a small sketchpad filled with sketches.)

HEINZ

The first thing I drew in hiding was my family in our Amsterdam apartment. I wanted to be able to come back to them again and again with hope that our lives would continue in that place. After fleeing Vienna, we knew that our time in Belgium was temporary and so we tried to not get attached to our life there. But Amsterdam was to be our new home. It was a place that welcomed refugees. A place that gave us a future. A future surrounded by new friendships, tulips, and music.

I was frustrated with my early renderings. As you can see.

(HEINZ skims through pad showing the audience a glimpse of his early sketches.)

"It takes time," said Pappy. And then with that optimistic grin of his he noted, "And luckily, these days, we have a lot of time."

(HEINZ exits.)

(There is a music and a light cue that signal the memory scenes. Piano music is heard.)

MEMORY: Music. The Geiringer apartment, February 1940

We are in the Geiringer's apartment. They are inside the main living area. Off to the side is an outdoor terrace. EVA and MUTTI are at a table going over EVA'S homework. From another room

we can hear HEINZ practicing piano. The music is somewhat somber. But it is clear there is a talented musician at work.)

MUTTI

He's been playing that over and over again since he got home from school. I hope he moves on to something else soon. Something with a bit more cheer.

EVA

You always say, "Practice makes perfect."

MUTTI

There's practicing and then there's going overboard. Your vocabulary looks good. We should move on to verbs.

EVA

My head needs to rest.

MUTTI

My head needs a break from that music. HEINZ! Play something else! Something cheery.

(Immediately there is a switch to ragtime. EVA is beside herself with happiness and starts to dance to it.)

MUTTI

Eva! Sit!

EVA

I can't!

MUTTI

Now! In Dutch please: "I am."

(EVA sits but cannot stay still. She can be upside down, hanging off the chair at a silly angle but she definitely is not upright.)

MUTTI

How will you ever learn your verbs if you keep moving about like a squirrel?

EVA

I just learned French. Let's go live in France.

MUTTI

The Dutch have given Pappy a job. So we learn Dutch.

EVA

Promise me that we won't move again where I need to learn another language!

MUTTI

We're safe in Amsterdam.

(EVA gets up and moves around to the music.)

MUTTI (cont'd)

Your verbs: "I am!"

EVA (While dancing)

"Ik ben!"

MUTTI

"He is!" (EVA dances.) "He is!" Eva! Sit!

EVA

I can't sit still while that music is playing.

MUTTI

Heinz! Practice time is over. (Music out.) Eva, settle down and write this/

HEINZ (Enters)

/I haven't played in so long. There's so much to go over.

(Sings a few bars from Irving Berlin's
"I Love a Piano" (public domain). It's silly. As he
sings, EVA dances.)

I love a piano, I love a piano,
I love to hear somebody play.
Upon a piano, a grand piano,
It simply carries me away."

MUTTI

Heinz! Eva and I are working.

HEINZ

Sorry, Mutti. I love that Pappy got us a piano! I love Amsterdam! I got carried away!

MUTTI

Get carried away silently, please.

HEINZ

I should write a love poem to the piano.

MUTTI

Maybe you should rest your eyes.

HEINZ

One eye is always resting. I need to strengthen my good eye. If that one goes, I'm, sunk.

MUTTI

Read, then.

HEINZ

I do have a book to finish.

EVA

And then after you are done, you can act out the story for me! I'm in the mood for pirates.

HEINZ

My new book doesn't have pirates. It has ghosts!

MUTTI

Eva! The verbs! "He is!"

EVA

What're you reading now?

HEINZ

I'm reading about Lorelei. A young woman who drowned and seeks revenge. She sings above a high cliff and her voice is so beautiful that sailors want to be near her. They jump ship and try to swim to her but they all drown – just as she did.

EVA

Let's act it out. I want to be "Lorelei the murderer!"

MUTTI

Eva!

EVA

If only I could sing!

The verbs! MUTTI

Tell me the entire story. EVA

It starts from a time long ago/ HEINZ

/Heinz, this is not the time for stories. Eva needs to practice her Dutch. Eva, "He is!" MUTTI

"Hij is!" EVA

Good. "We are." MUTTI

My head is full! EVA

We'll have you fluent in no time. Just like Heinz. MUTTI

I'm not perfect Heinz! EVA

I'm not "perfect Heinz!" Where is this "perfect Heinz?" Is there another brother I don't know about? HEINZ

Who learns a language in two weeks? EVA

I had a head start. I started practicing when we lived in Belgium. HEINZ

Can we please finish the homework? MUTTI

(PAPPY enters and dances over to EVA, takes her hand and they waltz across the floor. HEINZ hums some music.)

It's time for music. PAPPY

Erich! We're working!

MUTTI

I am saved by Pappy!

EVA

Erich, can we wait a bit? Eva should do a little more work.

MUTTI

(PAPPY dances to MUTTI and sweeps her off her feet. She protests. HEINZ and EVA dance.)

Dance, Mutti! Dance!

EVA

(And they do for a moment.)

Now everyone in your circle.

PAPPY

(PAPPY places the speaker of the gramophone or in the center of the room. He puts on "The Trout Quartet" by Schubert. **MUSIC: Trout Quartet.**)

Someday, I will compose something that makes people as happy as this music makes me.

HEINZ

And you will. But first we must make sure you grow up healthy and strong. A good night sleep is essential for your well-being. It's time to let the world float away.

PAPPY

(MUTTI, PAPPY, HEINZ and EVA sit down with their heads near the speaker. Their backs are touching each other. They are like four spokes in a wheel – evenly spaced in a circle. EVA does roll about a bit trying to settle down.)

Evi...

MUTTI

I'm still. See how still I am?

EVA

(And she does settle down. For a moment all is calm and quiet with just the sounds of the music playing. They may touch hands. The family is connected to each other as the lights change.

Projection of Apartment out.

Music out.

During the interlude, we switch back to August 1945 in the apartment. It is a few hours later.)

SCENE 2

PROJECTION 3: Heinz's painting of an apple and a jug of wine.

(HEINZ enters – in hiding.)

HEINZ

After a month of intense drawing, I turned my attention to still lifes. The first think I noticed is that still lifes aren't still! There are textures to capture, movement in the folds of tablecloths. Then you must decide where to focus. Is the red in the apple deep enough? Does it make me want to eat it? Of course, everything made me want to eat. Food was scarce. If I couldn't eat my fill, I could at least try and paint it!

(HEINZ may stay and paint or exit.)

EVA

This is on a pillowcase and look – a painting on a tea towel. It's amazing what they used for painting materials.

MUTTI

So ... many.

EVA

They could paint on anything. But who brought them the paints and brushes?

MUTTI

Some people were very kind. We must remember that.

EVA

Look at this one – on a scrap of leather. (Beat.) Mutti! Look!

MUTTI

I'm trying.

EVA

Pappy and Heinz started a new movement. Painting on leather! Canvas is so old-fashioned! I know he was practicing with this one. He told me. Playing with light and dark...

(Beat.)

MUTTI

This is so hard.

EVA

This is one of my favorites! All of those apples and sausages you left for us. Our late nights on the terrace eating what we swiped from the icebox. Do you know how much food we stole while you thought we were sleeping?

MUTTI

You were growing children. Just children. (Beat.) I knew.

EVA

We'd sneak onto the balcony and eat like greedy little piglets. First, we'd look for the first star. And then, Heinz would tell me a story. Every night there'd be a new story. Pirates! Spies!

HEINZ

Ghosts! I loved to read adventure stories. It was a way of being in danger without being in danger. Eva hated to read but loved stories, so I would tell her everything I read. And when I told her stories she would almost sit still. Almost.

Lights change and we are in memory.

MEMORY: March 1940; Geiringer apartment on the terrace. The terrace has a small café table and two chairs.

(The lights change. HEINZ is on the terrace with his guitar. EVA is 11. Heinz is 14. HEINZ is singing a song. ("Wayfaring Stranger.") Do as much or as little of the song as you wish.)

HEINZ

"I'm just a poor Wayfaring Stranger, passing through this world below.
There is no sickness, toil or danger, in that bright world to which I go.

I'm going there to see my father, I'm going there no more to roam.
I'm only going over Jordan. I'm only going over home.

(EVA enters with apples and sausages. They have a knife for cutting and they are quite pleased with their midnight shenanigans.)

EVA

Why do you always play that song?

HEINZ

It's how I feel when night falls.

EVA

Play something happier. Please.

(HEINZ plays a little ragtime music. EVA leaps up and does an impromptu dance. She may add in a cartwheel or hang off the railings – something to show off her physical prowess and her joy of the moment.)

EVA

I'm getting dizzy!

(HEINZ stops playing.)

HEINZ

Eat. You'll feel better. (He hands her some food.) Promise me something.

EVA

Anything.

HEINZ

Promise me that whenever you hear music, you'll dance like that. Even if I'm not here.

EVA

Where are you going?

HEINZ

Someday, I'll go to the University and study art and music.

EVA

You can do that in Amsterdam. I won't let you go anywhere else.

HEINZ

It won't be for years!

EVA

I promise you, if you try to go away, I'll ... lock the door and only open it to bring you apples. And to have you tell me stories.

HEINZ

It's all in the future. I'm not going anywhere yet.

(Beat as they look at the sky.)

HEINZ

The evening star.

EVA

It's there every night.

HEINZ

You can count on it. The fog's rolling in. Soon it'll be hard to see anything.

(EVA tightly shuts one eye and tries to look out.)

HEINZ

What are you doing?

EVA

Trying to see how you see.

HEINZ

You silly! I see just like you. I just don't see in all directions at the same time. Unless I'm in a corner. For some reason, I see more angles if I sit in a corner.

EVA

Shall I put you in a corner so you can see better?

HEINZ

I'm comfortable. Maybe I should wear a pirate patch? Would you like that?

EVA

We can both wear pirate patches!

HEINZ

And we shall board the Jolly Dodger and I'll be Captain One-Eye at the helm.

EVA

And I shall be known as Pirate Shy-Eye!

HEINZ

You are not shy!

EVA

One eye is shy when I'm away from home and one eye is filled with fun when I'm with you.

HEINZ

As for me, my good eye sees everything perfectly and my blind eye - sees what's inside of people.

EVA

What do you see now? The streets are filling up with shadows – it looks scary.

HEINZ

Quick! Over there – through the mist – something's moving. Look before it disappears! I think it's a ghost!

EVA

Where? I want to see it!

HEINZ

You missed it. Wait. Shh.

(Beat.)

EVA

What?

HEINZ

Is that a chain clanging in the distance?

(EVA listens intently.)

EVA

It is!

HEINZ

I think that's Old Pirate Gustav roaming the canals. Creeping ... sneaking ... step by step... until his icy hand finds his victim!

(HEINZ touches EVA with something cold from their midnight treats. EVA jumps!)

EVA

Heinz!

HEINZ

He came to Amsterdam to sell his stolen booty but was caught and hanged.

EVA

How do you know that?

HEINZ

Herman told me. He's been in Amsterdam for years and knows all about its ghosts. And guess what? I met Gustav! He was all bloodshot eyes, and black teeth. Everything about him was dirty except for this gold chain around his neck.

EVA

Was he here?

HEINZ

No, at school. I was working late in the music room. My eyes were tired so I curled up under the piano and fell asleep! I was awakened by a cold mist that came over me. And then an icy finger touched my forehead. His gold chain rattled.

(HEINZ acts it out. He touches EVA's forehead.)

I bolted upright. And there was Gustav! I froze. And then he gestured for me to follow him. I didn't want to but I had no choice. I was tied by an invisible rope that dragged me forward and soon I was out in the cold. I heard crying. Was it a baby? Or – a cat?

(HEINZ lets out a cat cry. EVA jumps.)

But then there was such a wail. (Heinz lets out a long wail.) It entered my body and I shuddered. (They both shudder.) I didn't want to go any further. The streets were empty. There was nobody about. Only Gustav-the-pirate-ghost and me. He was leading me to my doom.

EVA

Don't follow him!

HEINZ

I had to! We reached a bridge and the crying continued. Where was it coming from? And then I looked up. There was a child. Way up on the highest branch. He was terrified. And then I knew - Gustav brought me here to rescue him. So I made my way up the tree.

(HEINZ climbs on a chair and maybe onto the table. He's unsteady.)

EVA

But – you’re afraid of heights.

HEINZ

I know! But I did what Pappy told me when we went mountain climbing. “Don’t look down, son! Only up!” Slowly I inched up the tree. And then –

(HEINZ lets out a gasp and is silent.)

EVA

What?

HEINZ

The little boy jumped on my shoulder and held me tight. And oh-so carefully, I slid down. As soon as I put the boy on the ground, he hugged me and ran away. And then Gustav did the strangest thing. He removed one of the links from his gold chain and gave it to me. I think Gustav is trying to do good deeds to rid himself of his terrible past.

EVA

Where’s the chain link?

(HEINZ goes through his pockets but come out empty.)

HEINZ

I must have lost it when I ran home.

EVA

You’re making this up!

HEINZ

Who knows? Have another apple slice.

EVA

This is the perfect evening. Play one more song before we go inside.

(HEINZ plays “Lovely Evening.” He starts to sing and EVA joins in. NOTE: You may change the song to something in public domain that would fit the times and the scene. HEINZ stops.)

EVA

What’s wrong?

HEINZ

There's a policeman on the street. His uniform – it scares me. Remember - before we left Vienna - when I was attacked by some boys after school? A policeman watched and did nothing.

EVA

It's over. We're not in Vienna anymore. We're safe in Amsterdam.

OPTIONAL for large cast. HEINZ is remembering.

BOY

Juden!

ANOTHER BOY

Hey Jew-Boy? What's wrong?

BOY

Afraid of something?

ANOTHER BOY

Scared?

BOY

Get him!

HEINZ

Let's go inside.

Projection of Still Life out.

(They exit as the lights change.)

SCENE THREE

August 1945, at the Geiringer apartment.

MUTTI

Let's stop.

EVA

I need to do this! You should be grateful for them ... grateful they did this ... grateful we found them/

MUTTI

/I'm not ready for/

EVA

/I am! Two years in hiding and I didn't do anything.

MUTTI

You studied.

EVA

I can't paint. Or make-up stories. Or play an instrument.

MUTTI

You dance, do gymnastics, ski, mountain climb/

EVA

I did nothing to help him. He helped me learn Dutch. He helped me make friends, he was always there for me.

PROJECTION 4: Heinz with his guitar.

MEMORY: April 1940. Friends.

(EVA is outside in the courtyard. She has a bag of marbles and is playing by herself. Nearby, there are sounds of children playing: hopscotch, jump rope, marbles, hoops, and bicycles. SANNE is among EVA smiles and waves at SANNE. No response. HEINZ enters.)

HEINZ

Don't you have the saddest face of anyone I've ever known?

EVA

Nobody will play with me. And I can't speak to them in Dutch. It doesn't matter. I don't care.

HEINZ

Wait here.

(HEINZ exits.)

EVA

I have nowhere to go.

(She continues to play with the marbles by her lonesome. HEINZ returns with his guitar.)

HEINZ

Do you care to dance?

(And HEINZ plays a fast, ragtime tune. The music gets inside EVA and she dances. She leaps and cartwheels and if possible does her gymnast moves. She forgets her loneliness. SANNE comes forward. At first she watches EVA and then joins in the dance. There is a coming-together and the beginnings of friendship. As the lights change EVA is now with a friend.)

Projection of Heinz out.

(The lights change back to EVA'S and MUTTI'S 1945 apartment.)

EVA

Remember this?

MUTTI

Heinz's boat. We tried to sail every lake and river in The Netherlands. We almost succeeded. If only...

EVA

If only we were allowed to keep it. *I hate this!* Heinz should be here. He should be sailing, playing the piano! It's so quiet here. *I hate the quiet!*

(MUTTI takes EVA in her arms.)

MUTTI

Shh, my darling. The memories are hard.

(HEINZ appears)

EVA

No! The memories are good. This "afterlife" is hard. That beautiful sailboat! I know he was remembering those sailing days while stuck inside.

PROJECTION 5: The Sailboat.

(HEINZ enters – in hiding.)

HEINZ

Months pass. We were still in hiding. I began to use my art to set myself free. We were hidden in shadow so I painted the sun. Light meant being outside – sailing with friends – free. I wanted to set sail on a blazing blue body of water. But for now, my boat could only sail under a dim, blurred sky.

MUTTI

Remember when he became a captain?

MEMORY: May 1940

(Music underscoring as we set the scene for the “Memory of the Sailboat.” It is almost like a dance. HEINZ is the captain on a boat welcoming EVA, SANNE and HERMAN. He has on a captain’s cap. Music out at start of dialogue.)

HEINZ

Welcome aboard, Miss Geiringer. I am your captain. We will be sailing at 0900 hours. The winds are moderate from the southwest.

EVA

Aye, aye, Captain!

HEINZ

And welcome Sanne and Herman. Are you ready to set sail?

SANNE

I’m so excited. I brought a small picnic to share. With cake.

HERMAN

So did I. We’ll have plenty of food.

HEINZ

Ha! I’ve seen how much you can eat.

HERMAN

I’m growing!

HEINZ

We all are.

SANNE

So we’ll eat everything.

HEINZ

Except for Eva. She's a picky eater.

EVA

I eat cake.

HEINZ

We all eat cake. I am your captain and you are my shipmates.

HERMAN

As first mate/

EVA

/I'm first mate!

HERMAN

As second mate, I propose that we eat.

HEINZ

Before we eat, I think we should go on an adventure. Then we will be hungry.

HERMAN

I'm already hungry.

EVA

I vote for the adventure. What did you have in mind? Pirates? I'll be a pirate.

HEINZ

Sirens! There's a tale that takes place on the Rhine at a place called the Murmuring Cliffs.

SANNE

It's where Lorelei was jilted by her suitor and jumped off the cliff and drowned. Now her spirit sits way on top and she sings. She sings so beautifully that sailors that hear her go mad and jump ship to swim to her. But they drown. No one who has heard her song has survived to tell the tale. (Beat. As all look at her.) We studied it in school. *It's so romantic!* Let's play! I want to be Lorelei!

EVA

No, me!

HEINZ

You, Eva are my savior. For I want to be the sailor that hears Lorelei's song and lives to tell the tale. But that can only happen if you help me.

EVA

I'll always help you.

HERMAN

And me?

HEINZ

A fallen sailor.

HERMAN

Am I – dead? I don't want to be dead.

HEINZ

Nobody wants to be dead. Lorelei was so unhappy about being jilted, she vowed to drown as many sailors as she could.

EVA

She was a murderer!

HEINZ

She was. But sailors came anyway wanting to hear her song.

EVA

That's silly of the sailors. They should sail to a place where nobody wants to murder them.

HEINZ

They wanted to experience her enchantment. Just as I do. Are you game?

HERMAN

As long as I live.

HEINZ

We'll all live. In real life.

SANNE

I'm ready. What do you want me to do?

HEINZ

Sanne, climb up high on these boxes. They are the cliffs. You will be Lorelei and sing.

SANNE

I don't sing.

HEINZ

We will imagine it. Herman and I will be the sailors who want to experience everything. My first mate needs to tie me up so I cannot jump into the water when the music starts. Unfortunately my friend – you will not be so lucky. You will jump in the water/

HERMAN

/I don't want to jump in the water. I don't swim.

HEINZ

You *make-believe* you jump in the water and you *make-believe* you drown. Now, Eva you must wear ear plugs so that you don't hear Lorelei calling. Ready?

ALL

Aye, aye.

HEINZ

Here's some rope to tie me up.

(EVA ties a knot. SANNE climbs to the top "of something." HEINZ gives EVA some makeshift ear plugs. It could be something silly that hangs out of her ears.)

HEINZ

Take this. When I tell you to, put it in your ears. That way you'll be safe. And remember, no matter what I say – do *not* untie me until we're past the cliffs. Is that clear?

EVA

Aye, Aye, Captain!

HEINZ

And now, we sail to the cliffs!

(The sail in the quiet for a moment or two. And then from far away we hear a beautiful voice.)

HEINZ

Listen to the wind. There's music in it. Can you hear it?

(The children listen carefully. They hear it! SANNE mimes the singing and with a dancer's flair, she motions for the sailors to come to her. It's haunting, exquisite and welcoming.)

HEINZ (cont'd)

They're here! How I wish you could also hear them.

(The VOICE is closer. You could use “Die Lorelei.”)

SANNE

Come to me, sailors. Follow me into the sea. I have such secrets that mankind will never know. But I will tell them to you.

HEINZ

I must stay the course.

SANNE

Don't you want to know more? Experience more?

HERMAN

I do!

SANNE

Then come closer.

(HERMAN mimes jumping in. He flails about and slowly drowns. He is not a bad actor. It may go on a bit. The singing continues.)

HEINZ

Eva! Untie me. I need to get closer to them. **EVA!**

(EVA stays her course and shakes her head “no.” They are playacting and this is playful. We get to see EVA'S stubbornness.)

EVA

I can't hear you.

SANNE

Throw off that human coil. Break away from its chains. I will tell you the future. You can hold everyone's future in your hands. You will know all.

HEINZ

EVA! Unchain me now! That's an order from your captain.

EVA

I *am* following orders from my captain. And my captain said I should ignore my captain. So there!

SANNE

You are strong enough to get loose. Join me. You will know goodness for all of eternity.

HEINZ

Eva? **EVA!**

EVA

Is someone calling me?

HEINZ

Look at me. **EVA!** Read my lips. Remember when I told you to not listen to me?

EVA

Yes.

HEINZ

I was wrong. These sirens mean us no harm. Let me go.

EVA

(Beat.) No.

HEINZ

They will show me wonders and in turn, I will give them to you. A life of hope. Wouldn't you like that?

EVA

(Beat.) Yes. But no.

HEINZ

Eva!

SANNE

This is your last chance. To live forever.

HEINZ

Free me now!

(Beat.)

EVA

No.

(The singing is heard. HEINZ tries to break free. The music swells and abruptly changes into the sounds of war planes. They increase and are gone. Then more planes come and more planes. Maybe

Gestapo sirens. All “play” stops. EVA immediately goes to protect Heinz. They stare at the sky.)

EVA

Heinz!

HEINZ

The Germans are here.

(HEINZ envelops EVA in a hug. SANNE and HERMAN move closer together. The sounds are further and further away. HEINZ is shaken but tries to comfort his friends.)

HEINZ

Ahoy, my brave mates, Let’s sail home. Where shall we sail to next week?

SANNE

England!

HERMAN

America!

EVA

(Holds out her hand to him.) Anywhere. I’ll follow you anywhere.

Projection of sailboat out.

(The lights fade to black. After blackout, the sounds die down.)

SCENE FOUR

An “Official” enters and reads the “laws Against the Jews. Alternately, you could use two officials reading every other order.)

OFFICIAL

1. Jews are banned from recreational facilities: hotels, restaurants, movies, ice cream shops.
2. Jews are banned from management. They may no longer hold jobs that work with the public.
3. Jews may not own radios. All radios are to be confiscated.
4. Jews may not own bicycles. All bicycles are to be confiscated.

OFFICIAL (cont'd)

5. Jews may not attend public schools.
6. Jews must wear the Star of David on their clothing at all times. Failure to do so will result in arrest.
7. Jews must adhere to a strict curfew. They may not be outside from 8 p.m. till 6 a.m.
8. Jews cannot be citizens of the Reich. They have no right to vote and cannot hold public office.
9. Jews cannot use public transportation.
10. Jews may not use air raid shelters.

Jews cannot ... Jews may not ... cannot ... may not.

The lights come up on the Geiringer's Apartment. It is late October, 1940. The Germans have been occupying The Netherlands for a few months. (HEINZ enters – in hiding.)

PROJECTION 6: Tom with Train

HEINZ

More months passed. Pappy kept assuring me the war would be over soon and I continued to paint hope. I thought of my little cousin Tom who was safe in England. Tom was an innocent. I imagined him playing with toy trains. A train ride used to be an adventure. Now, it meant something far more menacing.

(EVA enters with vegetables and chocolates.)

At the beginning of the Nazi invasion, life was bearable. We played, we flirted – or rather I flirted. Friendships with girls was new to me and I welcomed it. Even Herman caught the bug and brought Eva flowers. Eva was so stunned, she ran away and hid in her bedroom until he left! We were just kids figuring out life.

Projection of Tom out.

MEMORY: The Unbroken Chain

In memory, We see EVA seated, stuffing her face with chocolates. She is rewrapping a fancy chocolate box where she has replaced all the chocolates with carrots and turnips. She knows what she is doing is wrong and once in a while glances around to make sure she isn't caught. In truth, she is quite pleased with herself.

EVA

Heinz! HEINZ! I am going to Sanne's. I'll be right back.

(EVA exits with chocolate box. Music stops and HEINZ enters. Seeing no one around, HEINZ settles into a chair reading *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. MUTTI and PAPPY enter.)

HEINZ

You're home early.

PAPPY

We were looking for supplies for our moccasin business.

MUTTI

But everything is in short supply.

HEINZ

That's not good.

PAPPY

We'll figure it out.

MUTTI

Where's Eva?

HEINZ

I don't know.

MUTTI

Probably outside playing. I'll get the tea on.

(MUTTI does so.)

HEINZ

We'll be fine, right Pappy? Your business will still work.

PAPPY

Don't worry. I'll take care of everything.

(MUTTI and PAPPY prepare for tea. HEINZ goes back to reading. EVA enters.)

MUTTI

We thought you'd be playing until dinner.

EVA

There's no one to play with. Everyone's at Sanne's birthday party. (Beat.) Except me.

(EVA approaches HEINZ. MUTTI and PAPPY are in the background with their tea.)

EVA

Heinz! You'll never guess what I just did. It was terribly naughty.

HEINZ

Uh huh.

EVA

You know how I wasn't invited to Sanne's birthday party? Well – guess what I did. I bought the prettiest box of chocolates I could find. I unwrapped all of them and ate every single one. They were soooo good. I should have saved you one - but I didn't. Then I worked very hard and cut a carrot and a turnip into the *exact* same-size squares that the chocolates were. And then I carefully rewrapped them to look like the original chocolates. Then, I put the fake chocolates back into the box, retied the bow and presented them to Sanne at her birthday party! I wish I could see her face when she opens them.

(EVA takes a moment to savor the memory. Maybe she has a laugh to herself. She is immensely pleased with her wrongdoing. HEINZ remains oblivious.)

EVA

I probably shouldn't have done that. But she deserved it. Don't you think so?

HEINZ

That's nice.

(EVA punches HEINZ.)

HEINZ (cont'd)

Eva!

EVA

Heinz!

HEINZ

What?

EVA

You're not listening to me!

HEINZ

I'm reading!

EVA

I'm talking to you!

HEINZ

You're always talking.

EVA

You're always reading!

(HEINZ is still ignoring EVA. She punches him again. HEINZ is not amused.)

Stop reading!

HEINZ

Don't punch me! (Beat.) Listen to this.

HEINZ (cont'd)

“To give up the yoke of the land which men equate with freedom is not a great sacrifice.”

EVA

That's nice. (Beat.) I have no idea what that means.

HEINZ

That's what Captain Nemo tells his men when they want to go back to land. Captain Nemo thinks they should stay on the ship.

EVA

If people want to leave the ship, the captain should let them. There. I solved his problem.

HEINZ

But the men have more freedom on the ship than on the land.

EVA

That's silly. There's more room on the land.

HEINZ

But suppose you're not free to go anywhere. Like us. We can't leave Amsterdam. We can't go to the movies. We can't go to ice cream shops. Wouldn't you rather live on a ship where you were free to go to those places?

EVA

Do they have ice cream shops on ships?

HEINZ

Eva! Think. If we lived on a free ship, Pappy could still run his business. He can't here.

EVA

Could Pappy run his shoe business on a ship?

HEINZ

Why not? Sailors wear shoes.

EVA

All right. I'll live on a ship. But only if you and Mutti and Pappy are with me. And I could have lots of ice cream.

HEINZ

Seriously, Eva. Look at Mutti and Pappy. They're worried. Pappy's trying to start a business at home but times are getting tough again. Like they were in Vienna.

EVA

Do you think Pappy will have to leave the country again to find a job?

HEINZ

Pappy will do whatever he can to support us. And keep us safe. But it's getting harder.

EVA

But what if he has to go all the way to America? And what if we can't join him? What if we don't see him for a whole year? What if he goes so far away that we never find him again?

HEINZ

(Beat.) I don't know.

(Pause as EVA absorbs this answer.)

EVA

That's the first time you've ever said, "I don't know" to me.

HEINZ

I wish I had an answer. (Beat.) Eva, have you ever thought about what you wanted to be when you grow up? I think about that a lot. Growing up. What our future will be like. Do we have one here?

EVA

Of course we do! I think it would be nice to be a mother some day. And grow tulips.

HEINZ

Tulips?

EVA

I love how the parks are filled with them. Vienna was never like that. Tulips make me happy. What will you do?

HEINZ

I don't know. I love my music. I love the idea that it makes people happy. But then I think about painting. When I go to the City Museum and see Rembrandt's paintings, I think how his works bring happiness to people hundreds of years after he's gone. Imagine being able to do that. It's as if you go on living after you're gone. I'd like that.

EVA

Rembrandt? The artist who did all those dark pictures?

HEINZ

Yes, Rembrandt! And the paintings weren't all dark. He did this clever trick where he would pose his subject just so.

(HEINZ tilts EVA'S face so she is posed "just so.")

HEINZ (cont'd)

He would let a little light center on the middle of the nose. That way, one half of the face could be painted in tiny details and the other half is shaded – darker – so there's more emotion. I love that idea!

EVA

Remember when we would go through Uncle Ludwig's art catalogue in Vienna? And he would say, "Heinz, someday you will be in this catalogue." (Beat.) I miss our Austrian family.

HEINZ

They're safe in England. I wish we were there. We used to see them every week. And now it's been –

EVA

- two years. The first thing we should do when this war is over is visit them.

HEINZ

If we make it to the end of the war.

EVA

Don't talk like that.

HEINZ

I don't know if Pappy can keep us safe anymore. First there were the new laws. Then we had to go to separate schools. And now we watch as Jews are arrested for what? For being Jewish. Nobody knows where they go. They just - disappear.

EVA

The Dutch will look out for us.

HEINZ

They want to but can they? (Beat.) I'm scared, Evi. I hear things. Bad things. You know how I always worried about my good eye going bad and being blind? Now, I worry about dying.

(Beat as HEINZ says this really to himself.)

What happens? Is it – just nothing forever?

PROJECTION 7: Heinz's drawing of Pappy

(EVA is stunned for a moment. SHE hugs HEINZ. HEINZ goes to PAPPY and EVA follows. They just stand there and stare at their parents. PAPPY and MUTTI look at them and there is a moment before HEINZ finally blurts out his fears.)

HEINZ

What happens to us when we die?

(A beat. MUTTI and PAPPY are stunned.)

MUTTI

Oh, Heinz. You're not going/

PAPPY

/let me talk to them, Fritz.

(The family settles on the couch.)

PAPPY

Where did that thought come from?

HEINZ

The Nazis – I remember Vienna and then I look around here and they're everywhere.

PAPPY

Heinz, understand that we are part of a long chain of people. You and I are each one of the links. So are Mutti and Eva. We are all links. Each and every link is important. And someday, when you have children, you will live through them.

HEINZ

But what if I don't have any children?

PAPPY

I promise you this: everything you do leaves something behind. Every time you help us, you leave something good behind. And that good stays. All the good you have already done stays forever – never to be forgotten. Everything is connected like a chain that will never be broken.

HEINZ

But I haven't done anything yet to create a chain.

EVA

You always help me!

HEINZ

I love doing that, but that's not enough. I need time. More time to create these links.

PAPPY

You have your whole life ahead of you.

HEINZ

Do I Pappy?

(Beat.)

MUTTI

We need some music. That always calms us. I'll get the gramophone.

HEINZ

No – let *me* play the music. I need to *do* something. Create something. Now.

Projection of Pappy out.

(HEINZ rushes into the other room. Music is heard. The family gathers close and listens as the lights fade to black.)

SCENE FIVE

AT RISE we are back in 1945 in the apartment in Amsterdam. EVA finds a poem. HEINZ is off to the side.

PROJECTION 8: Drawing of Eva Reading

MEMORY: The hospital poem

EVA

He drew me. (Beat.) I almost look pretty. Even studios!

MUTTI

You are beautiful, Evi'tje. As for studios? (Beat.) Maybe sometimes.

EVA

Look! In-between the paintings – he hid his poems. It's the poem he wrote about the hospital and I must say it's the silliest poem he ever wrote!

HEINZ appears – in hiding.

EVA

(Reading.)

A long day in the hospital brings you so much fun,
Many in the room are smiling and it's filled with sweet, loved ones.

(As MUTTI and EVA gather over the poem, we hear HEINZ'S voice. The poem is a wee bit inaccurately translated from the Dutch. The poem is dated from July 1942 when HEINZ first went into hiding.)

HEINZ

First, there is Mister Hillesum, an old, sweet gentle soul; he often sits upon the pot and likes it - nay, he loves it. Too much if you ask me.
The nurses also are great fun, there are so many in the crew.
Listen to what I've learned from here. Believe me, it's all true.
If you are not sick, the hospital's the perfect place to be.
And as a merry vacationer, my time here gave me glee.

EVA

Why'd you stick him in the hospital? It must have been miserable to be healthy in the middle of all the sick people.

MUTTI

Your father thought he'd be safer there. Boys were "disappearing" from schools. But when we heard that patients were "disappearing" from hospitals, we brought him home.

(The lights switch back to the apartment. It is March 1941. HEINZ and EVA are gathered together. HEINZ has a mountain of books.)

EVA

I've missed you. It's a little crazy to be in the hospital when you're not sick. What did you do – besides watching Mister Hillesum on the pot?

HEINZ

I read books – all day. I read a new book about pirates! It kept my mind off of Mister Hillesum. And the pot.

EVA

Tell me. I love a good pirate story!

(Planes are heard. Air raid sirens turn on.)

EVA (cont'd)

We're going to be bombed! We have to go!

HEINZ

We can't. Jews aren't allowed in the shelters anymore.

EVA

We have to go somewhere! Where are Mutti and Pappy?

HEINZ

At a meeting trying to decide where to find a safe space for us.

(Sirens.)

EVA

I need them here!

HEINZ

Lie down.

EVA

We have to get out

HEINZ

It's too late. Lie down!

(EVA does so. HEINZ throws whatever he could find over her. Coats... a tablecloth.)

EVA

What are you doing?

HEINZ

I'm protecting you in case there's broken glass. Don't get scared – but I'm going to throw myself on top of you. I'll die before I let anything hurt you.

(The sirens die down.)

HEINZ (cont'd)

False alarm.

EVA

You'd ... die for me?

HEINZ

Yes.

EVA

But – you're afraid of dying.

HEINZ

But I'm more afraid of you dying because I couldn't save you.

EVA

*I hate this! There's no safe place for us! We can't ride bicycle or ice skate or even go to the movies! **I'll never see Snow White!***

HEINZ

Snow White? We could have been seconds away from being bombed and you're mad because you can't go see Snow White?

EVA

I know it's silly. But they've been playing the songs on the radio for weeks and I love them. Everyone is going. (Beat.) Everyone who isn't Jewish. It's been six months since we've seen a movie. And I miss Shirley Temple.

(HEINZ does a sweet little tap number. It's awkward and funny.)

HEINZ

How's that?

EVA

You don't have her curls.

HEINZ

True. Come. Mutti and Pappy should be home soon. Let's set the table for them. (Beat.) We'll make them think they raised perfect children!

EVA

Maybe one perfect child... Did I tell you how much I love it that you're back home? I want the four of us to always be together.

Projection of Eva out.

(Lights fade to black.)

SCENE 5

Lights up. EVA is frozen. HEINZ enters.

HEINZ

I thought about that afternoon a lot. My sister – this child that cannot walk without doing cartwheels. This child who can walk on her hands. She could no longer ride a bicycle. She could no longer go to ice cream shops. And the only thing she wanted in the world was to see *Snow White*. And I thought – I could do that – I could give it to her.

PROJECTION 9: Snow White

MEMORY: Heinz gives Eva *Snow White*.*

(*For this scene, you may stage it so we do not see the front of the cut-outs, or draw your own cut-outs – not resembling Disney's - or use an illustrator in public domain such as Arthur Rackham. Although the memory pertains to the Disney film, all images and music from that film remains in copyright.)

Lights return to the Amsterdam Apartment, August 1945. EVA and MUTTI are still sifting through Heinz's works.

EVA

What happened to the Snow White drawings? They're not here. They made me so happy.

MUTTI

They were left behind.

EVA

The people after us probably threw them in the trash.

MUTTI

Or – they gave it to a young girl and the drawings made her as happy as they made you.

EVA

That evening was my own fairy-tale. Finally, those huge, scary blackout curtains were good for something. I remember you calling me in to the living room...

MUTTI

Evitje! Heinz has such a surprise for you!

(The lights change. We are in memory. Depending on your license, fairy-tale music could be heard in the background – Music possibility: Tchaikovsky's "Sleeping Beauty Waltz.")

We are going to showcase Heinz's art even though the originals are gone. Two choices (or both):

1. MUTTI and PAPPY hold up different landscapes during EVA'S narration (the woods, the castle, the dwarves home)

Or

2. HEINZ quickly changes masks that depict the characters during the narration.

(In reality, HEINZ fashioned huge cardboard cutout of the characters and if you are feeling ambitious – go for it.)

MUTTI and EVA remain in their 1945 places remembering. Let the music underscore the entire scene. HEINZ does the show in pantomime. Using the cutouts, he may dance as Snow White with the birds, pantomime the haughty queen looking into her mirror and eventually on his knees or scrunched down, he does all the dwarves. Feel free to use other made-up dwarves (SADLY, SINGY, DANCY, etc.)

We hear 1945 EVA over the pantomime.)

EVA

Heinz played all the parts. He sang parts of the songs. A light shone on the blackout curtains and his characters came to life. I felt so lucky. Thousands of people were seeing the movie in the theatres. But I was seeing it live!

Heinz sweetly danced with the birds outside the castle.

Then he was the mean Queen looking into the mirror and furious at what she sees.

Suddenly, he was the huntsman ready to slay Snow White! But he quickly changed back to Snow White and begged to be spared!

But the best of all were the dwarves. In the blink of an eye, Heinz changed into all the dwarves as he danced. Of course, I had to dance with him. And that thrilled me! I was dancing in Snow White! Nobody could take that away from me.

And nobody will ever take away that magical night.

(The narration, music and pantomime end at the same time. The lights change back and HEINZ is gone. We are back in 1945.)

EVA

Those days in Amsterdam when the four of us were together were the most wonderful years of my life. Even when we had curfew and couldn't go anywhere in the evenings, I loved it. Because we were together. Remember playing bridge?

MUTTI

You and Heinz got very good at it.

EVA

You never let us win! Sanne's parents let her and Barbara win.

MUTTI

Your father did not believe in that. He wanted to encourage you two to develop the fighting spirit. And not be afraid of working hard.

EVA

Even when Heinz was called up, he vowed to go and work hard, remember?

(The lights change. It is July 1942. HEINZ has a letter that he gives to PAPPY. HEINZ is putting on the bravest face possible.)

MEMORY: The Nazis call.

HEINZ

Everyone turning sixteen got one. Herman did. So did Henke. Even Margot. I think it will be fine, don't you?

PAPPY

I don't know.

HEINZ

I'll work hard. You know I can do that. And when the war is over, I'll be back here and things will go back to normal.

(EVA and MUTTI enter and MUTTI sees they are upset.)

MUTTI

What?

PAPPY

Heinz got called up. He's to report for work duty on Monday. He's to pack a bag and get ready to go to Germany.

(EVA runs and wraps her arms around HEINZ.)

EVA

No! I won't let them take him.

MUTTI

That can't happen.

HEINZ

There isn't a choice. Don't worry, Mutti. The war will end soon.

PAPPY

This is true. With the Americans in it, it can't be much longer. A month or two at best.

MUTTI

Erich! You can't think/

PAPPY

/No! He's not going.

HEINZ

They'll arrest me!

PAPPY

You're not going. (Beat.) I had hoped for more time. Another month to make arrangements. But the time is now – we must disappear.

(Lights fade to black on a stunned family.)

- OPTIONAL INTERMISSION -

SCENE 6

HEINZ enters from hiding. The paragraph below is from a poem of Heinz. It is not a literal translation but more thematic. He has his poetry book.

PROJECTION 10: Heinz handwritten poetry.

HEINZ

In July 1942, just before my sixteenth birthday, we separated. It seemed that we left everything – everything that defined us as a family. I tried to think that what was left were just “things. However, it was our lives that were important. I wanted an invention that would let us all live forever. It was “life” that I yearned for.

MEMORY: Separating

At rise, belongings are packed up or stacked at one end. It is July 1942. MUTTI is serving tea to PAPPY and EVA. HEINZ enters weighed down with many books.

EVA

It all looks so empty. As if nobody ever lived here.

MUTTI

Things come and go. We'll be back to brighten it up again.

PAPPY

Heinz! You'll break your back.

HEINZ

I need each one of these if I am to keep up with my studies. Geography, biology, French, World History, German, Italian/

EVA

/We don't need to learn Italian! We know enough languages!

HEINZ

But there are a few books I want to read and they were written in Italian. Everyone knows translations are not as good as the original. Why don't you try to learn Italian?

EVA

I'd rather practice walking on my hands!

PAPPY

We cannot carry all those books.

HEINZ

/But/

PAPPY

/We have enough to carry. We must look like we are visiting a relative. We certainly cannot be seen carrying so many things. People will get suspicious.

EVA

I gave up my Monopoly game!

HEINZ

I gave up my guitar!

MUTTI

Look at it this way; we are each giving up things we love in order to save what's truly important to us – each other. We can get things back later. First, we save ourselves.

HEINZ

Sorry, Mutti. I was being selfish.

EVA

Me, too. I'd rather be with all of you instead of being surrounded by stuff.

(Beat.)

PAPPY

Pick three books. (Beat.) We'll try to get the Jansens to bring some more over later.

MUTTI

Sit. This is our last tea together for a few months.

EVA

Months!

PAPPY

Two at most. We won't be in hiding that long.

EVA

Two whole months!

MUTTI

Two whole months where you will study so much, you will be ahead of everyone in the class when the war is over.

HEINZ

Doesn't that sound like fun, Eva?

EVA

No!

HEINZ

Just think – in two months we will be able to go to the cinema again.

EVA

Now, *that's* fun.

PAPPY

Tell me what you will take to think about while we are in hiding. Instead of taking things, we will take memories. What will you remember about our time in this flat?

EVA

Heinz's music!

HEINZ

Evi dancing.

PAPPY

I will remember all the fine meals your mother cooked and how she never cooked a thing until she came to Amsterdam.

MUTTI

I was spoiled – but I didn't too badly, did I? Even picky-eater-Eva ate everything.

EVA

I will relive the four of us eating together every minute of every day until we are back together.

MUTTI

And I will remember my remarkable husband who was banned from working and so created his own business from home. (To PAPPY.) Nothing stops you. You are still as wonderful as the day I met you.

(A very quiet beat.)

PAPPY

It's time to separate.

Projection 11 out.

EVA

I just sat down.

PAPPY

People are waiting for us. Good people.

EVA

Why can't we be in hiding together?

MUTTI

It's – dangerous. And hard for one family to hide four people.

EVA

What did we do to deserve this?

PAPPY

Nothing. Remember this always: you did nothing wrong. For now and in the future, know that you are all innocents caught up in madness. But for whatever reason, the Nazis are determined to find every Jew living in Amsterdam and send them away. I won't let them find us. We have a better chance of surviving if we separate.

HEINZ

Surviving? Does that mean there's a chance one of us might die?

MUTTI

It means – it's safer to hide separately. That's all. It's time. MRS. VITNER is expecting us.

(There are long hugs – it's almost a dance. Music underscores. Finally, PAPPY and HEINZ put on a coat and pick up some tiny belongings and exit. AFTER they leave, MUTTI and EVA do the same. The lights fade.)

SCENE 7 – Hiding

AT RISE, the stage is split into two hiding places. MUTTI and EVA are on one side. They are

finishing tea and getting ready to start the very quiet day. MUTTI is piling up books for EVA.

In PAPPY'S and HEINZ'S hiding place, HEINZ is already at work studying. He reads and then writes in a notebook. There's a small, unseen painting on a desk or a floor. PAPPY is putting the finishing touches on a painting. Again, it is on a small desk or table – just the basics – no easels. And they're working on small pieces of textiles. We hear an offstage voice. (We could see her if using a large cast.)

MRS. VITNER (O.S.)

Fritzi! Do you need anything before I leave?

MUTTI

We're fine, Mrs. Vitner. Thank-you.

MRS. VITNER

I will see you after work.

MUTTI (To EVA)

Come on! Mathematics and Literature are waiting.

EVA

I wish I were in school. At least there was recess!

MUTTI

Shh! Quiet time has begun.

(Very quietly, we see MUTTI show EVA the pages she needs to read. Then, MUTTI takes out a paper with a list of questions and gives them to EVA. EVA rolls her eyes but goes to work.

MUTTI opens a book.

On the other side of the stage, PAPPY stands quietly, checking his painting. HEINZ moves away from where he is studying and goes to his painting. He puts some finishing touches on it. The men go back to work touching up their art work.

EVA cannot sit still. She soon loops her legs around the chair. She reads. She changes position. Soon she is upside down reading. MUTTI is amused but tries to put her best “scolding face” on and gets EVA to sit up straight. EVA does and then goes into an impossible slump. MUTTI stands to admonish her and the doorbell rings. EVA and MUTTI freeze. The doorbell rings again. EVA and MUTTI aren’t breathing. We hear someone leave. MUTTI and EVA breathe. MUTTI and EVA try to go back to reading. EVA lays her head down on the desk.

On the other side of the stage, PAPPY gestures to HEINZ who quietly comes over. PAPPY shows HEINZ his painting.

**PROJECTION 12: PAPPY’S (ERICH’S)
painting of MUTTI (FRITZI).**

HEINZ stares at it and shows PAPPY his painting.
(It is also of MUTTI.)

**PROJECTION 13: HEINZ’S painting of
MUTTI.**

(If possible, have them side-by-side.)

HEINZ (As loudly and quietly as he dares.)

I miss them so much.

(HEINZ sits. PAPPY comes and over wraps his arms around him. They freeze.

Then, MUTTI approaches EVA who still has her head down. Holding back tears and sobs, EVA turns away. MUTTI goes to hold her and EVA lets her defenses down and grabs her mother as if it will save her life.

ALL are frozen for a moment as the lights slowly fade to black. **PROJECTIONS** out.)

(Time passes.)

OPTIONAL:

If using a large cast, you can do a street scene here. Underscored by music, EVA and MUTTI are enroute to visit HEINZ and PAPPY. It's dangerous. Any passerby could mean them harm. There can be people going to work, a police officer, a Nazi soldier. And then we segue into the next scene.

SCENE 8

HEINZ enters from hiding.

PROJECTION 13: HEINZ reading by fireplace.

HEINZ

For months, I pored over the one art book that Pappy Managed to get me. Rembrandt faced the darkness. Monet bathed his paintings in light. Van Gogh was all emotion. I started to paint to please myself. I stopped trying to paint correctly. Correctness was for mathematics.

MEMORY: Visiting Heinz and Erich

AT RISE we are in an attic – one of HEINZ'S and PAPPY'S hiding places. It is December 1942. The GEIRINGER'S have been separated and in hiding for six months. PAPPY is tidying up the small attic space. He finds a pillow and goes to move it. He looks at it.

PAPPY

Heinz! *HEINZ!* Where is my last pillowcase?

HEINZ

I – used it. For the still life. You don't need a pillowcase. You still have the pillow.

PAPPY

I like pillowcases on my pillows. It is one of the few niceties left to me in hiding.

HEINZ

Sorry, Pappy. I am trying to learn how to practice light and dark with my painting. Like Rembrandt.

PAPPY

Well Rembrandt, please stick to practicing your art on tea towels. And stay away from our sheets!

HEINZ

I was thinking your white shirt would be a good backdrop/

PAPPY

/No! If anyone paints on my last, white shirt – it should be me.

HEINZ

The paintings are my lifeline.

PAPPY

And the paintings are good. It is remarkable what you have accomplished. I couldn't be prouder of how you have handled all of this the last six months. (Beat.) How does everything look?

HEINZ

Almost like a home.

PAPPY

Stay away from the window.

HEINZ

They're late.

PAPPY

Maybe the train is late.

HEINZ

What if something happened? What if they were caught? We'd never know.

PAPPY

Believe me. We'd know. The Nazis document everything. Stop pacing.

HEINZ

Look at you all twitchy and nervous!

PAPPY

You're right. We both need to relax. It will be fine.

(A noise is heard in the hallway and then there is a knock at the door.)

MUTTI'S VOICE

Erich? Heinz?

PAPPY

See?

(PAPPY opens the door. EVA just about falls in.)

MUTTI runs to PAPPY. She is wearing some sort of elegant coat – very likely a fur coat. The trip was frightening and EVA can finally give in to her emotion. There are endearments and hugs and kisses that go on just a bit longer than would be normal in other circumstances. MRS. JANSEN is at the door – watching. She wears a worn coat.

There are constant hugs. Kisses – over and over. Murmurs of how much the kids have grown, how much they've missed each other. The GEIRINGERS are in a world of their own for a minute. Suddenly, PAPPY notices that MRS. JANSEN has remained.)

PAPPY

Thank-you, Mrs. Jansen. We are very appreciative.

(MRS. JANSEN nods and just stands there. There is an awkward moment.)

MUTTI

I'm sorry, is there something we can do for you?

MRS. JANSEN

I was admiring your coat.

MUTTI

It is lovely, isn't it? One of the few things I have left from our life in Vienna.

MRS. JANSEN

You don't need it. You barely go outside.

MUTTI

True. But I am hopeful when the war ends, it will be put to good use again.

MRS. JANSEN

You don't need it.

(MUTTI realizes what is happening and takes off her coat and hands it to MRS. JANSEN. In turn, she gives MUTTI her coat.)

PAPPY

Fritzi/

MUTTI

It's fine Erich. It's the least I can do for our – benefactor.

(MRS. JANSEN nods and exits. The family just looks at each other noting what has passed and then relieved to be alone together again. Hugs again between brother and sister, MUTTI and PAPPY.)

PAPPY

Fritzi, I'm so sorry.

MUTTI

It's a small price to pay to be able to spend some time with you. Six long months!

PAPPY

She's – problematical. I think we're going to have to find a new hiding place soon.

EVA

We're here. We're really here. It's been *forever!*

PAPPY

So, should we play catch-up with each other? Heinz, show Eva what you have been doing. Mutti and I ... will be right back.

(MUTTI and PAPPY exit to another room.)

EVA

They're going to start kissing.

HEINZ

I hope when I get married I stay in love when I'm old. Mutti and Pappy are lucky. They got to grow up during normal times. I wonder if I'll ever have a girlfriend.

EVA

Ha! You had two before we went into hiding.

HEINZ

They were friends. Nothing like Mutti and Pappy!

EVA

One year ago, I had no use for boys. Sanne was boy-crazy – just like her friends and I thought that was just silly. But now... sometimes I think it would be – interesting.

HEINZ

Interesting?

EVA

To have someone special who wasn't family.

HEINZ

It will happen. Come here. I have something to show you.

(HEINZ goes to a desk or a table and shows EVA a painting.)

**PROJECTION 13 turns to PROJECTION 14:
Painting of Discarded Items**

EVA

It's looks like a collection...of old stuff.

HEINZ

Of things lost or discarded. Like all the things we left behind in our Amsterdam apartment. (Beat.) Like us.

EVA

We're not/

HEINZ

/We are! But – we're fighting it.

EVA

This reminds me of your music. As if the colors were different notes. And those shadows... sad and spooky like that one Chopin you always played. I don't understand how you manage to do all of this. I can barely keep up with my studies.

HEINZ

Painting helps me. When I am frightened, I paint my fears so that I can look them in the face. And other times, I paint happy memories of our old life. It helps to remember that

HEINZ (cont'd)

those times will come back. Maybe hiding is a gift. If I was at a labor camp, I would not be allowed to do anything but work. But here – I have the time to learn new languages, paint, write poetry...

(HEINZ hands EVA a piece of paper.)

What do you think? I wrote it last week sitting in the dark. I was remembering the outside. I was remembering our life. Darkness comes early in December.

(The lights dim.)

EVA (Reading)

Dark, darker than darkness
Lay the city where nothing moved.
The eye could not catch anything.
Even the stars were removed.

Dark, darker than dark.
It layered all the streets.
Soft voices in the air
Told me danger was not here.

(HEINZ takes EVA's hand as they stroll imagining themselves outside. Sounds of the water lapping in the canals can be heard.)

HEINZ

I walked slowly through the streets
Thinking by the waterfront.
And the waters softly spoke to me
And swirled around my heart.

Looking at the sleeping city,
My mind flew to old desires,
To a path that now is gone.

This life that once brought joy,
This life that once I led,

When all was good, when all was fine,
Oh I am remembering
How that was a time.

PROJECTION of Discarded Items out.

(MUTTI and PAPPY enter.)

MUTTI

What are you two up to?

HEINZ

We were just taking an evening walk around the canals. The way we used to.

PAPPY

Tread lightly. We still need to remain quiet.

EVA

When this is over, I am going to scream! Scream until my voice gives out. And jump up and down until I leave a hole in the earth.

MUTTI

And I will let you. I'll even join you!

PAPPY

Take heart. The Germans were defeated at Stalingrad, which means the Russians are coming for them from the east. England and America are coming for them from the west. The Nazis will be squished.

EVA

The sooner the better!

PAPPY

Shh! Shall we play a nice quiet game of chess?

HEINZ

With all those horses and noisy knights? We dare not risk it. I have a better idea. Now that we have Mutti and Eva here until tomorrow, why not draw their likenesses? Eva will have to keep still as she will be my subject!

PAPPY

That's settled then. We still have some charcoal.

(EVA and MUTTI are posed on two chairs. PAPPY and HEINZ bring out supplies. Maybe some cardboard for paper.)

EVA

Can you make me look pretty?

HEINZ

You're beautiful.

PAPPY

As are you, Fritzi. More beautiful than ever.

(As MUTTI and EVA are posed, the lights fade to black.)

SCENE 9

**PROJECTION: 15: Young man at desk studying
with calendar dated May 11 on wall.**

HEINZ enters in hiding.

HEINZ

We were in hiding for two years. We moved seven times. We would hear people getting dragged into the streets and hauled away. The pressure for our hosts would build until finally they would say, "I am sorry. But can you find a new place to live." Each time we left a lot of our belongings. But we always carefully rolled up the paintings and my book of poetry and moved them to our new hiding place. It was our record of our time in the shadows. It defined us. I wrote a poem to my mother. In case I didn't make it.

"Hold my hand for just a moment
What a fog is in the room.
Mother, dear, please don't cry.
Mother. (beat) You know. (Beat) Mutti (Beat) Mommy...
Please. One more good-bye kiss/

MEMORY: Last day in hiding

Lights up on MUTTI and EVA in the present in their apartment. EVA uncovers another painting.

MUTTI

He painted himself studying. He was so determined to use the time in hiding wisely. *You*, on the other hand/

EVA

/I studied! I had no choice. What else was there to do?

MUTTI

I was determined to not have you fall behind. If anything, I wanted you to come out ahead of the other pupils.

(MUTTI notices something in the painting.)

MUTTI

Look at the calendar date on the wall.

EVA

May 11. My birthday! I remember him saying he considered that his lucky day.

MUTTI

Heinz's birthday on July 12 and yours on May 11 will always be my lucky days.

EVA
May 11 will never be lucky again.

MUTTI
It still is.

EVA
But it was on my birthday/

MUTTI
/Don't. It's best to forget.

(The lights change. HEINZ enters.)

HEINZ
May eleventh – of course I bathed that date in light. Eva would turn fifteen. I always had a birthday poem for her. Every year. I have one waiting for her now. I hope to give it to her soon.

(The lights dim and change. We are in EVA'S and MUTTI'S place of hiding. Music underscores as MUTTI sets a table for breakfast. There are tulips and a gaily-wrapped present. As the lights return to full, EVA enters. It is May 11, 1944.)

MUTTI (cont'd)
Happy Birthday, Evertje. Fifteen! Why, you are now a grown-up!

EVA
I feel like a little kid.

MUTTI
That's about right. Fifteen is part adult and part child. I first met your father when I was fifteen...

EVA
When all of this is over, do you think I will meet someone?

MUTTI
I am sure of it. But I prefer that you wait a few more years.

EVA
I love the tulips sitting there. I've always loved tulips.

MUTTI

We're very fortunate. Frau Reitsmas thought of many ways to make this day special for you. She'll be bringing breakfast shortly. There's even a present for you to open after breakfast.

EVA

You know what would make it perfect? If Pappy and Heinz were here.

MUTTI

You know that can't happen. Besides, we're lucky to see them just a few weeks ago.

EVA

I know. I'm just wishing.

MUTTI

Pappy and Heinz are getting settled in their new home today. It's frightening enough for them to travel outside to a new place. We don't need to add to their stress by attempting to visit. Not just yet. There will be time later.

EVA

This will be the year. Right, Mutti? Pappy said that this will be the year that peace will come.

MUTTI

Yes, this will be the year.

EVA

And then I will do handstands and dance and Heinz will play his music and Pappy will play the gramophone and it'll be the four of us again. Just the way it should be.

(EVA hums the Sleeping Beauty Waltz to herself and dances a few steps of the waltz. It's delicate. It's private. Abruptly, we hear some very hard knocking.)

OFFSTAGE MALE VOICE (or VOICES)

Juden! Juden! We know there are filthy Jews living here!

(Footsteps. EVA and MUTTI run to each other.
PROJECTION out.)