

What He Left (all rights reserved)

CAST:

CAST: 4-8 (4f, 4m) extras possible; Herman and/or Henke may be changed to female with a name change)*

***If you would like to expand the cast further than 8; you may use one Mutti and Eva in the 1945 scenes and another Eva and Mutti in the flashback scenes.**

Eva Geiringer (f) age 11-16; athletic, devoted to family, survivor, rememberer
Heinz Geiringer (m) 15-17; artistic, gifted, thirst for knowledge and life, loving brother, plays guitar and piano

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
Janny (f) 12, Eva's friend, joins everything with enthusiasm

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

Susanne (f) 12; Eva's friend; gentle soul

Henke (m) 15, enthusiastic friend of Heinz

DOUBLING FOR CAST OF FOUR

Eva

Heinz

Pappy/Herman/Henke

Mutti/Janny/Susanne

DOUBLING FOR CAST OF SIX (3f, 3m)

Eva

Heinz

Pappy

Mutti

Janny/Susanne

Herman/Henke

TIME:

February 1940 – August 1945

PLACES:

Apartment in Amsterdam

A sparse attic where Heinz and Erich (Pappy) hid

A Boat

An attic where Eva and Mutti lived

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.

SYNOPSIS: Heinz Geiringer loved the arts. As a child he pored over his uncle's art books carefully studying the works of the masters. Countless hours were spent at the piano trying to smooth out tricky passages and improve his skills. When the Nazis forced his family into hiding, 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 led to the terror and fears that were part of his day. From the tender age of fifteen to seventeen, Heinz left the world a body of work. Some paintings were simply to improve his skills. Others were of freedom and hope. And others were dark and foreboding. Heinz's body of work shows us the power of art under unconscionable circumstances and how one life lost to hate is one loss too many.

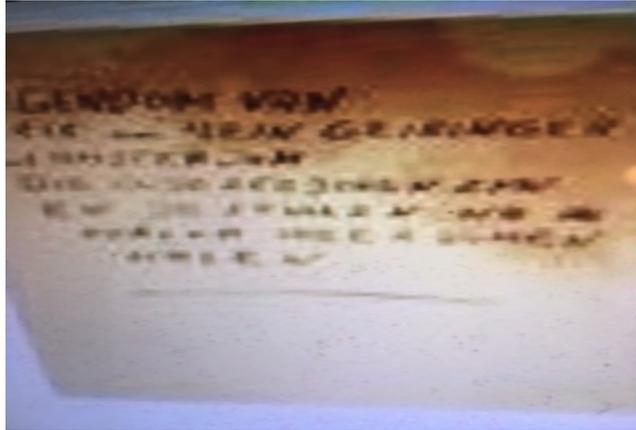
PROLOGUE

Prologue, August 1945

Lights up in EVA'S and MUTTI'S apartment. EVA (age 16) and MUTTI have just retrieved the paintings by ERICH and HEINZ. The paintings are on sheets, tea towels, pillowcases – whatever “found” object they could find in hiding. EVA looks at one. 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.

SOUND: A mournful train whistle in the distance.

PROJECTION:



“These are the belongings of Erich and Heinz Geiringer, who will collect the goods after the war.”

MUTTI

Sheets, pillow cases, tea towels... It's amazing what they used for painting surfaces.

EVA

They're more beautiful because of the circumstances.

(EVA holds one up for Mutti to see.)

MUTTI

Don't. Please.

EVA

Don't you want to see them? Touch them? Feel them close to you.

MUTTI

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

EVA

We promised!

MUTTI

And we got them just as we said we would. At least they are finally safe at home.

EVA

It's not a home anymore.

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

I want things the way it used to be.

Scene 1

MEMORY 1: The Geiringer apartment, February 1940.

PROJECTION: Side-by-side photos of Erich and Fritzi and Fritz with Heinz and Eva. Underneath: "The way it used to be."

Train sounds are again heard in the distance.

Lights change. We are in the Geiringer's apartment. If using one EVA and MUTTI, EVA and MUTTI can simply change from an overcoat and hat to a cardigan and no hat. They are inside the main living area. Off to the side is an outdoor terrace that will be used. EVA and MUTTI are at a table going over EVA'S homework. From another room we can hear HEINZ practicing

piano. The music is upbeat and it causes EVA to move about.

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 get your vocabulary done if you keep moving about like a squirrel?

EVA

I just learned French. How many languages do I need to know?

MUTTI

As many as it takes to keep us in a country that's safe . Which means you must now learn Dutch.

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

MUTTI (cont'd)

"I am!"

EVA (While dancing)

"Ik ben!"

MUTTI

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

EVA

Who can sit still when Heinz is playing music?

MUTTI

Heinz! Practice time is over. Eva, settle down and write this/

HEINZ (Enters)

/I haven't played in so long.

(Sings a few bars from Irving Berlin's
"I Love a Piano" (public domain). It's silly.)

HEINZ (con'd)

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 guess – I got carried away!

MUTTI

Get carried away silently, please.

HEINZ

I should write a love poem to the piano.

MUTTI

That sounds like a quiet activity. I approve.

HEINZ

But when I write, I must speak the words – loudly with passion.

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.

EVA

The Wild West?

HEINZ

Sorry, no.

MUTTI

Eva! Your vocabulary words! "He is!"

EVA

What are you reading now?

HEINZ

I'm reading about Lorelei. A beautiful, young woman who drowned. 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 the cliff but nobody ever reaches her. They all drown.

EVA

Let's act it out. I want to play Lorelei!

MUTTI

Eva!

EVA

If only I could sing!

MUTTI

Your vocabulary!

EVA

Tell me the entire story.

HEINZ

It starts from a time long ago/

MUTTI

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

EVA

"Hij is!"

MUTTI

Good. "We are."

EVA

My head is full! It has to let go of some French words before it can fit new Dutch words inside.

MUTTI

How will you make new friends if you don't learn their language?

EVA

I speak German and French. That's enough.

MUTTI

Just think, while you are struggling to learn Dutch, your classmates are struggling to learn French. And you already know that! We'll have you fluent in no time. Just like Heinz.

EVA

I am not perfect Heinz!

HEINZ

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

EVA

Who learns a language in two weeks?

HEINZ

I had a head start. I started practicing in Belgium.

MUTTI

Can we please finish the homework?

PAPPY (entering)

It's that time.

EVA

I am saved by Pappy!

MUTTI

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

PAPPY

I'm afraid not. We've reached the "Sleeping Hour."

(PAPPY places the speaker of the gramophone or a hand-held gramophone in the center of the room. He puts on "The Trout Quartet" by Schubert.)

HEINZ

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

PAPPY

I foresee wonderful things in your future. First we must make sure you grow up healthy and strong. A good night's sleep is essential for your well-being. Find your places.

(MUTTI, PAPPY, HEINZ and EVA lay down with their heads near the speaker. They are like four spokes in a wheel – evenly spaced in a circle.

EVA does roll about a bit trying to settle down.)

MUTTI

Evi...

EVA

I'm quiet. See how quiet I am? I'm almost dreaming.

(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.

During the interlude, we switch back to August 1945 in the apartment. EVA and MUTTI change back to the more adult EVA and MUTTI or older actors take their place. It is a few hours later.)

SCENE 2

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

MUTTI

There are so many! I had no idea.

EVA

Pappi and Heinz were so creative. Look at their materials – they could paint on anything. But who brought them the actual paints and brushes?

MUTTI

Some people were very kind. We must remember that.

EVA

Look! A pillow case. And this one – on a scrap of leather.

(MUTTI holds the leather close.)

MUTTI

It's a surprisingly good background for painting. This should be the start of a new art movement! Painting on leather. Canvas is so very old-fashioned!

EVA

This painting brings back such good times. Late nights on the terrace eating apples and sausages we swiped from the icebox. Do you know how much food we ate while we pretended to be asleep?

MUTTI

I knew.

EVA

And we knew you knew. Because it was always stocked. We'd sneak onto the balcony and eat like greedy little piglets. And then Heinz would tell me a story and the world slipped away.

MEMORY 2: March 1940; Geiringer apartment on the terrace.

(The lights change. There is a small balcony off an apartment in Amsterdam. HEINZ is on the balcony with his guitar. (The Merwedeploin.) EVA is 11. Heinz is 14. She can have a small change of clothing to help delineate the age difference. HEINZ is singing a song. ("Wayfaring Stranger.") Do as much or as little of the song as you need to give EVA time to change a piece of her clothing and grab some sausages and apples.)

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. They're just a tad noisy.)

EVA

Why do you always play that song? It makes me sad.

HEINZ

It's how I feel when the darkness comes.

EVA

Play something happy. For me. 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. She ends with a few twirls.)

EVA

I'm getting dizzy!

HEINZ

Eat. You'll feel better. 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 hope to 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 food and water. And to have you tell me stories.

HEINZ

It's all in the future. I wouldn't worry your head about it now.

EVA

Good. This apple is sweet and sour at the same time - like a sweet that isn't a sweet. Isn't it amazing - the icebox is always stocked full of goodies. It's a wonder we don't get caught.

HEINZ

They know.

EVA

How would they know? They never hear us!

HEINZ

Eva! There's food missing all the time! How could they not know?

EVA

Then it's extra special to have a mother and father who let us rob the icebox.

(They are settled on the balcony, cutting the fruit and sausage and eating. A clock may chime in the distance.)

HEINZ

The evening star.

EVA

It's there every night.

HEINZ

You can count on it. It makes me feel safe to count on something. Look! The fog's rolling in. Soon it will be hard to see anything.

EVA

The streets are filled 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. You're too busy eating! Wait. Shh.

(Beat.)

EVA

What?

HEINZ

Be quiet! Is that a chain clanging in the distance?

(EVA listens intently.)

EVA

It is!

HEINZ

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

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

EVA

What does he want?

HEINZ

You!

EVA

But you'll protect me.

HEINZ

Of course. Poor Gustav. I was told he died very young and is destined to roam these canals forever.

EVA

How did he die?

HEINZ

He was hanged – for stealing ... an apple!

(EVA may drop her apple.)

He was younger than us. The poor fellow was starving so he swiped an apple off a cart and paid for it with his life. Now he wanders the canals trying to rid himself of chains. The chains that weigh heavily upon him because he broke the law.

EVA

But - he was starving!

HEINZ

The law doesn't make exceptions for starving boys.

EVA

How do you know about Gustav?

HEINZ

My friend Herman told me. And you know what else? I met Gustav.

EVA

Was he here?

HEINZ

It was when I was working late to finish my sketches for art class. It was getting dark. My eyes were so tired, I curled up on the sculpting table and fell asleep! I was awakened by a cold mist that came over me.

EVA

Are you sure the window wasn't open?

HEINZ

Positive. And then an icy finger touched my forehead.

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

I bolted upright. And there was this child staring at me with bloodshot eyes. His neck was covered in chains. I froze. I couldn't even scream. And then he gestured for me to follow him. I felt like my own body was tied up in his mysterious chains. I didn't want to go with him but I had no choice. The invisible chains dragged me forward and soon I was going down the dark stairs and into the cold. I heard crying. I thought it was a baby. Or maybe - it was 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 me and Gustav-the-ghost. He was leading me to my doom.

EVA

Don't follow him!

HEINZ

I had to. The invisible chains were alive. They moved me inch-by-inch, step-by-step until I thought I was being led into a canal where I would drown in the frigid night.

EVA

You can't die.

HEINZ

Evertje – I'm here, aren't I? (Beat.) We reached a bridge and the crying continued. Was someone in the canal? Where was it coming from? And then I looked up.

(HEINZ and EVA look up. A full beat or two of silence. Until EVA is beside herself.)

EVA

Tell me.

HEINZ

There was a child. Way up on the highest branch. He was terrified. I knew Gustav brought me here to rescue him.

EVA

But – you're afraid of heights.

HEINZ

I know! But I did what Pappy told me when we went mountain climbing. I kept my eyes upward and never looked down. Slowly I inched up the tree. One small step at a time. And then suddenly –

(HEINZ lets out a gasp and is silent.)

EVA

Suddenly

HEINZ

The little boy jumped on my shoulder and held me tight. And very 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 his chains and threw it into the canal and disappeared into the mist.

EVA

You must have been so scared.

HEINZ

I was. But I think Gustav's a good sort of ghost. I think every time he does a good deed, he is able to shake off another chain. When the chains are gone, he will no longer be a ghost and will be able to rest in peace.

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 abruptly stops.)

EVA

What's wrong?

HEINZ

There's a policeman on the street.

EVA

It doesn't matter. We're not in Vienna anymore. We're safe. We're finally safe.

HEINZ

We should go inside.

(They exit as the lights change.)

SCENE TWO

August 1945, at the Geiringer apartment.

MUTTI

How many are there?

EVA

About thirty. It's amazing that we have them all.

MUTTI

Let's stop.

EVA

No. I want to see all of them.

MUTTI

It's too much for one time.

EVA

I need to do this!

MUTTI

I know. I do also. But slowly. There's a lot to take in.

EVA

Painting is like another language, isn't it? But the kind of language that everyone understands. You don't need words. Or vocabulary lessons.

MUTTI

Your father and brother certainly spoke that same language. I'm just grateful for these because it kept them alive.

EVA

What kept us alive? We didn't paint.

MUTTI

We had each other. That was enough.

EVA

I wish I had Heinz's talent. I can't paint. Or make-up stories. Or play an instrument.

MUTTI

Evi, my girl of so many talents. You dance, do gymnastics, ski, mountain climb/

EVA

/None of my talents helped Heinz. His paintings helped him. Now, they help me - just the way his music used to help me.

PROJECTION: Heinz with his guitar.

MEMORY 3: April 1940.

(EVA is outside in the courtyard. She has a bag of marbles and is playing by herself. Nearby, there are groups of children playing: hopscotch, jump rope, marbles, hoops, bicycles – whatever you would like. Use as many children as you would

like. If using a small cast, we can just hear the laughter and noise. EVA smiles and waves at a group. She is ignored. HEINZ enters.)

HEINZ

Don't you have the saddest face of anybody I've ever known.

EVA

Nobody will play with me. They already all know each other and they don't want me. It doesn't matter. I don't care. I can't speak to them anyway.

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. Slowly, a crowd gathers. At first they watch her and slowly some join in the dance. Maybe they dance together in a circle. Maybe separately - but there is a coming-together and the beginnings of friendship. A child may send a hoop sailing to EVA. Or an invitation to join in playing marbles. As the lights change EVA is now part of a group.)

(The lights change back to EVA'S and MUTTI'S apartment. It is again August 1945. As the scene changes, HEINZ continues playing his guitar until MUTTI and EVA are back in place.)

MUTTI

Look, Evi.

EVA

Heinz's boat!

MUTTI

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.

MUTTI

Your Pappy was so proud when Heinz was able to set sail on his own.

PROJECTION: The sailboat through the window.

MEMORY FOUR: May 1940

(HEINZ is the captain on a boat welcoming EVA, JANNY and HERMAN. He has on a captain's cap.)

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

Do you have your sea legs on?

EVA

Always.

HEINZ

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

JANNY

I am so excited. I brought a small picnic to share.

HERMAN

As did I. There will be more than enough to go around.

HEINZ

Ha! I've seen how much you can eat.

HERMAN

I'm growing!

HEINZ

We all are.

JANNY

Good. 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 ship mates.

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.

JANNY

(Speaking way too quickly but with passion because she loves this tale.)

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 such beautiful songs that sailors that hear her go mad and jump ship to swim to the cliffs *but* they are dashed by the rocks and drown. No one who has heard her song has survived to tell the tale.

HEINZ

That's – right.

JANNY

We studied it in school. *It's so romantic!*

HERMAN

I don't see any cliffs.

HEINZ

Look over there at the trees. They are our cliffs.

HERMAN

They're trees.

EVA

They're cliffs!

JANNY

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 will hear Lorelei's song and live to tell about it. 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. Why does she have to kill people?

HEINZ

Nobody wants to be dead. Poor 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 all the time wanting to be enchanted by 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 song. I want to experience everything that I can, while I can. Are you game?

HERMAN

As long as I live.

HEINZ

Don't worry. We'll all live.

JANNY

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

HEINZ

Janny, climb up high on these boxes and imagine you are on top of a cliff. You will be Lorelei and sing.

JANNY

I don't sing.

HEINZ

We will imagine it. Herman and I will be the sailors who want to experience everything. But my first mate will 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 very well.

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 and so you will not be tempted to follow her. Ready?

ALL

Aye, aye.

HEINZ

Here's some rope to tie me up.

(EVA struggles with a knot.)

HEINZ (cont'd)

Try a slip knot like the Scouts use.

EVA

I was never a scout.

HERMAN

I was.

(HERMAN ties a knot. JANNY 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 won't hear Lorelei's call and you will be safe. And remember, no matter what I say – do not untie me until we are past the cliffs. Is that clear?

EVA

Aye, Aye, Captain!

HEINZ

And for now, enjoy the beautiful day. 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! JANNY mimes the singing and with a dancer's flair, she motions for the sailors to come to her. You may use a few voices. It's haunting, exquisite and welcoming.)

HEINZ (cont'd)

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

(The VOICE (or VOICES) is closer. You may use “Die Lorelei.”)

JANNY

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.

JANNY

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

HERMAN

I do!

JANNY

Then come closer.

(HERMAN mimes jumping in. He flails about and slowly drowns. He is not a bad actor.)

(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.

JANNY

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!

JANNY

You are strong enough to get loose. Join me. You will know sweetness and 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 need you to listen carefully. I was wrong. These sirens mean us no harm. Let me go to them.

EVA

(Beat.) No.

HEINZ

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

EVA

(Beat.) Yes. But no.

HEINZ

Eva!

EVA

Heinz!

JANNY

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 suddenly is gone. HEINZ calms down and as EVA sees that, she removes her

ear plugs. She listens and is satisfied that all is quiet.)

HEINZ

They're gone. You may untie me. You did well, First Mate.

EVA

Thank-you.

HEINZ

We shall return to Amsterdam.

(EVA does so.)

HERMAN

After we eat! Drowning is hard work.

EVA

Was it as wondrous as you thought, Captain?

HEINZ

Even more so. Where shall we sail to next week?

JANNY

England!

HERMAN

America!

EVA

Anywhere. I'll follow you anywhere.

HERMAN

The picnic's ready!

JANNY

I'll have some cake, please.

(The children are settled and happily eating. All is peaceful for a moment. Suddenly, GESTAPO sirens are heard. They are jarring. You could layer them with World War Two jets. EVA immediately goes to protect Heinz.)

EVA

Heinz!

The Nazis are here.

HEINZ

(HEINZ envelops EVA in a hug. JANNY and HERMAN move closer together. The lights fade to black. After blackout, the sounds die down.)

SCENE THREE

The lights come up on the Geiringer's Apartment. It is late May. MUTTI and PAPPY are at the table in deep muffled conversation. Perhaps with tea. HEINZ and EVA are off to the side. EVA is playing with her marbles. HEINZ has a book but is staring at his parents.

MEMORY FIVE: "The Unbroken Chain"

PROJECTION: Erich Geiringer

(EVA waves a hand in front of HEINZ'S face.)

EVA

Is anybody in there? You look like a ghost.

HEINZ

Look at Mutti and Pappy. They're worried. Mutti doesn't think Pappy's job will last much longer.

EVA

Do you think Pappy will have to leave the country to find another job like he did in Vienna? I hate it when we're separated. I never want to go through that again.

HEINZ

You know Pappy will do whatever he can to support us. And keep us safe.

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

I don't know.

EVA

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

HEINZ

I wish I had a better answer. (Beat.) Eva, have you ever thought about what you wanted to be when you grow up?

EVA

Not really. I suppose it would be nice to be a mother some day. I love playing with babies in the courtyard.

HEINZ

But what would you like to *do*?

EVA

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. And I really want to 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 Van Gogh's paintings, I think how his works bring pleasure to so many people even after he's gone. And then there's writing. Imagine if I could write like Karl May! *I love his books!* I want to bring happiness to people but I don't know...

EVA

You will! You are so good at – everything!

HEINZ

Says the little sister who is kind to her big brother. But seriously, I don't know ... if there will be enough time for me to get really, truly excellent at something.

EVA

You have all the time in the world.

HEINZ

I wish I could be sure of that but I'm not. I don't know if Pappy can keep us safe anymore. Already, some Jews have been taken away.

EVA

They're just making new, stupid laws. They're not really going to do anything. Not in Amsterdam. The Dutch won't let them.

HEINZ

I hope you're right. I'm scared. I hear things. And then I worry. Because ... Evi, I'm terrified of dying. Not yet. Not before I have lived.

(EVA hugs HEINZ.)

EVA

I think we should talk to Pappy.

(EVA and HEINZ approach MUTTI and PAPPY. 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/

PAPPY

/let me talk to them, Fritzi.

MUTTI

Erich?

PAPPY

I will help them. Come.

(The family settles on a couch or more comfortable seating – where EVA and HEINZ were at the beginning the scene.)

ERICH

Heinz, understand that we are part of a long chain of people. You and I are each one of the links. So is Mutti, Eva, and your grandparents. They 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? Not everyone has children.

ERICH

I promise you this: everything you do leaves something behind. Every time you help Eva or Mutti and me, there is goodness. And that good stays. Nothing gets lost. All the good you have already done continues in the lives you have touched. It won't be forgotten. Everything is connected like in a chain And that chain will stay connected forever – never to 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 it's not enough.

ERICH

Perhaps we should listen to some music to put our minds at ease.

MUTTI

I'll get the gramophone.

HEINZ

No – let me play some music. I need to *do* something. Please.

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

SCENE 4

AT RISE we are back in 1945 in the apartment in Amsterdam. EVA finds a poem.

PROJECTION: The Hospital Poem by Heinz.

MEMORY SIX: Pirate story after the hospital

EVA

Mutti! Look. In-between the paintings – he hid his poems.

MUTTI

I remember this. The one about the hospital.

EVA

It's the silliest poem he ever wrote!

(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 original 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 was met with 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. Of course, as soon as we heard that patients were "disappearing" from hospitals, we brought him home.