

Yours Until Niagara Falls
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CAST: 2-8 females*

LINA ZENES (female) age 9-49; self-assured, trendy, has a stick-to-it-iveness that will serve her well. She craves a well-ordered life, shoes for every outfit, doughnuts are an important part of life. Shorter than Izzy. Jewish - which is important to her. She writes when it is necessary. She'd rather talk face-to-face but she will write to please Izzy.

IZZY ROSS (female) age 9-49; insecure; dreamer, clueless as to trends, has acting aspirations, can be clingy. Taller than Lina. Sometimes lives in her own drama-filled world. Catholic - which is meaningless to her. She loves to write things down – she believes it will help her dreams become reality and she can deal better with the conflicts in her life if she writes them. She wants to be someone else.

*Two actresses can portray the characters all through the play – or – you can divide it up into the “elementary school,” “junior high years,” “high school,” “college and all grown up.” Or any other way that suits your fancy. Initially, I pictured it with two but as the characters progress in age, it can work with more actresses. As with A.R. Gurney’s amazing *Love Letters* (inspiration for this play), this does not need to be memorized. But it should be rehearsed.

Unlike *Love Letters*, the actresses can look at each other when they pass school notes. Later, when they are not in class together, the play is about listening. They will not look at each other during the letters and emails. But they can react. It’s as important to see LINA and IZZY listening to the letters as they’re being read as it is for the actress reading.

Some letters are long. Do not get caught up in the writing of the letter. Assume most of it’s been written. Maybe we see the character correct something or just add their signature.

SET: 2 desks for passing notes which can double as their bedroom desk.

PROPS: Paper, pens, and later a keyboard for emails.

COSTUMES: Simple skirts and a blouse or sweater – which was the public school uniform at the time. If using multiple actresses can change with the times but keep it simple.

Feel free to embellish, sets, costumes, props – or not. Be as simple or detailed as you wish.

SCENE BREAKS:

Scene 1: Elementary School

Scene 2: Junior High

Scene 3: High School

Scene 4: College

Scene 5: All Grown Up

Scene 6: Apart

SYNOPSIS: LINA and IZZY are best friends – “LINA-AND-IZZY-ONE-WORD” best friends. They are always there for each other – for each important day in their lives until one day – they aren’t. Lina and Izzy must figure out what to take from the friendship and what is left behind even if it’s painful. With thanks (and apologies) to A.R. Gurney for inspiration and structure, and to the Zenes family for the whole shebang.

*Dates are provided for context and should not be spoken unless it’s in the body of the dialogue.

TIME: 1962-2001

COSTUMES: If using multiple actresses, dress appropriately for the times. If using only two actresses, let the costume be as classic as possible.

Music (public domain or where you have the rights) can be used to bridge scenes where you deem necessary.

Yours Until Niagara Falls

Scene 1

(Lights up on IZZY and LINA. LINA writes a note. IZZY opens the note. (It should not be physically passed between the two.) It is a Monday, February, 1962. They are age 9.)

LINA

Hello, Isobel-The-New-Girl. Will you be my friend? We can sit together at lunch. Lina.

(IZZY tears paper from notebook and scribbles and scribbles and scribbles. LINA looks at her – what is she writing? It's a school note!)

IZZY

Thank-you. Nobody has ever passed me a note in school. I would love to be your friend. Please don't call me Isobel. It's my grandmother's name. I'm not an old lady. Call me Izzy. Not Dizzy. Not Fizzy! But Izzy! And not Isotope – which is what my uncle calls me. He and my father are chemists. This school is old-fashioned. It's so old – my mother went here! I asked her if she ever travelled by covered wagon and she did not like that question.

Don't look at my hair. My mother thought I would be more popular if I had curly hair so she gave me a perm last night. Now my hair smells terrible and I look like a poodle.

Do you think John Glenn is done going around the earth? Will they make an announcement? In my old school, they would sometimes give you news. I hear you can burn up when you come back down from space.

(IZZY passes the note back. LINA writes.)

LINA

Wow, Izzy "not Dizzy!" You write long notes. (So, you're kind of "Fizzy.") You have terrible penmanship. I am sure John Glenn will not burn up but they won't tell us. They don't tell fourth graders the news. Only sixth graders. See you at lunch. Don't answer. Mrs. Scott is watching.

(It is now Friday.)

IZZY

Thanks for letting me come over every day this week. We are unpacked. Can you come over tomorrow? I love the Bobby Rydell record you lent me. I don't know if he is a dreamboat like you said because I never think about boys as being anything but yucky and punching each other like The Three Stooges.

LINA

Ari loves The Three Stooges. It's a boy thing.

IZZY

So can you come over? I've been practicing the mashed potato dance. My mother says I look like an ostrich.

LINA

Everyone looks like an ostrich when they do that dance.

IZZY

I have records, too. "The Wizard of Oz," "Oklahoma," "Sound of Music." My favorite is "The Wizard of Oz." Please say you'll come over.

LINA

Mrs. Scott is getting suspicious. Be extra careful when you pass a note.

IZZY

Can you come over?

LINA

I have Susan's birthday party tomorrow. Everyone's going.

IZZY

I'm not.

LINA

I'm sure you would have been invited if you moved here before. I can probably come over Sunday. Or we can go to the movies. "The Parent Trap" is finally at the Utopia. We'll talk about it over lunch. You don't have to answer.

(A beat. Because of course IZZY has to answer.)

IZZY

I love Hayley Mills! I want to be Hayley Mills. I have even worked on her English accent. Thank-you for teaching me things like rock 'n roll and dancing. I can teach you munchkin voices.

LINA

Your welcome. Munchkin voices?

IZZY

From the Wizard of Oz. You'd be good at it.

LINA

I'm only good at "dippy" things. Like penmanship and arithmetic. Are Munchkin voices dippy? MaryAnn calls me "teacher's pet."

IZZY

I won't talk to Mary Ann ever. When I know who she is.

LINA

But you still have to be nice. It's expected. DON'T ANSWER!

IZZY

Do you always do what's expected?

(LINA just looks at the note and gestures "enough.")

(IZZY writes a letter. April 1962)

IZZY

April 1962

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Zenes,

Thank-you very, very much for inviting me to your seder. It's my first one. I am not sure about the horseradish but you made the carrots taste good. I shall have to tell my mother about adding raisins to carrots to make them not boring. I really loved the matzo ball soup. I love chicken soup with anything in it - I think I would even love chicken soup if it had mouse tails in it. I am trying to learn more about Passover. All I can find is that it "celebrates the exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt." That's what the World Book says. At least I learned a new word - "exodus." I will go to the library to find out more stuff. You are a wonderful cook and Ari reads very well for a little kid. Thank-you again.

Sincerely,

Izzy

P.S. Just kidding about the mouse tails.

P.P.S. I am super excited about Lina's birthday next week. I've never been to a restaurant in the city.

(LINA writes a letter.)

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I am sorry that I had to write "Isobel" on the envelope but my mom says you should use proper names there. Thank you for the framed photo of Bobby Rydell for my birthday. I really love it.

Your friend,

Lina

(IZZY passes a note.)

IZZY

I loved that new music you played yesterday.

LINA

It's one of the Hungarian Rhapsodies – a really easy version. My pinkie finger does not love all the low notes.

IZZY

I should bring my Hungarian doll over to dance to it.

LINA

You can dance to it.

P.S. Your Hungarian doll is my favorite. Even if it's weird that you play "The Wizard of Oz" with her.

IZZY

At least I don't make her the witch!

(IZZY is writing a letter. July 5, 1962)

IZZY

Dear Izzy,

I am writing to your house because I don't know your address in the Poconos. The Fourth of July was boring. We didn't see the fireworks because of the rain. And I had to clean my room twice to stop my mother from yelling. I went to Aunt's Maria's a lot. My cousins watched "The Three Stooges Meet Some Kind of Monsters" ALL weekend. I saw it three times and still don't know the title. And now you are going straight to sleepaway camp for two weeks! Suppose something happens in July and we aren't best friends anymore? Suppose I got hit by a bus - my mother says that a lot. Or my father decided he hated his job and took us to live in a swamp and we'd never see each other?

I've been thinking. I am going to tell you my most secretest secret ever. So you know how much you mean to me. It's something I have never shared. I read that if you do that, it shows that you care about the other person a lot. My family knows my secret because have you ever tried keeping a secret in your family? They find out everything.

Here it is. Remember Puddles? You saw her under my pillows and thought she was a stuffed rat. She's really my stuffed duck. She used to have a beak which came off. And then her cute, webbed feet fell off and now I guess she is a duck-rat. I can't go to sleep unless I sleep with Puddles. That's why I don't go to sleepovers. I stay up all night if I don't have Puddles. I have to brush her fur over my lips to sleep. It makes me feel snuggly and when her fur touches my lips, I can finally fall asleep. I know it's babyish and my mom hates Puddles but I need her.

If you want to share a secret with me, I would never tell a soul. Please keep this somewhere like in your dirty socks and underwear where nobody would peek.

Tell me about camp. Write a really long letter.

Yours until Niagara Falls (Isn't that cute? I saw that in a book and liked it),

Izzy

(LINA writes a letter. July 1962)

Dear Izzy,

Happy Birthday! I wish I could be there with you. Thank-you for sharing your secret. It's fizzy and fuzzy and cute like you.

My parents brought your letter up. And I do have a secret. You know the birthday present my mom dropped off at your house? That's my secret. After you read it, I will tell you more.

I will not keep your letter with my dirty socks and underwear. Sheesh! It's safe inside my shirt with all the stripes in different colors that I hate and will never wear. Don't tell my mother.

Yours.... until the chocolate chips (A counselor made it up.)

Lina

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I just finished "The Diary of Anne Frank" and am crying. Thank-you for giving the book to me. I wondered about a lot of things so I will go to the library to find out more. I have stuff in common with Anne. She did not get along with her mother, did she? It sounds like me and my mother. I have a lot of questions. Hundreds. What does the book have to do with you? I don't know the secret.

I am sitting here in my cement backyard thinking of how you are having fun at camp. You could play "Wizard of Oz" "in the woods" or "Peter Pan" down by the lake. They should have a pirate ship in the lake. Wouldn't that be fun?

I miss you. I wish my parents would get me a dog so I could have someone to talk to. Sometimes I talk to my cousin's dog and he really listens – like you do. My mother is nagging me to go outside and "play." I'd rather stay inside and read. I listen to "The Wizard of Oz" a lot. I got really good at doing the witch laugh. I will teach it to you.

Maybe you can get the music to it and you can play the piano while I sing. I want to be the Scarecrow. Dorothy would be fun but I'm not cute enough. We could enter talent shows. *That* would be fun.

Yours Until Niagara Falls,

Izzy

(LINA writes a letter.)

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I am glad that you read "The Diary of Anne Frank."

The woods have lots of poison stuff in them. I itch all over. Also, all the bugs bite. They have a piano in the rec center so sometimes I still practice. Or play pong. Ping pong balls don't bite.

LINA (cont'd)

I don't think the counselors want a pirate ship. The boys would start pirate fights. Arrrgh!

I don't want to be in a talent show. Sorry.

And please don't compare me to a dog.

If I learned the witch laugh, would it scare Ari?

I will send you the "secret" when I am alone.

Yours until the chocolate chips,

Lina

Dear Lina,

It's been two days and I still don't know your secret. If you don't want to tell me, that's okay. But I really hope you tell me. I am good about keeping secrets.

I scared my sister with the witch laugh so you could probably scare your brother.

Nothing has happened in the last two days. Because nothing ever happens to me. I have to make-believe something happens to me.

Please write!!!!

Yours until Niagara Falls,

Izzy.

LINA

TOP SECRET! FOR YOUR EYES ONLY! DON'T SHOW THIS TO ANYONE

THE SECRET. It's funny that you started this secret-stuff - because before I left, my mother said I could tell you some things. She said if we were going to be together all the time, there are things you should know. And I should give you The Diary for your birthday. But I didn't know how to tell you. I am glad I am writing this to you because whenever we talk about it at home, I cry. I'm crying now. I am writing this in the shower where no one can see me. I bet you went to the library and took out a hundred books about this. I bet you know about the camps and the gas chambers. Which were worse than dying in quicksand. I know you worry about quicksand.

MY FATHER. He wanted to be a doctor. He couldn't finish medical school because the Nazis threw all the Jews out of all the schools. He was in a Russian prison. That's all I know - he won't talk about it and I don't ask. And you can never, ever ask!!! Okay? If they ever talk about this stuff to you, just listen. I think he would have been a good doctor.

MY MOTHER. My mother and her family were arrested from their home in Hungary because they were Jewish. They really arrested you for that. There was no time to go into hiding like Anne Frank. They were told they would be going on a train ride. And they could take one suitcase each. My mother took her father's medicine, and they all took lots of sweaters and socks. They were put on a train for a whole week - with no water. A week later they arrived at

LINA (cont'd)

Auschwitz - where Anne was. And no, they never met and no, no questions about that. There were nine people in my mother's family. At Auschwitz, they were put into two lines. The slave line and the gas chamber line. Her mother and father and all five of her little brothers were put in the gas chamber line. My mother and my aunt were on the slave line.

My mother says they knew everything. The guards said, "Stop crying. You'll all be dead soon." My mother had a little brother who was two. My mother was fifteen so she used to babysit him a lot. Right after "the selection," my mother ran to my grandmother and offered to bring her brother into the gas chamber. Some guard said, "Stay. We'll be happy to kill you, too." My grandmother said, "No, my hertzeleh,* it is not your time yet. Live." So my mother and her sister watched their family get murdered.

*(translation: *little heart)*

No one is left from my father's family. My mother has her sister. Before I go to sleep, sometimes I see my grandmother on a line carrying my baby uncle and she looks at me and I - look away. This is my most secretest secret ever and I am trusting it with you. BUT WE WON'T TALK ABOUT IT. Now I am going to shower so no one will know I was crying. I will be home soon and we will do all the stuff we always did. Listen to music, dance and do fun stuff. My mother says that's important.

Yours until the chocolate chips,

Lina

Dear Lina,

I'm crying. I want to say things. Really important things. But I don't know what to say. Except, I'm sorry and I will never tell anyone ever ever. I won't even tell my diary. Or my cousin's dog or Puddles - and I tell them everything.

Love,

Izzy

(October 1962. IZZY and LINA pass notes - 5th grade.)

IZZY

I can't believe we're doing this. My Dad says that Cuba is not far away and if they bomb us - we're gone. So, what's the point of these dippy drills??

LINA

To save our lives?

IZZY

Sitting in the hallway and covering our heads won't save us. I read about these bombs in the World Book. They melt you. I used to think quicksand would be the worst way to die and then I found out about gas chambers and now it looks like nuclear bombs are the worstest.

LINA

I don't want to talk about dying, okay? Or gas chambers. P.S. Stop writing.

IZZY

I'm sorry.

LINA

Stop worrying. *Stop writing.*

IZZY

I don't worry that much.

(LINA gives a "yeah, you do look at Izzy.)

(IZZY is writing a card. November 1962.)

IZZY (cont'd)

Happy Thanksgiving, Lina. Do you like my turkey? I drew it with my hand. I can draw three things: a turkey, a cat and a rabbit. I'm sorry I rushed you off the phone yesterday. The Monroes was on and I want to be in a show like that. I want to be Barbara Hershey.

LINA

Happy Thanksgiving! I am thankful you are not Barbara Hershey but my friend Izzy. P.S. I like the turkey! Did you glue pigeon feathers on it?

(IZZY is writing a letter. December 24, 1962.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I know you won't see this until you return but I miss you. It's Christmas Eve and everyone is downstairs being merry. We decorated the tree, brought in pizza and now my parents are listening to a Johnny Mathis Christmas record. My mother is singing. She has a terrible voice. My father and sister are sneaking the cookies meant for Santa. Not that my mother cares. She won't eat cookies. She's on a diet – even on Christmas! I wish I was in the mood. I love Christmas. Usually, I like to watch *A Christmas Carol* on tv and play my own Christmas carols.

But yesterday, I found a book about Hannah Senesh. Do you know who she is? You probably do and you probably don't want to talk about it. But I love reading about heroines. You never hear about them in school. She was so brave. I wonder if I could ever be that brave. I wonder if she wasn't caught when she sneaked back into Hungary if she could have saved your family.

It's probably not what I should be thinking about on Christmas Eve – but maybe it is. Since it's the season of "goodwill towards men." I want to do good – I want to help with "peace on earth" but I'm not always a good person. Sometimes I think mean things about others.

But never about you. I can't wait to see you "next year in 1963!"

Yours Until Niagara Falls,

Izzy

LINA

Merry Christmas, Izzy.

Isn't this a funny card? It's weird seeing palm trees decorated with colored lights. Miami's weird. But warm. Please don't write me about Hannah Senesh or anything about those times. They're over. Let's go see "Bye Bye Birdie" when it comes out. That would be fun.

Yours until the chocolate chips,

Lina

(February 1963. LINA and IZZY pass notes.)

LINA

Izzy! You have your pajama top on!

IZZY

I was in a rush this morning. I stayed up late reading the end of "The Moonspinners" and got up late. Do you think anyone will notice?

LINA

Yes.

IZZY

But it kind of matches my skirt.

LINA

It doesn't. I wish it did.

IZZY

Will you still sit with me at lunch?

LINA

Yes.

IZZY

Please don't tell Susan and Debbie.

LINA

They have eyes.

(Change. IZZY is writing a letter. She keeps crossing stuff out and starts again.)

IZZY

April 10, 1963

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Zenes,

Thank you (again) for inviting me to your seder. (again). I understand more now than last year. I wish my mother kept a Kosher home so I could have soda with my meal. We always have milk. I

IZZY (cont'd)

really love that you have black-raspberry soda. I never heard of that flavor before and I like it a lot. Could you tell my mother where to buy it?

Thank you for showing me pictures of your family. I tried saying stuff in my first note but I kept crossing it out because my words were wrong. And then it got messy. I had to start a new thank-you note. Your little brother was so cute. I'm sorry your home got robbed but glad nobody took the photos. You had such a big family. I wish they were all here for your holidays. I hope you think of me as family when I come over.

Sincerely, (Can I say "love?")

Izzy

(IZZY writes.)

Dear Lina,

I am sorry you have laryngitis and cannot speak. I know how you love to talk! But that means we can write letters! There is something I want to tell you. I never said it in person because you always "pooh pooh" compliments. Isn't that a cute phrase? "Pooh pooh?" I read it in an Agatha Christie book.

I'm just going to write this and you don't have to answer. I've been thinking. A lot. About things – the good stuff and the not-good. And for me – you are the good stuff. I want us to be best friends forever – even into that thing they call forever – you know beyond. And it's okay if you don't want to talk about some stuff. They say best friends tell each other everything but I also think best friends can tell you when to shut up. You make me feel part of this world – not just Queens, New York world – but the "everywhere world." From my first day in school, you made me feel like I belonged somewhere. I always thought I belonged in Oz. Maybe, you put a spell on me! I want us to be friends when we're old and in a rocking chair - like Whistler's Mother. But we'll dress differently than she did. And maybe someday when we are – you know - gone – we'll be ghosts together and haunt anyone who was mean to us. I hope you get your voice back for your birthday next week.

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I put a spell on you? Am I a witch? I hope I am Glinda, the Good Witch then.

Please don't write about being ghosts or anything about being dead. I don't ever want to think about that stuff. When we talk again, we can talk about who is cuter – Bobby Rydell or Frankie Avalon. That's much more interesting.

(June 1963. Passing a note in school. It's the last day before summer break.)

IZZY

Did you peek at your Report Card? Did you get all "Excellents" as usual?

LINA

It says I talk too much and pass too many notes.

IZZY

Who's your teacher?

LINA

Mrs. Villaverde.

IZZY

Yay! We're in the same sixth grade class. I hear Villaverde is a witch.

LINA

Do not write that down in a note. Now eat it.

(IZZY writes a letter. July 1963.)

Dear Lina,

How's camp? I miss you a whole lot. Thank-you for the Lesley Gore album for my birthday. She sings loud like me. Only better. Nothing is going on here. I must be the only kid in the world who misses school. Except for arithmetic. And penmanship. And the no-reading ahead rule. And being forced to play outside in the cold. But the rest is good.

My parents have the news on a lot. I never used to pay attention and I wish I didn't now. It's all sad. We live in a sad world. All that stuff about civil rights. Don't we all have civil rights? I thought in this country "all men are created equal." That's what the schools teach us. Do you follow the news at camp?

I think this may be my shortest letter ever because all I do is read and listen to music and I think if I sent you a list of my books you would roll your eyes.

Please send me a happy letter telling me everything you do.

Yours until Niagara Falls

(LINA writes a letter. July 1963.)

Dear Izzy,

I love getting letters. I really like short letters. Your letter wasn't short. We don't have a tv at camp so I know nothing. I swim, run relay races, play ping pong, ride horses, and do crafts. In the last week we have color wars. Everyone is divided into two colors and we are in competition. Some kids go crazy with wanting to win and get mean. Like MaryAnn. See you soon.

Yours until the chocolate chips,

Lina

(IZZY writes a school note. It's early November 1963.)

IZZY

Do you think it would be all right if I watched *The Wizard of Oz* at your house on Sunday? 'cause you have the new color TV.

LINA

I'll ask but it's probably okay. Just don't go into a tizzy when the witch does the hourglass thing.

IZZY

I don't get into a tizzy.

LINA

You totally do. Like you don't know the ending. Don't answer. Villaverde is watching us.

(IZZY is writing a letter.)

Dear Lina,

I wish my parents would take me to the Poconos. Everyone is glued to the TV and the funeral. It's so sad. I feel sorry for Caroline and John John. I bought *Profiles in Courage*. It's pretty good but it's all about men. All we do is learn about men.

I really wish you were here so we could talk. You know how we talk about what we will do when we're all grown up? The more I watch the news, the more I think I want to be Peter Pan and live in Neverland. Well, maybe not Neverland because there are so many boys. Maybe in my magical, good kingdom with you.

LINA

Hi Izzy,

I just got home and read your letter. I am writing this because you always say sometimes you should write things down. So thank-you for thinking I have a good, magical kingdom. And thank-you for never making me fill dippy. And never calling me "Teacher's Pet." You're fun to be with. You jump into things. You dance when I play the piano. It's neat.

(IZZY is writing a card.)

IZZY

Happy Hanukkah, Lina. Thank you for being my friend.

(LINA is writing a card.)

LINA

Merry Christmas, Izzy! Ditto.

(IZZY and LINA are in school passing notes. February 1964)

I Want to Hold your Hand! IZZY

Soooo cute! LINA

I know! George is the best. IZZY

Paul! LINA

George! IZZY

No way! She Loves You! LINA

Yeah, yeah, yeah! IZZY

(Change. May 1964. IZZY passes a note.)

IZZY
I opened the letter. I couldn't wait. I always worry I'm going to be left back because of my penmanship. Or arithmetic. Did you open it? Open it!

LINA
We're supposed to show it to our parents first.

IZZY
There are times when you should not follow rules. Open it.

LINA
Well, this is neat. Did you get this, too?

IZZY
Yep.

LINA
Neat.

(IZZY is writing a letter. May 1964.)

IZZY
Dear Mr. And Mrs. Zenes,

IZZY (cont'd)

Hi, It's Izzy. So Lina and I both got into the "special progress" program which is neat. I spoke to my parents about not skipping eighth grade and just doing the 3-year-special progress like Lina but they will not listen. Is there any way you can have Lina also skip eighth grade so we will be together in junior high and high school? Otherwise, I will miss her too much. She's like my sister. Only better.

(IZZY stares at the letter for a moment. Finally, she tears it up.)

(IZZY writes a letter. July 1964)

Dear Lina,

Yay! Summer letters. Boo! Lina's back in camp. The Dave Clark 5 is singing "Glad All Over" but I'm feeling "Sad All Over." I've been thinking. I thought about trying to go to your camp. I know all about being Kosher and the Mezuzah. If I changed my name from Ross to Rosinski nobody would know I wasn't Jewish. My cousin tried to join your synagogue. He has a crush on Michelle Ackerman but she can only go out with Jewish boys. So he tried to sign up at the synagogue and told the Rabbi his last name was Tornamski instead of Tornambe. The Rabbi told him that you don't just get baptized like Christians do and magically become Jewish. There's a bunch of work involved. So my cousin is still Catholic. Sort of. And now I am thinking that going to your camp will never work.

And - I've been thinking about junior high school and how we will never ever be in the same class again. I think in Junior High, you're expected to be cool. Maybe I will use this summer to become a new person. I need to get prettier – especially for when I am a real actress. They're all really pretty. Like you. Maybe I will always be the funny character? Seventeen Magazine says putting oatmeal on your face helps with the acne. After you take the oatmeal off your face, you're supposed to put on egg whites to close your pores. But what do you do with the egg yolks? They say, "reserve for another use." Should I put the yolks in my hair? Do you think they'll soak up the oil? But they're oily, right? And how do I explain the missing eggs to my mother?

Maybe I'll get a new haircut and wear all blue clothes and be like – the "mysterious blue person?" Can I be someone else in Junior High? I tried imitating Hayley Mills and then Barbara Hershey but that didn't work. Who should I be?

Yours Until Niagara Falls,

Izzy

(LINA writes a letter. July 12, 1964.)

LINA

Happy Birthday. I hope you had cake. Thank you for printing your letters. Guess what? I came in third in the relay and am thrilled. I made believe I had long legs like you. So in a way, you helped me in the race!

Please don't become someone else. Be Izzy. I like Izzy. Save the eggs. Buy stuff for oily skin.

LINA (cont'd)

Thank-you for saying I'm pretty. I'm really just okay.

Yours till the chocolate chips,

Lina

P.S. Are you still sleeping on soda cans to get smooth hair?

IZZY

Thank you for that long, informative letter. You have been at camp for three weeks and I still have no idea what you are doing— besides running one relay. Did you sneak away and visit the Boy's Camp as planned? Or – are none of the boys as cute as George Harrison? (Notice I didn't mention Paul.)

I am reading "Romeo and Juliet." I make-believe I am Juliet. I never will be Juliet. When we read fairy tales in school, I was always the witch. I wonder if when I am a real actress if I will still be the witch. Some of the play is hard to read – I don't understand Mercutio so I keep looking up things. Juliet is only thirteen. Just one year older than us. Imagine being married at thirteen! I can't even date until I am sixteen!

I had a nice birthday. My parents gave me the Beatles album and a small stereo with actual speakers. I can play music really loud. My mother was nice to me all day. I wonder if she stored up all of her meanness for later.

Today is July 15 which means I have 45 more days until you come home on August 29. I am going to Aunt Rose's Country Club one day. And we will be going to the World's Fair in a week. And we go to Jones Beach one day each summer. So I am busy for three whole days this summer and need to find something to do for the other 42 days.

How about if I write you a one-page letter to you every day for forty-two days so when you come home, you'll have a forty-two-page letter to read. How does that sound?

Miss you.

Yours Until Niagara Falls,

Izzy

P.S. I stopped sleeping on soda cans because you don't sleep. I need to be able to sleep.

Especially because I don't have Puddles anymore. I don't even iron my hair. Remember when we ironed each other's hair and burned it and how it smelled awful? That was fun.

LINA

Dear Izzy,

Please don't write me a forty-two-page letter and if you are writing one now – STOP! If you write it then I will feel like I have to read it and I don't want to read a forty-two-page letter. Write me a short one! Or we'll just talk a lot when I come home.

The boys are not as cute as Paul – because NO boy is as cute as Paul. Not even as cute as George. I don't know who "Mercutio" is. But please don't write me about it. You can tell me in person. I am good at archery. But it hurts my arms. Miss you, too,

Yours till the chocolate chips,

Lina

(Lights fade to black.)

Scene 2 – Junior High

(Izzy writes a letter.)

IZZY

September 30, 1964

Dear Lina,

I miss writing you letters so I am going to keep doing it. I still go crazy when I think about the fact that we are no longer in the same classes. Sheesh, you'd think we'd at least have lunch together. I wish you were skipping eighth grade with me.

So you say I should look at the school year with a better attitude. So here goes: I like English. We are reading "Twelfth Night" and the best part is – after we finish it (I finished it) – we will see it at Stratford in Connecticut. In eight months! We are going to work on the same play for eight months! I will go out of my mind! I already got in trouble for reading ahead. And then there's algebra. I don't care what "x" is. Maybe if I flunk out of algebra they'll kick me out of my program and I can go to junior high for three years instead of two and we can go to high school together.

Write me!

Yours until Niagara Falls, (I think we're not supposed to capitalize the preposition. So when my mother asks, "what did I learn in school today," I have something to tell her.)

Izzy

LINA

Dear Izzy,

It's funny writing to someone who lives three blocks away. We have to buy a stamp and everything. Algebra can be cool. Think of it as a puzzle.

Dear Lina,

I put some stamps in the envelope. Letters are good things because you can keep them forever. I have all your letters and school notes in a special blue box and reread them. And guess what? I've been thinking. You know how I go to your seders and celebrate Hanukkah with you? And how you had Easter here and ate some lamb even though you hate lamb and worried about being mean to Bambi (baa...)? I wonder if we should visit each other's religion. I can go to your synagogue and you can come to my church. You're going to have a Bat Mitzvah next year and I don't know what that means. The World Book Encyclopedia says nothing.

LINA

Thank you for the stamps. If this keeps up I will also need envelopes. Oy! You keep my letters????? Please don't show them to anyone.

LINA (cont'd)

So, the Bat Mitzvah....it means having "religious responsibility." I need to do projects and work in the synagogue at becoming a good Jewish woman. This is super-important to me. My Jewish faith is like – in my blood and bones – it's part of me. I asked my mom about visiting each other's religion and she cried! She said if the world did that maybe we'd all stop hurting each other. So thanks for that idea.

(IZZY writes a letter.)

November 29, 1964

Dear Lina,

Happy Hanukkah! It's pretty early this year.

I am trying to look on the bright side. I know you're only moving a mile away but sometimes it feels like it's across a really high mountain and everything will be harder for us because now we have to climb a mountain. You know "Climb Every Mountain" from *The Sound of Music*? I don't want to climb mountains. My life has enough mountains. Take my mother. (Really, take her.) But the fact that you're moving over Christmas and will be spending Christmas with me instead of in Miami is super-exciting. I have a schedule for us.

CHRISTMAS EVE:

- Bake cookies.
- Trim Christmas tree with family and don't get tied up in tinsel. My father uses a lot of it.
- Eat cookies.
- Sing at least one Christmas song with me. Not "Jingle Bells!"
- Eat more cookies.
- Eat Pizza from Dantes. We will make sure that we don't order meat so its kosher.
- Eat another cookie.
- Watch Alistair Sims A Christmas Carol on channel 9. It's a good one.
- Maybe have some milk with the cookies.

CHRISTMAS DAY

- Open presents.
- Have breakfast.
- Get all dressed up and take pictures under the tree.
- Go to Aunt Marie's where there will be at least tons of noisy Italians and too much food. Uncle Roberto will try to give you wine. Aunt Marie says she will make a special plate for you where there is no meat so you can have the lasagna.
- Make sure you get a cannoli. They go really fast. And if you're not sick of cookies, I'll put aside a pignoli cookie for you. Soooo good.
- Go home really late and sneak some cookies into the bedroom.

It will be the merriest ever.

Dear Izzy,

Everything sounds too too wonderful. A small question? Can we also eat donuts?

LINA (cont'd)

Please be happy that I am moving. Ari and I will each have our own room and I won't have to worry about him blowing up my records with his chemistry set.

Yours until the Chocolate Chips,
Lina

(You could... maybe interject some Christmas music in the back ground. Or "Auld Lang Syne.")

(Izzy is writing a letter. May 1965.)

IZZY

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Zenes,

Thank-you for inviting me to Lina's Bat Mitzvah. It was a perfect day and all the tulips are in bloom! Like the world was celebrating with Lina. The service was beautiful. Sometimes I think I even understood what was going on. But even when I didn't – I loved it. It was like going to a special world that was far away but right next to me at the same time. That was how I felt when I went to your synagogue last month. Like I was invited to a special world. I don't think Lina was invited to a special world when she came to church with me. Attila-the-Nun (that's what the kids call her) asked me why my friend wouldn't kneel in church and I told her that's because she was Jewish. And you know what she said????? She said, "Get another friend." And you know what I said????????? "I'll get another church." I think that was probably disrespectful but I was mad.

Anyway, I loved the Bat-Mitzvah.

Sincerely yours truly,

Izzy

LINA

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Ross,

Thank-you for coming to my Bat Mitzvah. I love the flowers you sent and the sweets and the cute Italian horn. I especially loved the donuts. You all made me feel very special.

Yours truly,

Lina

IZZY

Dear Lina,

Mazel Tov on your Bat Mitzvah. All the cards say that and I couldn't find anything original. I know this is important to you and I hope I got it right. I have no idea what you said during your celebration. But it was pretty impressive. My mom could not figure out what to get you. I told her you would want a box of donuts. So she went crazy with all the sweets and flowers and then you got the Italian horn. Which is pretty funny. Everyone in my family has one. It's protection from the "evil eye." And in this world – you never know. It has a 5,000-year history. A lot of it is about sex. (My cousin told me that. Not my mother. Look it up.) I won't tell you all of it but it's supposed to help with fertility. I know we are not supposed to say these things out loud but you're a woman now, right? Anyway, it's not religious so you can wear it without anyone

IZZY (cont'd)

thinking you're Catholic. Just don't show it to any boys. You don't want to give them the wrong idea.

Isn't it funny that we are both going to California for the summer and still won't be together? I am excited about San Francisco. I am hoping I get to see the set of the Ponderosa – it's somewhere up there. Maybe I'll even see Michael Landon. He's kind of cute. But not as cute as George. Or Paul. And you get to go to Hollywood! See if they have the sets from *The Wizard of Oz*. It's an important part of history.

We're going to be staying with my aunt and uncle in July and my grandmother in August so I think my mom will have to be nice to me all summer. I am putting two return addresses on the envelope so you can write to me.

Yours until Niagara Falls,
Izzy

Dear Lina,

Write to me! Have you gone to Hollywood yet? We are not seeing the sets from *Bonanza*. We see A LOT of movies. My cousins are crazy about movies. We saw *Battle of the Bulge* which was really long. And violent. My cousin Will says the history is all wrong. But at least the good people won. We also saw *Sound of Music* – which I already saw. I did like that the Nazi-boyfriend did not want to turn in his girlfriend. Of course, the Von Trapps weren't Jewish so maybe that's why. There are a lot of movies about World War Two now. Have you noticed? My uncle says that's because it's twenty years since the war ended and people want to talk about it now. Except I know that you don't so I'll stop talking about it.

We are going to the Red Wood Forest next week to look at tall trees. That will be fun.
Yours until Niagara Falls,

Dear Izzy,

Skip the war movies. Go see the movie *Help*. The movie makes no sense and we can talk about that. Plus Paul is really cute. And George is a little-cute. Have fun with the trees.
Yours until the chocolate chips,
Lina

Dear Lina,

The trees were gargantuan-humungous. I have lots of pictures. Next week, we are going on a drive to Carmel-by-the-Sea. My cousins used to visit the "Witch Tree" on the way but it blew down last year. California people sure do like their trees.

Summer is coming to an end and I am so sad about going back to school. It's weird going from 7th grade to 9th. I don't like it. And there's nothing I can do about it. Except worry. Which as you know, I am very good at.

Yours until Niagara Falls,
Izzy

P.S. Saw "Help." George is gorgeous. Paul is all right.

Dear Izzy,
 School will be fine. Stop worrying.
 P.S. George's smile is crooked.

(IZZY writes a letter. November 1965.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,
 Isn't this blackout great? I hate ninth grade. I love that there's no school. I don't care if the lights ever come back on. I think it's pretty funny that your mother called my mother because she thought that Ari caused the blackout. I don't think chemistry sets for eleven-year-olds can take out thirteen states and part of Canada!

All the neighbors are talking to each other. Next door, they think the blackout was caused by aliens. Up the block, they're saying it's the Russians.

We've all got our ears glued to little transistor radios but nobody knows anything. I don't know what we'll do when the batteries run out because you can't get batteries anywhere. You also can't get milk. Maybe I can have soda with my meals!

The only downside to the blackout is there is no tv and I will miss The Patty Duke Show. I just love her and want her life. I bet her mother doesn't yell at her and everyone loves her. I wish I was Patty Duke.

Yours until Niagara Falls,
 Izzy

Dear Izzy,
 1. I think Ari wishes he caused the blackout.
 2. You don't want to be Patty Duke. Do you read Tiger Beat? She doesn't even live with her mother. She lives with her agents. I would hate that.

Dear Lina,
 I would love to live with my "agent." I would love to have an agent. I would love to be in a TV show. I would love to be Patty Duke. I am boring and awkward with bad skin.

Dear Izzy,
 You are crazy-imaginative and you listen to me practice the piano even when I'm bad. I'd rather be friends with Izzy Ross than Patty Duke.

(And IZZY is writing another letter. December 1965.)

IZZY

Happy Almost New Year, to Lina in Miami!

IZZY (cont'd)

I've been thinking. You know how we're reading *The Diary of Anne Frank* in school? Please don't let the little hairs on your arms stand on end – this is not about your family. Well kind of. But not the past. It's about the future.

I've been wondering to myself if all the terrible things that happened in Europe happened here – would I hide you? The first time I read it all those years ago, I was sure I would. I even made a plan that I would put your family in our attic. I would feed you all my broccoli and some of my ice cream and look for fresh fruit for you. It would be freezing cold in the winter and horribly hot in the summer but you would be safe. But today, I was wondering – would I be brave enough? I'm scared of everything. Change, high school, my mother. I'd want to save you. Does that count?

(LINA writes a letter.)

LINA

It counts. I'd want to save you, too. Happy New Year, Izzy. See you soon. Look, I even bought my own stamps. I knew there'd be a letter waiting.

(LINA writes another letter. February 1966.)

LINA

Dear Izzy,
I am sending this sympathy card to you because I saw in Tiger Beat that George Harrison married Patti Boyd. I am sorry. I am sure if he knew you existed, he would have waited for you.
Yours until the Chocolate Chips,
Lina

IZZY

Dear Lina,
Thank you for the sympathy card. (Do people write thank-yous for sympathy cards?) I still keep George's poster on my wall because he is (ahem) the handsomest Beatle and very deep. I hold out hope for you and Paul. I know he is engaged to Jane Asher and she is very pretty but so are you. I wonder if he would convert for you.
Yours until Niagara Falls,
Izzy

Dear Izzy,
Paul would probably not convert. And it doesn't matter. Paul and George are just part of our make-believe world. I think we have to start focusing on real guys. I know it's hard. There's no guy in school I want to focus on. But maybe someday, "Our prince will come."
Are you going to the spring dance? Please say you will go. We can go shopping and get new dresses and shoes. It will be fun.
Yours until the chocolate chips,
Lina

Dear Lina,

I am never going to go to another school dance again. Only Eddie asked me to dance and he is very short. All the boys are shorter than me. When I danced with you, I saw Mary Ann and her “team of cool” pointing at me and laughing. That’s why I stayed in the bathroom until my dad picked us up. I appreciate that you have showed me all the latest dances but I think I will always be an ostrich.

Yours until Niagara Falls,
Izzy

(LINA writes a postcard. July 1966)

LINA

Dear Izzy,

LINA (cont’d)

Here’s a postcard of my camp just like I promised. I wrote you first! Are you impressed? It looks better in person. They should have taken a photo of the lake and not the rec center. Tomorrow is my first day as a junior counselor. Ari gave me a rabbit’s leg for luck. (Don’t get in a tizzy – it’s not real.)

Yours until the chocolate chips,
Lina

(IZZY writes a letter.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

July 10, 1966 was the BEST day ever. I saw my first Broadway show. My mother said I can go on my own to Saturday matinees as long as I just take the subway to the theatre and then come right home. I saved up my babysitting money and saw “Fiddler on the Roof.” I was in the last row and it cost \$5.00 – and I did my arithmetic and that was ten hours of babysitting but it was worth it. They had to throw me out of the theatre. I couldn’t move at the end. I will never, ever forget it. I wrote ten pages about it in my diary.

I cried a lot. Is it all true? That story about Chava marrying a gentile and then she was dead to the family? If you married a Gentile, would your parents throw you out? I cannot picture your parents doing that. If you don’t want to talk about it – you don’t have to. I am just trying to understand.

Now, your turn. Tell me everything. How is it being a junior counselor? Do you get to boss the little kids around? Is it fun?

Yours until Niagara Falls,
Izzy

(LINA writes a letter.)

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I am sorry I am writing so late. Being a junior counselor is exhausting. I don't boss anyone around. The "real" counselors boss me around.

I will answer your question because it is about a musical in Russia and not the war. And because it probably is a good thing that you want to understand stuff,

I don't know how to put this into words that you would get. My parents would never understand if I married a gentile. They might even sit shiva for me. As if I was gone. Really, it would break their hearts. But Izzy, I would never marry a gentile. Paul McCartney would have to convert. It's just how it is.

Yours until the chocolate chips,

Lina

(Lights change.)

Scene 3 – High School

IZZY – 10th Grade

LINA – Junior High 9th Grade

(IZZY is writing a letter. September 1966.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I hate high school. I know you told me to give it time and I did. Three days. Also, my mother yells at me all the time. I want to run away. But I don't know where to go. I wrote my grandma in California and asked if I could go live with her and she called my parents and now they are both mad at me. Is there a way I can live in your house without anyone knowing? I can hide under your bed and just be a giant dust bunny when everyone's home and then when you are all gone, I can clean your house or something. It'll only be for four years until I am eighteen. You can feed me after everyone's in bed. Just don't feed me broccoli. Remember when you said you'd want to save me? Here's your chance.

Please! I have to go somewhere. I never know when the yelling's going to begin so I play music in my room really loud. Don't call me. My mother is always in the kitchen. She doesn't eat so she must want to listen in on me when I am on the phone. I can't stay here. Do not tell your parents anything. Will you hide me?

In anticipation of your valued response (I read that somewhere).

Izzy

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I wish you didn't hang up on me. I did think about hiding you. But Suzette cleans every day and she would not think you were a giant dust bunny under my bed. Do you know why your mother yells at you? You get good grades. You don't sneak around. I don't get it. But for now, the

LINA (cont'd)

grown-ups are in charge. I really miss talking to you. You like to live in your imagination - so can we get together and make-believe we live in a world that's perfect?

Yours until the Chocolate Chips (but maybe it chipped already),
Lina

(IZZY tears up the letter and puts it into a new envelope.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,
Thanks for nothing.

LINA

Dear Izzy,
Can we talk? I am worried about you. Look! I bought stamps and stationary with matching envelopes and everything. I'll write more. I promise. That way you will have something to look forward to when you get home from school. Or maybe you can come here every day after school and just sleep at home? Do you want me to ask my parents?

Or – you know what I really think? I really think you need to talk to your dad. Maybe he doesn't know everything that's going on because he's at work.

I miss you and I want to see you. I even bought the music to "Somewhere over the Rainbow" so I could play it for you. And you can dream of flying like the bluebirds over the rainbow. Please don't shut me out.

(IZZY is writing a letter.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,
Thank-you for your letter. I miss you, too. I was blaming you for not saving me. But I really was blaming my mother for not liking me. I finally talked to my father who talked to my mother who talked to me and she (maybe) realized that telling me I was unplanned and they weren't ready for children was not the best thing she could have said at the top of her lungs. They both mentioned that maybe I should stay with Aunt Marie for awhile. But then Dana cried and my mother cried so that idea didn't work. My mother yells at me because I am messy. I am. I seem to like everything everywhere. You've seen my room with books and magazines and candy wrappers all over. My dad thought maybe she should hang up a sign on my door saying, "Do not enter: a teenager lives here." And just leave me alone. Yeah ... that would work for about a week.

I'd really love to hear you play "Somewhere over the Rainbow." And I want to hear you play "Rhapsody in Blue" some more. Especially the opening.

Yours until Niagara Falls,
Izzy

Dear Izzy,
 I am glad you talked to your father.
 Are things back to normal?
 Yours until the chocolate chips.
 Lina

Dear Lina,
 What's normal?
 I walk on eggshells. My mother doesn't talk to me. (See I can write a two-sentence letter, too.)
 Yours until Niagara Falls,
 Izzy

Dear Izzy,
 That was three sentences. It's hard being in two different schools. Let's go to the movies over Thanksgiving. *The Russians are Coming, the Russians are Coming* is at the Utopia. Ari says it's pretty funny. You need to laugh and so do I.
 Yours until chocolate chips,
 Lina

Dear Lina,
 It's a date. (One sentence. I always need to write an aside.)
 Yours until Niagara Falls,
 Izzy

(LINA writes a postcard. December 27, 1966)

Dear Izzy,
 This is where we are staying in Miami for the holidays. Wish you were here.
 As Gidget says, "Toodles,"
 Lina

(IZZY writes a letter.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,
 "Wish you were here?" Really? That's all I hear from you is "Wish you were here?" Let's just say, I wish I was there, too. Christmas was not Christmas. Forget the "merry merry" and "ho ho ho." There was lots of talk about the Vietnam War and not any about peace on earth. One of my aunts was nagging my cousin that if didn't get his grades up, he'd never get into college. (That's a great Christmas topic, don't you think?) And if he doesn't get into college, then he would be drafted and go to Vietnam. And then another uncle chimed in and said, "What's wrong with that? I served in World War Two." And then more uncles chimed in and then the aunts started with their opinions and it got louder and louder and soon everyone was eating their lasagna in silence. You could hear everyone chew in unison. Which can be very scary when they're all Italian. It's almost 1967. I hope the year goes by really fast so I am closer to going to college.

LINA

Dear Izzy,
Happy New Year! Here's some advice from your elder of three months: Don't wish your life away.

IZZY

That's what my mother says. Don't sound like my mother. Happy New Year. What would you like to happen for the New Year?

LINA

I want a really cool pair of bell bottoms. You should get them, too. You're tall – you'd look good in them. Like Cher. Let's go shopping together for them! And - I want to learn to play the cello. I suppose wishing for peace on earth couldn't hurt.

IZZY

You can't give up on your piano after all these years! You are going to be a famous pianist. Or did you decide to become a famous cellist? I have such plans for us – I'll be on Broadway and you'll be in Carnegie Hall. And we'll have late dinners after our shows and discuss the arts and cute musicians. Doesn't that sound like fun?

LINA

No. I do not want to be a famous anything. I just like music. Can't someone like something without having to become famous? Don't give me your dream. Yours is a huge grand one and my dreams are smaller. I just want to have a family and play them music and make them happy.

I'm not giving up on piano although I want to. My teacher gave me Tchaikovsky's "Symphonie Pathetique and it's impossible. Sometimes I practice Brahm's Lullaby because it's easy and I know it by heart. That's what I'll play for my babies.

(LINA is writing a postcard. It's Spring Break 1967.)

LINA

Dear Izzy,
I really do wish you were here. The beach is super-crowded. Coming here for spring break was not a great idea. Plus, I don't fit into my swimsuit. I must stop eating donuts. I will be home soon
Toodles, Lina

(March 27, 1967)

IZZY

Dear Lina,
My parents had a l-o-n-g talk with me about dating. No, not the "sex" talk. Thank goodness. Just dating. How old I should be. How old the boy can be. How I should not ever get into cars with boys. It was awkward. I told them they had nothing to worry about since no one wants to date me. And they said your parents are coming over to talk about this. Why do your parents want to talk about me dating?

LINA

Dear Izzy,

My parents had a l-o-n-g talk with me also. It's no biggie. It's what parents do. "Born Free" is at the Utopia. Do you want to go? It's about friendly lions.

Dear Lina,

Your parents did come over. I listened from the top of the stairs. They're worried that I'm going to change you. Change you? You're the most stubborn person I know. I can't even make you want to be a famous musician. Even though you should and you could. That dating stuff? *What are they worried about? We can't even date!* I can't date until I am sixteen when I am a senior in high school.

I don't get the stuff about not dating outside of your religion. Doesn't that separate people more than bring them together? Don't your parents want to bring people together?

Yours truly,
Izzy

(LINA is writing a letter. March 30, 1967.)

Dear Izzy,

I don't know what to say. I know what I want to say. "Don't get in a tizzy, Izzy!" But you'll think I am trying to be cute (I am) and ignore me.

My parents were just talking about all of our futures. They're worried that you'll introduce to me to Christian boys. They're worried I might fall in love with one like Chava did in "Fiddler on the Roof." They have a different history than your family. Six million Jews were murdered. They didn't survive so that they could have Christian grandchildren. Can you understand that?

Jeez, Izzy! We visited each other's religion. We shared holidays. You even fasted with me on Yom Kippur. Don't let religion divide us. Then, we're going in the wrong direction.

Yours until the Chocolate Chips (I'm trying here)
Lina

(IZZY writing.)

Dear Lina,

I don't think I am doing the dividing. I think that's your family. Sorry. It's how I feel. First of all, I don't know any Christian boys except for my cousins. All the boys I know are Jewish. And for the record, my mother would be thrilled if I married a nice, Jewish doctor. I don't get why all this pressure is on you. Are you living for others? Don't you want to lead your own life? The terrible things that happened to your parents did not happen to you. Maybe you should talk about it so you can finally move on.

(LINA writing.)

Izzy,

Move on? *Move on?* Are you serious? Those terrible things did happen to me. These “things” get passed down. They’re in my dreams. My mother was fifteen at Auschwitz. I will be fifteen in three weeks. The same age as my mother when she had to watch her family stand in line to be murdered. Later, when my parents were liberated and my mother *did* want to talk about it, there was nobody to listen. All she heard was “We all suffered. We don’t want to hear about you.” So she and my father bottled everything up. But my parents worry that no matter where we live, we are all just a few steps away from the gas chambers. You don’t “move on” from that.

(IZZY WRITING.)

Lina,

The world is different. You are not a few steps away from the gas chambers. Remember that even while in hiding Anne Frank said that she still believed people are good at heart.

(LINA writing.)

Izzy,

I wonder what Anne Frank would have written had she not been killed in Bergen-Belsen. You read. You have to know that there are many people who wish the Nazis would have won. I would have thought that you would understand. I told you my family’s story. My mother showed you the pictures of her family. We invited you inside to our most sacred remembrances. My parents lived and because of that I am here. And I am going to use my life by being the best daughter, sister, friend, someday-mother that I can be. All within my faith. But I will never move on from the past. That, too, is sacred. I carry my murdered family with me everywhere I go. I think that you may never understand that.

Lina

(IZZY is writing.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I can’t understand things that I don’t know. For years, all I’ve heard is “I don’t want to talk about it.” I don’t think it’s fair that you are blaming me for not understanding things you never explained.

Izzy

(LINA is writing.)

Dear Izzy,

Please use your intelligence to think. I told you everything. Pardon me for not going into morbid detail. I have no intention of becoming the “tragic heroine” in your little drama.

We need a break from each other.

Lina

 I don't think the play needs an intermission however if the director decides the actors
 and/or audience needs one – this would be a good time
 -----\

(IZZY is writing. April 3, 1967.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,
 It's been a week. That's how long a school break is. Can we talk? Or write? Or sit next to each
 other and pass notes?
 Don't let Niagara Fall....
 Izzy

(LINA is writing.)

Dear Izzy,
 You made me smile. I'll call. Let's not go nuts talking about this. We probably both learned a few
 things.
 And then we'll eat chocolate chips,
 Lina

(IZZY is writing. May 1, 1967.)

Dear Lina,
 So only two more months before I am done with my first year in high school. One down two to
 go. I finally found someone to walk home with. Her name is Tanya and her parents are from
 Russia. She's smart – even in algebra like you and she wants to be an actress like me. Plus she
 wears scarves all the time and looks cool. Maybe I should wear scarves all the time.

But then yesterday, she said something which made me think, “Uh oh. This is not good.” She
 talked about all the Jewish students at school and how they always stuck together so she was
 glad she met me. She said Jewish people stick together and don't make friends outside of their
 religion. I told her about you (not your secret) and how we were still friends even though we're
 not even in the same school. She said, “Just wait. You two won't be friends forever.”

So now I wonder about staying friends with her. Can you change someone's mind? I like having
 someone to walk home with and I thought I liked her. But can I like her if she doesn't like you?
 Maybe she would like you if she knew you?
 Yours until Niagara Falls,
 Izzy

Dear Izzy,
 Do you want to wear scarves all the time? Is that an “Izzy-thing” or an “Izzy-trying-to-be-
 someone-else (yet again) thing?”

LINA (cont'd)

I asked my mother about what Tanya said to you. I hope you don't mind but usually she's smarter than me. She said that this could be an "opportunity to show Tanya that human beings are human beings and it has nothing to do with religion." Do you know what I think? I think you are just discovering things about how as a Jew, people think a lot of weird things about us. When we do stick together ... maybe it's for self-protection? But we've always had friends from all over because we live in this melting pot. I guess the pot doesn't always melt together. Maybe someday we can change that.

Yours until the chocolate chips,
Lina

(LINA is writing a postcard. July 12, 1967)

LINA

Happy Birthday, Izzy. I am writing this on your actual special day so you will get it late. We are just figuring out the post office. Venice is so beautiful. You go everywhere by boat. And all the boat-rowers are gondoliers who sing to you. You would love it. You probably would sing back! I hope you get here someday. My mother lets me wear a little make-up so I bought some Italian lipstick called "rossa."

Yours till the lip sticks (Did I make you laugh? I made it up!)
Lina

(IZZY is writing a letter – July 25, 1967.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

Since I can't write you in Italy, I am sending this to your home. What do you think of my typing? I got a typewriter for my birthday and now everyone can read my "penmanship."

Venice looks so dreamy and romantic. It's on my list of what to do when I am a grown-up. I started thinking about being grown up. We haven't seen each other in eons and I wonder – is this what happens when friends grow up? That time runs out for seeing your friends because you are busy – doing – I don't know – grown-up stuff?

This is a good time to be out of the country. There is rioting everywhere. In June, the news kept talking of the hippie movement and how this would be the "summer of love." But really, it's the "summer of riots." And the news is Vietnam night after night. And body bags. You would hate it. I am glued to the news because what else do I have to do? Was the world always crazy and we were just too young to notice?

I am reading all of Agatha Christie novels this summer. It's my escape.

Yours until Niagara Falls (because even though we are older and that phrase is babyish – it's still true),
Izzy

IZZY (cont'd)

P.S. I bought eye shadow. It's Mary Quant and it's kind of baby blue. But I still don't look like Jean Shrimpton or Jane Asher.

LINA

Dear Izzy,

Thanks for your letter. I am home and I think you may be on vacation because no one picks up the phone. I want to tell you all about Italy.

And to answer your question, yes the world was always crazy. You know my family's history so you know it's true.

Yours until the Chocolate Chips,

P.S. I am glad you don't look like Mary Quant or Jane Asher. You look just lovely as Izzy. Be Izzy.

(IZZY is writing a card.)

IZZY

Happy Hanukkah a week early! May your candles burn extra bright this season. Even in Florida.

(LINA is writing a letter. December 25, 1967.)

Dear Izzy,

Look, Izzy! An actual real letter from me from Miami. Not a postcard! Merry Christmas! I hope you get some Christmas magic this year. I have something to tell you that I can't put into a postcard because other people might see it. I met someone. You'd like him. He lives in New York so I could date him – if I was allowed to date. It's a secret because he's a little older and I don't think my parents would approve. I think Ari knows I have a crush on him but he is being amazingly good about keeping quiet.

So, the important stuff. He's really cute. Maybe not as cute as Paul McCartney (who still hasn't married Jane Asher – what's up with that). But different-cute. Really funny with a humungous smile. And he smiles at me ALL the time. And my stomach does flips. And then it does flops! Which is the best feeling. He's a fabulous swimmer and diver. I spent a lot of time with him at the pool – watching him (when I was supposed to be studying). He's a freshman in college. That's not too old, right? Only three years older than me. And yes, I know what you were wondering. He's Jewish. Anyway, it's loads of fun having a crush on a real person and not a picture in a magazine. You'll see.

P.S. The craziness of the world goes away when I see him at the pool. But we're never alone together. I think Ari has decided to be my chaperone.

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I'm happy for your "crush." I don't know if a boy will ever like me. No one has ever asked me out. Not even Eddie who used to send me valentines. It doesn't matter since I can't date till next year when I'm sixteen. I am friends with this guy. But.

IZZY (cont'd)

You're probably wondering if he is cute. You know Charlie Brown from the comic strip? That's what he looks like. Charlie Brown if he was fifteen. So – different-cute? But he is ... interesting. He draws these stick figure comics and has them commenting on the times and they're very funny. His name is Kevin Beardsly. Although the kids call him Kevin Weirdsly. And he is weird. But I like him. As a friend. Even though my mother thinks you can't be friends with a boy. But I think you can, don't you? I just like talking to him. I used to think of boys as kind of alien creatures – maybe because I never had a brother. Kevin doesn't make my stomach do flips like Florida-guy.

Dear Izzy,

Florida-guy's name is Michael. When I'm sixteen, I'm going to start working on my parents to talk them into letting me date him. Sorry the letter is so short. I have tons of homework and cello practice and piano practice and I may give up the piano. For now. Don't try to talk me out of it.

(IZZY is writing a letter: March 4, 1968.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

They're riots in South Jamaica. My mother says I can't go shopping there anymore. I hope Audrey and Lydia are safe. I guess we'll know tomorrow in school. My parents now get the New York Times in addition to the Long Island Press. We all read the papers, watch the news and get sad. My Dad talks about what a tough world this is for my sister and I to grow up in. But your parents' world was tougher.

How does all this stuff happen? How does a man who preaches non-violence get murdered? Is this what happens to good people? I want to be a good person but it seems that the good die young and the bad live forever. Which doesn't mean I want to be a bad person. I just don't want to die young or be murdered like Dr. King.

(LINA is writing.)

Dear Izzy,

Can we make a pact that we will not write anymore about dying young or being murdered? We don't know the future and it's better if we write about "the good." Some people believe that if you focus on that you can make good a reality. I know that did not work for Dr. King. But I hope his story is not over.

You know what we need? We need to dance again. Dance away the world for an hour. It won't solve anything but it would be fun to be kids for the day – like we used to be. Come over.

Yours until the Chocolate Chips,

Lina

(IZZY is writing a letter.)

IZZY

April 22, 1968

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Zenes,

Thank you for letting me be part of Lina's Sweet Sixteen Birthday at that amazing restaurant on top of the sixes. It made me feel like a society lady in the Henry James novels. (I just finished reading "Washington Square" for school and I hope I have a better ending than poor Catherine.) The food was delicious and the views were better than the ones at the Empire State Building. I will never forget it. Thank-you again.

Sincerely yours truly,

Izzy

Dear Lina,

Guess what? I signed up to work for Eugene McCarthy. I can't start until school is out but at least I will have something to do this summer. And maybe I will be doing good. Does that make me good? I want to do good even if I am not good about it. But I don't know. I think being good also means you have to be nice to your mother. I thought about working for Senator Kennedy but Senator McCarthy was the first one to come out against the Vietnam war. Senator Kennedy just copied him.

Your Sweet Sixteen Party was so fun. I can't believe my mother is letting me have a party early so all my friends can come. The only one who declined was Tanya. Remember Tanya-with-the-scarves? She's busy. I am overthinking if she is. But it doesn't matter. What matters is you will be there.

(Izzy is writing a letter. June 2, 1968.)

IZZY

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Zenes,

Thank-you for my beautiful circle pin for my Sweet Sixteen Birthday It's just like Lina's. We will match and nobody will be able to tell us apart – except for the fact that I am four inches taller than her and she is prettier with better hair. I love it a lot and will wear it all the time. I am so glad my mother let me have my birthday party early so Lina and other people could actually come. I also am grateful that you invited me to Ari's Bar Mitzvah. I guess he's all grown up. Kind of?

Thank-you again.

Yours, Sincerely, Best Wishes,

Izzy

(LINA is writing a letter. July 5, 1968.)

July 5, 1968

Dear Izzy,

Israel is amazing. I got to visit with my only aunt and two cousins. We hardly ever see them because of where we all live. And guess what? My cousins love the Beatles and think Paul is really cute. (Ha ha!) I guess teens are teens everywhere. Why people like to focus on differences instead of what brings us together is a mystery.

LINA (cont'd)

There's so much history in this tiny country. I am gobbling it up. We hiked in the Golan Heights and visited Masada National Park – it just became a National Park – and it made me cry. And then there was the Sea of Galilee – so blue and of course, the Dead Sea which has so much salt you can float without trying to float. I don't know why they call it the Dead Sea – because you couldn't drown in it – you have to float! And then there's Jerusalem – where all these religions come together. And I cried some more. Because wouldn't it be wonderful if the people in all these religions could also come together? Hope things are well in NYC and you are enjoying working for Senator McCarthy. We are still sad about Robert Kennedy.

Lots of love and chocolate chips,

Lina

IZZY

Dear Lina,

Welcome home. It was great to talk to you like we were real people. I just saw that Paul McCartney and Jane Asher broke up this summer? That leaves room for drumroll you!

Dear Izzy,

I may not be available....

(IZZY is writing a card. December 14, 1968)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

Happy Hanukkah tomorrow. Sorry the card is late but I figure it has eight days to get there. It was fun seeing you for all of ten-minutes to exchange gifts. Will there ever be enough time to be together and just “be?” And Happy New Year.

Yours until Niagara Falls and lots of love,

Izzy

P. S. Not available for Paul McCartney??????

(LINA is writing a card. December 20, 1968)

LINA

Dear Izzy,

Merry Christmas, Izzy! Just “be?” Do you want a “Be-in” like in the musical “Hair?” (See, I can keep up with Broadway musicals like you.) By the way, would you ever take your clothes off onstage? Please say, “no.” My parents could be in the audience.

We are crazy busy, aren't we? Happy New Year!

Lots and lots of good wishes and love,

Lina

P.S. Paul McCartney lives too far away and he seems to like redheads.

Dear Lina,

I saw *Hair* over the holiday and loved every bit of it. I'd LOVE to be in it. For the record, when they take their clothes off – the lights get really dim and you can't see anything. But I think I would hide backstage during that scene.

Let the sunshine in!

Izzy

(March 1969.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I've been thinking and I actually have a plan. Really, it's well-thought out. Nothing like my runaway plan to live under your bed. You know how I've been working at Alexanders after school? I have enough money to go to the summer program at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts! I have to be careful with telling my parents. They are not thrilled that I am not getting into one of those ivy colleges because my math grades were not exactly up there.

Today, I found out I got into a small college in New Jersey and will go there. It's Lutheran but they don't push religion. Which is good because I never found a religion. Kevin ... (remember Kevin) says he's a Buddhist and I thought about that. There are a lot of steps and I think differently than they do. I also thought about becoming a Unitarian which is properly vague for me. Maybe – my religion is looking for the “quiet good.” I think in religion you're supposed to aspire to – something? Even if you never get there. Can you have religion without belonging to a religion?

Yours until Niagara Falls,

Izzy

(Lights fade.)

SCENE 4 - College

(IZZY is writing a letter. October 1, 1969.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I am writing because there is just one phone in the hallway of the dorm and you can't really talk because there is always a line and everyone is saying, “Hurry up.” I hope senior year is being good to you. I hear they may reinstate the prom. Will they finally do shows, too?

I can't believe we barely saw each other all summer. That one mile apart sure looks very far these days. So, you know how good is followed by bad. I am going to tell you the good first.

GOOD: The American Academy of Dramatic Arts was the best thing ever. I wish I could go to college there but they don't offer a degree and my dad is fixated on degrees and I am not great at the “big rebellion.” I learned so much! There are a lot of talented kids out there. A LOT. And onstage – I am funny. I have what they call “timing.” But I am not always truthful – so I need to work on that. And arms are a huge problem. Do you ever think about your arms when

IZZY (cont'd)

you are going through your day? Never, right? When I'm onstage, my arms just hang there – like dead wood. At the end, we had a recital and even my father came. I just loved it all so much, I am turning into a puddle as I write this. The best thing – I did a scene where my character was from England and some teacher told my teacher that the British girl had promise. He thought I was British! He thought I was someone else! Score one for me.

BAD: My roommate has a boyfriend. That's not the problem. The fact that he lives in my dorm room is. She sneaks him into the room every weekend. I don't much like sleeping in a tiny room with this guy I don't know and I won't go into anything else. I've never been on a date and now I'm sleeping in a room with some strange guy – who really is strange by the way. So what do I do? I take a bus, two subways and another bus and go home every weekend. Every weekend! That was not the plan when I decided to go away for college. My mother thinks I miss her.

I am taking a bunch of requirements to get them out of the way and just one theatre class and it's boring. I know I am kvetching. I wish I could take a class in kvetching because I do that well. Niagara falls ? Or just "love" because I am in college now?

Izzy

(LINA is writing a letter. December 1969.)

LINA

Dear Izzy,

Whoa – long letter. I am sorry it has taken me so long to respond – but there's so much to answer. We kept missing each other over Thanksgiving – my fault. Maybe Christmas break? Although I will be visiting colleges. I hope college gets better for you.

So, why we kept missing each other: I am dating Michael. Remember? "Florida boy?" Only he's really almost a man – being in college and all. My parents finally gave in. Seventeen is a good year for me. I only play the cello now so I'm not nutty practicing everything. Send me your dorm phone number. Let's stay young forever with ending our letters with Niagara Falls and chocolate chips. Let's never get too old to not remember how we were when we were little.

Yours until the chocolate chips,

Lina

(IZZY is writing a letter. December 10, 1969)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

There's always a huge line to use the dorm phone. Write me!

GOOD: Guess what? College got better! My roommate dropped out to live in some commune with her boyfriend and nobody has taken her place. And I got the lead in the spring play! Which has made some of the students mad because I am just a freshman. And someone asked me out. Do you go out with someone just because they ask you? Because I am unsure. I know you're going out with Michael because you actually like him (and I'm happy for you).

IZZY (cont'd)

BAD: Biology. Why does a theatre student need Biology?

What colleges are you looking at?

Yours till Niagara Falls (because I am feeling young again),

Izzy

P.S. Is this short enough for you?

(LINA is writing a letter. January 2, 1970.)

LINA

Dear Izzy,

We go on so many road trips to colleges.

What is the school play you are in? (Congratulations!)

We looked at Smith College (but I don't want to go to an all-girl's school), New York University (but I don't want to go to go to a school in the City unless Michael was in the City (he's upstate). and Cornell University (I wanted to check out the winter in Ithaca. I liked it a lot but it is cold).

And I know what you're thinking – Michael's college is not nearby.

Yours until the butter flies (for a change in pace),

Lina

P.S. Your letter was the perfect length.

(IZZY is writing a letter. January 15, 1970.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I have to get used to writing "1970." After writing the 1960's years for so long. Do you have that problem?

THE SEMI-GOOD (because things always have problems.) I am Stella in "A Streetcar Named Desire." There's a lot of – what? Sexiness in a way that is sexy but not overtly and I have never been kissed, so what do I know? My first kiss ever – will be onstage. (I did not go out with the boy who asked me out because I didn't want to. So I made up a story of a boyfriend back home. I acted the story really well.) Maybe you should write me about being kissed. Do you kiss Michael? You must. Also, I still have an arm-problem.

THE SEMI-BAD: I have to light birthday candles on a cake and I cannot light a match. Who knew that when I finally got a lead I'd have to worry about lighting a match? In acting classes, they have you do a lot of breathing but really – I wish they did more practical stuff – like how to light a match. And how to make your arms move.

I hope you think about New York University. Then I can take the train to the city and we can hang out like old times. Think about it. My show runs the last two weekends in March. I'd love for you to come and see the show. My parents would drive you back and forth. PLEASE COME!!!!!!

IZZY (cont'd)

Yours till Niagara Falls,

Izzy

P.S. Is this too long?

(LINA is writing a letter. March 26, 1970)

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I am not going to write you about what's it's like to kiss Michael – it's personal. I am sorry I missed your show. We had the spring orchestra concert and then it was spring break in Miami. Michael's not here so I guess I will really study. I hope the show went really well and you were able to light a match. I am home April 1 for a family celebration – no fooling. Call me.

Yours forever,

Lina

P.S. How about we make a deal? I won't criticize your long letters if you don't criticize my short ones?

(May 1, 1970. IZZY writes a letter.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

THE GOOD: I have a boyfriend. And he's Jewish. Yes, I found a nice Jewish boy at a Lutheran college. My mother always said I should marry a Jewish doctor. Of course, he's not a doctor. And he's not going to be one. And my parents hate him. Which is fine by me.

Izzy

P.S. Regarding our letters: You have a deal. Although you have to proud of me – this was really short.

(Snippets of letters as time passes.)

(From LINA. September 20, 1970.)

Dear Izzy,

Cornell is okay. I like my roommate. And my classes. I have no idea what to major in. Nothing is jumping out at me. I have to study a ton but sometimes I go into the music building and just play the piano. It relaxes me. I am going to learn to cross-country ski which is what they do in Ithaca in the winter. I really miss Michael. I just want to get married and start my life and not have to wait four more years.

Love,

Lina

(From IZZY. February 1970.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

It was really great seeing you over winter break. You really only have three-and-a-half years until you graduate. Remember when I had to wait all that time to get out of the house? Time does go by. Of course, you will need a major someday (Oy! I just sounded like a grown-up.).

ALL GOOD: I can't believe I am in Europe. I LOVE studying here. It's gorgeous – like living in one of those classy calendars. I wake up every day, put my feet on the ground and whisper to myself, "You are really here." I am broke – doing this on five dollars a day. My parents can't send me much money. I know they are counting their pennies to do this for me. I also know they are doing this because they hope I break up with Josh.

Some friends and I went to Salzburg. I imagined I was Angela Cartwright in "The Sound of Music" (Remember when I wanted to be her? I think that only lasted two weeks.) I restrained myself from dancing in the Alps singing "Do Re Mi." I didn't want anyone to think I was deranged.

The school took us to Italy over Easter. We walked the Colosseum in Rome and I clearly could see togas and gladiators and lions. It just came alive for me. A friend had to hit me on my back to break the spell. It's like that everywhere. I was surrounded by angels when we saw Botticelli's "Birth of Venus." The ceiling in the Sistine Chapel had movement. At one point I reached to the sky to join them. The tour guide sneered at me. Can you imagine what the world would be like if instead of sitting in school rooms for twelve years, we could all travel the world? Now, I am hearing Louis Armstrong sing "Wonderful World." And wishing it could be. And thinking, it really could be if only....

NOT GOOD: Last week we went to Munich. We stopped into some random beer hall and there were these men – standing and singing loudly. And they were scary. My friend who speaks German said, "let's go." And later he told me they were singing Nazi songs – which is forbidden. I guess the war isn't as far away as I thought. It's hard to believe there are people alive who miss those days. I am just starting to understand things that you already knew.

BACK TO THE GOOD: I am heading to Paris in a week. So pinch me.

I won't be writing a ton of letters because airmail is expensive. I just heard your sigh of relief.
Yours until Niagara Falls,
Izzy

(From LINA. May 1971.)

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I am home for the summer. Can we get together? I want to hear about your semester abroad. I am amazed that you did not sing the entire score of "Sound of Music" in the Alps.

(From IZZY. June 1971.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I am in North Carolina being an apprentice at an Equity Summer Stock for the summer. I love it – except for the ticks. We do a new show every week and the apprentices do a children’s show that tours.

VERY GOOD: We are doing *The Hobbit* and it is great fun. I get to sing – loudly. And it’s fine if I go flat because it is a funny song. They are doing a lot of cutesy comedies like “*Butterflies are Free*” which sells very well. They end the season with “*Look Homeward Angel*.” It takes place close to where the theatre is and it’s the theatre’s “specialty of the house.” I am reading the novel so I can learn more about the play’s history – and the area. There really is an angel sculpture and it’s beautiful. There are mountains everywhere and wildflowers and such a welcome break from the City. But then, there’s something else that I found out about – which is really crazy.

HORRIBLE: On my very first morning at breakfast, a little girl who is the daughter of one of the theatre-owners came to me and wanted to see “my horns.” She thought because I was from New York that I must be Jewish and if I was Jewish – I must have horns! You can bet I didn’t let anyone know I wasn’t Jewish. And I let her check my head for horns. And the thing is – she goes to a private school and is from a well-educated family. The past is never far away, is it? It’s taken me awhile to learn that. You tried to tell me but as usual, I had to learn these things for myself. Other than that, I love doing a show every week. It’s like being on the fast track in theatre which beats being on the fast track in algebra.

I hope your summer is as special as you are.

Yours until Niagara Falls,

Izzy

(Time passes. Snippets of letters.)

(IZZY writes a letter. February 1972)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

Where are you? I haven’t heard from you in months. Let’s not discuss the world or the elections. I am cast as the Housekeeper in “*Man of La Mancha*.” It’s a soprano role and I can’t sing it. I am, of course, the old lady. At least I’m not a witch. Just a nasty, gossipy woman. But still, it is my escape from the times. Miss your letters.

Love, Izzy

(LINA writes a letter and they continue to alternate. February 1972.)

LINA

Dear Over-Dramatic Izzy,

What are you talking about? We saw each other over break and on New Year’s! You’re not that bad at arithmetic! It’s been all of three weeks. Jackie brings Michael here once a month. Then,

LINA (cont'd)

she drives us around while Michael and I make-out in the back seat. I don't think my parents sent me to college for this. I still don't have a major. I thought about math – which I am good at but I don't want a life of crunching numbers. My parents think I should take education classes. Do all parents think their daughters should take education classes? Break a leg with “Man of La Mancha.” Do you draw lines on your face to look old?

Love until the lip sticks, Lina

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I am also taking education classes. So I have “something to fall back on.” And yes, all parents think their daughters should take education classes, learn to type or become a nurse. They're burning bras all over the country but our career options are stuck in the 1950's. I guess more women are going to med school. But that's not for me. Maybe you?

Yes, I have lines drawn on my face. Plus they pad me to look fat. It's every actresses dream to look fat and old onstage, right? I'm in the “Be careful what you wish” for syndrome. I wanted lots of parts in plays. I was right all those years ago about never being Juliet. I was born to be the witch. I must be good at being mean. Or maybe I just look mean. Or – maybe I am mean.

Would it be nagging if I told you that you should major in music?

Yours until Niagara Falls,

Izzy

Dear Izzy,

Yes, that would be nagging.

No, med school does not interest me, either.

You're not mean.

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I'm not in the spring show. They're doing “The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds” I was hoping to be Tillie because a lot of me is Tillie but they cast an actress who looks thirteen and not fifty – which is apparently my stage age. I thought they would consider me for the mother since everyone thinks I look old. But they're bringing in an actual fifty-year-old actress to play the mother. So that leaves me out. Even though I am the resident fifty-year-old for the department.

I gained a little weight when playing the housekeeper. Maybe they didn't need to pad me after all. All the students (female) in the department are going on this no-carbohydrate diet. You can only eat fruits and vegetables once a week. But you can have steak everyday. I don't like steak. I like pasta.

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I am told that models swallow cotton balls to lose weight. Apparently the liquids in your stomach makes the cotton balls expand so you think you are full. Please don't do that.

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I promise to not go on the cottonball diet.

Are you home this summer? I will be working but am around in the evenings. Josh and I broke up. For the tenth time – but the tenth time's the charm. You know when I went abroad for the semester? I didn't miss him. I think if you're in love you are supposed to miss your boyfriend when you are away. That told me something. My sister said that my parents celebrated. Their plan worked. You know I hate writing that.

I went out with a musician from the orchestra of "Man of La Mancha." He's going to Julliard and wants to be a conductor. My mother loved that. She loved telling her friends that my boyfriend was going to graduate school at Julliard. But he's not my boyfriend. He has lizard eyes and they started to creep me out.

Love,
Izzy

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I think it's a good call to stay away from boys with lizard eyes. I won't be around this summer. I will be working in a kibbutz. I am excited for that except being away from Michael. Now I know what you mean about letters. I hope he writes me every day. And I will try to do the same.

IZZY

Dear Lina,

Aha! For years, I have had to nag you to write me letters and now you are planning on writing Michael every day? I guess you really must be in love. Maybe you'll figure out your major.

LINA

Dear Izzy,

I just dream about marrying Michael and playing music for him and kissing him – a lot. I just can't focus on picking out something to study that will work for the rest of my life. I don't know many people who know. My roommate changed majors twice already. You were so focused even when we were little. I mean, what nine-year-old knows what she wants to be when she grows up?

IZZY

A nine-year-old who wanted to be anyone but who she was. I miss us. It's getting harder, isn't it? To stay best friends. It's not just us. We're in the world now.

LINA

I'll try harder to stay in touch. I can't write anymore. Michael will be here soon and my hair is a rat's nest.

Yours until the lip sticks,
Izzy

(More letters September 1972.)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

Do you watch the news? Or the Olympics? Did you see what happened in Munich? I can't bear it. Everyone's crying. The world is spinning out of control.

LINA

Dear Izzy,

My parents came to Ithaca to be with me. We talked about - is it ever safe to be Jewish? Is it ever safe to be in any minority? I don't know what else to say.

(More letters. October 1, 1972)

IZZY

Dear Lina,

I had to write you right away. Because I have news and it's not about our sad, topsy-turvy world. The school just built a new Black Box Theatre and they are doing some Sean O'Casey one-acts. (I love Sean O'Casey and everything Irish. My Scottish ancestors may not be thrilled.) And I am the female lead! Okay, she's the mother - but she is a lead. And I'm not a fifty-year-old (but probably a forty-year-old). We will be doing it in January. I am brushing up on my non-existent Irish brogue. I don't want to sound like that commercial for Irish Spring soap.

Love, Izzy

(From Lina. November 1, 1972.)

Dear Izzy,

Congratulations on being an Irish mother. I have two things and one is HUGE. I tried to call but no one answers the phone in your dorm. I'm leaving school in December. I have all good grades so I should be able to go back if I ever want to. The BIG news? Sit down. I am getting married. Michael proposed and I said yes and my parents hemmed and hawed but they realized that Michael is a good man. I am in madly in love with him and have been since I was fifteen. He's Jewish and devoted to his faith. His parents are also Holocaust survivors. There really are no black spots to count against us. It's hard to concentrate on finals when you are dreaming about your wedding.

Love is everywhere,
Lina

(November 12, 1972.)

IZZY

Wow Dear Lina,
 Congratulations. You're the first person not related to me to get married. But you are kind of related to me, aren't you? As you used to say, if you're happy, I'm happy. I am kind of amazed that you are striking out on your own and doing this. But I'm really glad you are following your heart.

Rehearsals are going great. There are two new freshmen in the theatre department: Melanie and Rachel and they are little like you and cute. And they sing really well. Mark my words, they're going to be on Broadway. As for me? I'm not so sure anymore. I might have to wait until I'm fifty.

Yours until Niagara Falls,
 Izzy

(IZZY opens a wedding invitation. LINA reads it aloud.)

To Miss Isobel Ross.

Mr. and Mrs. Josef Zenes along with Mr. and Mrs. David Goldblum
 Request the honor of your presence to the marriage of their children
 Lina and Michael
 On Sunday, January 22 1973...

(IZZY fills out the "reply" card and stuffs into an envelope.)

Dear Izzy,
 I have been calling and calling. Are you avoiding me? What do you mean that you "regret" not being able to come to my wedding? This is me, Izzy. The one who played *The Wizard of Oz* with you – how many times? I even did munchkin voices for you!

Dear Lina,
 I know and I'm sorry. Very, truly sorry. But I have a matinee that day. It's the lead, remember? There's no understudy. If I'm not there, there would be no show. I can't let everyone down.

Dear Izzy,
 But you can let your best friend down?

Dear Lina,
 I think best friends see each other more than once a year. I think best friends ... are asked to be in the wedding.

Dear Izzy,
 It's a Jewish wedding. We did this quickly. And to be truthful, I see Jackie a lot more than I see you. She always drives to Ithaca to visit me.

Dear Lina,
I don't drive.

Dear Izzy,
I was afraid there wasn't time to get you up to speed for the service. You're always in rehearsal.

Dear Lina,
You certainly did do this really quickly. I thought it took months to plan a wedding. I was thinking it would be in the spring and then I wouldn't audition for a show if it was. Or the summer. Summer weddings are beautiful. You seem to be in such a rush? Is there a reason for it?

Dear Izzy,
I am NOT "in the family way" if that's what you are implying. How can you even ask? Who are you these days? There's still time to respond.

Dear Lina,
I'm sorry. I can't. Can we ... meet later and celebrate?

Dear Izzy,
It's a wedding! Not a birthday celebration. You celebrate your wedding at your wedding!

Dear Lina,
Where are you registered?

(January 1973)

Dear Izzy,
Thank you for the china place setting.
Lina and Michael

(Time passes.)

Scene 5 – All Grown Up

(IZZY goes through her blue box that contains LINA'S letters. She reads snippets aloud. Or she hears LINA'S voice. November 28, 1975.)

IZZY

"I am thankful you are not Barbara Hershey, but Izzy." "Please don't become someone else. Be Izzy. I like Izzy." "Izzy is crazy-imaginative. I'd rather be friends with Izzy than Patty Duke." "You look just lovely as Izzy. Be Izzy."

(IZZY thinks for a moment and writes.)

Dear Lina,
It's Hanukkah. I think about you every Hanukkah, on your birthday....

(LINA reads letter.)

LINA

... and all those days in-between. I spent so much of my life trying to be someone else and realize now that you were the one person in my childhood who saw me – exactly as I was – with all my foibles and still liked me.

I really messed up with the wedding stuff. I am sorry. When I look back to three years ago, I see how fixated I was on what I thought was the brass ring – a part in a play. It is true that I didn't want to let anyone down. It's also true that I didn't even try to work something out. I could have talked with the director to see if someone could fill in for me. I could have at least tried to do something. Even if meant losing the role. And I didn't. I let you down. I also let myself down. That person is not the person I wish to be.

I am sending this to your parents because I don't know where you are anymore and I hate that. I understand if you don't answer. Do know that some of my finest moments were with you.

Thank-you for that.

Yours until Niagara Falls because that will always be true,

Izzy

P.S. And Happy New Year. May 1976 be good to you.

(LINA puts the note away. She may move away from the desk and then return. Either way, she will reread the letter.)

Dear Izzy,

Thank-you for the letter. It is true that I always pictured you at my wedding and I was hurt. My dreams have come true and I sincerely hope you are happy living your dream.

Lina

(IZZY writes a card. April 1976.)

IZZY

Happy Birthday, Lina. Remembering. And testing the waters.

Izzy

(LINA puts the card away.)

IZZY

Happy Hanukkah, Lina and Michael.

(LINA puts the card away.)

(April 1977.)

IZZY

Happy Birthday, Lina. Please admire my persistence.

(Yes, LINA puts the card away.)

IZZY

Happy Hanukkah, Lina and Michael. Wishing you all the best in 1978.

(LINA looks at the card and puts it away as she has done with all the others. Then, she changes her mind and takes out a notecard and photograph and writes.)

LINA

Merry Christmas, Izzy. The (most adorable ever) little pumpkin sitting between Michael and me is Juliana – almost 2 years old.

IZZY

Happy New Year! Juliana looks like you. How lucky for her. I hope to meet her one day.

(LINA looks at the card. Still not sure about continuing the correspondence so she puts it away. Time passes. It is now April 1978.)

IZZY

Happy Birthday, Lina. From the elephant (or the ostrich?) that never forgets.

LINA

Happy Birthday, Izzy. I hope age 26 is good to you. There's a little kumquat growing in my tummy so this will be a good year for me.

IZZY

Happy Hanukkah, Lina, Michael, Julianna and Kumquat. I see that Hanukkah is on Christmas Eve this year. Remember our Christmas Eve together?

LINA

Happy New Year from Lina, Michael, Julianna and Elise. Elise is the bald one.

P.S. I remember

IZZY

Dear Lina,

Can we stop being so formal with each other? As Joan Rivers likes to say, "Can we talk?" I don't let go of things easily and I don't want to let go of you. Even if I messed up – I always thought we'd somehow go on. If I don't hear from you, I will stop nagging. (Probably. Maybe. Not sure.) But I think we still are the same people.

My phone number is at the bottom if you'd rather not write a letter.

LINA

Dear Izzy,

Actually – letters are better because I sleep when the munchkins sleep (yes, I call them my munchkins). My most wide-awake times are in the middle of the night. I have thought about a visit. But I am knee deep in diapers and legos. My only reading material is “Goodnight, Moon” and the Berenstain Bears series. (Julianna loves them but I don’t know. The dad is sort of a dolt.) Witty conversations won’t happen and trips down Memory Lane can be tricky. My piano songs are “Wheels on the Bus” and “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes.”

Yes, we are the same people and no, we are not. Time leaves marks on you. Motherhood definitely leaves marks on you. My focus these days is keeping an active toddler and a helpless baby alive. It’s a wondrous thing. And an exhausting one.

Still fond of chocolate chips,

Lina

IZZY

In exactly one week and three days I will have my days free. I can hop a train and visit. I am in the middle of an off-off Broadway show – “Separate Tables.” I play a British waitress (Mabel) who is grumpy and probably around fifty years old. (Some things never change.) I don’t have an arm problem because I am always carrying trays of food. The NY Times gave me one line in their review: “Isobel Ross is amusing even when she descends into caricature.” I think that’s a left-handed compliment but I will take “amusing.” We close in a week. I go back to waitressing in the evenings I can come out Monday-Friday (I work brunch on the weekends.) It can be an early birthday visit for you.

LINA

Wear steel-toed boots. Legos are everywhere.

IZZY

Do you still like donuts?

LINA

Thank-you for making the trip out to Long Island. And thank-you for the Paddington Bear for Julianna. She loved it when Paddington Bear spoke to her in an English accent! You do have that accent down pat. Elise loves Puddle-Duck. She actually hugs her. And as you can see, I still love my raspberry jelly donuts. The day was a bit of nostalgia and memory lane, wasn’t it? You remember a lot more details than I do. Of course, I am still in “Baby Fog.” What did you think of “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes?” Would that be a good audition song for you?

IZZY

At least the song was in my key! And did you teach Julianna to say “Dizzy” instead of “Izzy....” And – the big ‘and.’ It was ... awkward, wasn’t it? They say best friends are supposed to pick up wherever they left off and I had a feeling we were both struggling to make conversation. What can I do to make this easier?

LINA

Where is it written that best friends just pick up as if years haven't passed? Because I never read that book. Yes. It was awkward. We've evolved. We're not the same. Expecting to visit as adults in the same way we did as children is not feasible. You don't need to do anything. You're not in a play. This is not a drama. Let's just wait and see how it goes and if it goes.

IZZY

I did feel a pang on the train ride home. I looked out at all the houses we passed and thought about all the families who live in those homes. Are they getting ready to have dinner with loved ones? Are they having a life? Because I don't think I'm having a life right now. I was just a tad jealous of you. Maybe I want us to be the way we were once upon a time. Maybe I should have stopped the train and gotten off and moved into one of those little houses. Maybe I should reinvent myself.

LINA

And maybe ... you should meet yourself on your own terms and not always think of changing yourself. Who knows? You may like you. I'll try to get into the City. My Mom and Dad love babysitting the kids. I may be as happy as a clam (wherever did that phrase come from – who determines if a clam is happy or depressed?) but I'd love a day off.

IZZY

I'd love it if you'd come in. After I return from London. Yep, you read that right. Everyone's moving. My dad's company closed and he got a job in Mary-Tyler-Moore land otherwise known as Minnesota. My parents are moving there this spring. My sister moved to San Francisco. But the most interesting move is my college friend. She moved to London.

There's a new thing called Skytrain that goes from New York to London for \$99. My friend said I can stay with her instead of at some Bed and Breakfast and all I have to do is buy her food. Who can resist that deal? I'm going. I will perfect my English accent. If I am going to have a non-life, I'm going to make it interesting. I'll call when I return.

LINA

Bon Voyage! When you return, we can see what Chapter Two holds for Izzy-and-Lina-one-word.

IZZY

I love London. I never want to come home. P.S. Turns out my British accent is not very accurate. It's worse than my Irish brogue.

(January 1980. Lina picks up a letter. She reads the envelope.)

LINA

“Moved. Address unknown.”

Happy New Year, Izzy. Wherever you are.

SCENE 6 – Apart

(Time passes. Perhaps IZZY and LINA put their hair up, wear earrings? LINA has pearls? Something to show that LINA is now working in a professional capacity and IZZY also has changed with age. Don't think about the stereotypical gray hair or any of that – do think about that they are now adults who have come into their own. It's April 21, 1999. IZZY writes an email.)

IZZY

Surprise? And Happy Birthday. Does friendship have an expiration date? I looked you up on the internet. I found this email for you online where you work. I promise I am not stalking you. It's just that I think of you every year during the holidays and on your birthday and each year, I tell myself – look for Lina. And every year, I get wrapped up in my days and then – another year has gone by and it gets harder to say, “Surprise!” But the year 2,000 is coming. And it seems like it's a milestone. And how can there be a milestone without Lina?

You're a lawyer! For children's services! I think it's wonderful and perfect for you and would love to hear about your journey. If you don't want to answer after all this time, I understand. But if you do, I would be thrilled. Oh! I live in Minnesota (surprised?). How awkward do you find this email?

With affection and Niagara continues,
Izzy

LINA

Let me breathe. And collect my thoughts. I am happy to hear from you, of course. I looked for you “back in the day.” I wondered if you were abducted by aliens? You just – disappeared. But I don't know where to start. Because, yes, awkward. And tricky. And delicate. Are we an “auld lang syne” friendship? Is our only common ground rooted in childhood memory? Give me some time. And thanks for the birthday wishes. I also think of you every July 12. My personal email is below. But please, wait for me to get back in touch.

(JULY 12, 1999.)

LINA

Happy Birthday! I also remember. Let's tread water and see where this leads. Let's speak about today instead of yesterday. Then we can see if our different paths can meet again.

Yes, I am a lawyer. I went back to school when I realized the girls would be up and out of the house by the time I was in my early forties and I did not see myself as a housewife for the next thirty years. That's my last ten years in a nutshell. Your turn. Minnesota?

IZZY

Stuff happened in New York and I had to get out. So yes, new state – Minnesota - and a new name. Tell me about Julianna and Elise and Michael.

LINA

Julianna's out of college and in graduate school for French. Elise is in college and hasn't declared a major (she is my daughter after all). Michael's doing well. We are an old-married couple well-suited to each other. A new name? Did you really reinvent yourself as you used to say you would? Or are you in the Witness Protection Program?

IZZY

I am living the traditional life I vowed I would never live. Married (that's why the new name but it would be fun to lead you on and give you an imaginative version of myself). Oh and children. I had the years of Legos and "Wheels on the Bus." Home in the suburbs. And I am grateful for all of it. Life could have gone much worse if I stayed on my original course. I am an artist-in-residence in the schools.

LINA

You gave up theatre to become an artist?

IZZY

Like "painting" artist? Ha! I can still only draw a turkey, a bunny and a cat. I tried to give up theatre. Believe me. But somehow, I became a teaching theatre artist. It's been a journey.

LINA

Do you ever visit New York?

IZZY

Yes. And I thought about looking you up when I was there – but our last in-person visit was so awkward, I thought maybe we were better suited as "letter friends."

LINA

That was how many years ago?

IZZY

Sixteen.

LINA

You do keep track. I'm going on a well-earned vacation. Talk to you later.

IZZY

Bon Voyage!

LINA

I am just back from Nova Scotia. Michael likes visiting cold places. He said his parents brought him to Florida too many times! It's lovely and I imagined you imagining yourself as Anne of Green Gables. I have a new personal e-mail (below) and am starting a heady new job that's likely to be insane and challenging. I hope I am up to it and expect spotty and irregular emails in the coming weeks.

IZZY

Happy Halloween! I miss taking the kids trick-or-treating. I also miss stealing their snickers bars. I hope things are going swimmingly well at the new job.

LINA

The new job is frenzied, crazy, important, international and oye! But my head is above water and it's exciting. Did you ever think about coming here for New Years? Big things are happening for the year 2000. You can go to Times Square.

IZZY

Happy Hanukkah! I am so sorry that I will miss the apple coming down in Times Square with 10,000 drunks. But you can't have everything. Have you ever thought about coming to Minnesota? We have 10,000 lakes instead of 10,000 drunks.

LINA

No.

IZZY

Happy Birthday!

LINA

Thank-you. I'm in China.

IZZY

You're a jet-setter! I'm going up north to Duluth. Look it up.

LINA

Happy Birthday! I'm in France. Maybe one day I'll make it to Duluth.

IZZY

Dear Globe-trotter, What do you do these days that sends you into the world?

LINA

I went from social-worker-lawyer to financial-lawyer. I was always good at math. I'm very good with contracts. Now, don't "pooh pooh" it as an old friend once said. It pays well and with the downturn in the economy, I was able to contribute more to our household income. It's win-win for both of us.

IZZY

I'm happy for you. And Happy Halloween. We had so many trick-or-treaters, there are no snickers bars left for me.

LINA

They're on half-price tomorrow.

IZZY

Happy Hanukkah, Lina, Michael, Juliana, and Elise. And so begins our “Space Odyssey” year.

LINA

Merry Christmas Izzy, John, Christopher, and Kate! I hope you are all making merry. Remember all the worries about Y2K and 2000 went off without a hitch? Who knows what 2001 will bring? It’s our last year in our forties! Let’s make 2001 a great year!

IZZY

Happy Birthday, Lina. I started a new job as a theatre teacher in the “Arts” school. I have 10,000 students. Well, maybe a little less but it feels like more. I promise to send a real card when I can go shopping for one. In the summer. When school’s out. Anyway, hope it was lovely. Especially because age fifty is coming and I cannot fathom being a half-century old in 2002.

LINA

Happy Birthday, Izzy! Are you now off work and can play?

IZZY

I’m directing a summer show – “Annie.” I am working with 10,000 little girls. It’s outside and we are always waiting for the sun to come out. It’s been a rainy season!

But ... drumroll ... I am going to be in the city September 22 for my cousin’s wedding. Yep, Tony finally found someone who will marry him! He must have stopped telling “fart” jokes. I am coming in on September 21 BUT I could come in September 20 and we could spend the day – or evening – or whatever – together. Tell me you are free. I can bring a Beatles CD and we can dance in your office or in Central Park or wherever. Or not do any of that stuff and just keep moving forward. Or do both! Look back and move forward OR – whatever you want. It’s just me. Christopher has Homecoming and Kate won’t step away from cross-country until she gets a medal for winning a race. So, John has to stay home to watch them!

LINA

I will make myself free! Name the date. I declare it a “Lina and Izzy National Holiday.” If you come in early, you can spend the night at my house. I have plenty of Beatles CD’s to dance to. I even have the CD from Paul’s concert in Orlando.

IZZY

Wait! You saw Paul McCartney – live?

LINA

Michael took us all down as a surprise birthday present for me. My parents watched the kids while we went to the concert and later we all went to Disneyworld.

IZZY

That’s amazing.

LINA

It was. And don't tell Michael – but oh Izzy, he's still mighty cute. And you know – yeah, yeah, yeah!

IZZY

I'll never see George in concert.

LINA

I know. I'm sorry. I used to think late fifties was old. But with fifty just around the corner, I know we're just getting started a new chapter.

Now the plan for September 20: I will bring you to my office so you can see that I am actually a proper professional with a desk, a chair, a painting, a lamp and a large picture window. There're also a lot of finely bound books which I think is to try and impress people. Ha! Not even my kids are impressed. And then we will all go to dinner with Michael, Ari, his wife Barbara and my folks. It could be a family reunion. What do you say?

IZZY

It won't be awkward, right? Tell me it won't be awkward. I just started worrying.

LINA

You are one of the silliest people ever born on this planet. So, I am asking you again. What do you say to my plans?

IZZY

Yes, yes, yes to everything. I have my suitcase out and am packing. It will take me a week to get it right. I need all new clothes. (Beat.) I have something to tell you.

LINA

Everything okay?

IZZY

I got chubby.

LINA

Sheesh, Iz. We're pushing fifty. Everyone gets chubby.

IZZY

Oh that scary number again. I am focusing on the fact that I just turned forty-nine.

LINA

You're still doing your own narrative. I love it. Send me your flight info.

IZZY

Will do.

(LINA and IZZY get off their computer. LINA takes out a folder and goes through some work. IZZY takes out her blue box of letters and rifles through them. IZZY reads a snippet or two or we hear LINA. Director's choice.)

LINA'S VOICE

"I'm here and I intend to make my time here count. I am going to be the best daughter, friend, sister, mother that I can be."

IZZY

You're all that and more.

(IZZY goes back to the computer. She retrieves her flight information.)

IZZY

I found the flight info. It's attached.

LINA

Michael and I will pick you guys up at the airport.

IZZY

You're still online?

LINA

I like to work late. It's quiet. Shutting down now. There's an early meeting tomorrow. Cantor Fitzgerald thrives on early meetings. See you in ten days. When the chocolate chips.

IZZY

Until Niagara Falls.

(LINA exits. Small break. A change. Maybe some music.)

IZZY

(Reading a newspaper. Or from the computer. September 12, 2001)

Snippets of papers from Cantor-Fitzgerald littered the streets below. The plane hit at 8:48 a.m. just below the Cantor Fitzgerald Headquarters at World Trade Center One. All 658 employees perished.

(IZZY is writing a letter. September 15, 2001)

IZZY

September 12, 2001

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Zenes:

Dear Ari:

IZZY (cont'd)

I just heard *(crosses out)*. I want to express my sincere *(crosses out)*... Words cannot express *(crosses out)*.

(IZZY opens a box and takes out notes and letters.)

LINA'S VOICE *(As IZZY reads)*

Hello, Isobel-the-new-girl. Will you be my friend? We can sit together at lunch.

IZZY

I'd want to save you. Does that count?

LINA

It counts.

IZZY

I will always be yours. Until Niagara Falls ... and the chocolate chips.

END OF PLAY