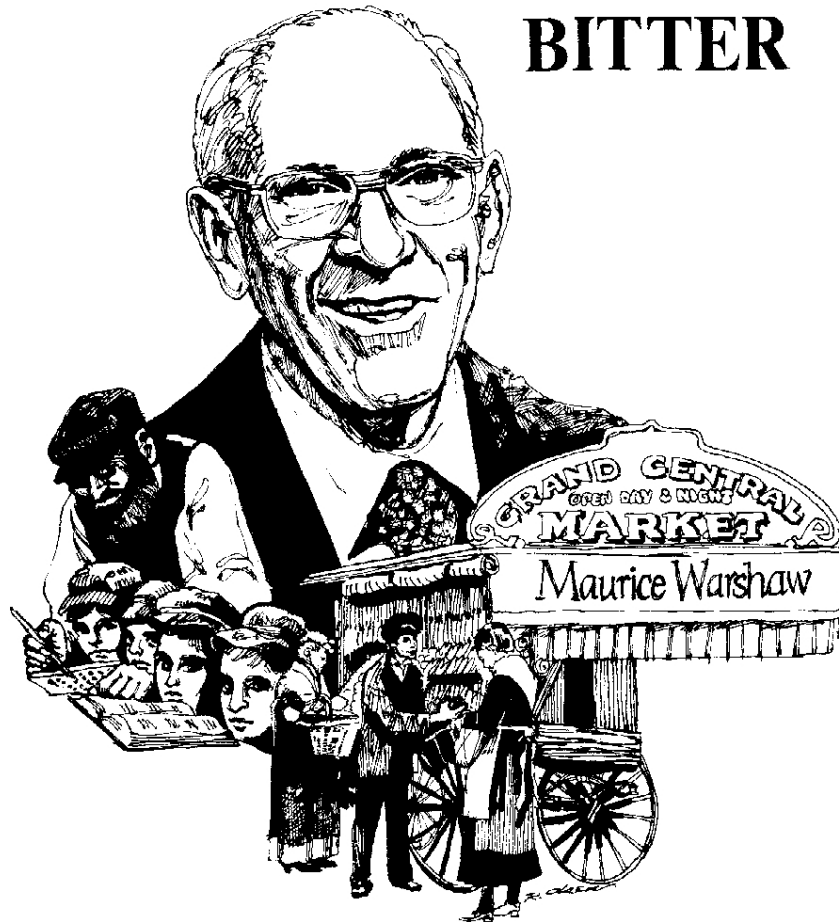


PERUSAL SCRIPT

# LIFE...MORE SWEET THAN BITTER



Music by  
**K. NEWELL DAYLEY**

Book and Lyrics by  
**PAT DAVIS**

Suggested by Maurice Warshaw's Autobiography "Life -- More Sweet Than Bitter"



ZION THEATRICALS  
Newport, Maine

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Original Production presented at

PROMISED VALLEY PLAYHOUSE

Presents

# **LIFE...MORE SWEET THAN BITTER**

Music by

***K. NEWELL DAYLEY***

Book and Lyrics by

***PAT DAVIS***

*Suggested by Maurice Warshaw's Autobiography "Life -- More Sweet Than Bitter"*

Scenery by

***CLIF A. DAVIS***

Lighting by

***JIM PHELPS***

Costumes by

***JERRI GRILLS***

Orchestra Conducted by

***ROBERT BOWDEN and TERRY HILL***

Orchestrations by

***K. NEWELL DAYLEY***

Directed by

***PAT DAVIS***

Choreography by

***JAY KIRK***

**THE CHARACTERS**  
(in order of appearance.)

THE RABBI Dave Hill  
SAMUEL (Maurice Warshaw) WARSHAWSKY (Little Mouse) William Morey  
BOLA John McEntire  
AARON Allan Kirk  
JACOB Mike Christensen  
MICHEL Brian Rowe  
AVRUM Scott Graham  
YUSSEL Marc Boyden  
DAVID Kevin Rowe  
PHILIP WARSHAWSKY (the boy) Mike Evans  
NATHAN WARSHAWSKY Nelden Maxfield  
UNCLE SAMUEL Mike Bennett  
REBECCA WARSHAWSKY Jerri Grills  
JOSEPH WARSHAWSKY Chris Andersen  
SOLOMON (the soldier) Chris Bennett  
LITTLE EDA WARSHAWSKY Gretchen Soffe  
EVA WARSHAWSKY Claudia Romney  
JULIE WARSHAWSKY Nedra Yates  
PEASANT MAN Mark Simpkins  
NEIGHBOR Ken Eklof  
MRS. KOLOSKY Ruby Thomas  
MR. KOLOSKY Scott Curran  
CAPTAIN OF S.S. BREMEN Ralph Carter  
MR. SKOLNICK Mark Simpkins  
YOUNG EDA WARSHAW Liesa Romney  
SAM Ken Eklof  
YOUNG MAURICE WARSHAW Bryce Jolley  
YOUNG PHILIP WARSHAW Robert Shields  
MAILMAN Clare Raybould  
MRS. SKILLINGSTEAD Kathy Petersen  
MILKMAN Bart Montgomery  
MAURICE WARSHAW (the man) Craig Clyde  
ESSIE SKILLINGSTEAD Marilyn Montgomery  
MRS. GOLDBERG Alice Andersen  
MENDALL (the tailor) Scott Curran  
CAROLINE Deor Carr  
SADIE (Joseph's wife) Christine Little  
EMMANUEL (Eva's husband) Dave Hill  
MR. SKILLINGSTEAD Brian Bowles  
INEZ WILLIAMS WARSHAW Chris Timothy  
BOY FRIEND Scott Shore  
LUMBER DEALER Scott Curran  
GROCERY BOY John McEntire  
MARJORIE WARSHAW Macey Soffe  
KEITH WARSHAW Justin Hill  
TOWNSPEOPLE, RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS, RUSSIAN SOLDIERS, DANCERS: Alice Andersen, C. Andersen, Marsha Anderson, Todd Atkinson, Chris Bennett, Kevin Bostrom, Brian Bowles, Deor Carr, C. Clyde, S. Curran, Ken Eklof, Jana Jacobs, Nancy Jacobs, Linda Jim, B. Jolley, Allan Kirk, Christine Little, Julie Merrill, Bart Montgomery, Marilyn Montgomery, Kathy Petersen, Clare Raybould, Betty Sedgley, R. Shields, Scott Shore, Vicky Smith, Dave Stephenson, Tricia Thatcher, C. Timothy  
CHILDREN Maren Christensen, Alisa Kirk, Macey Soffe.

## LIFE. . .MORE SWEET THAN BITTER

Synopsis of Scenes

Time: 1905 -- 1928

### ACT I

**Prologue -- Cheader (Hebrew School) Dubossar, Russia. On the eve of the Revolution**

#1 -- God's World Is Great and Holy (chant.) Rabbi.

#2 -- Life Is What You Make It Rabbi & Boys

**Scene 1 -- The Warshawsky yard, later that day**

#3 -- Always Together Nathan & Rebecca

#4 -- There's Something Better Out There Joseph, Solomon & Men

**Scene 2 -- Inside the Warshawsky home, that night**

#5 -- One Day At A Time Nathan, Uncle Samuel

**Scene 3 -- The Kolosky's cellar, Kishinev, Russia, one month later**

#6 -- Whispered Lullaby Rebecca

**Scene 4 -- On board the S.S. Bremen, approaching Ellis Island, several months later**

#7 -- I Wonder Company

#8 -- I Wonder (DANCE.) (ORCHESTRA.)

### ACT II

**Scene 1 -- A street in Philadelphia, five years later**

#9 -- Look In The Basket Maurice, Philip and Company

**Scene 2 -- Sunday at Fairmont Park in Philadelphia, one year later**

#10 -- Incidental Music In The Park (ORCHESTRA.)

**Scene 3 -- From Philadelphia to Salt Lake to Clarion, Utah**

#11 -- A Gentile Is A Gentile Is A Gentile Maurice

#12 -- Never Look Back Julie and All

### *INTERMISSION*

### ACT III

**Scene 1 -- The West Side of Salt Lake City in the 20's, March**

#13 -- If I Had A Girl Like You Maurice

#14 -- Always Together (reprise.) Julie, Eva, Sadie, Little Eda

**Scene 2 -- Saltair, July**

#15 -- Dance (Yes, We Have No Bananas.) (ORCHESTRA.)

#16 -- Two Different People Maurice, Inez

**Scene 3 -- Back to Cleveland the following January.**

#17 -- Always Together (reprise.) Nathan, Rebecca

**Scene 4 -- The West Side and the East Bench, Salt Lake City, two years later.**

#18 -- 1425 Kensington Inez, Maurice and Company

**Scene 5 -- Back to the West Side.**

**Scene 6 -- Grand Central Market, 1928.**

#19(a,b,c) -- Finale Maurice, Uncle Samuel, Inez, Julie and Company

# Life ... More Sweet Than Bitter

## Act I

**Prologue** -- *The scene is the interior of the Rabbi's home. The walls are bare and wooden. The Rabbi is standing among six young boys who are sitting on benches. An area light is on the Rabbi as he stands with a pointing stick in his hand. He is chanting as the stage lights come up.*

### MUSICAL # 1 -- GOD'S WORLD IS GREAT AND HOLY

**RABBI:**

GOD'S WORLD IS GREAT AND HOLY,  
AND EVERY MAN, HIGH OR LOWLY,  
HAVING BEEN CREATED BY GOD,  
IN HIS OWN LIKENESS, IS A HIGH PRIEST  
IN THE EYES OF THE LORD.  
EVERY DAY OF A MAN'S LIFE  
CAN BE A DAY OF ATONEMENT,  
AND EVERY WORD HE SPEAKS IN SINCERITY,  
RAISING HIS EYES TO HEAVEN,  
IS HEARD AND KNOWN.

*(The light comes up on two young boys, MAURICE and BOLA, as they tip -- toe into the room.)*

**RABBI:** So? We are to be congratulated! Samuel Maurice Warshawsky has finally arrived! And now "Little Mouse"

*(looks at MAURICE.)*

with your permission, may I begin? Again?

**MAURICE:** I'm sorry I'm late, Rabbi. I didn't mean to interrupt...

**RABBI:** Interrupt? Interrupt what? What could be so important that you shouldn't interrupt me? So, who knows, I probably need the practice.

**MAURICE:** But Rabbi, I...

**RABBI:** *(Rambles on as if MAURICE had not tried to speak)* After all, who am I, the Rabbi, to tell YOU, who just happens to be the son of one of the richest Jews in Dubossar, that you can't come to Cheder whenever you please... so... IF it pleases you...

*(Extends his hand.)*

...we will begin... AGAIN... unless of course, you think I need more practice, maybe?

**MAURICE:** *(Shakes head)* No...no, sir, I'll just take my seat on the bench.

**RABBI:** You do that... and Bola, you do the same. And IF it isn't too much trouble, we will read from the Talmud.

*(He picks up book and opens it.)*

"Why was man created on the last day?"

*(He looks directly at MAURICE.)*

"So that he can be told, when pride takes hold of him; God created the GNAT before thee."

*(He closes book.)*

So, enough!

*(He picks up pointer stick.)*

Now then, what does a Jew mean when he says Torah?

*(He shoots questions to boys in rapid fire.)*

Aaron?

**AARON:** *(Stands)* That, Rabbi, means how God tells us we should live our lives.

**JACOB:** The Torah is the five books of Moses which form the Jewish Law.

**MICHAEL:** The Laws of God to man.

*(The children sit with hands on table -- the Rabbi hits them with stick if they do not answer correctly -- he walks around room.)*

**RABBI:** Avrum, recite from Psalms 119, Verse 10.

**AVRUM:** I can't, Rabbi.

**YUSSEL:** "I have turned to YOU with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commandments."

**RABBI:** Bola, you next...Verse 155.

**BOLA:** "Deliverance...ah, deliverance is...is ah, deliverance is...

*(He remembers, and rambles on quickly.)*

is -- far -- from -- the -- wicked -- for -- they did -- not -- turn -- to -- Your -- Laws."

**RABBI:** David...Verse 81?

**DAVID:** "I long for Your Deliverance; I hope for Your Word."

**RABBI:** Very good, David...

**DAVID:** If I may continue, Rabbi...Verse 33 completes the sit, it is, "Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your laws, I will observe them to the utmost."

**RABBI:** Extraordinary, David. You study hard, and someday you will become a real person. To be a scholar is greater than to be a king. Now, Samuel, you may tell me what the first letters of the set of scriptures form.

*(MAURICE Does not respond, is looking at opposite side of room.)*

**RABBI:** Samuel,

*(Realizes that the boy's mind is elsewhere.)*

SAMUEL WARSHAWSKY!

**MAURICE:** *(Jumps to his feet)* I'm sorry, Rabbi, I was thinking of something else.

**RABBI:** *(Addresses other boys)* He was thinking of something else.

*(To Maurice.)*

Perhaps you would care to honor us with such great and ponderous thoughts?

**MAURICE:** I... ah... I'd rather not, sir.

**RABBI:** Ten years old, with thoughts too wise he should not share them? That is a miserly trait for one so rich in wisdom.

**MAURICE:** I'm sorry, Rabbi, I was merely thinking, the scriptures and the ways of piety are NOT like a nervous goat about to run away. They will always be here. But today will soon be gone, and I can never live

it again. And one day I will look back and see all the days of my youth spent learning something I do not understand.

**RABBI:** (*Somewhat touched by the boy's honesty*) Little Mouse, you shouldn't worry if you don't understand what I am saying. Just listen...LATER you'll understand.

## **MUSICAL # 2 -- LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT**

LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT  
SO MAKE IT WHILE YOU CAN.  
THE LESSONS LEARNED IN CHILDHOOD  
ARE GIFTS OF LIFE TO MAN.  
REMEMBER "LITTLE DAVID"  
ANOINTED TO BECOME  
THE GREATEST KING OF ISRAEL  
WHEN HE WAS VERY YOUNG?  
CONFRONTED BY GOLIATH,  
THE NINE FOOT GIANT FELL,  
AND ALL BECAUSE YOUNG DAVID  
HAD LEARNED HIS LESSONS WELL.  
AH...AH...AH  
LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT,  
SO MAKE IT WHILE YOU CAN  
THE LESSONS LEARNED IN CHILDHOOD  
ARE GIFTS OF GOD TO MAN.  
LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT,  
DON'T BE A SIMPLETON.  
THE "SAYINGS OF THE FATHERS"  
HOLD WISDOM FOR THE SONS.  
'TIS WRITTEN "HE'S A WISE ONE,  
WHO LEARNS FROM EVERY MAN,  
WHO OVERCOMES HIS PASSIONS"  
WHO TELLS HIMSELF HE CAN,  
BECOME AS WISE AS SOLOMON,  
AS RIGHTEOUS AS POOR LOT:  
AND ALL BECAUSE HE LEARNS  
FROM LESSONS HE'S BEEN TAUGHT.  
SO...  
DON'T WASTE YOUR BOYHOOD DAYS WITH NOTHINGS,  
THE PLEASURES OF A CHILD,  
LEFT BEHIND WHEN YOU BECOME A MAN.  
TO BE A SCHOLAR MAKES EARLY DAYS WORTHWHILE



AND SIFTS THROUGH LIFE  
LIKE PRECIOUS GRAINS OF SAND.  
AH...AH...YES...  
LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT,  
WHY WAIT TO BE A MAN?  
TAKE EVERY MOMENT, EVERY CHANCE  
AND MAKE IT WHILE YOU CAN!

*(Music continues under dialogue.)*

**RABBI:** So? Now you understand. Because you are Who you are, a Jew, an important link in the ancestral chain of Israel, you are compelled to study...all your life.

**MAURICE:** Rabbi?

**RABBI:** Yes, my son?

**MAURICE:** Is THAT the persecution of the Jews?

**RABBI:** *(Angry)* Knowledge is not persecution, but a great gift from heaven.

LOOK TO THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM  
OUR LESSON FOR TODAY,

**MAURICE:**

WHEN GOD SPOKE UNTO ABRAHAM  
HE WENT WITHOUT DELAY

**ALL:**

UNTO THE LAND OF CANAAN (ISRAEL.)  
WHERE HE GREW WISE AND OLD  
WITH FAITH THAT SELDOM WAVERED  
HE DID WHAT HE WAS TOLD.

**RABBI:**

HAD ABRAHAM NOT LISTENED  
OR CHOSE TO DISAGREE...  
BOY, THINK OF THE MISFORTUNE.  
THERE'D BE NO YOU OR ME!

**RABBI & BOYS:**

LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT,  
WHY WAIT TO BE A MAN?  
TAKE EVERY MOMENT, EVERY CHANCE  
AND MAKE IT WHILE YOU CAN.

*(Music continues under dialogue.)*

**MAURICE:** But, Rabbi...I still don't understand.

**RABBI:** Silence! An inquisitive mind from a curious student is good. A boy asks me a question, I answer. I accept and he accepts...he may not understand, BUT HE ACCEPTS!

**MAURICE:** I suppose sometimes my brain becomes confused.

**RABBI:** Perhaps the brain is so busy with the ambitions of the inquisitive mind, it has found little time to remind the lazy fingers to open a book and learn for oneself.

**MAURICE:** But I do open books, often... And according to the ledgers in my father's warehouse...

**RABBI:** (*Cuts him off*) Ledger? You call that a book?

(*To other boys.*)

He knows from nothing.

(*To Maurice.*)

My son, someday you will learn that there are many, many ledgers, but very few books. There is an old Jewish proverb that says, "He who runs after good fortune runs away from peace." God forbid, Samuel Warshawsky, that you may find for yourself there is no disgrace in poverty.

**MAURICE:** Yes, Rabbi.

**BOLA:** (*Mutters to himself, but loud enough to be heard*) That's the only good thing you can say about it.

**RABBI:** Bola, if you want to live life, you should equip yourself with a heart that can stand suffering. For even a child should realize that life is sometimes sweet...sometimes bitter. The important thing is what we learn from it.

TURN TO THE BOOK OF GENESIS,  
TO JACOB AND HIS SONS.  
THE BEST OF TWELVE WAS

**JOSEPH:**

'T WAS NO COMPARISON.  
BECAUSE HIS FATHER FAVORED HIM  
HIS BROTHERS TOOK COMMAND  
AND SOLD HIM INTO EGYPT.  
DID JOSEPH UNDERSTAND?  
AH -- AH -- AH

(*Shakes head.*)

NO -- NO -- NO  
BUT WITH THE GENTLENESS OF ISAAC,  
THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM,  
THE COURAGE OF POOR JACOB  
HE LEFT HIS FATHER'S LAND.  
FOR THIRTEEN YEARS HE SUFFERED,  
OF BITTERNESS HE'D TASTE,  
THE SWEETNESS OF HIS LIFE WAS YET TO COME.  
AND THROUGH THE DUNGEONS  
AND THE FAMINE GREW HIS FAITH,  
TO GOD, HE WAS A MOST OBEDIENT SON.  
FROM PRISON TO PRIME MINISTER  
ACCORDING TO GOD'S PLAN.  
NOT ONCE DID JOSEPH QUESTION  
BECAUSE HE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND.

FOR GOD WON'T PLAN A LIFETIME  
FOR EACH AND EVERY MAN.  
SO MAN MUST WORK HIS LIFETIME  
INTO GOD'S HOLY PLAN.

**RABBI & BOYS**

AH...AH..., AH...  
LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT.  
WHY WAIT TO BE A MAN?  
TAKE EVERY MOMENT  
EVERY DAY  
AND MAKE IT WHILE YOU CAN!  
(BLACKOUT.)

**Scene 1** -- *The scene is the yard of the Warshawsky home. The father, Nathan, is talking with his brother, Samuel.*

**NATHAN:** And whom are you cursing so early this beautiful morning?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Who? I don't know, but don't worry, someone will turn up.

**NATHAN:** Did you see to it that young Samuel and Phillip arrived at Cheader on time?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Is that not my lot in life? The only thing I am good for? I walk the children to school, but is this a way to make a living?

**NATHAN:** Oh come now, brother, to be employed to walk the children to school is very important, and besides, such exercise is good for your problem.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Problem? What problem? The only problem I have is an empty purse. So what other problem should concern me?

**NATHAN:** Samuel, you know well I refer to your limp.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Limp? What limp? I only limp when I walk... and if I didn't have to walk the children to Cheader, I wouldn't limp.

*(Nods to Nathan.)*

Then the problem you speak of would not exist. But... I would still be faced with the misfortune of an empty purse.

**NATHAN:** *(Laughs as he places some coins in Uncle Samuel's hand)* An empty purse is indeed a misfortune. But remember, my brother, there is no misfortune that hasn't in it at least some good. Bees sting, but they also supply honey.

*(Rebecca, Nathan's second wife, comes into scene. She has been out in the yard feeding the chickens and geese. She is a tall woman wearing a long red cape and she has a basket of feed on her arm.)*

**REBECCA:** Good morning, Samuel.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Good morning, Rebecca.

**REBECCA:** How did it go with the children this morning?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** So? How should it go? Mind you, I'm not complaining. I would, believe me, go into a coffin with a smile on my face if only for the rest of my life I did not have to accept a living from my brother.

*(Looks up at sky.)*

Oh, if only The Holy One would send down one hundred thousand kopeks, I promise I would give a thousand to the poor and walk the children to Cheader every day.

*(Looks at Nathan and Rebecca.)*

And if the Holy One doesn't trust me, He can deduct the thousand in advance and I would walk the children every OTHER day!

**REBECCA:** Dear Samuel, it's not you who must accept from us, but we who are in Your debt. What with little Eda to take care of, I depend on you to keep a religious eye on the children's upbringing. And if you were not here each morning, God forbid, my days would lose some of their brightness.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** *(Turns to Nathan)* So? ... how could I leave? You're a lucky person, Nathan.

**NATHAN:** God has blessed me.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** The winter when typhus took your dear wife, Rivka, I suffered for you. A man alone with six children. I said to myself, "Rivka Rample Warshawsky is dead, and my brother must look after her children, which is not easy, for believe me a man doesn't know how to bring up children until he's been a mother!"

**NATHAN:** You're a wise man, Samuel.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** You were considered a great catch by every matchmaker from Dubossar to Kishinev.

**NATHAN:** And a well -- informed man.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** *(Turns to Rebecca)* The matchmaker would come to the house with his prospects, but Nathan would only shake his head. Until one day the matchmaker came with a special name.

**NATHAN:** *(Places his arm around Rebecca)* You are a man of truth, Samuel.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** You had a long list of qualities, Rebecca. A special lady, a widow, well educated, beautifully built, a good manager, perhaps rich . .

**NATHAN:** You are also a blabbermouth, Samuel.

**REBECCA:** *(To Samuel)* It's time you found yourself another wife.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Another wife? Let me tell you. I was married to the best, I knew what a woman's love could mean. She was an angel, a jewel, may she rest in peace. And my home life was, every moment, a blessing.

*(He drifts off into past memories.)*

**REBECCA:** She must have been a wonderful person.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Wonderful! I would get up in the morning and my darling would have a wonderful breakfast ready for me, my clothes laid out -- clean, neat, not a button missing. I would go about my business and when I came home my darling was waiting for me at the door.

**REBECCA:** But Samuel, she's been gone three years now.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** *(Continues as if not hearing her)* She takes off my shoes, puts on my slippers, sits me in my favorite chair, diverts me by telling me what she did all day, and she would talk, and I would listen, the house is warm and cozy, a haven, a haven, and my darling would talk, and talk and talk and talk ...

*(Suddenly comes back to reality.)*

Boy, how she TALKED! ... Listen, these past three years have been WONDERFUL!

*(Uncle Samuel exits stage left as Rebecca and Nathan laugh. Suddenly Nathan remembers something and calls to Samuel.)*

**NATHAN:** Samuel, you must bring the children straight home tonight. We have much to discuss before the sabbath.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Much to discuss? Concerning... ?

**NATHAN:** Concerning everyone.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** EVERYONE?

**NATHAN:** Everyone, Samuel, including you.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Including me? Ah ha... this could mean one of two things. Either something good is going to happen, or, something good is not going to happen.

**REBECCA:** Hurry home with the children, Samuel.

*(Samuel exits as Rebecca turns to her husband.)*

Nathan, is it necessary to disturb the children. They're so young, perhaps these troubled days will pass and life will be as it was before.

**NATHAN:** I don't know

*(Shakes head.)*

I don't know. Yesterday when I went with the committee to plead with the officials for better treatment for our people, I got little response.

**REBECCA:** But the officials have always listened to you ... why they have even asked you to advise them.

**NATHAN:** At first, when we ourselves were little affected because our village was small and insignificant.

But now

*(Shakes head with concern.)*

Rebecca, we must realize that our luck so far is no guarantee against some new official order that could change everything.

**REBECCA:** Everything?

**NATHAN:** We must realize that our Joseph has been able to stay out of the army so far, but it is impossible to hold out much longer.

**REBECCA:** Maybe the war will soon be over!

*(She stammers, trying to think of how she can protect this oldest son.)*

Maybe ... maybe we could hide Joseph somehow... perhaps the warehouse. The warehouse... that's it, Nathan, maybe you could explain to the officials how necessary your son is to your warehouse in Kishinev and the food supplies for the village.

**NATHAN:** The food shortages have already begun. The warehouses are almost empty. Now they store mostly ammunition and guns.

**REBECCA:** *(Frightened)* What are you saying, Nathan?

**NATHAN:** *(Trying to quiet her fears)* We still have a great many things stored in our cellar, our family can get along for quite awhile yet. But my business, my warehouse in Kishinev, they would like to get their hands on that. In their eyes a Jew should be denied the right to such a business.

**REBECCA:** Can't you talk to the officials again?

**NATHAN:** It's an uneasy time, Rebecca. Why should they listen to us? Fortune tellers and soothsayers they listen to. They have all the power at court. Just yesterday one of the officials told me that seances are being held at the Czar's palace for divine guidance.

**REBECCA:** For them Cod isn't good enough?

**NATHAN:** They don't look high enough. They look instead to worldly solutions.

**REBECCA:** And this war with Japan, is that a worldly solution? Young Jewish boys and Russian peasants shipped to Siberia and slaughtered, is that a worldly solution? Half a million young soldiers dependent on supplies that never come, is that ...

**NATHAN:** REBECCA!

*(He cuts into her words.)*

*How well -- informed you've become, and how foolish I have been.*

**REBECCA:** Foolish?

**NATHAN:** Foolishly trying to keep the war news from you, trying to keep my anxieties from becoming your worries.

**REBECCA:** My dear husband, don't you realize everything that is yours is mine, the good and the bad?

**NATHAN:** So? How blessed can a man be?

*(He embraces her.)*

In one lifetime to have the love of two beautiful women. And my children, to have had two wonderful mothers. I often look around me and I say to myself, "Nathan, how can things be so good. . and so bad at the same time?"

**REBECCA:** So bad? Remember, with us there will be no bad, and no sadness, not so long as we're together.

**NATHAN:** *(Kissing her forehead)* And no joy without each other.

### MUSICAL # 3 -- ALWAYS TOGETHER

TOGETHER,  
SO CLOSE TOGETHER,  
AND TOGETHER WE ARE ONE  
IN PERFECT HARMONY.  
FOREVER, SO CLOSE FOREVER,  
YOU AND ME  
ALWAYS TOGETHER.

**REBECCA:**

TOGETHER,  
SO HAPPY TOGETHER,  
AND TOGETHER WE'LL RAISE  
A PERFECT FAMILY  
FOREVER, SO HAPPY FOREVER,  
FOR WE'LL BE  
ALWAYS TOGETHER

**NATHAN:**

AND AS THE CHILDREN GROW, THROUGH THE YEARS,  
THEIR LIVES WILL BLESS OUR AGING DAYS  
AND CALM OUR FEARS.

**REBECCA:**

OUR PRECIOUS LOVE WILL GROW THROUGH THE YEARS,  
AND WHEN THE CHILDREN LEAVE  
THERE'LL BE NO TEARS.

**BOTH:**

FOR ONCE AGAIN WE'LL BE  
TOGETHER,  
ALONE TOGETHER.  
WITH A LOVE THAT BRIGHTENS UP THIS LIFE WITH HEAVEN'S LIGHT.  
FOREVER,  
WE'LL LOVE FOREVER,  
YOU AND ME  
FOREVER TOGETHER.

*(They embrace and as they separate Nathan cups his hands under her face with music underscore.)*

**NATHAN:** "And who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust her and she will do him God all the days of her life."

*(He kisses her.)*

**REBECCA:** *(Kissing his hand)* "The best horse needs a whip; the wisest man advice; the best woman ... a man."

**BOTH:**

FOR ONCE AGAIN WE'LL BE TOGETHER,  
ALONE TOGETHER,  
WITH A LOVE THAT BRIGHTENS UP THIS LIFE WITH HEAVEN'S LIGHT

**REBECCA:**

FOREVER,  
WE'LL LOVE FOREVER,  
YOU AND ME.

**NATHAN:**

FOREVER,  
WE'LL LOVE FOREVER,  
YOU AND ME.

**BOTH:**

YOU AND ME FOREVER TOGETHER.

*(At conclusion of song the oldest son, Joseph, some friends, and a young crippled soldier enter.)*

**JOSEPH:** Papa, papa!

**NATHAN:** Later, Joseph, I'm busy now.

**JOSEPH:** But, Papa, I must talk to you.

**NATHAN:** So? What could be so important that you should. . .

*(He sees other boys.)*

*Oh! You have guests?*

**JOSEPH:** Yes, Papa.

**NATHAN:** "Yes, Papa," is that all you have to say? They have names, maybe?

**JOSEPH:** This is Solomon, Papa.

*(He stands by wounded soldier.)*

**NATHAN:** Solomon?

*(Not recognizing the boy.)*

**REBECCA:** Solomon, our neighbor's boy?

**SOLOMON:** Yes, ma'am.

**REBECCA:** *(Embraces the boy)* Gone just a few short months, and now I don't even recognize you. What has happened to you?

**NATHAN:** Could the war have done all this?

**JOSEPH:** Papa, Solomon says that...

**NATHAN:** *(Interrupts)* Silence! Solomon has a tongue, he will speak for himself.

*(Nathan places his hand on Solomon's shoulder.)*

So, tell me, how does it go, this war with Japan?

**REBECCA:** WE have heard such terrible stories.

**SOLOMON:** They could not be any worse than the way things really are. It's a bloody slaughter. Men... really only boys like myself, are wounded on the battlefield and left to die.

**NATHAN:** And you?

**SOLOMON:** I was blessed. After I was wounded I crawled to safety, but when they realized that in my condition I would be of no value to them they sent me home.

**NATHAN:** That's a blessing? And what of the other boys from our village?

**SOLOMON:** The others? I don't know. I did see Isaac, the cooper's son, but only for a short while. He was having a bad time.

**REBECCA:** Isaac? He's only a boy.

*(Suddenly looks at Joseph.)*

Just a boy ... facing such an enemy!

**SOLOMON:** Our enemy is not only the Japanese.

**NATHAN:** What do you mean?

**SOLOMON:** There is much hostility between the Russian soldiers.

**NATHAN:** I don't understand.

**SOLOMON:** We're Jews... and because we're Jews the other Russian soldiers forced us to act as servants, selected us to undertake any filthy task. We're the last to be fed, the first to be slaughtered.

**REBECCA:** God forbid! I'm almost afraid to ask... what about your food? The preparation?

**SOLOMON:** *(Laughs)* I'm sorry, forgive me, I didn't mean to be rude. You see, there is no consideration for the Jew, let alone our food. In fact, the food we were forced to eat was not even edible.

**JOSEPH:** Don't you see, Papa, he's a Russian soldier, but he is also a Jew, so everything that happens is twice as bad for him as the others.

**NATHAN:** *(Shakes his head)* No other people will ever know so hard a life, but for us I'm afraid there is no escape.



**JOSEPH:** Yes, there is... Papa. I won't believe it always has to be like this. I won't believe there's nothing better for Joseph Warshawsky.

**MUSICAL #4 -- THERE'S GOT TO BE SOMETHING BETTER**

THERE'S SOMETHING BETTER OUT THERE  
THERE'S SOMETHING MORE IN STORE FOR GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE,  
SOMETHING BETTER THAN WARS, BLOODSHED AND DEATH.  
SOMETHING MORE HOPEFUL THAN DREAMS TURNED TO NIGHTMARES,  
THERE'S GOT TO BE SOMETHING BETTER OUT THERE.

**MEN:**

THERE MUST BE A PLACE, A PLACE WITHOUT SUFFERING  
A LAND WHERE A MAN IS FREE TO BELIEVE.  
A SPOT ON THIS EARTH WHERE A JEW CAN STAND UPRIGHT.

**JOSEPH:**

THERE'S GOT TO BE SOMETHING BETTER FOR ME.  
WHERE A BOY CAN REACH OUT FOR THE SUN,  
AND GROW IN THE WARMTH OF IT'S RAYS,  
AND CHALLENGE THE DAWN OF HIS LIFE TO BECOME  
THE BRIGHTEST AND GREATEST OF ALL OF HIS DAYS.

**SOLOMON:**

AND A SOLDIER CAN FIGHT HIS OWN BATTLES,  
OR BATTLES IN WHICH HE BELIEVES.

**MEN:**

FOUGHT FOR THE CAUSE, THE CAUSE OF A PEOPLE,  
AND NOT AT THE WHIM OF A TYRANT'S GREED.

**JOSEPH:**

I DEMAND THERE BE SOMETHING BETTER FOR ME.  
*(Joseph jumps on milk stool as more young villagers appear.)*  
THERE'S SOMETHING MORE IN STORE FOR THOSE WHO ARE WILLING,  
SOMETHING BETTER FOR THOSE WHO ARE BRAVE AND AWARE,  
OF THE HOPES AND DREAMS THEY COULD BE FULFILLING.

**EVERYONE:**

OH THERE'S SOMETHING BETTER, MUCH BETTER OUT THERE.  
THERE MUST BE A LAND OF PEACE FOR OUR PEOPLE.  
WHERE BY THE SWEAT OF HIS BROW A MAN CAN ACHIEVE,  
AND FIND THAT HIS LIFE IS WELL WORTH THE LIVING.

**JOSEPH:**

I TELL YOU THERE'S SOMETHING BETTER FOR ME.  
WHERE A MAN CAN HAVE FEELINGS OF HOPE,  
AND SAVOR THE SWEETNESS OF LIFE.

NOT GROVEL AND BEG, AND IN HIS OLD AGE  
BE DANED WITH THE SCOURGES OF LIFE.  
AND IF SUCH A PLACE WAITS WAY OUT THERE,  
THOUGH IT BE A DISTANCE AWAY.

**EVERYONE:**

THIS HAVEN OF HOPE FOR THOSE WITHOUT HOPE,  
THIS HOME WHERE THE HOMELESS CAN COME AND STAY.

**MEN:**

THIS PLACE FOR THE SONS OF ABRAHAM,  
ISAAC AND JACOB TO PRAY.

**JOSEPH:**

AND LIFT UP THEIR TIRED, THEIR BURDENSOME LOADS  
AND RAISE UP THEIR EYES TO A BECKONING ROAD,  
AND DREAM OF A PLACE TO HAVE AND TO HOLD.  
I'LL FIND IT SOMEDAY.

**MEN:**

WE'LL FIND IT SOMEDAY -- THERE'S SOMETHING MUCH BETTER OUT THERE.

**Scene 2** -- *The scene opens in the Warshawsky home. It is after the Sabbath meal and the family and their guest, Solomon, are seated around the fireplace.*

**REBECCA:** So, children? Just one more story? And then one more after that... and then one more after that... and then?

**NATHAN:** Only one more, Rebecca, and then we have more serious talk, right?

**REBECCA:** *(Smiles)* Of course, right.

**NATHAN:** Very well, which one shall it be?

**LITTLE EDA:** The Horse Thieves...  
*(Claps her hands.)*

The Horse Thieves!

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Enough is enough already! After every Sabbath meal must we listen to the same story? If I am to oversee the education of your children, then I must object.  
*(The children moan, etc.)*

**REBECCA:** Perhaps he's right, children. And which story would you like to hear, Uncle Samuel?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** *(Surprised)* Which story?  
*(Obviously not prepared for such a question.)*

You're asking me? As if my opinion makes a difference?

**LITTLE EDA:** *(Walks over to him)* You decide, Uncle Samuel.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** *(Lifts her up onto his lap)* Well, there is one story, with such a good lesson, and that is the story you should hear.

**PHILIP:** And which story is that?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** It is the story of the Prince and his Horse.

**PHILIP:** But, Uncle, that's the same story as the Horse Thief!

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Oy vay! I should have such luck. Now we will have to listen to it again.

**NATHAN:** Forgive me for mentioning this, Samuel, but I don't know what difference it makes, you always fall asleep, anyway.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** And that's a compliment to you. After all, with my responsibility to the children, would I fall asleep if I didn't trust you?

*(Little Eda climbs up onto her father's lap, Maurice sits on the arm of his chair.)*

**REBECCA:** *(Placing her hand on Maurice)* Little Mouse, would you mind so much missing the story, just this once? Bola's mother is sick with the fever and I want you and Eva to take this soup over to her.

**MAURICE:** Couldn't Joseph go with Eva?

**REBECCA:** Joseph should stay here with our guest. Now go, it won't take long if you hurry. You might even be back before the story ends.

*(Rebecca places scarf and hat on Maurice and hands him the soup. Eva and Maurice take soup and a loaf of bread and exit, as Nathan begins story.)*

**NATHAN:** Once upon a time, there lived a couple of horse thieves who had their eyes on a Prince's horse.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** So? What kind of prince was he?

**NATHAN:** He was a wise prince... go to sleep!

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** So? It's been such a long time, at least seven days, since I heard this story, I'd forgotten.

*(Everyone laughs.)*

**NATHAN:** One day the Prince went for a ride, and the thieves followed him into the woods. He stopped his carriage by a tree and fell asleep.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** That's because he'd heard the same story.

**NATHAN:** *(Ignoring him)* Whereupon the thieves crept up, and unharnessed the Prince's horse. Now while one took the horse to the next town and sold it, his companion harnessed himself to the carriage in the horse's place.

*(He stands up in order to act out the rest of the story, walking around the room.)*

When the Prince awakened, he cried, "Oy, what's this?" and the thief explained: "Your Honor, Prince, you see twenty years ago I sinned and God punished me by making me become a horse. My time is up today, and I have become a man again." "Oh my, oh my," said the Prince, "I am highly honored that you have been redeemed while in my possession!" So he unharnessed the thief, gave him a few rubles and walked to the next town to look for another horse. And then what do you think happened?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** You're asking?

**NATHAN:** I'm telling! There in the town stable stood his own white horse. "Oy, my Yonkel," cried the prince, "so you couldn't hold out... you've sinned again!"

**FAMILY:** *(Variously)* Such a good story, what a foolish prince, that's the funniest story ever, etc.

**SOLOMON:** It's a privilege to be invited to share the Sabbath with such a family. You have a great gift, Reb Nathan. It is equally exciting to hear you tell children stories as it is to hear you expound the Torah.

**MAURICE:** *(Comes bursting into the room, with Eva behind him)* Papa, Papa, they're dead! They're dead!  
*(Nathan jumps to his feet.)*

**REBECCA:** What is it? What has happened? Did Bola's mother... die?

**NATHAN:** *(Holds sobbing boy in his arms)* There, there, it's all right.

**EVA:** It isn't all right, it will never be all right again.

**NATHAN:** What are you saying? Eva?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** *(Puts his arm around her and walks her to a chair)* Eva, darling, tell Uncle Samuel about it.

**EVA:** *(Staring straight ahead, and without emotion)* We were almost to Bola's house when a man came running out of the door crying. We ran to the open door and then we saw them.

**NATHAN:** Them? Who? Who did you see?

**MAURICE:** *(Sobbing)* They looked like rag dolls laying there, with blood all over them.

**REBECCA:** Them?

**EVA:** Bola... his mother... his father, and all the other children...

*(Looks up at Nathan.)*

Their throats were cut!

**REBECCA:** Ah, dear God! NO... not here... not to them!

**NATHAN:** Who would do such a thing?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Suddenly it's become patriotic to kill families? Children?

*(There is talking outside the home, loud talking, angry voices, phrases like: "An eye for an eye," "A life for a life," "Let's get them," "Murderers, they were only children," etc.)*

**REBECCA:** Julie, close the windows, such violent talk frightens me.

**NATHAN:** *(Placing his arms around her)* And, if we close the windows, will that stop the violence?

**JULIE:** Then what are we to do?

**NATHAN:** The time has come, time for serious talk.

**SOLOMON:** Perhaps I should be leaving.

*(He puts on scarf, etc.)*

**REBECCA:** Good Sabbath, Solomon.

**SOLOMON:** Good Sabbath.

*(He exits.)*

**NATHAN:** *(Suddenly raising his voice)* I will not go on living in a land whose government condones and encourages the murder of Jews!

**JOSEPH:** Papa, do you mean we are to leave?

**NATHAN:** That's exactly what I mean. Many of our people live already in America.

**REBECCA:** America?

**JULIE:** You can't be serious!

**NATHAN:** THERE's no other way.

**EVA:** Yes there is, Papa!

*(Runs to a desk drawer, takes out pamphlets, and hands them to her father.)*

*There is another way!*

**NATHAN:** ANARCHIST!

*(He throws them across room.)*

**REBECCA:** Nathan!

**NATHAN:** Eva, Julie, you must listen to me, and do as you are told. Your enthusiasm for the socialist movement must cease at once. Do you understand?

**JULIE:** But Papa we are just getting organized!

**EVA:** We are now collecting money to buy guns.

**JULIE:** (*Rattling on*) Lazer says that soon we will be able to use these guns in riots against the police and government officials.

**NATHAN:** SILENCE! You silly goose, can't you realize that any revolutionary movement will only meet with a counter -- revolutionary one?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** AND EVEN more important, you are not like your other Russian friends... you are Jews. And nowadays that is a yoke of double trouble.

**JOSEPH:** Uncle Samuel's right. Anyone who turns against the government is considered a traitor, and for a Jewish traitor there is no justice.

**NATHAN:** The matter is settled! Now we will make our plans.

*(Rebecca quickly closes curtains and locks the door. Father softens his voice.)*

Joseph must leave at once and make his way to America.

**REBECCA:** But the danger!

**NATHAN:** The danger is in waiting! I have already arranged for Joseph to be passed through all the police stations along the way to the Rumanian border.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** And how did you accomplish such a miracle?

**NATHAN:** I still have a few friends among the Christians, one of them knew most of the border guards well enough to buy them off. They will smuggle him aboard a train, and from Rumania he can make his way by boat to America.

**JOSEPH:** How soon do I leave, Papa?

**NATHAN:** Before tomorrow, noon!

**EVERYONE:** (*Variously*) Tomorrow, so soon... but how? etc.

**REBECCA:** (*Holding Joseph close to her*) I will pray for your safe journey.

**NATHAN:** (*Looking directly at Eva and Julie*) Not a word must be spoken outside this room. Do you understand? Perhaps it would be better if you were not to see your friends again before we leave and you must bury all those pamphlets in the yard.

**JULIE:** Papa, I'm not going.

**NATHAN:** Not going? Of course you're going.

**JULIE:** No, Papa, I can't leave the cause...

*(She starts to sob.)*

I can't leave Lazer!

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** Julie, darling... If I can let you go... Lazer can let you go.

**REBECCA:** Uncle Samuel... you're not going with us?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** You're asking?

**NATHAN:** We're asking!

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** I'm going!

**EVERYONE:** (*variously*) Relief, excited conversation, etc.

**NATHAN:** This is the plan. Joseph, you will have to leave before daylight. Then Uncle Samuel, you and I will...

*(He is interrupted by a noise at the door. Eva quickly hides the pamphlets as Father tries to calm everyone down, Rebecca goes to the door.)*

**REBECCA:** Good Sabbath!

**PEASANT MAN:** Good Sabbath, Rebecca, is your husband home?

**REBECCA:** He is, but we were just...

*(PEASANT MAN walking past her along with about 8 men, they come into the room.)*

**NATHAN:** Ah... good Sabbath! And what can I do for you?

**PEASANT MAN:** Didn't young Samuel and Eva tell you...?

**NATHAN:** Of course, of course, it's just that we have been trying to calm them.

**PEASANT MAN:** The neighborhood men are organizing a committee to trace the murderers. You'll join us?

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** And when you find them?

**PEASANT MAN:** We will take justice into our own hands.

**NEIGHBORHOOD MEN:** *(Shouting encouraging words)* Come, let's get them. We must hurry, etc.

**2ND MAN:** They will be executed.

**3RD MAN:** We will trample them until they are dead.

*(NEIGHBORHOOD MEN cheers.)*

**NEIGHBORHOOD MEN:** A life for a life!

**PEASANT MAN:** We are wasting time, we will meet down by the synagogue.

*(They leave quickly. Rebecca quickly closes and locks the door.)*

**NATHAN:** It will not be safe for any Jew to stay in Dubossar after tonight. As soon as Joseph leaves, we will all go to Kishinev until we are able to leave Russia.

**MAURICE:** Will we ever be coming back, Papa?

**NATHAN:** I don't know, Little Mouse, we will just have to take one day at a time.

## MUSICAL #5 -- ONE DAY AT A TIME

ONE DAY AT A TIME, LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME;  
WHEREVER YOU ARE, WHATEVER YOU DO,  
YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO DO,  
IF YOU'LL DO IT ONE DAY AT A TIME.  
ONE DAY AT A TIME, TAKE ONE DAY AT A TIME  
WHEN NOTHING GOES RIGHT AND TROUBLES APPEAR  
YOU CAN FACE THE DAYS, BUT NOT THE YEARS,  
YOU'LL GET THROUGH IT ONE DAY AT A TIME.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:**

WHEN THE LORD, GOD CREATED THE HEAVEN AND EARTH,  
HE DID IT ONE DAY AT A TIME.  
HE WASN'T CONCERNED WITH A WEEK FROM TODAY,  
OR THE MOUNTAIN OR WORK THAT STOOD THERE IN HIS WAY,

OR THE PROBLEMS HE'D FACE IF HIS PLAN WENT ASTRAY.  
HE JUST TOOK IT ONE DAY AT A TIME.

**NATHAN:**

ONE DAY AT A TIME.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:**

ONE DAY AT A TIME.

**NATHAN:**

LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME.

**UNCLE SAMUEL:**

LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME.

**BOTH:**

WHEN THINGS LOOK SO BAD AND HOPELESS TO YOU,  
THERE'S A WAY FOR YOU TO SEE IT THROUGH,  
IF YOU'LL DO IT ONE DAY AT A TIME.

**NATHAN:**

ARE WE WISE, DO WE THINK WE'RE MUCH WISER THAN GOD?  
LET'S TAKE IT ONE DAY AT A TIME.  
WE POISON OUR LIVES WITH SO MUCH MISERY  
AS WE WORRY AHEAD TO PROBLEMS WE CAN'T SEE,  
THEN DEFEATED BY THINGS THAT MIGHT NEVER REALLY BE.  
WHY NOT TAKE IT ONE DAY AT A TIME.  
ONE DAY AT A TIME,

**UNCLE SAMUEL:**

LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME.

**BOTH:**

WHEN THINGS LOOK SO BAD AND HOPELESS TO YOU,  
THERE'S A WAY FOR YOU TO SEE IT THROUGH,  
IF YOU'LL THINK OF TODAY, AND THANK GOD FOR TODAY,  
YOU'LL GET THROUGH IT ONE DAY AT A TIME.

*(At conclusion of song there is silence.)*

**REBECCA:** Julie, Eva, you must help me gather a few things together.

**PHILIP:** What shall we take, Papa?

**NATHAN:** We may take only what is necessary. We will need all the jewelry that can be converted into cash.  
Each of the children may take one possession so long as it is small enough to be tucked into their clothing.

**REBECCA:** But my music, my books, photographs of the family?

**NATHAN:** No, Rebecca... even your chickens and geese must stay. I will try to find someone to care for them.

*(Looks up to heaven.)*

*God willing, some day we'll come back.*

*(Everyone hurries off stage. Eva and Julie still complaining, etc. Leaving UNCLE SAMUEL on stage, he looks up to heaven.)*

**UNCLE SAMUEL:** So, good -- bye, oh Lord -- I'm leaving you. We're going to America!  
*(BLACKOUT.)*

**Scene 3** -- *The scene opens in the Kolosky cellar in Kishnev. Earthen walls dug under the house for the storage of food. There is a set of wooden stairs going into a door cut into the kitchen floor. The cellar's only light is from a candle sitting on a barrel. A plate serves as a candle base. There are boxes and crates to sit and sleep on. Plus some old rugs (small) for sleeping. Also a few blankets. The cellar is windowless. It is a well -- stocked room with barrels of herring, smoked meats and pickled and preserved foods and grain. Little Eda and Maurice are quietly playing hide and seek among the barrels. A stream of light shines through the open doors to the kitchen as Mrs. Kolosky is sitting on one of the top steps talking to Rebecca, Julie, Eva and Phillip.*

**REBECCA:** Mrs. Kolosky, the herring and potatoes were so good.  
*(She hands the tray to the Russian woman.)*

I know how confusing it must be for you, with our food preparation, we have become such a bother. You are a good and valued friend. But now,

*(Interrupted by children.)*

Hush, children, go upstairs and try not to worry about us.

**MRS. KOLOSKY:** *(Smiles)* It is my Christian duty to worry about you.  
*(To Maurice and Eda.)*

Quiet, you must play very quietly. Mr. Kolosky should be back soon.  
*(To Rebecca.)*

He was going to stop at the home of our daughters and tell them not to come to visit for awhile.

**REBECCA:** Such a bother, I'm sorry for the inconvenience we have caused you.

**MRS. KOLOSKY:** Better the inconvenience than having one of my grandchildren give your hiding place away.

**MAURICE:** Mrs. Kolosky?

**MRS. KOLOSKY:** *(Softly)* Yes? Little Mouse?

**MAURICE:** Are you a gentile?

**MRS. KOLOSKY:** Yes... I suppose you would say that.

**MAURICE:** Then, why are you hiding us? The Gentiles killed our friends and drove us out of Dubossar.

**REBECCA:** Hush, Samuel, hold your tongue.

**MRS. KOLOSKY:** It's all right. Why shouldn't he be confused?  
*(She comes down to him.)*

Mr. Kolosky and I are Christians... and we will try to help you all we can.

*(Kneels down to him.)*

Trust us, Little Mouse, I pray for your family morning and night.



*(Footsteps are heard upstairs, a door bangs... Mrs. Kolosky hurries upstairs.)*

**MRS. KOLOSKY:** Quiet now, you must be quiet.

**REBECCA:** *(Gathering the children about her)* Don't be frightened, children. God will see us through, God will see us through.

**MAURICE:** *(Whispered)* Mother?

**REBECCA:** Hush  
*(Softly.)*

What is it, Little Mouse?

**MAURICE:** DOES Mrs. Kolosky pray to our God... the God of Israel?

**REBECCA:** No, Samuel, Mrs. Kolosky prays to a Christian God.

**MAURICE:** Two people praying to different Gods? Which one will be heard?

*(The doors to the cellar open, allowing a stream of light to reappear. The family crouch down behind cartons and almost gasp as a man comes down the stairs.)*

**MR. KOLOSKY:** It's only me, children.

**MRS. KOLOSKY:** *(Following behind him)* It's all right... It's Mr. Kolosky.

**REBECCA:** *(Rushes to him)* My husband? Did he and the others?

**MR. KOLOSKY:** There is still some danger, but soon, very soon, they will be out of the country. And you, Mrs. Warshawsky, you and the children must get out too ... as soon as possible.

**JULIE:** Out of the country?

**REBECCA:** But I had hoped the pogroms might subside, and we would be able to go back to...  
*(Turns to Mr. Kolosky.)*

What about our things in Dubossar. Our holdings here in Kishnev?

**MR. KOLOSKY:** You've been here... how long?

**MAURICE:** Seventeen days, sir!

**MR. KOLOSKY:** In those seventeen days things in the outside world have become worse. I don't want to frighten you, but they will soon be searching for you.

**PHILIP:** For us?

**MR. KOLOSKY:** Your husband advised me to convert the jewelry you brought with you to cash... it will be needed for your journey to America.

*(Reaches into his pocket.)*

He also made out a predated bill of sale for your property in case it has to be sold. I dare not touch your bank account, it is doubtless being watched.

**REBECCA:** You sound so... urgent, Mr. Kolosky. How soon must we leave?

**MR. KOLOSKY:** Very soon, in fact as soon as I can make the final plans.

*(He looks at the frightened faces of the children. Picking up Little Eda.)*

Don't look so sad, Little One. Soon you will be on your way to join your father and Uncle and your brother, Joseph, in America.

**EVA:** *(To the children)* What he is saying is that we will never see our home again. We will never see our... FRIENDS... again!

**MR. KOLOSKY:** Children, you must try to help your mother in whatever must be done. Your father asked me to tell you that. And he promised he would somehow get word to you of his whereabouts.

*(Takes hold of Julie's shoulders.)*

He asked me to especially remind you, Julie, that you must not try to communicate with ANYONE in Dubossar. Do you understand?

**REBECCA:** Thank you, Mr. Kolosky.

*(She walks over to Julie.)*

The children and I will do whatever you and my husband have decided must be done.

**MR. KOLOSKY:** Good. To avoid suspicion you will leave on Saturday.

**PHILIP:** Saturday? But, Mother, that's . .

**REBECCA:** *(Cutting him off)* Hush, Phillip.

*(To Mr. Kolosky.)*

That's very wise, Mr. Kolosky. No one would suspect a Jew of traveling on the Sabbath. When we fled Dubossar it was a nightmare. How bad, how dangerous are conditions here, in Kishnev?

**MRS. KOLOSKY:** *(Looks at Children)* Mrs. Warshawsky, Rebecca, my husband will see to it that you and your children are safely . . .

**MR. KOLOSKY:** *(Interrupting)* The danger here in Kishnev is as bad or worse than it was in Dubossar. I am sorry to tell you this, but your dear friend Solomon was murdered last week.

**JULIE:** Oh, not Solomon. . .

*(Suddenly there is a loud knock at the door, more and louder pounding continues.)*

**MR. KOLOSKY:** *(Rushing upstairs with his wife)* Quickly, hide, and be quiet... Not a noise!

*(The cellar doors close and only the light of the candle flickers as Rebecca holds the children close to her. Eda is in her lap, her arm is around Maurice, the two girls and Phillip are at her knees with their heads in her lap... soon the voices and footsteps are heard directly above... Eda begins to whimper and cry.)*

**REBECCA:** Shah, shah, little one... God is Israel's lucky star. We will be preserved, God has promised... So you see -- you mustn't be afraid.

## **MUSICAL #6 -- WHISPERED LULLABY**

HUSH -- A -- BYE  
CLOSE YOUR EYES,  
DREAM OF TOMORROW,  
DREAM OF YOUR PAPA WHO'S DREAMING OF YOU.  
DON'T YOU CRY,  
HUSH -- A -- BYE,  
AND ON THE MORROW  
ALL THAT YOU'VE DREAMED OF WILL SURELY COME TRUE.

*(Rebecca cradles Little Eda in her arms.)*

Sleep, little one, try to sleep, you mustn't be afraid.

*(Music box transition into new key under dialogue.)*

BUB -- E -- LAH

BUB -- E -- LAH

DEAR LITTLE GRANDMA  
GOD OF OUR FATHERS IS WATCHING ON HIGH.  
GUARDIAN ANGELS ARE QUIETLY SINGING,  
QUIETLY SINGING A WHISPERED LULLABY.

*(Music continues under dialogue. Spoken.)*

Lord, God of Israel, watch over my frightened children. You who give life to every living thing, protect the lives of these little ones now. I am asking this because they are ours now, Yours and mine, and we must care for them and keep them safe until we find their Papa. So, God, if it isn't asking too much, I'll take care of things down here if you'll oversee things from up there.

**MAURICE:** *(Opening his eyes and looking at her)* Mama, you talk to God as if you knew him personally.

**REBECCA:** Do I know the sun? The moon, the earth and the stars? Do I know you, Little Mouse?

NOW, HUSH -- A -- BYE  
CLOSE YOUR EYES,  
DON'T BE AFRAID NOW,  
GOD OF OUR FATHERS IS WATCHING ON HIGH.  
*(BLACKOUT.)*

**Scene 4** -- *The 19th day on board the Steamship S.S. Bremen. The scene change music should segue from Silent Lullaby into steamship whistle noises. Maurice has with him a slate and is wearing cap. The scene opens on several dozen Jewish refugees on board the busy lower deck. Scattered among the Jews are 5 or 6 Germans and Poles and Rumanians. In order for Rebecca and children to get into scene as quickly as possible, they must enter unnoticed on opposite side of stage from where dialogue begins. There is a dim foggy look to stage as warmer lights come up over areas where various families are speaking.*

**OLD WOMAN:** *(She is bent and crying)* Papa, when we left our homeland, I knew we would never go back.  
*(She clings to him, crying.)*

We will never go back!

**OLD MAN:** Shah, Mama. Shah, it's all right. Those things are behind us now. We must look ahead.  
*(Comforts her.)*

Shah, shah.

*(Lights down -- up on group in center of stage. A woman and her child and another older man.)*

**CHILD:** How soon will we be there?

**OLDER MAN:** Very soon, Bubelah.

*(Lights down -- up on side stage -- two young men.)*

**1ST YOUNG MAN:** Nineteen days of sea sickness. I don't know how you stand it!

**2ND YOUNG MAN:** All I can say is I hope I'm really sick. I'd hate to feel like this if I'm well.

*(Lights down -- then up on Warshawsky family.)*

**MAURICE:** *(He has slate in his hand and is sketching his mother)* Are we almost there, Mother?

**REBECCA:** *(Knitting a muffler -- later seen on Nathan)* I don't know, Little Mouse. We should be.

**MAURICE:** *(Looking around)* Why do you suppose all these people are going to America? Are they running away, too?

**PHILIP:** Maybe they are like Joseph. They had to run away so they wouldn't have to go to war.

**JULIE:** *(Looking up from a book she is reading)* Hum -- I wonder...

**REBECCA:** Wonder?

**JULIE:** How so many can find positions. Employment.

**MAURICE:** Don't worry. America is a land of plenty!

**JULIE:** Yes -- but plenty of what?

**EVA:** Immigrants, maybe!

*(They all laugh.)*

**REBECCA:** Hush, too many questions. The captain is speaking. Quiet now, children.

**CAPTAIN:** You are to be congratulated. I have never traveled in such cramped conditions, yet we have been out 19 days and in that time we have had very minor problems. Your children have been well -- behaved. We have had a minimum of complaints and a little illness, but considering everything, this crossing on the S.S. Bremen has been very good. Very good, indeed.

**WOMAN:** *(To Rebecca)* That's easy for him to say. Not so with Mrs. Grobstein, whom we buried at sea last week. For her it was not such a good crossing.

**CAPTAIN:** Soon we will arrive at our destination. We will dock at Ellis Island and there you will each be given a number. The immigration people will talk to you in turn. They will want to know where you were born, why you left, and they will want to examine you for illness, lice and bedbugs.

**REBECCA:** Examine us? What if one of us was sent back by the health inspector? Nobody should know from such trouble.

**MAURICE:** You shouldn't worry so much -- so far our luck has been good.

**REBECCA:** Shouldn't worry? So? I'm afraid the good luck we have had so far is so good it shouldn't last! What if something should happen?

**CAPTAIN:** Finally, you will need to contact your families and sponsoring organizations so they might make arrangements for you in America.

## MUSICAL #7 -- I WONDER

**REBECCA:** What if, after all we've been through -- all the hiding, and the hunger what if one of us was denied admittance? God forbid, what if it was me? What would happen -- the children -- who would care for them?

*(Lights down on Warshawskeys -- up on another area. Family huddled together.)*

**MOTHER:** I wonder what the food is like. I should have packed a lunch!

**FATHER:** And what would you have packed, Mama? We ate all the chicken soup before we came on board.

**OLDEST SON:** Don't worry -- at last report they are still selling food in America.

**MOTHER:** Yes, I know -- but how good can a Gentile chicken taste?

## CHORUS

I WONDER, I WONDER

HOW THIS NEW LIFE WILL BE!

WHO EVER THOUGHT THAT SUCH A THING SHOULD HAPPEN TO ME?

*(Lights down on family -- up on group of young adults -- Eva wanders over to them as they sing.)*

**YOUNG MAN:** *(To New Wife)* Everyone will have plenty of everything. There will be wonderful opportunities to earn money.

**EVA:** I can't help but wonder where all this money in America will come from.

**YOUNG MAN:** Who knows, who cares? We only know we're leaving one life for a better one. Some exchange, no?

**EVERYONE:** Yes! Yes! Yes!

## CHORUS

I WONDER, I WONDER HOW THIS NEW LIFE WILL BE.

WHO EVER THOUGHT THAT SUCH A THING SHOULD HAPPEN TO ME!

*(Lights down on young adults -- up on large family of children.)*

**MOTHER:** Where's our bundles, where's our trunk? I've mislaid our landing papers! Where's your hat? Quick, put it on! Shouldn't tempt the evil one!

*(Lights down -- up on group of men talking.)*

**1ST MAN:** So how goes it with your brother in Chicago?

**2ND MAN:** Two months' wages he spent last week on doctors and medicine.

**1ST MAN:** Back in the old country he could have been sick for two years for that kind of money.

*(Lights down on men -- up on middle -- aged couple.)*

**HUSBAND:** And why should I learn their language? I don't know anyone there to talk to

*(To Wife.)*

except you. And we haven't had anything to talk about in twenty years!

**WIFE:** So? Mrs. Levitsky is helping her husband, and so is Mrs. Weissenberg. So I'll teach you. We'll use the Russian -- English dictionary.

**HUSBAND:** It all seems like Greek to me!

**CHORUS**

I WONDER, I WONDER HOW THIS NEW LIFE WILL BE.

WHO EVER THOUGHT THAT SUCH A THING SHOULD HAPPEN TO ME!

*(Lights down on couple and up again on large family.)*

**MOTHER:** Our money... where's our money? I hid it good, but where? In the bundles. But which bundles?

I've lost our money -- and I'm losing my mind!

*(Lights down on family -- up on group of children with Eva reading to them.)*

**LITTLE GIRL:** The Captain's going in circles. I think we must be lost.

**EVA:** You don't know from nothing. Like a beet you grow with your head in the earth. Columbus was also lost. That is how you find America.

*(Lights down on children -- up on Maurice.)*

**MAURICE:** Soon we'll be with Papa and Joe and Uncle Samuel. And life will be even better than it was before. For Papa must be well employed, perhaps even an employer. Yes, we will go to America -- then we'll come right back home.

**CHORUS:**

I WONDER, I WONDER HOW THIS NEW LIFE WILL BE.

WHO EVER THOUGHT THAT SUCH A THING SHOULD HAPPEN TO ME!

*(At conclusion of song lights down on stage -- up on Maurice and family.)*

**MAURICE:** Mother, please read me Papa's letter.

**REBECCA:** Again? Little Mouse, I have read it to you so many times by now you should have it memorized.

**MAURICE:** When we arrived in Bremen, after our escape, it was Papa's letter that cheered me up. I wasn't afraid anymore.

**LITTLE EDA:** Don't be afraid, Samuel. When you're afraid, I'm afraid.

**REBECCA:** No, after such a plea, what can I do?

*(She opens letter -- taken from under skirts, tucked in a pocket in her petticoat.)*

First he tells us he is well, and Joseph and Uncle Samuel are also well.

**PHILIP:** *(To Eda)* See, America must be a miraculous place, if even Uncle Samuel is well.

**REBECCA:** Then he tells us where we were to buy our steamship tickets.

*(She is suddenly frightened.)*

Julie, where did I put the rest of our money?

**JULIE:** It's here Mother, in your handkerchief.

**REBECCA:** Good! Count it.

**JULIE:** But I just counted it this morning.

**REBECCA:** So, count it again. I don't understand the difference between rubles and marks so I don't know how much we've got. So I should know, at least, how many pieces? No? Besides, we'll need all we have to bribe the American authorities!

**EVA:** I'm not so sure they do that in America.

**REBECCA:** Nonsense! Bribing officials got us here on this boat. The rest will get us to Papa. I just hope there is enough.

**LITTLE EDA:** *(Crying)* What if there isn't enough for all of us?  
*(Two men approach.)*

**REBECCA:** Eda, stop crying. Here comes the health inspector and if he thinks you're sick -- God forbid! We'll all be in trouble.

*(The two men part company as Mr. Skolnick approaches Maurice.)*

**MR. SKOLNICK:** Good afternoon. I have been noticing you and your family for several days now. -- It would appear that you are as confused and frightened as I was on my first voyage to America.

**SAMUEL:** You've been to America before?

**MR. SKOLNICK:** Have I been to America? My boy, America is my home

**JULIE:** Then you should be knowledgeable on the subject of American employment and political and social matters.

**MR. SKOLNICK:** Matters, smatters. For me, America is a heaven on earth. But every so often I long for my native Poland.

*(Sadly.)*

So I go back.

**JULIE:** If America is so wonderful -- why go?

**MR. SKOLNICK:** *(Laughs)* So when I return, I can relive my own first view of America.  
*(Someone shouts.)*

**MAN:** Look! Off the left.

**REBECCA AND CHILDREN:** What is it? What is it?

**MR. SKOLNICK:** *(To Maurice)* This is one time you should take off your hat, for you're in the presence of a very great lady.

**MAURICE:** Lady?

**MR. SKOLNICK:** See her, she is standing proudly against the skyline. She is America's Statue of Liberty. Listen, she calls to you.

**LITTLE EDA:** I can't hear her.

*(Musical underscore.)*

**REBECCA:** The writing, Mr. Skolnick, can you read for us.  
*(He starts to read as people gather to listen to him.)*

**MR. SKOLNICK:** "Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

*(Crying.)*

Send these, the homeless, tempest -- tossed to me."

**PERUSAL SCRIPT Life ... More Sweet Than Bitter** by Pat Davis and K. Newell Dayley

*(Whistles from other ships and small boats are heard in the distance -- also repeated whistles from the steamship. People stand, bundles in hand, crying. Suddenly, people who have gathered about are saying, "Look, the fog is lifting," "I can see it," "I can see land".)*

**REBECCA:** Now, if we can just get through immigration!

**OTHERS:** We're here. We're in America. I never thought we'd make it. Etc.

**MUSICAL # 8 -- I WONDER** (Dance.)

*(Everyone starts to shout, hugging each other. They start humming and chanting as men on deck form circles and begin to dance in the old Jewish way. Then the women join arms and begin to dance. Big dance production number. During dance people 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class passengers are hanging over rail to see a few come down and join in dance -- finally even Rebecca enters into the spirit of things. BLACKOUT.)*

**END OF ACT ONE**

*30 more pages in act two*