

The Doll Maker's Gift

A musical

Book by EllaRose Chary and Francis Sillau

Music by Brian Feinstein

Lyrics by Sammy Buck

Based on *The Doll Maker's Gift* by Sashi Fridman

SYNOPSIS

The Doll Maker's Gift is a story of family, friendship, love, and the power of imagination. Set in a small village in Eastern Europe during the pogroms of the early 1900s, Nora, with the help of a friend, learns how to escape the horrible events that are around her by imagining a better world for herself, her family, and community.

Cast Breakdown/Doubling Plan

Cast Size: 11 - four youth female, three youth male, 1 youth either, two adult female, two adult male

Nora (Youth Female)

Rosa (Youth Female)

Anna/Doll #3 (Youth Female)

Rivka/Doll #2 (Youth Female)

Joseph/Jacob/Doll #4 (Youth Male)

Moshe/Doll #1 (Youth Male)

Solider #1/Ensemble (Youth Male/Female)

Mama(Esther) /Doll#3/Ensemble (Adult Female)

Pola/Aunt/ Soldier #2/Ensemble (Adult Female)

David (Papa) (Adult Male)

Zalushka/Uncle (Adult Male)

A Note on Doll World

The piece moves between the doll world in Nora's imagination and reality. The script indicates when we are in doll world and when we are not, and there is accompanying musical underscoring to delineate these worlds. When characters are in doll world, they play doll version of themselves as seen through Nora's lens. For example, the actor who plays Mama will also play "Doll Mama," but she will be a stylized version of herself.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

1. Hide and Seek (p. 1)
2. Come Out to Play (p. 10)
3. Grow Down (p. 20)
4. Papa's Goodbye (p. 25)
5. Getting There (p. 29)
6. No No (p. 36)
7. A Little Bit A Mitzvah (p. 42)
8. Every Time I Go Inside (p. 44)
9. Ball of String (pg. 45)
- 9A. Every Time I Go Inside (Reprise) (p. 48)
10. Come Out to Play/ Hide and Seek (Reprise) (p. 51)
11. Precious Cargo (p. 56)
12. Finale (p. 61)

SCENE 1.

MUSIC 1: "Hide And Seek"

Soldiers march across the stage accompanied by soldier music and some amplified marching sounds.

Nora enters with an armful of dolls and a ball of string. Rosa enters reading a book. Nora throws the ball of string at her, Rosa puts down the book, brings the ball of string back to Nora and they begin to play with the dolls.

We enter doll world.

NORA

I'LL CLOSE MY EYES.
I'LL COUNT TO TEN.
I PROMISE I WON'T PEEK.

ROSA

IT'S YOUR TURN TO HIDE.

NORA

NO, I WANNA SEEK

ROSA

YOU'RE YOUNGER
AND YOU'RE SMALLER.
YOU CAN SCURRY. YOU CAN SNEAK.

NORA

HOW ABOUT THE DOLLS GO HIDE?
BOTH OF US CAN SEEK.

The dolls come to life around Nora & Rosa.

DOLLS

WE'LL HIDE
WE'LL HIDE
WE'LL HIDE

NORA & ROSA

WE'LL SEEK

The dolls try to find hiding places.

ONE
NORA & ROSA

TO THE FOREST!
DOLL ONE

TWO
NORA & ROSA

TO THE SHED!
DOLL TWO

THREE FOUR FIVE
NORA & ROSA

UNDERNEATH THE BED
DOLL THREE

SIX
NORA & ROSA

BENEATH THAT PILE OF STICKS
DOLL FOUR

SEVEN EIGHT NINE TEN
READY OR NOT HERE WE COME
FOUND YOU
FOUND YOU
NORA & ROSA

WAIT!
ROSA

WHAT'S THAT SOUND COMING FROM?

Soldier dolls appear. The mood changes. Suddenly the hiding is not a fun game, but a necessity. All the dolls are very still. This is a heightened, doll world, scary, rather than the literal world we'll see later. Rosa notices the soldiers, nudges Nora.

ROSA

WE'LL CLOSE OUR EYES
AND COUNT TO TEN
AND NO ONE TRY TO SPEAK.

IF WE ALL GO HIDE
THE SOLDIERS WON'T GO SEEK.

Nora picks up a soldier doll. The doll comes to life.

NORA

Quick, Rosa, hide! Don't let the soldiers find you!

But it's too late, the soldier dolls find Rosa, she and
Nora squeal, like kids do when caught in the game.
The dialogue is part of the game.

SOLDIER 1

Do you have your papers?

ROSA

Yes, sir

SOLDIER 2

Have you seen the neighbor boy?

ROSA

No, sir.

The soldiers exit.

NORA

I BETCHA I CAN HOLD MY BREATH
AT LEAST FOR ONE WHOLE WEEK.

ROSA

THE SOLDIERS ALL HAVE GONE.

NORA, ROSA & DOLLS

BACK TO HIDE AND SEEK

NORA

WE'LL PLAY

ROSA

WE'LL HIDE

NORA & DOLLS
WE'LL PLAY
HIDE AND SEEK.

NORA
WE'LL PLAY

ROSA
WE'LL HIDE

NORA & DOLLS
WE'LL PLAY
HIDE AND SEEK.

ROSA
Maybe we can hide in America -

“Doll” Mama enters.

NORA
Mama says
NOT ENOUGH MONEY

NORA & MAMA
TO GET ON THE SHIP.

“Doll” Papa enters.

NORA
Papa says

PAPA
WE DON'T NEED TO TAKE THAT TRIP.
WE STAY RIGHT HERE AND FIGHT FOR OUR LAND.

MAMA
DAVID, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
We need to find a place where there is more money for challah -

PAPA
We need to make this a place where there is enough challah to go around -

MAMA
How?!

Rosa withdraws, concerned. The soldiers approach.

NORA (CONT'D)

I know where we can hide! Our favoritest place -

ROSA

The best place in the whole wide world -

NORA

Zalushka's Doll Shop!

MUSIC CUE 1A: "Zalushka's"

[The dolls come out of hiding to welcome their leader/father/"the Wizard"...Zalushka the doll maker!]

ZALUSHKA

WELCOME TO MY IMAGINARIUM
SO MANY DOLLS, LET ME HELP YOU CARRY 'EM.
YOU'VE GOT TROUBLES? HERE WE'LL BURY 'EM.
WORRIES YOU WILL SHUSH, CAUSE
NOW YOU'RE AT ZALUSHKA'S.

HERE'S A DOLL THAT'S MADE OF PORCELAIN.
HERE'S A WHALE WITH A FEATHER DORSAL FIN.
SO MUCH FUN, TAKE EVERY MORSEL IN.
YOUR SPIRITS GET A PUSH, CAUSE
NOW YOU'RE AT ZALUSHKA'S.

MY NEWEST CREATION YOU BET'LL
BE THE GREATEST IN ANY DOLL COLLECTION.
AND TODAY WILL BE REMEMBERED IN OUR SHTETL
AS THE UTMOST IN DOLLMAKING PERFECTION!

ROSA AND NORA

What is it? What is it?

ZALUSHKA

A doll with a secret treasure inside.

He gives it to Rosa, she examines it.

NORA

Is there one for me?

ZALUSHKA

There is...

NORA

Where?

ZALUSHKA

OPEN IT, YOU WON'T BELIEVE YOUR EYES!

Nora expects Zalushka to hand her another doll, but much to her and Rosa's delight, Rosa is able to open the doll and pull out another doll which she hands to Nora.

ROSA

WHAT?

NORA

NO WAY?

ZALUSHKA

ISN'T THAT A NICE SURPRISE?
SUCH A JOY ADDING TO THE MERCHANDISE.
WE CALL IT A MATROYSHKA
ONLY FROM ZALOISH

ROSA & NORA

ZALU -

ZALUSHKA

ZALU -

ZALUSHKA, ROSA, NORA, DOLLS

LU - SHKA!

Zalushka shrugs mischievously. Nora opens the doll to find another, Rosa opens the doll to find another. As they play with the doll in wonder, the soldiers enter the dollshop. Everyone tenses up.

SOLDIER 1

Give me all your dolls, old man.

SOLDIER 2

What, these potato sacks? I thought he was supposed to be some kind of expert doll maker.

SOLDIER 1

There's something off about a grown man who plays with dolls, if you ask me.

He throws a doll on the floor, steps on it. Soldier 2
rips another doll in half. Nora steps up, she's the
hero ready to fight the bad guys.

NORA

You stop that right now! Zalushka's doll shop is the best doll shop in all of Russia, in all of
Europe, in all of the whole wide world!

The soldiers are vanquished, but Rosa is scared.

ROSA

Nora! You can't do that! You have to be more careful!

NORA

What are you so afraid of? The dolls will protect us, they'll hide us so good even the
soldiers can't find us.

ROSA

Oh, Nora, you don't know anything!

MUSIC CUE 1C: "Hide and Seek" CODA

The dolls whisper amongst themselves. Nora refuses
to give in to fear - tries to start the game again

NORA

ONE

DOLL ONE

WE'RE ALL HUNGRY

NORA

TWO

DOLL TWO

WE'RE ALL SCARED

NORA

THREE FOUR FIVE

DOLL THREE/ DOLL FOUR

WE'RE UNPREPARED

NORA
SIX

DOLL FIVE
IT'S NOTHING WE CAN FIX

NORA
SEVEN EIGHT NINE TEN

ROSA
READY OR NOT HERE THEY COME
EVERY DAY A NEW POGROM

Music changes: There is a pogrom, which for Nora and Rosa is a scary, amorphous doll dance. It is not literal, but it is frightening. Everyone becomes a soldier before the girls' eyes, including Mama, Papa, and Zalushka, in a whirlwind that swirls around Nora and Rosa to a violent peak.

NORA
I'LL CLOSE MY EYES.
I'LL COUNT TO TEN.

ROSA
I'M SO MAD I COULD SHRIEK.
NORA, WE CAN'T HIDE -

NORA
I know everybody is always worrying and everybody is always hungry and the grown ups are always too busy to play, but as long as we've got Mama and Papa and each other and the dolls, no scary soldiers can mess with us. Cause we're superheroes and

THERE'S A WHOLE WORLD WE CAN SEEK.

Come on Rosa, the dolls are waiting!

But Rosa is still focused on the soldier dolls.
Something has changed.

ROSA
Nora, I'm busy, there are more important things than
PLAYING HIDE AND SEEK

NORA

What's more important than
PLAYING HIDE AND SEEK
PLAYING HIDE AND SEEK
PLAYING HIDE AND SEEK
PLAYING HIDE AND SEEK

Rosa leaves. Nora watches her go.

NORA (CONT'D)

PLAYING HIDE AND SEEK.

The song ends and doll world dissolves. We land in
the literal doll shop. Nora holds the ball of string.

Fine, go home, I'll stay here without you.

SCENE 2.

Nora finds Zalushka doing menial tasks in the
workshop.

NORA

Zalush, why are you sweeping the floor! That's apprentice work.

Noticing....

NORA (CONT'D)

Wait...where's Isaac?

ZALUSHKA

Isaac got conscripted.

NORA

What's conscripted? Is it like the chicken pox?

ZALUSHKA

Well, just as painful, but not as itchy.

NORA

I don't understand.

ZALUSHKA

(trying to explain to a child)

Conscripted is when the Czar's soldiers come to your house and invite you to go with them.

NORA

Like inviting you to a party? I love parties!

ZALUSHKA

Yes, except the party's a war, and you can't say no.

NORA

But he's only 11! The same age as Rosa!

Zalushka nods. Nora realizes something, a child's discovery of an adult as a person.

NORA

You're sad.

ZALUSHKA

I miss Isaac.

NORA

I know! Let's make him a doll for when he comes back!

ZALUSHKA

The truth is Nora, I've been having trouble imagining without my apprentice.

NORA

I can help with that! I'll be your apprentice, just tell me what to do.

ZALUSHKA

I don't know, Nora...

NORA

Come on Zalush, we have to make Isaac a doll to show we care, what's step one?

ZALUSHKA

Well...okay...step one is a question...

MUSIC 2: "Come Out To Play"

ZALUSHKA

WHAT KIND OF DOLL?
FIRST WE MUST CHOOSE.
WHO'S OUR NEW FRIEND?
WHO WILL COME OUT TO PLAY?

ONE LOG IS ALL -
ALL THAT WE USE
TO SHAPE AND TO BEND
INTO WHO WILL COME OUT TO PLAY.

Dolls enter around Nora.

SCHOOLGIRL DOLL

I'LL BE A SCHOOLGIRL, I'VE READ EVERY BOOK.
I'LL ANSWER ANY QUESTION YOU CAN ASK.

BOXER DOLL

I'LL BE A BOXER WITH A MIGHTY RIGHT HOOK.
LIKE HIPPOLYTA, I'LL CONQUER ANY TASK.

FAIRY DOLL

I'LL BE A FAIRY, COME AND PAINT ME A WAND
AND I'LL CAST YOU A MAGIC SPELL.

CAPTAIN DOLL

I'LL BE A CAPTAIN SAILING 'ROUND LE MONDE
WHICH IS FRENCH FOR "THE EARTH,"
IF YOU CAN'T ALREADY TELL.

ZALUSHKA

THEY'RE HIDDEN IN THIS WOOD,
WAITING TO APPEAR

DOLLS

FIND US! FIND US!
WE'RE RIGHT HERE.

ZALUSHKA

HERE'S MY MACHINE.
CAREFUL, IT'S FAST.
WATCH FOR THE LATHE.
LET ME SHOW YOU THE WAY.

SHINY AND CLEAN
AND BUILT TO LAST.

OY, I SHOULD BATHE.
I HAVEN'T SINCE YESTERDAY.

NORA
(re SCHOOLGIRL DOLL)
A CRAFTY SCHOOLGIRL COULD HELP US CREATE.

ZALUSHKA
(to NORA)
THE WAY YOU THINK IS A GOD-GIVEN GIFT

NORA
(to BOXER DOLL)
OUR MIGHTY BOXER, YOU CAN LIFT ANY WEIGHT

ZALUSHKA
(to NORA)
MY WEARY MIND COULD SURE USE THE LIFT

NORA
(to FAIRY DOLL)
OUR FAIRY ANGEL, BE OUR NEW GOOD-LUCK PIECE

ZALUSHKA
(now to the dolls and Nora)
YOU'LL SPRINKLE UP SOME FAIRY DUST

NORA
(to CAPTAIN DOLL)
NOW, CAP, WE NEED YOU, DON'T YOU SAIL OFF TO
GREECE
YOU KNOW HOW TO NAVIGATE
YOU'RE THE ONE WE TRUST

DOLLS
WE'RE HIDDEN IN THIS WOOD,
ALL OF US ARE HERE
FIND US FIND US

NORA
THE ANSWER IS CLEAR!
We don't have to choose - we can make a nesting doll -
A FAIRY FLYING AROUND A

ZALUSHKA
A BOXER LIFTING UP A

NORA
A SCHOOL GIRL HELPING GUIDE A

ZALUSHKA
A CAPTAIN STEERING A SHIP WITH A

NORA/ZALUSHKA/DOLLS
(in a round)
A FAIRY FLYING AROUND A
A BOXER LIFTING UP A
A SCHOOL GIRL HELPING GUIDE A
A CAPTAIN STEERING A SHIP WITH A

They sing these phrases in a round, the dolls join,
then they create the Matroyshka doll.

ZALUSHKA
NORA, SO SMART
YOU HOLD THE KEY

NORA
ALL THAT I DID
WAS TO COME OUT TO PLAY

ZALUSHKA
YOU HAVE AN ART
YOU INSPIRE ME
GOD, WHAT A KID
YOU'RE WELCOME HERE ANY DAY

ZALUSHKA & DOLLS
TO COME OUT TO PLAY!

Zalushka hands Nora the doll they made together as
the song ends. Papa enters.

PAPA
Nora, I thought I'd find you here.

NORA
Papa! I made a doll!

PAPA
Putting Zalush out of business, are we?

NORA

No, silly, I'm the imaginator, he's the builder with the tools.

ZALUSHKA

(returning a bundle of tools to Papa)

Speaking of which....thank you, David, for loaning me these for the doll shoes, I got that big order out to the Russians before they had time to think about the Jew who was running late.

PAPA

And, speaking of running late - Mama's waiting for us -

ZALUSHKA

Before you go, you must let me pay you a little something for your trouble.

PAPA

No trouble at all, that's what old friends are for.

ZALUSHKA

The let Nora keep this doll at least -

PAPA

Zalush, don't be ridiculous - you just said you're behind on all your orders.

NORA

But, papa!

PAPA

We have to get home, our guests are waiting for us!

NORA

Oh, yes! The cousins!

ZALUSHKA

(to PAPA)

Your brother is in town?

NORA

Not just Uncle Abe, but Anna, Ruchel, Joseph, Moshe and Aunt Rebecca! Here all the way from Kishinev!

ZALUSHKA

How are things in Kishinev?

PAPA

(reacting subtly because of Nora, but she
is lost in looking at the dolls)

They are not as well as things are here. The two soldiers who visited my shop the other day
just came to look -

ZALUSHKA

And in Kishinev?

PAPA

The soldiers don't leave shops left to be looked at.

Nora interrupts, holding "her" doll -

NORA

Papa! Let me just show you something about this doll, one thing - so you can see it's the
most specialist -

PAPA

Next time, my dear, we have to get home -

ZALUSHKA

Are you sure? You could take it to play with, with the cousins...

PAPA

Good Shabbos, Zalush.

ZALUSHKA

Okay, okay. Good Shabbos, old friend.

SCENE 3.

Papa and Nora leave the shop. Nora is obviously
upset.

NORA

Papa! Why wouldn't you let me have that doll, the one Zalushka and I made is the bestest
doll I've ever seen and he wanted to give it to me.

PAPA

Lending him the tools was a mitzvah.

NORA

What's a Mitzvah?

PAPA

A good deed. You do a mitzvah not because you expect something in return, but because it's the right thing to do.

NORA

Maybe Zalushka wanted to do a mitzvah for us by giving me the doll!

PAPA

That's not quite the same thing. If I didn't lend Zalushka my tools and he didn't finish the dolls on time, the Russian soldiers might have not paid him for his work - or worse - it would be very dangerous. If we go home without one more doll, I think we'll survive. Understand?

NORA

(exasperated)

I guess...

PAPA

However, dilly dallying out here longer while Mama's Shabbos dinner gets cold on the table - that we may not survive.

SCENE 4.

**MUSIC CUE 2A: SOLIDERS' MARCH
TRANSITION**

A group of soldiers walk by accompanied by ominous soldier music. Nora, still holding the ball of string, and Papa watch them pass warily, and then go into the family home and are greeted by Mama, Rosa, and the cousins.

MAMA

How was the doll shop?

ANNA

Yes, yes tell us about the dolls!

NORA

I helped Zalushka make a brand new doll, you would not believe it. She has the beautifullest dress and -

MOSHE

Did he have another fireman?

ANNA

Our doll maker doesn't even know how to make nesting dolls!

MOSHE

I don't like dolls anyway, dolls are for girls, why doesn't he have other toys?

ROSA

Dolls are not for girls or for boys Moshe, it is just about whether you like the doll or you don't. That's science.

NORA

Zalushka's dolls are for everyone! Even the soldiers like his dolls.

This comment changes the tone of the room. The grown ups are clearly worried. The cousins play, but Rosa is clearly listening to the grown ups -

AUNT REBECCA

There were soldiers in the doll shop today?

PAPA

Just a few, you know Zalushka makes dolls for them.

MAMA

David, you should have told us, that's three times this week you've run into them.

UNCLE ABRAHAM

Have they come to your shop?

PAPA

Not this week.

MAMA

But they were in twice last week.

AUNT REBECCA

What do they want?

PAPA

To scare us, but we won't be intimidated.

MAMA

David, don't downplay! They've started a conscription - we should be saving to go to America.

AUNT REBECCA

What, run away?

UNCLE ABRAHAM

You can't abandon your country - you'd leave this land to the Czar and his thugs?

PAPA

We're not going anywhere.

AUNT REBECCA

A revolution is coming, but only if we fight for it.

MAMA

You all have been waiting for the revolution as long as you've been waiting for the Messiah, neither is coming. But the soldiers are, more of them by the day - filling the square and any one with any sense isn't waiting around to find out why.

UNCLE ABRAHAM

Because we've finally got them scared -

MAMA

I'm scared!

PAPA

Enough arguing, it's Shabbos. Esther has made a lovely dinner that is getting cold.

ROSA

And we still have to light the candles!

PAPA

That's right.

ROSA

Can I do it?

NORA

No - you're not a grown up -

MAMA

Yes, Rosa, do it the way I showed you -

NORA

But she's not big enough!

MAMA

Nora - Rosa's growing up - it's a good thing. *(to Rosa)* Go ahead dear.

MUSIC CUE: 2B SHABBAT

Rosa gets the candlesticks and the family gathers to say a prayer and light candles - we see the ritual of Shabbos with Rosa lighting the candles for the first time.

A musical transition takes them into dinner and then off stage as an ominous soldier dance takes the stage.

Nora orchestrates a moment of soldiers dancing with the dolls in doll world, it is dark and a little scary, but also touched with a bit of childlike wonder - she's still a bit innocent to the severity of the situation in her rendering of it. This moment ends with a soldier throwing a brick through a window, the sound of shattering glass. Back in reality, lights on Zalushka and Pola in the doll shop, surrounded by shattered glass holding the brick.

SCENE 5.

We melt back to Nora playing with her dolls, Rosa with her nose in a book. Nora throws the ball of string at her, Rosa smiles, throws it back but doesn't come over. Nora picks up one doll and makes it talk, then she picks up another and makes it talk.

NORA

"Why are there so many soldiers in the square?" "I am the Czar! I'm going to conscript you"

With both hands full of dolls, Nora realizes she can't pick up a third.

Rosa! Rosa! Come play with me.

ROSA

Not now, I'm too busy to play dolls.

NORA

Doing what? You're a kid.

ROSA

I'm almost 12, I'm doing almost-12 year old things. Things a 9 year old wouldn't understand.

NORA

I'm a very advanced 9!

ROSA

I'm studying. Did you know that the Earth moves in a circle around the sun?

NORA

No, the sun moves up in down in the sky.

ROSA

It just looks like that, but actually -

NORA

I need someone to be the soldier!

ROSA

The soldiers are not a game, Nora. Now, I'm trying to teach you something real -

NORA

Real things are boring! When will I ever use science in real life?

ROSA

Nora, you're getting too old to keep your head in the clouds. It's time for you to grow up.

Nora quickly assembles a team of dolls.

MUSIC CUE 3: "Grow Down"

NORA

YOU TELL ME TO GROW UP.
YOU SIT AND MOPE AND FROWN.
I DON'T NEED TO GROW UP .
YOU NEED TO GROW DOWN.

WHERE'S MY CLEVER SISTER
WHO LAUGHED MORE THAN A CLOWN?

WHY DID YOU GO GROW UP?
COME ON BACK. GROW DOWN.

TAKE A BREAK.
CLOSE YOUR BOOK.
LET'S JUMP AND SPIN AND SKIP.
YOU WON'T HAVE TO FRET OR FUSS

YOU USED TO LOVE THE DOLLS
"HELLO, WE MISS YOU, ROSA"
THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE SAYING.
COME ON BACK TO US

Nora tries to get ROSA's attention with the dolls.

NORA & DOLLS
THE WORLD IS FULL OF COLOR.

NORA
NOT JUST ONLY BROWN.

NORA & DOLLS
LET'S GO FIND A RAINBOW
IF ONLY YOU'D GROW DOWN.

DOLL 1
REMEMBER WHEN WE STOWED AWAY
ABOARD THAT OCEAN LINER?

DOLL 2
LET'S GO BACK THERE
AND REVEL IN THE SEA-BREEZE.

NORA
SEE? PLEASE.

DOLL 3
REMEMBER WHEN WE STORMED THE GATE TO
BATTLE THE CZAR

DOLL 4
WE CONQUERED ALL HIS MEN.

NORA
LET'S DO THAT AGAIN,
MY DEAR ROSA, DON'T STAND BACK SO FAR.

ROSA

(to the dolls, giving in)

HELLO, YES I REMEMBER.

WE LAUGHED AND PLAYED EACH GAME,

BUT TIMES ARE NOW MUCH DARKER.

NOTHING IS THE SAME.

(to NORA, tender)

YOUR BIG IMAGINATION

CAN'T FIGHT THE FRIGHTS IN TOWN.

IT'S HAPPENING, IT'S REAL.

DOLLS

IT'S A BIG OLD ROTTEN DEAL.

NORA

DON'T YOU THINK I KNOW?

THAT'S WHY YOU NEED TO GROW -

DOLLS

(as if building to a huge finish of the song)

OH -

Just then there is a loud knock on the door.

MUSIC continues as:

MAMA and PAPA enter the room, ZALUSHKA
bursts in.

MAMA

Zalushka!

PAPA

What's the matter?

ZALUSHKA

David - your brother and his children, are they still here?

MAMA

They went back to Kishinev two days ago.

ZALUSHKA

I was hoping you would not say that.

PAPA

What's happened?

MAMA
(seeing Zalushka's face)

No...

ZALUSHKA
I just received word from a salesman I know who goes through there quite a lot -

The dolls moods darken:

DOLL 1
THE SOLDIERS LIE IN WAITING.

DOLL 2
WHEN WILL THEY ALL ATTACK?

DOLL 3
AND LOOT AND STEAL AND PILLAGE?

DOLL 4
SET FIRE TO THE VILLAGE?

ROSA
Nora, I think something's happened to Anna and Moshe.

NORA
What? Did they get pogrom'ed by soldiers?

She plays with the soldier dolls and makes explosive sounds.

MAMA
They were just here...we shouldn't have let them leave.

PAPA
It could have just as easily happened here.

ZALUSHKA
I'm so sorry.

PAPA
I have been a fool - talking about the revolution, thinking we can hold our ground.

ROSA
Do you know what pogrom means?

NORA
No. Do you?

ROSA
Yes.

NORA
(to dolls)
Are we playing or not? Rosa?
(trying to cut the tension)

NORA
WE'LL MAKE BELIEVE WE'RE DINOSAURS
AND FLY LIKE PTERODACTYLS.
WE'LL WALK THROUGH CLOUDS
AND FLOAT TO FAIRYLAND

NORA & DOLLS
AND... AND...

NORA
(comforting Rosa and the dolls)
I KNOW ONE DAY I'LL GROW UP.
FOR NOW I WILL NOT DROWN

NORA & DOLLS
UNDER ALL THE DOOM AND GLOOM.
WE CAN HAVE OUR MAGIC ROOM
AS LONG AS WE
GROW DOWN.

PAPA
We cannot wait another day. I'm going to America.

MAMA
Finally! But how will we afford the tickets?

ZALUSHKA
Let me help you, I can give you a little something -

PAPA
Save your money for your own ticket, Zalush -

ZALUSHKA

The bad news about that is Pola can't travel in her condition. The good news is we don't have enough money for two tickets, anyway.

MAMA

Which is why you must keep your money for her medicines. David will go and send for us.

ROSA

(whispering to NORA)

Why won't Papa take his help, Papa helps Zalushka so much?

NORA

(being a know-it-all)

When Papa helps Zalushka, it's a mitzvah, a commandment, you can't take help in return for that. Obviously.

PAPA

Esther - you want me to go alone, to leave you and the girls? We can't be separated.

MAMA

Better to be separated and alive than to die together. Do not be like Abraham and Rebecca.

MUSIC CUE 4: PAPA'S GOODBYE

PAPA

You're right. I've got to keep this family safe no matter what it takes.

I WILL SEE YOU VERY SOON

BE SURE WE'LL REUNITE

(to NORA)

I WILL SEE YOU VERY SOON

JUST HUM THIS TUNE

I SWEAR YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT

(to ROSA)

WATCH OVER HER, BE BRAVE, BE KIND

AND BE SURE YOU'LL

ALWAYS BE WITH ME

IN MY HEART AND MIND

The four vocalize the melody of the tune as Papa hugs Rosa, then Mama, then Nora, but she is too wrapped up in the melody to notice he's leaving- until the quartet becomes a trio. Nora opens her eyes and realizes he's gone. Upset, she runs off -

MAMA

Nora - where are you -

NORA

The doll shop!

MUSIC CUE 4A: Soldiers Dance

The music turns into the eerie soldier music. Nora watches Zalushka and Pola in the doll shop from outside. We see this scene through Nora's lens, the heightened doll world version. Pola is visibly unwell. Zalushka hurries to make more dolls, the soldiers take them as he makes them, not giving him money in return. They demand more dolls, though he has very few left to give. Zalushka and Pola are visibly worried. Rosa arrives and puts a hand on Nora's shoulder, taking her out of doll world.

ROSA

Come on, Nora, we have to go home.

NORA

Did you see the soldiers were in Zalushka's...but the doll's kept them safe.

ROSA

Sure.

NORA

They did! I saw it!

ROSA

Mama sent me to get you, you're going to be in big trouble for running away.

NORA

I am?

ROSA

No, but you should be.

They exit.

SCENE 6.

Mama enters carrying a sewing basket and a letter.

MAMA

Girls! A letter from Papa, he's arrived safely.

The girls enter, Rosa with a book and a measuring tape, Nora with the dolls and the ball of string.

Papa appears as Mama "reads" the letter. The following is underscored.

PAPA

My dearest girls - America is a very strange, fascinating place. They think Philadelphia is an old place, but much of it has only been here for 200 or 300 years! I would like to tell them we have lint in the shtetl that is older than that.

PAPA (CONT'D)

I am working very hard and hope I will soon have the money to bring you here, I'm sorry it is taking so much longer than expected. My situation is difficult at times - it's hard when you don't speak the language and sometimes I wonder if the Americans feel the same way about Jews that the Russians do.

Nora tries to measure herself against the wall, she struggles with standing straight and marking her height. Rosa comes over and marks it for her.

NORA

I did it! I did it! I grew an inch.

Nora measures Rosa.

NORA (CONT'D)

I think you ungrew an inch.

ROSA

That's physically impossible.

A boy enters. Nora and he begin to play **HIDE AND SEEK** with the dolls. The boy is clearly older than Nora, but we can see that he has an imagination like Nora. They play with the dolls, but Rosa won't join them. She reads a book.

Nora throws the ball of string at her, but instead of returning it, she just shoots Nora an annoyed look...Mama writes her letter to Papa, who appears in a pool of light. Nora and Rosa chime into the letter from their positions.

MAMA

Dear David, we miss you very much -

NORA

All the time

ROSA

Every day

MAMA

Everyone in town is well - I took in extra sewing - the news from nearby towns is never very good, please hurry and send the money, the soldiers are coming more often -

MAMA is interrupted by a knock at the door. She hurries Jacob into hiding and then puts down the letter to answer the door - Rosa and Nora hid behind her. There is a soldier at the door.

SOLDIER 1

Where is Jacob?

MAMA

There is no Jacob here.

SOLDIER 1

I've got it on the list, Jacob Rabinowitz -

NORA

He doesn't live here, he lives next door.

ROSA

Shh!

MAMA

Nora!

NORA

What?

SOLDIER 1

I see. And who lives here?

NORA

We do, obviously!

ROSA glares at her, NORA doesn't understand.

MAMA

It's just me and my girls...

SOLDIER 1

What, no man of the house?

MAMA

My husband of course, but he's -

NORA

He's in -

ROSA slaps her hand over NORA's mouth before she can speak. The soldier eyes them and MAMA.

SOLDIER 1

Where is he?

NORA suddenly gets shy, afraid.

ROSA

His shop.

SOLDIER 1

Ah ha. When he returns tell him we're looking for Jacob and it would be in the best interest of him and you to keep the boy in one place long enough for us to find him.

He leaves. They are still for a moment.

ROSA

Nora what is wrong with you!

NORA

What? I didn't tell him.

MAMA

You are not to speak to the soldiers!

NORA

But, mama, you said don't tell anyone that Jacob from next door -

Jacob comes out from hiding.

NORA (CONT'D)

Is hiding in the cellar - and I didn't tell him that. I know how hide and seek works.

JACOB

Is he gone?

MAMA

For now. But he'll be back.

JACOB

I won't be here. We're going to America tomorrow.

MAMA

Good - hopefully we'll join you soon.

He leaves.

NORA

First Papa, now Jacob! Everyone is going to America!

ROSA

Everyone but us.

NORA

Good! I don't want to go! America is gross.

ROSA

Don't be a baby Nora, there are no soldiers in America, America is safe.

MUSIC CUE 5: "GETTING THERE"

Split scenes between ensemble at the docks in line for tickets, mixed with scenes of Nora. Rosa and Mama at home to indicate passage of time.

ENSEMBLE 1

AMERICA IS WEST .

ENSEMBLE 2
AMERICA IS EAST.

ENSEMBLE 3
AMERICA IS SOUTH –

ENSEMBLE 4
NO NORTH –

ENSEMBLE 5
IT'S SOMEWHERE ELSE AT LEAST.

ENSEMBLE 6
LAND OF OPPORTUNITY.

ENSEMBLE 7
SOUP IN EVERY POT.

ENSEMBLE
AMERICA IS FREE
BUT GETTING THERE IS NOT .

At the family's house: Rosa and Nora measure each other again, they are taller than before. Nora picks up the ball of string, it's significantly bigger, she doesn't even bother to throw it at Rosa.

MAMA has another letter from PAPA, the same convention from before, she reads, he appears.

PAPA
AMERICA IS FULL
OF FOLKS FROM FAR AND WIDE
SOME DAYS IT FEELS LIKE THOUSANDS
ARE ALL CRAMMED RIGHT HERE INSIDE
FINDING GOOD EMPLOYMENT'S TAKING
LONGER THAN I THOUGHT

ALL
AMERICA IS FREE
BUT GETTING THERE IS NOT

Under the following, time passes again. Nora measures herself again, Rosa doesn't join. The ball of string, bigger, sits untouched.

PAPA

COUNTING THE DAYS TILL THERE'S ENOUGH FOR
YOU TO ESCAPE, BUT WE WON'T SUFFER.
YOU'LL FIND THE WAYS TO TAKE THE ROUGHEST
JOURNEY.

ALL

SAVING OUR MONEY IN A CAN
YES, THAT'S THE PLAN
PRAYING THAT THE PRICES WON'T INCREASE
HOPING THAT WE GET THERE IN ONE PIECE.

ROSA/PAPA

AMERICA IS LARGE,
YET IT FEELS TOO SMALL.

PAPA

AMERICA WITHOUT YOU THREE
IS NO HOME AT ALL.

ROSA/PAPA

I WORK AT A FACTORY.

NORA

IS HE MAKING SHOES?

ROSA

NO.

PAPA

AMERICA IS FREE
BUT YOU MUST PAY YOUR DUES,

The soldiers come to the door again, Mama turns
them away while she sings.

MAMA

KEEPING A BRAVE FACE, FIGHTING TEARS
EACH TIME A NEIGHBOR DISAPPEARS
HELPING THE GIRLS TO CONQUER FEARS
WE STAY STRONG

WHEN WE'RE ABOARD WE WON'T LOOK BACK.
WHEN DO WE PACK?
EVERY DAY WE STAY WE SEE THE WORST
WANTING SO TO LEAVE HERE, WE COULD BURST.

ALL
AMERICA'S SO CLOSE.
I FINALLY HAVE MY SEAT.

NORA
(to a doll)
WE CAN DIG A TUNNEL TO AMERICA –
(as the doll)
THAT'S NEAT!

ENSEMBLE
TICKET PRICES GOING UP.
LUCKILY WE BOUGHT.
AMERICA IS FREE
BUT GETTING THERE –

Nora pretends to dig the tunnel.

NORA
(to a doll)
ARE WE GETTING THERE
(as the doll)
WE'RE GETTING THERE.

ENSEMBLE
WE'RE GETTING THERE.

ROSA
(to herself)
WE'RE NOT

MAMA
The money has arrived!

ENSEMBLE
AMERICA IS FREE
AND SOON WE ALL WILL BE!

MAMA
Girls - get your things we have to go get our tickets right away.

NORA
No! I'm not going. I'm staying in the shtetl with the dolls.

MAMA

You can bring your dolls to America.

NORA

It's not the same! Right, Rosa? Right? She doesn't get it!

ROSA

No, Nora, you're the one who doesn't get anything!

MAMA

Let her be, Rosa.

ROSA

Why? She needs to be more careful! She runs away to Zalushka's on her own, she talks to the soldiers in the square, she plays with those dolls like she doesn't know what's happening around her!

NORA

The dolls protect me, and they'd protect you, too, if you'd let them!

ROSA

(to Mama)

See! She doesn't understand!

MAMA

And what good will it do her to understand? It won't change anything and it will just scare her.

NORA

I'm not afraid! I'm a big girl.

ROSA

No you're not.

MAMA

Rosa, please try to be kinder to your sister - She's little, we have to be patient with her -

NORA

I'm not little! And I do understand! I just don't like it!

ROSA

No one likes it! That's why we're going!

She leads the way as they leave for the docks.

SCENE 7.

MUSIC CUE 5A: Getting There Underscore

The ticket counter for the ships to America. The scene is once again through Nora's doll world lens. The doll ensemble bustles around Nora, Rosa, and Mama as they wait to go to the window. Music fills the air as the crowd is excited about going to America.

Mama gets to the ticket window. There is a doll ticket taker.

TICKET TAKER

Here you go, 2 tickets.

MAMA

Three tickets.

TICKET TAKER

2 tickets.

MAMA

Three tickets.

TICKET TAKER

This isn't enough money for three tickets, it's enough for two tickets. And you get change!

MAMA

I don't want change, I want three tickets.

TICKET TAKER

And I want an elephant, but the climate isn't right for it.

MAMA

I don't understand - this should be enough for three tickets.

TICKET TAKER

It would have been enough for three tickets before we raised the prices, but y'know, supply, demand, inflation, exchange rates, you know how it goes.

MAMA

I don't understand.

TICKET TAKER

Who does? Economics is confusing. Next!

MAMA

But I need three tickets.

TICKET TAKER

Okay. So you don't want these two?

MAMA

Will the price go up again?

TICKET TAKER

Probably. Next!

MAMA

I'll take the two then, come on girls.

SCENE 8.

Once they have left the ticket area, Mama starts to cry. Rosa looks uncomfortably at Nora.

ROSA

Don't worry, Mama, we'll figure this out. Problem solving is the foundation of science and mathematics. Maybe we could build our own boat from the trees in the forest and sail to America ourselves.

MUSIC CUE 6: "No No"

NORA

NO NO YOU'RE WRONG
YOUR PLAN IS SO INSANE
INSTEAD, THE AVIATOR DOLL
COULD FLY US IN HER PLANE

ROSA

NO NO, PLEASE STOP.
HAVE YOU HEARD A WORD I'VE SAID?
YOU THINK YOU'RE BEING USEFUL
BUT YOU'RE JUST A SILLY GOOSE FULL
OF YOUR DAYDREAMS.

WE NEED MONEY,
NOT A GAME PLAYED IN YOUR HEAD.

NORA

NO NO YOU'RE MEAN.
MY BANKER DOLL IS RICH.
SHE'LL PAY FOR WHAT WE NEED
MY PLAN'LL WORK WITHOUT A HITCH

ROSA

JUST GO
AWAY

NORA

BETTER YET I'LL STAY
USE THAT TICKET

ROSA

FINE, I WILL

NORA

AREN'T YOU LEAVING?

ROSA

SURE, TODAY.
I WON'T MISS YOU

NORA

NOW THAT'S A LIE.

ROSA

I'M ON THAT BOAT.

NORA

THAT'S RIGHT, GOODBYE.

ROSA

YOU'RE SUCH A BABY.

NORA

YOU'RE A PEST.

ROSA

AND YOU'RE A –

AND YOU'RE A – NORA

AND YOU'RE A – ROSA

AND YOU'RE A – NORA

AND YOU'RE A – ROSA

GIVE IT A REST! MAMA

No fighting! Not now. I appreciate you girls trying to think of something, but this isn't your worry - I'll write to Papa and we'll figure something out.

ROSA
No, that will take too long! We need to leave now - Do we have anything valuable at home we could sell?

MAMA
We sold all of our jewelry and other valuables to buy Papa's ticket.

NORA
The dolls –

ROSA
The dolls are not going to solve this problem! We must have something else that's valuable.

NORA
The dolls are our most valuable thing!

ROSA
Mama, that's it!

I KNOW. I KNOW.
I KNOW WHAT WE CAN DO.

NORA
ZALUSHKA?

ROSA
YES, HE MIGHT PERFORM
A MIRACLE OR TWO.

NORA
YOU'RE RIGHT! HE WOULD!

ROSA
'CAUSE ALL HIS DEEDS ARE GOOD.

NORA
WE NEED A MITZVAH ON THE SPOT.

ROSA
HE COULD BE ALL THAT WE'VE GOT.

NORA
SO WE'RE AGREEING NOW?

ROSA
I GUESS

NORA
YOU THINK I'M HELPFUL?

ROSA
ALL RIGHT, YES.

NORA
YES YES?

ROSA
UGH, YES.

SCENE 9.

Mama, Rosa and Nora arrive at the dollshop.

ZALUSHKA
Esther, the good news is we'd love to buy back the dolls.

POLA
The bad news is we don't have the money.

ZALUSHKA

The soldiers were here again and they made off with most of my dolls, leaving us with nothing.

POLA

Which is better than last time when they left us with something, and the something was a brick.

ZALUSHKA

My wife, the optimist.

NORA

The soldiers came again?!

ZALUSHKA

They're doing it every few weeks now. It's starting to be a habit.

POLA

It's very disorganized for a military operation, but half the time it's Cossacks instead of soldiers, so what do you expect?

NORA

That's not fair!

MAMA

No, it's not.

ROSA

It's why we have to leave.

ZALUSHKA

And their presence in the town is making it harder to get Pola's medicine, more dangerous to deliver means more expensive.

POLA

But our troubles are nothing compared to yours. Our troubles are very great, and extremely noteworthy, but nothing compared to yours. Our troubles are so much that I lie awake at night, but they are nothing compared -

ZALUSHKA

We wish we could help you.

MAMA

I wish we could help you - I will bring over some of my special serum for your health. Zalush, do you think someone else would give us money for the dolls - even the soldiers?

ZALUSHKA

I'm having trouble selling new dolls these days, times are tough for everyone - I don't imagine you'll find a market for used ones, even if you go to the city.

MAMA

There must be a solution I'm not thinking of -

POLA

We'll think, too.

Mama, Rosa, and Nora leave.

ZALUSHKA

I wish I was something other than the best dollmaker! If I was the best at something more useful, something indispensable, then we'd have money to help our friends. The best butcher or the best tailor or the best, I don't know -

POLA

(teasing him)

The best banker?

ZALUSHKA

Exactly! We would be rich.

POLA

Even the best banker is not so rich that he can buy happiness...or children...

ZALUSHKA

Yes, the bad news is we could never have children -

POLA

The good news is, we don't have to raise them in a world where we can't protect them.

ZALUSHKA

That's also the bad news.

POLA

I'm glad you're not a banker. Your dolls are so beautiful the world would be empty without them. And we would not have so many children around all the time and our world would feel more empty, too.

ZALUSHKA

With Nora and Rosa going to America, we'll feel it even more. It's magical the way Nora loves the dolls.

POLA

And you Zalush. But, she's not going to America yet, unless her mother can think of something

ZALUSHKA

If both Esther and David could work in America they could make enough money in no time for the passage for both girls -

POLA

But they can't both go to America until they have passage for both girls -

ZALUSHKA

But if they could both go to America they could make enough money to have passage for both girls -

POLA

But they can't go to America until they have passage for both - Zalush! That's it! That's how we will help Esther!

ZALUSHKA

We'll go to America and make money for passage for both girls?

MUSIC CUE 7: "A Little Bit a Mitzvah"

POLA

No, silly, we will watch Nora. Let Esther and Rosa go to America and earn the money for Nora's passage. A girl Rosa's age can work in America, and with the three of them working they'll earn Nora's ticket in no time.

IT'S A GRAND SOLUTION FOR
THE TROUBLE HERE WE FACE.
BRING DEAR NORA IN,
GIVE THE GIRL HER SPACE.

TEMPORARY SANCTUARY
TILL THEY CAN AFFORD
PASSAGE ON A SHIP,
THEN WE HELP HER BOARD.

IT'S A LITTLE BIT A MITZVAH,
GIVING HER THE CARE SHE'LL NEED.
A DAUGHTER OF OUR OWN –
WAIT, I DON'T MEANT TO SPEAK WITH GREED.

ZALUSHKA

IT'S A LITTLE BIT A MITZVAH,
HELPING OUT HER FAMILY.

POLA

A DAUGHTER OF OUR OWN –

ZALUSHKA

THIS ISN'T ABOUT YOU AND ME.

POLA

WE COULD TUCK HER IN AT NIGHT
AND TELL HER STORIES –

ZALUSHKA

SURE!
SHELTER HER IN PEACE,
HELP HER FEEL SECURE,

POLA

WHEN SHE'S FEELING SAD, WE'LL LIFT
HER SPIRITS AND WE'LL HEAR
EVERYTHING SHE SAYS.

ZALUSHKA

WE'LL NEVER DISAPPEAR

POLA & ZALUSHKA

IT'S A LITTLE BIT A MITZVAH,
ENCOURAGING HER TO BE BRAVE.
A DAUGHTER OF OUR OWN —
NO, SOMEONE ELSE'S WHOM WE'LL SAVE.

IT'S A LITTLE BIT A MITZVAH,
TENDING TO HER HOPES AND JOYS.

ZALUSHKA

ALL THE DOLLS SHE WANTS,

POLA

I LOOK FORWARD TO THE NOISE.

SHE WILL BRING US LAUGHTER
AND A LIFE WE ALWAYS LACKED
FOREVER IN OUR HOUSE

ZALUSHKA

DON'T OVERREACT

BOTH

IT'S A LITTLE BIT A MITZVAH
THE HAPPINESS THAT SHE'LL PROVIDE
WE WILL HAVE A HOME
WE WILL HAVE A LIFE
CHILD MAKES IT THREE
FOR HUSBAND AND A WIFE
ALL GRIEF IS IN THE PAST
WHEN WE WILL BE A FAMILY AT LAST!

SCENE 10.

MUSIC CUE 8: "Every Time I Go Inside"

NORA

I get to live in the doll shop? I get to live in the doll shop!

We enter doll world.

NORA (CONT'D)

OPEN UP THE DOOR.
COLORS FILL THE AIR,
SMILING FACES ALL AROUND ME
EVERY TIME I GO INSIDE.

DOLLS ALONG THE FLOOR
DANCE WITHOUT A CARE,
SINGING HOW THEY'RE GLAD THEY FOUND ME
EVERY TIME I GO INSIDE.

SURROUNDED BY THESE FRIENDS OF MINE,
EACH PERSON ON THE SHELF -
I WON'T BE WORRIED, WON'T BE SCARED.
I WON'T BE BY MYSELF.

I'LL GET TO SEE THEM EVERY DAY
AND EVERY SINGLE NIGHT
WE'LL STAY UP LATE AND LAUGH AND PLAY
WE'LL ALWAYS BE ALL RIGHT

DOLLS

LET'S GO SOMEWHERE NEW.
SOMEWHERE WE CAN BE
WHERE NO ONE'LL EVER HARM US,
FAR FROM ALL THE NOISE OUTSIDE.

NORA

LONG AS I'M WITH YOU,
I'M FOREVER FREE,
UNDERNEATH A MAGIC CHARM, US

NORA & DOLLS

VERSUS ALL OF THEM OUTSIDE.

NORA

TOGETHER WE CAN BUILD A WORLD
THAT NO ONE'S EVER KNOWN
I PROMISE I'LL WATCH OVER YOU
YOU'LL NEVER BE ALONE
THEN WHEN WE SEE MY FAMILY
WE'LL FINALLY BE SAFE

...UNTIL THEN...
...I'LL BE HERE...
...ALMOST SAFE.
YES!

NORA & DOLLS

SAFE NO MATTER WHEN,
SAFE WITHOUT A FEAR,

DOLLS

SAFE AND STRONG 'CAUSE I'LL PROTECT YOU,

NORA

EVERY TIME I GO INSIDE.

Back in reality, in the dollshop, Mama gives Nora a tearful goodbye, while Rosa, Zalushka and Pola watch. Nora is distracted from Mama's sincere emotion by the excitement of the dolls around her.

MUSIC CUE 9: "Ball of String"

MAMA

Nora, be good and listen to Zalushka and Pola and know that we will send for you as soon as we can, much faster than Papa sent for us.

NORA

Yes, Mama.

Breaking down, turning to Pola and Zalushka.

MAMA

I can't do this. I can't be separated from my child.

ZALUSHKA

No parent should be separated from her child. This is what comes from the Czar's tyranny, we are forced into terrible situations. But, Pola and I will watch over her for you.

MAMA

Am I a terrible mother for leaving her?

POLA

You are a wonderful mother for working so hard to protect her.

Mama turns back to Nora. She takes something out of her pocket - the ball of string from the beginning. She tosses it to Nora. Nora catches it.

MAMA

DON'T FORGET OUR BALL OF STRING
IT'S A SIMPLE THING
BUT STRONG.

IF YOU KEEP IMAGINING
THEN I'M PROMISING
WE WON'T BE APART FOR LONG

FEEL EACH THREAD, TOUCH EVERY STRAND
CLOSE YOUR EYES AND
YOU'LL BE RIGHT BESIDE ME
TAKING MY HAND

STRING IS LIKE A TETHER
THAT HOLDS EVERYTHING TOGETHER
WE'LL HOLD EVERYTHING TOGETHER

WITH THE WORLD UNRAVELING

ALL THIS SUFFERING
IS WRONG

DON'T FORGET OUR BALL OF STRING.
IT'S A SIMPLE THING.
STAY STRONG.

STRING IS LIKE A TETHER
THAT HOLDS EVERYTHING TOGETHER
WE'LL HOLD EVERYTHING TOGETHER

Music fades out.

MAMA
Goodbye, my love.

NORA
(getting an idea)
Wait, Mama! Maybe you don't have to go -

MAMA
Oh, Nora, my love, we've discussed this -

NORA
But if we all stay here in the doll shop, the dolls will protect us.

ROSA
Nora! You are too big for this - you know that's not true - the dolls are just dolls. They can't protect anyone!

NORA
You're just jealous! You wish you could stay here and live at the doll shop, but too bad, you can't - the dolls chose me! That's why you're being a meanie.

ROSA
I'm not a meanie - do you want to end up dead like Moshe and Anna?

NORA
What?

ROSA
They're dead, Nora! That's what pogrom'd means - it means dead!

NORA

Stop it! I hate you for saying that, I hate you!

ROSA

Grow up, Nora! It's the truth! And you can't just make believe it better.

MAMA

Rosa, enough.

ROSA

How long are you going to let her pretend? Nobody lets me pretend.

She stalks towards the door.

MAMA

Rosa is right, Nora, you have to be a big girl for me now -

NORA

Big girls can play with dolls! Zalushka's a grown up and that's all he does! I hate you and I hate Rosa and I hate Papa for leaving me and I don't want to go anyway, so just go already.

MAMA

Nora -

NORA

Just go!!!! The dolls are waiting for me.

She storms off into the workshop where Zalushka makes the dolls. The dolls come to life around her.

MUSIC CUE 9A:

"Every Time I Go Inside" (Reprise)

Nora enters the world of the dolls fully. Mama and Rosa recede.

DOLLS

OPEN UP THE DOOR.
COLORS FILL THE AIR,
WELCOME TO YOUR BRAND NEW CASTLE
COME ON NORA, COME INSIDE.

SLEEP ALL ON THE FLOOR
DANCE WITHOUT A CARE,

NOTHING HERE'LL BE A HASSLE
HAPPY NORA, COME INSIDE

DOLL 1
FORGET ABOUT AMERICA

DOLL 2
WE'RE GONNA HAVE MORE FUN

DOLL 3
ALL YOU NEED IS US

NORA
THAT'S RIGHT! I DON'T NEED ANYONE...

The family appears in her imagination. The Dolls
gravitate toward them and away from Nora.

PAPA, MAMA, ROSA & DOLLS
LET'S GO SOMEWHERE NEW.
SAIL ACROSS THE SEA
WHERE NO ONE'LL EVER HARM US
FAR FROM ALL THE NOISE OUTSIDE.

Music underscores as they dance, leaving Nora
outside the circle. Dolls turn to Nora. Their singing
becomes more scary than comforting.

DOLL
FORGET ABOUT AMERICA

DOLL 2
YOU HAVE A NEW HOME NOW

DOLL 3
HOW ABOUT A GLASS OF MILK?

NORA

No.

DOLL 3
DON'T YOU WANT A GLASS OF MILK?

NORA
No, no, no, no!

DOLL 4
DON'T YOU WANT A -

NORA
Stop, stop!

Music ends. Ensemble 4 turns into Pola. The other dolls melt away and become doll dolls again in reality.

POLA
Do you want some warm milk?

Nora nods. She drinks the milk.

NORA (CONT'D)
I can't stop thinking about what I said to Mama and Rosa. They must hate me now.

Zalushka enters and observes this.

POLA
Sometimes when we're sad we get angry. Your mama and Rosa understand that underneath it all you love them.

NORA
I wish they were here now.

She starts to cry. Pola comforts her, Nora drinks her milk while Pola and Zalushka confer.

**MUSIC CUE 9A: Little Bit a Mitzvah
Reprise**

ZALUSHKA
She's so upset.
IS IT A LITTLE BIT A MITZVAH?
BIGGER THOUGH IF WE ALLOW

POLA
SHE MUST HAVE HER HOME.
SHE MUST HAVE HER LIFE.

BOTH
BETTER THAT WE'RE GRIEVED
THEY WILL BE RELIEVED.
WE'LL FIGURE OUT NOW
HER FAMILY MUST REUNITE, BUT HOW?

Zalushka attempts to cheer Nora up.

ZALUSHKA
Do you want to help me make a doll?

NORA
No, Rosa is right...I have to grow up.

ZALUSHKA
Maybe...maybe not. Rosa is scared. The dolls make you brave, Rosa could take that lesson from you.

NORA
I need to go to her and bring her a doll and help her be brave!

ZALUSHKA
Hmm...

MUSIC 10: "Come Out To Play"/"Hide and Seek" (Reprise)

ZALUSHKA
WHAT KIND OF DOLL?
FIRST WE MUST CHOOSE.
WHO'S OUR NEW FRIEND?
WHO WILL COME OUT TO PLAY?

NORA
ONE LOG IS ALL -
ALL THAT WE USE
TO SHAPE AND TO BEND
INTO WHO WILL COME OUT TO PLAY.

The dolls appear.

DOLLS
WE'RE HIDDEN IN THIS WOOD
WAITING TO APPEAR

FIND US
FIND US

ZALUSHKA

WHAT KIND OF DOLL?

NORA

LARGER THAN LARGE
HUGER THAN HUGE
IT HAS TO BE UNIQUE

DOLLS

FIND US
FIND US

ZALUSHKA

WHO WILL COME OUT TO PLAY?

NORA

WE'LL PLAY HIDE AND SEEK.

We'll make a nesting doll.

ZALUSHKA

What do you mean?

NORA

Put me as the treasure in the doll and give it to Rosa and Mama as a gift. Then I can go to America! If you think that's scientifically possible and not just something I'm imagining.

ZALUSHKA

When it comes to dolls, I can make anything you can imagine!

NORA

Because I'm the imaginator, and you're the builder?

ZALUSHKA

Exactly. But we have to hurry.

NO ONE WILL KNOW
YOU'RE SAFE INSIDE
TILL YOU'LL LEAVE THE DOCKS

NORA

THEN I'LL COME OUT TO PLAY

NORA

Will this work, Zalush?

ZALUSHKA

If you are very quite, and very still, and very brave.

NORA

I can be all of those things! And I know the doll will help me.

ZALUSHKA

She certainly will!

In musical staging, the DOLLS, NORA, POLA and ZALUSHKA construct the doll.

Music as they work. The Dolls provide a countdown to the same tune as the count-to-ten section of "Hide and Seek."

DOLLS

ONE

ZALUSHKA

GET THE TOOLS OUT

DOLLS

TWO

NORA

NEED MORE WOOD

DOLLS

THREE FOUR FIVE

NORA

NEED MORE POLISH

ZALUSHKA

HEY THAT'S LOOKING GOOD

DOLLS

SIX

NORA & ZALUSHKA

WHAT COLORS DO WE MIX?

DOLLS

SEVEN, EIGHT, NINE, TEN

ZALUSHKA

All right, Nora, are you ready for your greatest adventure yet?

Nora tears a strand off of the ball of string and then
hands the ball to Zalushka.

NORA

This is for you and Pola, so that even when we're apart, we'll always be tied together.

NORA, ZALUSHKA, POLA AND DOLLS

HIDDEN IN A DOLL,
WAITING TO APPEAR
ON YOUR WAY YET
SAFE RIGHT HERE.
RIGHT HERE!

She gets inside the doll.

**MUSIC CUE 10A: TRANSITION (Getting
There?)**

SCENE 11.

At the docks:

MAMA

Do you have your ticket?

ROSA

Yes.

MAMA

Do you have your bag?

ROSA

Yes.

MAMA

Do you have your -

ROSA

Mama - stop fussing - I'm not Nora, I have all my things.

MAMA

I know, dear.

Zalushka comes on carrying the life-sized doll. An Ensemble member becomes one of the employees of the ship.

ZALUSHKA

Esther! Rosa! Wait!

ENSEMBLE 1

Ticket, sir.

ZALUSHKA

I'm not travelling, I just need to give this parting gift to my friend -

ENSEMBLE 1

You can't go on board without a ticket -

MAMA

Zalushka, what -

ZALUSHKA

But it belongs to the little girl -

ENSEMBLE 1

I thought you said it was a gift -

ZALUSHKA

Rosa you can't leave without your doll -

ROSA

That's not my doll -

The Guard eyes Zalushka suspiciously.

ZALUSHKA

Like I said, it's a gift -

ENSEMBLE 1

I don't know what you're playing at, but we're about to leave -

ZALUSHKA

I must get this doll to that little girl -

ENSEMBLE 1

Fine. I can put it in the cargo hold for you, but you're not boarding this ship

He reaches for the doll, Zalushka freaks out and pulls it away.

ZALUSHKA

No!!!

MUSIC CUE 11: "Precious Cargo"

NORA & DOLLS

LET US ON BOARD,
GET US ON BOARD,
PLEASE LET HIM GO,
OH LET US GO.

ZALUSHKA

PRECIOUS CARGO.
MUST GET ON THE BOAT.
CAN'T YOU SEE THE FRESH, NEW PAINT?
A BRIGHT NEW COMPANION
FOR THE GIRL,
SHE LOOKS SO SAD, SO FAINT.

PRECIOUS CARGO.
DON'T MESS UP YOUR COAT.
THOUGH I'M OLD, I AM QUITE STRONG.
I WILL CARRY AND GIVE THIS GIFT
AND THEN I'LL MOVE ALONG.

NORA & DOLLS

OH, LET ME ON BOARD!

NORA

THE DOLL IS SCARED.

DOLLS

OH LET ME ON BOARD!

NORA

HOW HARD ZALUSHKA HAS DARED
TO BE THERE,
SO CLOSE I CAN SEE THERE.

NORA & DOLLS

ROSA, MAMA - OH -

ZALUSHKA

PRECIOUS CARGO.
IT'S THE KIND OF DOLL
YOU AND NORA DREAMED ABOUT.
A NESTING MATRYOSHKKA
WITH A HEART
ALL ACHING TO GET OUT.

ENSEMBLE 1

We leave in ten minutes.

ZALUSHKA

Ten?

ENSEMBLE 1

Now nine.

ZALUSHKA

Ten? Nine?

(with an idea)

TEN!!!

(to ENSEMBLE 1)

WHAT? I'M COUNTING

ENSEMBLE 1

If you folks are going to be this much trouble, then you can just leave the boat and get the doll on land -

ZALUSHKA

NINE

NORA & DOLLS

ROSA. THINK!

ROSA

It's okay, I'm too big for dolls anyway -

ZALUSHKA, DOLLS & NORA

EIGHT. SEVEN.

ZALUSHKA

(to ROSA)

LOOKIE THERE,
DID THE DOLL JUST WINK?

MAMA

Zalushka - thank you for thinking of us, but we don't want any trouble -

ZALUSHKA, DOLLS & NORA

SIX

ZALUSHKA

IT PLAYS A LOT OF TRICKS

ZALUSHKA, DOLLS & NORA

FIVE FOUR THREE TWO ONE

ZALUSHKA

IT'S A GIFT FROM NORA

SHE WANTS YOU TO HAVE SOME FUN.

Rosa finally understands, she looks at the guard and begins to "play"

ROSA

(overdramatic)

OH, LET IT ON BOARD!

THE DOLL IS MINE!

OH LET IT ON BOARD!

ZALUSHKA

DON'T WANT TO HOLD UP THE LINE,

SO COME HERE,

I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU FROM HERE.

MAMA

ROSA?

ROSA

MAMA!

ALL

OH!

ROSA

If you don't let him on the boat, I'll come get the doll -

ENSEMBLE 1

Then you'll get left behind, the ship is taking off -

Rosa makes a move.

MAMA

Rosa, no!

ZALUSHKA

(to the guard)

Do you really want to be responsible for separating a child from her mother?

ENSEMBLE 1

Of course not! - little girl stay where you are -

But Rosa runs toward the gangplank and Zalushka,
out of Mama's grasp -

MAMA

Rosa!

ENSEMBLE 1

Well! Give it to her before we push off!

Zalushka hurriedly hands Rosa the doll and then
jumps back to land - Rosa takes the doll to Mama as
the guard disappears on to the ship. Rosa shows the
doll to Mama.

MAMA

Rosa what are you thinking behaving like that! You're old enough to know better!

ROSA

You're never too old for games, Mama, if it's the right game

MAMA

I don't understand.

ROSA

She's in there somewhere.

ROSA

MY EYES ARE OPEN
COME ON OUT
YOU CLEVER LITTLE SNEAK
(worries)

Nora?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO HIDE.

NORA

RIGHT! I WANNA SEEK.

Nora appears. Joyful embraces.

ROSA

Nora! You were right, the doll saved you!

NORA

Well, don't imagine too much Rosa, really it was Zalushka and Pola and me working with wood and paint and -

ROSA

WE PLAYED

NORA

WE PLAYED

NORA & ROSA

WE PLAYED
HIDE AND SEEK

Mama embraces her daughters, overcome with emotion.

Zalushka appears, in another space.

ZALUSHKA

PRECIOUS CARGO.
PRAYING FOR US ALL.
BLESS THEIR JOURNEY FREE OF STRIFE.
BLESSING YOU FOR THE GREATEST
MITZVAH OF
SAVING A LIFE!

MUSIC CUE 12: "Finale"

This turns into a musical/dance transition that sweeps them away to America. It ends with the stage being clear.

SCENE 12.

Nora and Rosa enters, with the armful of dolls, including a nesting doll, and the ensemble of dolls dancing around her as they play.

NORA & ROSA:

WHAT KIND OF DOLL
FIRST WE MUST CHOOSE
WHO'S OUR NEW FRIEND
WHO WILL COME OUT TO PLAY?

GIVING OUR ALL
EACH DAY WE CAN USE
A COMBINATION
OF TOOLS AND IMAGINATION

ALL
WE'RE BUILDING A NEW WORLD
CONQUERING EACH FEAR
FIND US
FIND US
WE'LL BE HERE

WE'LL FACE EVERYTHING TOGETHER
(in a round)
WE'LL FACE EVERYTHING TOGETHER
WE'LL FACE EVERYTHING TOGETHER
FACE EVERYTHING TOGETHER
FACE EVERYTHING TOGETHER
WE'LL FACE EVERYTHING TOGETHER
FACE EVERYTHING TOGETHER
FACE EVERYTHING TOGETHER
EVERYTHING TOGETHER