

Harlem, 1917

Original Screenplay by Jeremy Cohen

FADE IN:

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DAY

The apartment complex is a near-slum. Undomesticated animals scurry about the outer edges of the building.

**Card: Jewish Harlem. November, 1917.**

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DAY

The building has five floors, plus a basement. With four families living on each floor, that makes twenty families in all.

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DAY

There's a store on each side of the building.

**Card: One of the most densely-populated Jewish areas in the entire country.**

To the left, a dairy, with a chicken market. To the right, a kosher bakery. Further up the block, on either side, are kosher delis, dry goods stores... and more bakeries.

**Card: Irish and Italian families, as well.**

Posters urging people to buy Liberty Bonds (to support the war effort) are plastered on either side of the street.

Pushcart peddlers are all over the block, hawking their wares on the sidewalks and in the gutters. Some sell fruit. Others, tobacco. A few are indigent, trying to sell items which have fallen into various states of disrepair.

Always visible during the day are clotheslines, strung to old-fashioned telephone poles.

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DUSK

Several cars wheedle on by. A horse and wagon pulls up. The MAN ON THE HORSE dismounts, as do the men on the wagon. They begin removing large amounts of coal from the wagon's hold. Their breath is visible.

A man in his early 30's heads out of the building.

JOE GRAU

Joe carries a large canvas bag. Smiles at the man on the horse. The men help Joe fill the bag with coal.

GABE KLEIN

18, sturdy, joins Joe by the curb, bag in hand.

JOE  
Evening, Gabe.

GABE  
Hiya, Joe.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DUSK

Joe and Gabe each have the bag of coal slung over the right shoulder. It's dark inside the building, even during the day. Just ahead, the entrance to the basement...

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - BASEMENT

There's a combination bathtub/shower in the basement, as well as a concrete tub for laundry. A woman (50s) leans over the laundry tub, scrubbing her family's clothes.

CEILIE BARTON

Two disposable paper grids are affixed near the shower and tub. Family last names, times, and dates, for regimented use of each. Off to the side are twenty separate storerooms, one for each family. Closets, more or less.

Ceilie turns at Joe and Gabe's approach.

JOE  
Nice to see you, Ceilie.

CEILIE  
Yosef. Gabor.

Polish-born Ceilie gets back to work. She has a limited grasp of English, hence her referring to Joe and Gabe by their given names, Yosef (Joe) and Gabor (Gabe).

Joe moves to the storeroom marked 'Grau' and opens it. Gabe heads for the one labeled 'Klein.' He uses a shovel to transfer coal from the bag, into his closet.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/THIRD FLOOR - NIGHT

Still toting the bag, Joe reaches the third floor. There are four apartments on each floor, two at the front, two at the back. He slides a key into the first door he comes across.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Joe enters. The apartments are quite small. Joe smiles at the lovely woman (30) standing in the kitchen, preparing dinner.

ELISABETH GRAU

Helping Elisabeth is their 8 year-old daughter

BARBARA

Each apartment has a cast-iron coal stove, which serves the dual purpose of cooking and heating the apartment. Joe slides some coal into the stove.

JOE

Paper?

Barbara grabs a segment of the paper, hands it to her dad.

ELISABETH

Supper ready in fifteen.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/THIRD FLOOR - NIGHT

Joe walks down the hall, suddenly in a hurry. He knocks on an unmarked door. No answer. He opens the door.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/THIRD FLOOR/TOILET - CONTINUOUS

The room has a toilet. Nothing else, not even a sink.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/THIRD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

There's another unmarked door at the other end of the hall. Two toilets per floor, one at each end of the hallway.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/THIRD FLOOR/TOILET - CONTINUOUS

There's a wood-box flush tank on top of the toilet. The average family can't afford the extravagance of toilet paper. Hence, Joe's newspaper.

**Fade to Black.**

FADE IN:

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - NIGHT

The horse and wagon is on its way.

INT. BERK APARTMENT - NIGHT

**Card: Wednesday, November 21.**

The five members of the Berk family, at dinner. The youngest is 14 year-old...

ANIA

**Card: The Berks -- "Girl Next Door"**

Ania's parents are in their late 30's, but seem younger.

SIGMUND (Siggie) and PAULINE



PAULINE  
When Mr. Hirsch decides to call it  
quits, the deli's ours?!

Pauline's eyes well up. Ania races over to her father, hugs him. Pauline leans over and plants a kiss on his cheek. The three hold one another tight.

Sigmund's parents, MARTA and FRYDERYK, eat in silence. Neither speaks a word of English. They peer up, uncertain of what all the fuss is about.

FRYDERYK  
Pessel?

Pauline slides the paper over to Marta and Fryderyk. The page must be in Yiddish, because the two of them understand its meaning. Marta smiles at her son.

MARTA  
Leben ahf dein kop!

**Subtitles: Well Done!**

INT. BERK APARTMENT - LATER

Marta and Fryderyk sip hot tea and read from the Talmud. They whisper in Yiddish, heads bowed in silent prayer.

Pauline, Siggie, and Ania are in the main room of the apartment, curled up on the floor. The box nearby is that of a board game, "The Elite Conversation Cards." Siggie rolls a pair of dice, moves his game piece a number of spaces.

Ania holds a card in hand.

ANIA  
Father? Are you inclined to boss  
the house?

Siggie beats his chest a little. Puffs it out. Pauline glares at him. He shrinks back.

SIGGIE  
That would be... a `no.'

Laughter. Ania rolls the dice, moves her game piece. Now, mom asks her a question.

PAULINE  
Oohh...

ANIA  
What is wrong?

PAULINE  
Have you ever been in love?

Ania blushes.

EXT. SPRING'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A gorgeous apartment complex, downtown.

INT. SPRING'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is even nicer inside. ARNOLD SPRING (60) looks at himself in the mirror beside the front door. He wears a dark blue suit and brown-striped tie.

EXT. TEMPLE - DAWN

The temple's quiet this morning, only one light is visible. A few VERY COLD PASSERSBY hurry to get to where they're going. Spring pulls his car next to the curb. He drives a Cadillac Type 57, one of the pricier models of the day.

INT. TEMPLE - DAWN

Spring is the only member of the congregation for early Saturday morning services. RABBI MORDECAI RUBIN (40's) leads him in prayer.

EXT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - MORNING

An old-fashioned movie theater/vaudeville house, on 118th street and Madison Avenue.

Owner SOL ORENSTEIN (60's) acts as his own ticket seller this morning. Spring hands Orenstein some change. Orenstein hands him a ticket.

ORENSTEIN

One moment now, Mr. Spring.

Orenstein hustles out of the ticket seller's window, over to the entrance to the theater itself. Spring cracks a smile. He follows Orenstein. Orenstein takes the ticket from Spring, tears it, hands half back.

ORENSTEIN (CONT'D)

Enjoy, Mr. Spring.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - MORNING

Spring is the only one in the audience for the early morning run of short films.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER/PROJECTION ROOM - MORNING

Orenstein's also the projectionist today. He removes a reel from the projector. Puts it on the floor, now goes searching for the next film on the day's slate.

ORENSTEIN  
Musketeers, Musketeers...

Orenstein finds a reel marked `Musketeers,' over on the far shelf. He grabs it, fixes it into the projector.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - LATER

Spring watches D.W. Griffith's *The Musketeers of Pig Alley*, one of the earliest gangster-style movies ever produced.

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DAY

A small, irrepressible boy of twelve tosses a Spaldeen against the front stoop.

ANDY BARTON

Ania plays alongside. They take turns throwing and catching.

ANIA  
Here comes your friend.

Andy peers left: Spring approaches. Ania hands Andy the Spaldeen. She lowers her voice a tad.

ANIA (CONT'D)  
Such a pious man. Always in Shul, first thing every morning, follows all the laws, he says. No trouble collecting money on the Sabbath.

Ania watches as Spring greets Andy with a firm handshake.

SPRING  
How are you, young man?

ANDY  
Fine, sir. How were the pictures?

SPRING  
Wonderful. Saw one called *The Musketeers of Pig Alley*.

ANDY  
I've seen that one. Gangsters. D.W. Griffith.

Spring's impressed by the kid's knowledge. He looks at Ania. She returns his smile with a blank stare.

INT. BERK APARTMENT - DAY

Pauline hands Spring \$11 in cash -- the month's rent.

SPRING  
Thank you, Mrs. Berk. Good day.

Ania looks out the kitchen window, down toward the front of the building. One of the building's FAMILIES is in the process of being dispossessed. There's a young father, his wife, and five small children. The wife weeps. Pauline comes over to join her daughter.

PAULINE  
Mr. Terach lost his job three weeks ago. They were already behind half-a-month's rent, before today.

ANIA  
Where will they go?

PAULINE  
I don't know.

Spring stands with the local SHERIFF and his MEN, as they move the Terachs' belongings out to the curb.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - DAY

Elisabeth punches away at a typewriter, a Remington #2. It's a monstrosity of a machine, with its keys descending much like a "tower." Ania's impressed by the machine.

ELISABETH  
Quicker than working by hand.

Ania peeks at the stack of typewritten material, to Elisabeth's immediate left.

ELISABETH (CONT'D)  
Three plays.

ANIA  
Where does a writer get thoughts?

ELISABETH  
Life, mostly. One's a musical about the trip over. One's a melodrama about falling in love. Then the comedy about the mother who learns she's about to have triplets.

Ania grins.

ANIA  
And now?

Elisabeth raises both palms.

ELISABETH  
121st street.

ANIA  
Will I be in it?

ELISABETH  
Count on it.

Ania hands Elisabeth a pair of tickets. Elisabeth's face lights up.

ELISABETH (CONT'D)  
You got them!

ANIA  
Jana was able to get me two free.

EXT. GRAU APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A twitchy, nervous 13 year-old boy stands near the door.

VICTOR DOLBERG

Victor overhears Ania's voice, as she prepares to leave Elisabeth's company. Ania exits the apartment. She smiles.

ANIA  
Hello, Victor. What brings you to this floor?

Victor can't come back with "you" -- the likely answer. He stammers, blushes. She doesn't pick up on his unease.

VICTOR  
Going to study with Fedor.

ANIA  
Ah. Ready for your day?

VICTOR  
I will be. You'll... be there?

ANIA  
Of course, why wouldn't I be?

His relief is palpable.

VICTOR  
Barbara Grau.

ANIA  
I heard. The poor thing. I did not catch it.

VICTOR  
Neither did I.

Ania walks past him. Casually slides a hand across his shoulders.

ANIA  
Bye.

Victor ogles her as she leaves. He sighs.

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - NIGHT

Chanukah Menorahs are visible from the street, spread across many of the facing apartment windows. Though different shapes and sizes, each has a candle in the center, and one at the far right end.

As the five members of the Berk clan exit the building.

INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT

The Berks take their seats, about halfway back in the congregation. Ania nods at Elisabeth Grau, one seat over. Elisabeth is with Joe and their four children, Barbara, and triplets Zeev, Gene, and David.

Services have yet to begin. The Rabbi is near the lectern, with CANTOR WAHRMAN (60's).

Ania turns around... and catches Victor eyeing her. She smiles at him. Victor gulps, tries to say something, but the cat's got his tongue. Victor sits between dad...

DIMITRI

and mom...

IRINA

... who smiles at Ania.

IRINA

Hello, Ania. Say hello, Victor.

Victor blushes. Someone puts a hand to his shoulder. He turns. Rises.

VICTOR

Cantor Licht.

Facing Victor are the three members of the Licht family:

GRISHA

wife RIVKA

and the man Victor was addressing, Grisha's father...

FEDOR

a retired Cantor. Grisha and Rivka are forty, but come across as much older. Fedor is a very old fifty-nine.

FEDOR

Happy Chanukah, Victor.



PAULINE  
Oh, Dimitri and Irina must be so nervous right now.

Ania halts at the door.

ANIA  
Mach Schnell!

Ania's commanding of the family out the door (in Yiddish) steams Fryderyk.

FRYDERYK  
A breyte deye hob'n!

**Subtitles: Intemperate Youth!**

A rare laugh from Marta. Siggie and Pauline chuckle as Ania leads the way out of the apartment.

**Fade to Black.**

FADE IN:

INT. DOLBERG APARTMENT - NIGHT

Victor peers at his Haftorah manual. He's in a panic.

**Card: Sunday, November 18th.**

Dimitri reads the newspaper. Irina clears out the sink.

**Card: The Dolbergs -- "Enemy Within?"**

A little background: while Dimitri and Irina decided to keep their own names upon arriving in the states, they immediately took to calling their son `Victor,' the Americanized form of `Vidor,' the boy's given name.

Irina turns toward Victor.

IRINA  
Tseit tsu gehn shlufen.

**Subtitles: Time for bed.**

VICTOR  
Night, mother.

Irina's use of Yiddish has failed to catch Victor -- whose voice has started to change -- by surprise. She smiles as he heads for his room.

Irina crouches down next to her husband.

IRINA  
Ready for bed?

DIMITRI  
You can go ahead, I'll be along.

Irina smiles. She kisses Dimitri's neck. No reaction.

IRINA  
Vilsa Spielen...

Dimitri drops the paper, bolts to his feet.

**Subtitles: I would like to play...**

Irina tries to undo Dimitri's bathrobe. Dimitri wriggles free. He races to the other side of the room, nearly slipping and falling in the process.

IRINA (CONT'D)  
What is the matter?

DIMITRI  
What are you... what's the...

IRINA  
Maybe the weather. Maybe I just want to get warm. Maybe I just want you.

DIMITRI  
You're Victor's mother!

IRINA  
And you, his father, yes?

INT. IRINA AND DIMITRI'S BEDROOM - LATER

Irina waits for Dimitri in bed. She's pushed her single bed next to his. He slides onto his own bed, turns away from her. Irina deflates.

INT. TEMPLE/CANTOR WAHRMAN'S PRIVATE STUDY ROOM - DAY

Victor recites a portion of his Haftorah.

VICTOR  
Va-yiv-rach Ya-a-kove... s'day  
aram... Va-ya-vod Yis-ra-el...

The Cantor's not paying attention; he studies "numbers."  
Makes some selections.

CANTOR WAHRMAN  
Very good, Victor. We'll go further  
next time.

INT. DOLBERG APARTMENT/KITCHEN - DAY

Victor enjoys a bowl of chicken soup with kreplach (dumplings). Irina kneads challah dough.

VICTOR  
Cantor Wahrman doesn't care, I'm so far behind, I'll never be ready. My voice is gone. And Ania.

Victor closes his eyes. Irina pauses from the challah to plant a kiss on her son's head.

IRINA  
Take the Challah dough downstairs.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS BAKERY - SAME

Victor's inside the kosher bakery, the one next door to the apartment building.

VICTOR  
Hello, Mr. Pritz.

Victor hands PRITZ, the baker, a bag. The Challah dough is inside the bag.

PRITZ  
Ten cents, Victor.

Victor hands the man a dime.

INT. DOLBERG APARTMENT - NIGHT

The family enjoys Shabbos dinner. By now, the baked Challah is mostly eaten.

INT. IRINA AND DIMITRI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

With Irina in a randy mood, Dimitri pretends to be asleep. She gently bites at his right ear. Dimitri forces a snore. Irina rolls over, back to her bed. Stands up. Grabs the edge of her bed, drags it apart from Dimitri's.

IRINA  
This better?

DIMITRI  
Much.

Dimitri twitches, as she's put the lie to his supposed sleep. She gets into bed, rips the covers over her.

**Montage...**

As the days and nights pile up, Irina tries all comical manner of seduction. Although it's plain to see that Dimitri loves her to death, he keeps her at a distance.

EXT. UPTOWN KOSHER BAKERY - MORNING

Dimitri heads into the small bakery.

INT. UPTOWN KOSHER BAKERY - MORNING

Dimitri faces the COUNTER CLERK.

DIMITRI  
One coffee cake, one powdered  
doughnut, and one cruller.

The counter clerk quickly bags the items. Dimitri hands the counter clerk a nickel.

EXT. HIRSCH'S DELI - MORNING

Dimitri and THREE ASSISTANTS are on the second-floor fire escape, one building left.

The fire escape is in complete disrepair. The four men remove the platform from its hinge.

EXT. HIRSCH'S DELI - LATER

Dimitri and friends weld a new platform into place. The inscription on the new fire escape reads 'Mott Ironworks,' Dimitri's employer. Siggie comes out to watch.

SIGGIE  
Vilst essen?

**Subtitles: Ready for lunch?**

DIMITRI  
Just about.

EXT. HIRSCH'S DELI - LATER

Siggie and Dimitri are next to one another, on the bottom step of one of the stairs leading to the new fire escape. Siggie hands Dimitri a sandwich and a cup of hot coffee. He goes to work on his own sandwich.

SIGGIE  
How's it coming over there?

DIMITRI  
Not bad, about half the fire  
escapes are new, or good as new.

SIGGIE  
How do you know when to replace the  
whole platform, or just re-do  
what's there?

DIMITRI  
How do you know how long to steep  
red peppers?

SIGGIE  
My job to know.

Siggie smiles. He's answered his own question.

DIMITRI  
How is Ania?

Siggie grunts.

DIMITRI (CONT'D)  
Boys?

SIGGIE  
Mmmmm.

Dimitri grins.

DIMITRI  
Have her on a short rope?

SIGGIE  
No. Pauline doesn't believe in...

Siggie searches for the proper English word.

SIGGIE (CONT'D)  
Restricting her. When we have a  
little extra money, she can go out.

The men eat fast. By now, they're nearly done with their sandwiches. Siggie eyes Dimitri's own goodie bag. He rubs his hands together.

SIGGIE (CONT'D)  
Ready.

Dimitri cuts the bag open length-wise, lays out the three pastries across the now-exposed interior of the bag. Dimitri cuts the powdered doughnut in half. Siggie takes half, plus the coffee cake. Dimitri keeps the other half of the doughnut, plus the cruller.

DIMITRI  
Victor's having difficult days. I  
pray the Cantor will put in more  
time with him before...

SIGGIE  
Irina?

Dimitri's eyes dart around. Siggie, sensing he's hit a sore spot, downs the rest of his half-doughnut, swigs some coffee.

DIMITRI  
 I need to tell you something  
 private. Irina lately... desires.  
 She keeps saying *Vilsa Spielen*.

Siggie's laughter causes him to choke on the coffee. He pats himself down with a napkin. Dimitri reads Siggie's face, notes his friend's incredulity.

DIMITRI (CONT'D)  
 I love her so. But it's not right.

SIGGIE  
 Says?

DIMITRI  
 The man's job always to... begin.  
 Not the woman.

SIGGIE  
 Says?

DIMITRI  
 Pauline?

SIGGIE  
 Think of it as a gift.

Dimitri doesn't seem to agree. He takes a big bite out of the cruller, swigs some coffee.

EXT. LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Lunchtime. Victor sits alone, poring over his Haftorah book. He chants in silence.

ANIA (O.S.)  
 Well?

Victor jumps upon hearing her voice.

ANIA (CONT'D)  
 Sorry to surprise you.  
 (smiles)  
 Can I hear some?

Victor loses himself in her gaze. She doesn't comprehend his stare, goes right ahead and sits down next to him.

VICTOR  
 Can't chant much of it. Cantor  
 hasn't had the time to school me,  
 all the accents.

ANIA  
 Have you seen Cantor Licht?

VICTOR  
Who?

ANIA  
The Lichts. Third floor? The older  
man was a Cantor in Russia.

VICTOR  
Fedor? A Cantor?

EXT. LICHT APARTMENT - DAY

Victor takes a deep breath. He knocks at the door. Rivka  
answers. Her eyes are red, as though she's been crying.

RIVKA  
Hello, Victor. How can I help you?

VICTOR  
Is Fedor at home?

Rivka's eyes cloud. Seconds later, the slightest hint of a  
smile overtakes her lips. She calls back.

RIVKA  
Cantor Licht?

Fedor -- reading the paper -- reacts to being called 'Cantor  
Licht.' He stands, as Victor approaches him.

FEDOR  
Which Haftorah?

VICTOR  
Vayyetze.

FEDOR  
Tricky one.

VICTOR  
The accents are so hard to learn.  
Can you teach me?

FEDOR  
Certainly.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - LATER

Victor and Fedor sit, side-by-side, as they go over the  
Haftorah. Victor is happy, the first time we've seen him in  
such a state.

EXT. HIRSCH'S DELI - MORNING

Dimitri and his three assistants are further up the next-door  
building, working on another fire escape.

EXT. HIRSCH'S DELI - LATER

Lunchtime. Siggie and Dimitri are up to the dessert portion of the meal.

SIGGIE  
I heard of Barbara Grau.

DIMITRI  
Elisabeth and Joe's little girl.  
What of her?

SIGGIE  
You missed the sign?

DIMITRI  
Not often on that floor.

SIGGIE  
Kronk.

**Subtitles: Sick.**

DIMITRI  
With?

SIGGIE  
Scarlet fever.

Dimitri's face twists with concern.

DIMITRI  
Is Ania close with her?

SIGGIE  
She'll sit with her at lunch, on  
occasion. Not at school though, or  
at home on weekends.

DIMITRI  
Victor knows her. Have you spoken  
to Joe? How is she?

SIGGIE  
In danger. This next week will be  
key to her recovery. Joe had it as  
a child. Elisabeth missed it.

DIMITRI  
He taking off from work?

Siggie nods.

DIMITRI (CONT'D)  
How will they make the rent?

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - DAY

Bar Mitzvah prep. Fedor beckons Victor to stand. Victor complies, takes a deep breath. He chants:

VICTOR  
 Va-yiv-rach Ya-a-kove... s'day  
 aram... Va-ya-vod Yis-ra-el... b'ee-  
 sha... oo-v-ee-sha... sha- mar. Oo-  
 v'na-vee Heh-eh-laaa Ado- nai...

Victor nails the accents to perfection. Fedor smiles.

INT. DOLBERG APARTMENT/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Victor's at the kitchen table, pondering homework. Dimitri comes up behind him. So focussed is Victor on his studies, he "jumps" at his father's approach.

DIMITRI  
 Only father. Vee filst du?

**Subtitles: How do you feel?**

VICTOR  
 Tired.

DIMITRI  
 How is your throat?

VICTOR  
 Little weak from the --

Dimitri panics. He crouches beside his son.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
 What is it?

Dimitri scrutinizes Victor's neck. He pulls up the young man's shirtsleeves. Finds nothing. Exhales.

**Montage...**

Working closely, Victor and Fedor iron out all the rough spots. Fedor even assists the young man in learning to chant a Torah portion (M.O.S.).

**End Montage.**

Victor reacts to the sound of the front door opening. He stops chanting. It's Grisha.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
 Hello, Mr. Licht.

GRISHA  
 Young Victor. Don't let me stop you.

VICTOR  
But... why are you home so early?

No answer. Rivka enters from the kitchen, fixes her gaze on her husband. Victor gets up to leave.

FEDOR  
No need to go.

VICTOR  
Let me. I'm ready for tomorrow.  
Cantor Licht, thank you, thank you,  
thank you.

Victor and Fedor hug. Rivka lets Victor out.

RIVKA  
Sleep well tonight.

INT. DOLBERG APARTMENT - NIGHT

Victor tosses and turns in bed, unable to relax.

INT. TEMPLE - DAWN

The Dolbergs arrive very early. The doors have just been opened for the day. The Rabbi shakes hands with Dimitri, kisses Irina on the cheek. The Cantor stands at his side, eyes fixed on Victor.

CANTOR  
Prepared?

VICTOR  
Yes, sir.

INT. TEMPLE - MORNING

Victor is up front, behind the lectern, seated in a chair, which resembles a throne. He peers out at the gathering crowd. Seeing familiar faces, he decides to go for a stroll among the congregation.

Since everyone assembled knows he's "the man" on this day, he draws a lot of smiles. Joe and Elisabeth Grau sit in the front row, along with the triplets.

VICTOR  
How is she, Missus Grau?

Barbara, until now hidden from view, pops her head up.

BARBARA  
Lots better, thanks.

Victor grins at Grisha, Rivka, and Fedor, one row back. He continues to make the rounds. Spring offers him a wave.

Victor spots the Berks. Makes eye contact with Ania. Her smile shakes him up.

RABBI RUBIN (O.S.)  
Victor? Ready.

Victor heads back toward the lectern. Out of the corner of his eye, he notices the Kleins, sitting with the Bartons.

Andy Barton stands on his chair. He doffs an imaginary cap, at Victor. The two families laugh. Victor relaxes as well.

INT. TEMPLE - LATER

Absolute silence in the temple. Victor's alone at the lectern. Rabbi Rubin and Cantor Wahrman sit on the thrones behind him. Victor sucks in a long breath. And begins.

VICTOR  
Va-yiv-rach Ya-a-kove... s'day ah-  
raam... Va-ya-vod Yis-ra-el... b'ee-  
sha... oo-v-ee-sha... sha-mar. Oo-  
v'na-vee Heh-eh-laaa Ado-nai...

INT. TEMPLE - CONTINUOUS

As Victor continues (M.O.S.). Andy's impressed, as is his sister, Jana.

ANDY  
That's me up there, year from now.  
He's doing really good.

JANA  
His voice is changing, he's  
fighting through it.

Ceilie and Will offer their children stern glares.

ANDY  
(to Will)  
Sshh!

Jana covers up. She doesn't want to show herself laughing at her parents.

INT. TEMPLE - LATER

Victor's nearly finished. His features swell with confidence.

VICTOR  
Oo-fo-sheem... Yee-ka-shloo Vah-ah-  
ah-ahmmm.

That's it, the last of the Haftorah. Victor exhales audibly, bringing a chuckle to the congregation.

INT. TEMPLE - LATER

With the service now over, folks mill about the main hall. TEMPLE EMPLOYEES set up tables with bottles of wine and cheap appetizing, i.e. bagels, smoked salmon, and cheeses.

Rabbi Rubin and his wife, TILLIE (40's), stand beside Victor.

RABBI RUBIN  
My wife has something to tell you.

TILLIE  
You didn't miss one accent. The first time I've witnessed such a thing. Cantor Wahrman --

VICTOR  
Wasn't Cantor Wahrman. It was Cantor Licht.

RABBI RUBIN  
Who?

Victor directs the Rabbi's eyeline over to Fedor, enjoying a cup of wine at present.

VICTOR (O.S.)  
Was a Cantor back home in Russia. He saved me. All due respect, Rabbi Rubin? Cantor Wahrman was no help. His mind was... elsewhere.

RABBI RUBIN  
Elsewhere? On what?

VICTOR  
Numbers.

Victor spies Ania at the appetizing table. She takes a swig from a cup of wine.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Excuse me, sir. Ma'am.

Victor walks over to Ania.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Thank you. So much.

ANIA  
Hm?

VICTOR  
*Fedor.* Would you like to dance?

ANIA  
Dance?



VICTOR  
Your kiss.

INT. DOLBERG APARTMENT - NIGHT

The family is happy to be home.

IRINA  
You did us both... so proud.

DIMITRI  
In so many ways. She's lovely.

VICTOR  
I know. Going to bed now.

IRINA  
Yes, it's been a long day.

Irina kisses her son's forehead.

DIMITRI  
Good night. Vidor.

Victor smiles at his dad's use of his given name. He gives Dimitri a hug, then is off to his room.

IRINA  
He's a good boy.

DIMITRI  
We've done well.

Irina takes Dimitri's hand. She moves in front of him, gives him her best "bedroom eyes."

DIMITRI (CONT'D)  
Ich bin sculdig.

**Subtitles: I am at fault.**

Irina blinks in surprise.

IRINA  
You have been.

Irina leans up, kisses Dimitri. He makes no attempt to resist.

INT. IRINA AND DIMITRI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Irina and Dimitri lie under the covers, arm-in-arm.

IRINA  
What are you feeling?

DIMITRI  
Happiness. You?

IRINA  
Happiness.

They kiss.

**Fade to Black.**

FADE IN:

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - MORNING

More threadbare than the Dolberg or Berk apartments. A large picture of a young man in a United States military uniform hangs near the door. Underneath, some burning candles.

Grisha puts on his yarmulke. Rivka wraps him up in a muffler.

**Card: The Lights -- "The Price"**

Fedor hands Grisha a bag lunch.

**Card: Monday, November 20th.**

FEDOR  
Good day, Grisha.

EXT. MEYER'S SUITS - MORNING

The drab, dingy, building is located at 22nd street and 3rd avenue. Grisha enters through a side door.

INT. MEYER'S SUITS - MORNING

Meyer's Suits isn't retail, it's a factory, a virtual sweatshop. Grisha's among the hundred or so men on the factory floor. He's not the only man sweating profusely.

One station over, SAM (40s, thin) mops at his brow.

Grisha handles precision needle and thread work -- sewing by hand, if you will. It's his job to put the final touches on the different suits that come his way.

SAM  
How is Rivka?

Grisha winces at how loud Sam has to be for his voice to carry. He nods at Sam.

MR. MEYER, 50s, chubby, bounds across the floor, all smiles. He watches as Grisha hangs up a new suit.

MEYER  
Good work over there!

Grisha gives Meyer a half-bow, as Meyer heads into his office. Grisha allows himself a smile.

The FLOOR BOSS scowls at Grisha.

FLOOR BOSS  
Gregory, back to work!

Grisha goes by the Americanized 'Gregory' in public; the better to fit in, one would gather. He grabs the next suit to be hemmed and gets right back to work.

EXT. MEYER'S SUITS - DUSK

Grisha exits the building with a dozen or so other EMPLOYEES. Fatigue's written all over his face, in his movements. Grisha continues to amble along, even as he drops his head out of sheer exhaustion.

Grisha bumps into a TEENAGE BOY, knocking the young man to the ground. Mortified, Grisha leans over to help the boy up.

GRISHA  
Young man, I'm terribly --

The Teenage Boy smacks Grisha's hand away, scrambles to his feet.

TEENAGE BOY  
Rotten Yid! I won't forget this!

The Teenage Boy takes off running in the opposite direction, leaving Grisha feeling even worse than before.

INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT

Normal Friday night services. The main hall is less than one-quarter full.

RABBI RUBIN  
Mourners, rise for the Kaddish.

The Licht family rises.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - NIGHT

The Lichts are at the dinner table.

FEDOR  
Tired, Grisha?

Grisha doesn't reply.

RIVKA  
No one should have to do this kind of work. You need to... advance.

GRISHA  
Where?

RIVKA  
Promotion.

GRISHA  
To? Floor boss?

Rivka doesn't understand her husband's attitude. Fedor senses trouble. He excuses himself from the table.

Rivka waits for Fedor to clear the area.

RIVKA  
You and Mr. Meyer get on fine, no?

GRISHA  
We do.

RIVKA  
He likes your work, yes?

Grisha nods.

RIVKA (CONT'D)  
Then, what --

GRISHA  
Would not ever want to be a boss in such a place. We're all Jews working there. I should take advantage of my people, to make a buck?

RIVKA  
So *noble*.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - DAY

Spring waits by the entrance to the apartment. He wears his dark blue suit and brown-striped tie.

SPRING  
I've just come from the Berks. Nice folks.

Rivka hands him some money.

SPRING (CONT'D)  
Nine dollars? Where's the other two?

RIVKA  
Meyer just doesn't pay enough.  
And Abie...

Rivka nods at the picture of the young man in military garb.

RIVKA (CONT'D)  
 Cost so much to bury... our son.  
 We're still paying it off, they  
 were nice about it, but --

Spring puts up a hand.

SPRING  
 I've a business to run, Mrs. Licht.  
 You're nine dollars behind. If next  
 month you do not have eleven, you'll  
 be on the street. Understood?

RIVKA  
 Mr. Spring, you'd do this to a  
 fellow Jew!

Spring's blood boils. He marches through the apartment, over  
 to the window, and looks out.

SPRING  
 Mrs. Licht!

Rivka heads to the window. Looks out, along with Spring.

One of the building's families is in the process of being  
 dispossessed. There's a young father, his wife, and five  
 small children. The wife is weeping. This is the Terach  
 family, as noted by Pauline, earlier on.

SPRING (CONT'D)  
 I bring the Sheriff's office with  
 me, one month from today. Eleven  
 dollars, Mrs. Licht.

Spring heads for the door.

SPRING (CONT'D)  
 Good day.

Rivka trudges across the apartment, closes the door behind  
 Spring. She puts a hand to her face.

INT. DOLBERG APARTMENT - DAY

Fedor sits at the kitchen table, with Victor and Irina.  
 Irina sets a steaming mug of hot cocoa in front of Fedor.

FEDOR  
 Thank you.

IRINA  
 Thank you. What you've been doing  
 with Victor --

FEDOR

Helping your son is the best part of my day. He reminds me a little of Abie. The... what do you call them, *jitters*? Abie never really got over them. He was just a boy. The letters he sent from the front? So scared. Grandfather outliving the grandson.

Irina's uncomfortable with this topic.

IRINA

How are you with money?

FEDOR

Grisha does not make enough.

IRINA

Can't you find work?

FEDOR

As what?

VICTOR

A Cantor.

Fedor's taken aback, as though this hasn't occurred to him until now. He manages to smile at Victor.

FEDOR

Who would hire such an old man?

INT. MEYER'S SUITS - DAY

Sam's clothes are drenched in sweat. The perspiration pours off of him.

SAM

How is Rivka?

Sam's loud enough for the Floor Boss to take note. Sam's manner is somewhat off, almost goofy. Grisha doesn't want to answer. He nods, offers a half-smile.

SAM (CONT'D)

Your dad is well?

Grisha sees that the Floor Boss is on his way. He ignores Sam, who faces the Floor Boss just as the latter arrives.

SAM (CONT'D)

Sir.

Sam breathes erratically.

FLOOR BOSS

This is not a coffee house! Silence  
on the floor.

SAM

I am so hot, Sir, just trying to  
pass the time --

FLOOR BOSS

Pass the time?! You're here to  
work, not pass the time!

Sam's eyes flutter. He drops. The Floor Boss whistles as loud  
as he can. Within seconds, men arrive with a stretcher.

Meyer emerges from his office. He races over. He addresses  
the men with the stretcher, as they pick Sam up and put him  
on the stretcher.

MEYER

Will he be okay?

MAN WITH STRETCHER

Yes.

MEYER

Thank goodness.

Grisha twists his face at Meyer and the Floor Boss.

GRISHA

Must you two... be this way? One  
good, one bad, this one always  
smiling, the other yelling? You're  
not two sides of a coin. You're the  
same side, pretending.

Meyer looks at the Floor Boss for a count of two. He heads  
back toward his office. The Floor Boss waits for him to be  
out of earshot.

FLOOR BOSS

Gregory, if I get that look from  
him again, you're fired.

EXT. MEYER'S SUITS - DUSK

Grisha trudges away from Meyer's.

EXT. THREE BLOCKS FROM MEYER'S - DUSK

Grisha spots the subway drop, just up ahead.

TEENAGE BOY (O.S.)

That's him!

Grisha faces the voice. He recognizes the young man as the one he bumped into on the street not that long ago. The young man is with four OTHER TEENAGERS. They stand, as one.

Grisha's not afraid. The young men are all much smaller than he is. He does an about-face, headed for the subway drop.

The Teenage Boy flings a broken milk bottle at Grisha. The dull end strikes him on the left arm of his coat. Grisha grabs for his arm.

TEENAGE BOY (CONT'D)  
Better watch where you're going, Yid!

The other four boys fire broken milk bottles at Grisha, aiming for the upper body. Grisha covers up. Two of the bottles strike him across the hands.

The young men take off running in the opposite direction. Grisha looks down at his hands: they're bleeding, from a pair of jagged cuts.

INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

Grisha's taken his coat off, wrapping a portion of it around his wounds. He shivers.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rivka is at the stove, cooking, as Grisha enters.

RIVKA  
Evening, Grisha.

Fedor's eyes are drawn to Grisha's makeshift wound dressing.

FEDOR  
Why'd you take your coat off?

Grisha's as pale as a ghost. Rivka stops what she's doing to look. Grisha walks over near the stove. Blood is barely visible, but Rivka can sense something's wrong.

Grisha unwraps the coat from his hands. As each layer comes off, more and more blood is apparent.

RIVKA  
Oh, my.

One of the cuts is more towards the palm. The other is right across the four fingers.

RIVKA (CONT'D)  
Who did this?

GRISHA  
Some youths.

RIVKA  
Did you talk to the police?

GRISHA  
And say what? A poor Jew was  
attacked by a pack of little kids?

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - LATER

Grisha and Rivka are by the kitchen sink. The color is back in his face. Both of his hands are under the water. Blood washes off the wounds.

RIVKA  
You remember... the day we arrived?

GRISHA  
Of course. A glorious day it was.  
The boat from the Island, seeing  
the beautiful city.

RIVKA  
You remember the Island?

Grisha grimaces.

GRISHA  
What of it?

RIVKA  
Don't make me treat you like a child.

GRISHA  
I refuse to play games with you.

Rivka cuts the stream. Grisha shows his hands. Within seconds, they bleed again. She twists the faucet's handles. Grisha puts his hands back under the stream. Blood continues to wash off the wounds.

RIVKA  
Let's try again.

She cuts the stream. Within seconds, the blood returns. She slams her own hands against the sink in anger.

INT. GRISHA AND RIVKA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Grisha sits on the edge of the bed, his hands exposed. The bleeding's finally stopped. Rivka tends to his wounds with cloth bandages.

RIVKA  
Now. We talk.

GRISHA

You and Abie were sick with influenza. Picked it up during the voyage. The men at Ellis Island thought it was consumption.

RIVKA

What did they do with the consumptive?

GRISHA

Three doctors tested you. If two had said `yea,' we would have all been sent back. One said `yea.' Two said `flu.' Why bring this up?

Rivka finishes with Grisha's hands. The bandages are fixed firmly in place.

RIVKA

How does it feel?

GRISHA

Hurts a little. I'll be able to sleep, don't fret. Why do you bring this up?

RIVKA

We gave up so much just to get here. Then we would have been better off.

GRISHA

Going back?

RIVKA

Going back.

GRISHA

Why? There was nothing left for us in Russia, look what goes on now.

RIVKA

Abie.

Grisha abruptly stops talking.

RIVKA (CONT'D)

Abie would still be with us.

Rivka starts to sputter. Grisha grabs his wife, holds her as tight as he can. In spite of himself, he checks to make sure his bandages are holding in place.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - MORNING

Rivka stands with Grisha, as he prepares to leave for work. She makes a final check of his bandages. She puts his Yarmulke onto his head.

GRISHA

No.

Grisha pulls the Yarmulke from his head.

GRISHA (CONT'D)

Time to stop calling to myself.  
Those kids... there are others  
who'd do the same.

Rivka puts the Yarmulke back on.

RIVKA

You will wear it. And be proud.

Grisha shakes his head.

RIVKA (CONT'D)

It was disgrace enough when you  
stopped wearing *tzitzit*.

Grisha removes the Yarmulke, fires it to the floor. Rivka slaps him across the jaw.

GRISHA

It's a symbol, nothing more. My  
faith is in my heart, my soul. I  
don't need to... advertise.

RIVKA

Advertise?

GRISHA

Please. I mean no disgrace by it.

INT. MEYER'S SUITS - MORNING

Grisha peers at his bandaged hands. Twists them this way and that. The movements cause him to wince.

INT. MEYER'S SUITS. MORNING.

Grisha, careful of his hands, works at about a third his usual pace. The Floor Boss notices that something's amiss.

FLOOR BOSS

What's wrong, Gregory?

Grisha shows him.

FLOOR BOSS (CONT'D)  
What happened to you?

GRISHA  
You don't want to --

FLOOR BOSS  
Don't presume to tell me what I do  
or do not want. Tell me.

Grisha isn't in the mood to listen to this guy grandstand. He bites his tongue.

GRISHA  
I'm not here for your amusement.

FLOOR BOSS  
True. I'll let you get back to it.

EXT. MEYER'S SUITS - DAY

Grisha is at lunch. He tries to put his hand around a large apple. He can't do so without pain. He puts the apple back into his lunch pail.

Blood has seeped through Grisha's bandages. Dried, by now.

INT. MEYER'S OFFICE - DUSK

Meyer's at his desk, looking over several suits. There's a knock at the door.

MEYER  
Enter.

It's Grisha. He comes through the door.

MEYER (CONT'D)  
Gregory, hello. Sit, please.

Grisha has a resigned look to him, as though he knows precisely why he's been summoned.

MEYER (CONT'D)  
What happened to your hands?

Grisha keeps mum.

MEYER (CONT'D)  
These suits on my desk. Have blood  
on them. They can't be sold in such  
a state. I don't even know if they  
can be cleaned.

Meyer appears genuine.

MEYER (CONT'D)  
 You are my best man. But if this  
 happens again tomorrow --

GRISHA  
 Would you prefer I take a holiday  
 tomorrow?

MEYER  
 No, I need you here, just not  
 bleeding all over my suits!

Grisha stands.

GRISHA  
 Good night, Mr. Meyer.

INT. MEYER'S SUITS - MORNING

Grisha -- hard at work -- looks down at his hands. Blood once  
 again seeps through the heavy bandages.

INT. MEYER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Meyer puts his coat and muffler on the office's rack. He  
 turns to find Grisha standing in front of him.

MEYER  
 You startled me, Gregory. What is  
 it, how do you feel today? Lots to  
 do, so many suits...

Grisha holds up his hands.

GRISHA  
 I'm sorry, Mr. Meyer.

MEYER  
 I am, too.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - MORNING

Fedor hums the opening stanza of Victor's Haftorah. He and  
 Rivka sit across from one another, eating hot cereal. The  
 door opens. They jump up to see who it is.

RIVKA  
 Grisha.

Grisha's a beaten man.

RIVKA (CONT'D)  
 Fired you?

GRISHA  
 Yes.

Grisha half-collapses onto the couch.

GRISHA (CONT'D)  
 Cannot work with these hands, the  
 cuts keep opening, fluid drips  
 through the bandages. Might be  
 weeks before I can be what I was.

RIVKA  
 Then you look somewhere else --

GRISHA  
 No reason even to look for work I  
 cannot do.

Fedor grabs a hat and coat.

RIVKA  
 Where are you going?

FEDOR  
 I can.

GRISHA  
 Can what?

INT. DOWNTOWN SUBWAY - DAY

Fedor rides the rails downtown.

EXT. FANCY MIDTOWN TEMPLE - DAY

The temple is more than twice the size of the one in Harlem.  
 Fedor takes a deep breath and enters.

INT. FANCY MIDTOWN TEMPLE/GENERAL OFFICE - DAY

Fedor sits on a bench. A pair of SECRETARIES alternately open  
 mail and write out letters longhand.

MR. STEWART (50s) enters the general office. Fedor stands.

FEDOR  
 Mr. Stewart?

STEWART  
 Yes?

FEDOR  
 My name is Fedor Licht, may I have  
 a moment?

STEWART  
 Sure, step into my office.

INT. STEWART'S OFFICE - DAY

Stewart's office is luxuriously appointed. The two men enter. Stewart gestures to the chair facing the desk.

STEWART

Please.

Fedor obliges. Stewart goes around the desk and sits.

STEWART (CONT'D)

So, what can I do for you?  
Membership to our Shul?

FEDOR

No, no, I belong to 122nd street.

STEWART

I've been there. A little small,  
but nice. What can I do for you?

FEDOR

Mr. Stewart... I was a Cantor in  
Russia. Have not worked since  
arriving in America. I would very  
much like to.

Stewart's eyes cloud. Then clear.

STEWART

You've come here to ask for a job?

FEDOR

With my hat in my hand. Perhaps you  
need a substitute. Chanukah  
services come soon. It is quite a  
strain on one voice.

STEWART

How old are you, Mr. Licht?

FEDOR

Fifty-nine.

Stewart's reaction indicates that he thought Fedor a great deal older.

FEDOR (CONT'D)

I can still chant like when I was a  
young man. Would you like me to?

STEWART

No. Mr. Licht, we simply don't have  
room in our budget to bring in  
someone new for such a position.

Fedor rises, chin held high.

FEDOR  
Thank you for your time, Mr.  
Stewart. Good day.

INT. DOWNTOWN SUBWAY - DAY

As Fedor travels further downtown...

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE - DAY

The expansive lower east side of Manhattan boasts the highest percentage of Jews in the city. Fedor emerges from a subway drop. He spots a small temple on a street corner, up ahead.

INT. SMALL TEMPLE - DAY

Fedor stands with the temple's PROPRIETOR, a sharply-dressed man of forty. They have a few words (M.O.S.). The Proprietor shakes his head.

EXT. SMALL TEMPLE - DAY

Fedor exits. His head starts to drop.

FEDOR  
No.

He forces his head high.

**Montage.**

Over the course of the afternoon, Fedor covers much of the lower east side, on foot. He stops in four more temples. Gets to chant for one of the OWNERS (M.O.S.). He grows more and more despondent as the day goes on.

INT. UPTOWN SUBWAY - DUSK

Fedor despairs. He buries his head in his hands.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Grisha and Rivka are by the door when Fedor enters. He trudges past his son and daughter-in-law, headed for the next room. He finds his bed, lies down. They follow him.

GRISHA  
Father?

FEDOR  
Nothing for me anywhere.

Rivka comforts him.

RIVKA  
Time to go to supper.

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - NIGHT

Chanukah Menorahs are visible from the street, spread across many of the facing apartment windows. Though different shapes and sizes, each has a candle in the center, and one at the far right end.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Rivka, Fedor, and Grisha look down at their Menorah, which has a single candle on the right side. Rivka holds the *Shamash* (the service candle), as the family finishes their prayer.

FEDOR

... She-chech-ee-anu, v-kee-yu-ma-nu, v-hee-gee-anu, l-ha-dlik-nair, shel Chanukah.

GRISHA/RIVKA

Ah-mein.

Rivka lights the lone candle, then places the Shamash in the center of the Menorah.

INT. TEMPLE/FIRST NIGHT OF CHANUKAH - NIGHT

The Lichts sit next to the Kleins -- son Gabe, mom and dad Steven and Teresa, and matriarch Ros.

GRISHA

How are you, Ros?

ROS

Awful. *America...*

Grisha stiffens.

STEVEN

Have either of you found work?

FEDOR

No.

RIVKA

We can't make the rent. We're out on the Sunday.

GABE

Didn't Spring just do the hello not two minutes ago? Like you were his oldest and dearest friends?

The Lichts have nothing to say. Rabbi Rubin reaches the lectern. The congregation quiets down.

RABBI RUBIN  
Mourners, rise for the Kaddish.

Gabe looks on grimly, as the Lights rise in unison.

RABBI RUBIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Yit-ga-dal v'yit-ka-dash, sh'mei ra-  
ba, b'a-l'ma di-v'ra chi-ru- tei,  
v'yam-lich mal-chu-tei...

The Lights quietly say the words along with Rabbi Rubin.  
Rivka dabs at her eyes with a handkerchief.

RABBI RUBIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
B'chai-yei-chon, uv'yo-mei-chon  
uv'chai-yei d'chol beit Yis-ra-  
eil, ba-a-ga-la u-viz-man ka-riv,  
v'im'ru: Ah-mein.

GABE  
Ah-mein.

Fedor trembles. He's desperate not to break down crying.

RABBI RUBIN (O.S.)  
Yit-ba-rach, v'yish-ta-bach, v'yit-  
pa-ar, v-yit-ro-mam, v'yit-na-sei.  
V'yit-ha-dar v'yit-a-leh, v'yit-ha-  
lal, sh-mei d'kud'sha, b'rich hu...

Gabe puts an arm around Fedor, draws him close. As Rabbi  
Rubin continues (M.O.S.), Grisha, red-eyed, looks at Gabe.

GRISHA  
Thank you.

INT. TEMPLE - LATER

There's a break in the service. Rabbi Rubin has stepped away  
from the lectern. He's deep in conversation with a NATTILY-  
ATTIRED young man wearing a bow-tie.

GRISHA  
What goes on here? They never stop  
the service in the middle.

Wearing a broad smile, Rabbi Rubin heads back to the lectern.

RABBI RUBIN  
Members of the congregation, I have  
wonderful news. I've just been  
informed that the Ottoman Turks  
have fallen in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Rubin pauses, allowing everyone to process.

Grisha turns to his wife.

GRISHA  
Does this mean --

RABBI RUBIN  
The Holy City is now under Allied  
control.

A few whoops are heard in the congregation. Grisha and Rivka clutch hands.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Grisha, Rivka, and Fedor stand before the large picture of Abie. Each of them holds a lit candle. They gaze upon the picture with great pride.

GRISHA  
You did not die in vain. You helped  
Jerusalem become free.

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MORNING

Harlem, several blocks further uptown.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MORNING

Spring watches as a SECRETARY fills out some paperwork. She slides it to him. The top of the page reads 'Notice of Dispossession.' Spring signs at the bottom of the page.

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MORNING

Spring exits, flanked by three DEPUTIES.

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - MORNING

Rivka is by the window. She looks down to the street, in time to see Spring and the deputies head into the building.

RIVKA  
They're here.

Grisha hugs her tight. Fedor joins in on the hug.

A knock at the door. Without bothering to wait, Spring lets himself in. The three deputies follow.

SPRING  
Sorry to hear of your injury --

GRISHA  
Here.

Grisha hands Spring some currency.

SPRING  
Ten dollars.

Rivka's stunned.

SPRING (CONT'D)  
Where did you get ten dollars?

Grisha peers upward.

SPRING (CONT'D)  
Rent is eleven. You were warned.  
This is an order to dispossess.

Spring offers Grisha the piece of paper.

RIVKA  
Over one more dollar owed, you'd  
cast us out?

SPRING  
Rules are rules, Mrs. Licht.

RIVKA  
Gai kucken afin yam!

**Subtitles: Go shit in the ocean!**

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DAY

The Lichts and all of their belongings are by the curb.  
Steven, Teresa, and Gabe are there, commiserating.

Andy Barton exits the building, overdressed, it would appear.  
He's in a hurry, until realizing what he's stumbled into.

TERESA  
Just one more dollar.

Gabe's about to say something, but stays quiet. He and Steven  
share a glance.

STEVEN  
You'll stay with us until you find  
work.

RIVKA  
No, we won't impose. We'll find a  
shelter, no worries.

GABE  
What if we give Spring the money  
right now?

GRISHA  
No matter. Have a peek.

Spring greets a young HUSBAND and WIFE (early 20's) by the  
entrance. They each carry two large satchels. Spring leads  
them inside.

FEDOR  
What is this?

TERESA  
They're moving in. The ink is not even dry. Spring, that bastard.

**Card: One Week Later.**

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/EMPTY APARTMENT - DAY

This apartment lacks any sort of lived-in look, almost appears as though no one's ever lived here. There's a piece of paper in the middle of the floor; that's it.

The door opens. Through it come Grisha, Rivka, and Fedor, carrying what looks to be all of their belongings. They drop the stuff to the floor, exhale as one.

RIVKA  
Nice to be back.

GRISHA  
Yes. Different floor, but --

FEDOR  
No complaints. It's a great miracle that we're back in this building.

RIVKA  
Indeed it is.

Rivka spots the piece of paper at her feet.

EXT. SILVER'S THREADS - DAY

Silver's Threads is located in the high 90s, two subway stops from Jewish Harlem. Grisha's outside. He looks down at his hands. They've healed well enough.

INT. SILVER'S THREADS - DAY

Grisha stitches up a suit pant-leg, displaying considerable sewing abilities for MR. SILVER (50's). Silver gestures at Grisha to stop doing what he's doing.

SILVER  
Position is yours, Mr. Licht. Your skills and experience, starting pay will be a dollar an hour.

Grisha breaks into a wide grin.

GRISHA  
Do you know what Meyer paid me, after who-remembers how many years?

SILVER

Fifty cents an hour. Itzi is the cheapest business owner in all of the city. You're lucky to have lost your job when you did. My man on the endline retired, and here you are to take his place. There is one thing, though.

GRISHA

What is it?

SILVER

There will be some staff responsibilities with the increased pay. Are you okay with this?

GRISHA

I don't know. But I will try.

SILVER

Good.

The two men shake hands.

INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT

The Lichts arrive for Friday evening services. Their mood is upbeat. Rabbi Rubin waits for them.

RABBI RUBIN

Fedor?

FEDOR

Good evening, Rabbi Rubin.

RABBI RUBIN

A word?

Fedor, confused, follows the Rabbi, leaving Grisha and Rivka to find seats.

RABBI RUBIN (CONT'D)

Do you feel you're up to full-time Cantorial work?

FEDOR

Certainly. Why?

RABBI RUBIN

Cantor Wahrman was picked up this morning, for his part in a local numbers game. He is no longer welcome in this congregation.

Rabbi Rubin stops walking, faces Fedor.

RABBI RUBIN (CONT'D)  
What do you say?

Fedor can't believe his ears. He allows himself a thin smile.

FEDOR  
Yes.

Rabbi Rubin puts a hand to Fedor's shoulder.

RABBI RUBIN  
Cantor Licht.

FEDOR  
Rabbi Rubin.

INT. TEMPLE - LATER

Services have ended. Wine, coffee, and assorted cakes are laid out on a table. The Lichts sip from wine glasses. They all smile, happy and content.

**Fade to Black.**

FADE IN:

EXT. UPTOWN APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The west 80's, a lovely area. Trees line either side of the block. A horse-drawn carriage makes its way crosstown.

INT. UPTOWN APARTMENT. DAY.

**Card: Monday, November 19.**

This family is Catholic, judging by the statues and crosses mounted on every wall. The apartment's jam-packed with luxuries, including a phonograph, which cranks out Mozart. There's also a full bar.

Steven Klein, Carpenter, is on the floor, hammer and nails in hand. He works like a demon.

**Card: The Kleins -- "Hourglass"**

With him in the apartment is ESTHER LUND (40). Esther is on the couch, sipping from a mug, overseeing Steven's work.

Steven's speed may be partially due to his being uncomfortable, what with Esther watching his every move. She pretends to stare at a wedding album.

ESTHER  
It was a sad day, and a happy day,  
when our Jillie wed. We see them  
every now and then. Do you miss the  
girls, Mr. Kleinmetz?

Steven rolls his eyes, which she doesn't see.

STEVEN  
Klein will suffice. You inquired of  
this yesterday.

Esther cups a hand over her mouth.

ESTHER  
I'm sorry. I don't like quiet with  
people, I always talk. I remember.  
You don't see the girls much. But  
they write all the time.

Steven relaxes.

STEVEN  
Here it is, Esther, the very last  
nail. Would you like to?

Esther leaps off the couch, dribbling cocoa out of her mug. She puts down the mug, joins Steven on the floor. He hands her the hammer. He sets the final nail into place.

Esther brings the hammer down. Almost misses the nail entirely, barely scraping the head. She and Steven laugh. He puts out a hand.

ESTHER  
No, I can do it. Stop laughing.

Esther concentrates. This time, she whacks the nail on the head with precision, bringing closure to the job.

STEVEN  
Good work.

The two of them rise to their feet. Esther checks out the newly-completed floor. She grins at Steven.

ESTHER  
Good work.  
(shouts)  
James!

Creaks emanate from the floorboards in the other room, as do loud groans. Esther's husband JAMES (40, stocky) staggers in. He's in the grips of a killer hangover. He pretends to look over Steven's work.

JAMES  
Excellent work, Mr. Kleinmetz.

STEVEN  
Klein will suffice.

JAMES  
Can I fix you a drink?

STEVEN  
Sure.

James heads for the bar.

JAMES  
I'll join you for a Scotch.

STEVEN  
Uh... do you have iced tea?

James lets out a big laugh. Ouch. He grabs for his forehead.

JAMES  
I forgot, you Jews. Not much for  
the tippling.

Esther opens the icebox, draws out a container filled with iced tea. While Esther pours the drink, James hands Steven a stack of bills.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
A job well done.

STEVEN  
Mr. Lund.

JAMES  
Do you go out to Long Island?

Esther hands Steven the iced tea. He takes a sip.

STEVEN  
Once in a while.

JAMES  
A friend in business needs his home  
re-done inside. It might be three  
months of work.

STEVEN  
What was the question again?

James focusses through his pounding skull.

JAMES  
Do you go out to Long Island?

STEVEN  
Five days a week.

James lets out another belly laugh. Clutches at his forehead in pain.

INT. KLEIN APARTMENT - DAY

The most well-appointed of the 121st street apartments. Based on the evidence, the Kleins could likely move out whenever they choose.

Gabe enters, a towel around his head, partially-buttoned shirt covering his torso. His pants are a little wet. Teresa takes the towel, scrubs his hair with maternal authority.

TERESA

How was the water? You were down a long time.

GABE

Pretty weak. Spigot needs fixing.

TERESA

Yes, I know. I'll tell Mr. Spring, next time he's here.

Gabe moves to a small table in the main room of the apartment. Wood, paint, and assorted "finishing" tools are scattered about. His work area is a mess. Teresa cleans up some of the assorted garbage.

TERESA (CONT'D)

May I?

Gabe peers down at the tiny, handcrafted Jade he's just completed. He blows some dust off, hands it to his mother.

The Jade's level of detail is astonishing. Teresa marvels at her son's creation.

GABE

You're always a little too surprised I can do this. Dad's very good at what he does.

EXT. KAREL'S TCHOTCHKES - DAY

A tiny little storefront, on the corner of a street in the West 80's.

INT. KAREL'S TCHOTCHKES - DAY

Ah, but inside, the place reeks of wealth. It's a collectibles store, for people with too much money to burn.

MR. KAREL (40's) is behind the counter. He looks over Gabe's work -- ten separate handcrafts, each amazing in its own way.

KAREL

These are better than the last batch.

GABE  
Thank you, Mr. Karel.

KAREL  
So how is school, Gabe?

GABE  
School?

Karel squints.

KAREL  
You're done with school. No college?

Gabe is angry with this line of inquiry. He tries to quell the feeling.

GABE  
We talked of this the last time I was here.

KAREL  
I'm sorry, Gabe, I talk a lot, but don't listen as well. Please.

GABE  
I'm not attending college, because...

Gabe pauses. He gathers himself.

GABE (CONT'D)  
I've been drafted. I report in a matter of weeks.

KAREL  
Goodness, no. We talked about this?

GABE  
We did at that.

Gabe's had it with the friendly chit-chat.

GABE (CONT'D)  
Which ones would you like?

KAREL  
All.

EXT. KAREL'S TCHOTCHKES - DAY

Gabe folds a stack of currency and puts it into his pocket. He glares at the store's sign. Spots a jewelry shoppe just up ahead. Decides to stroll in that direction.

INT. KLEIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

The Lights are over for dinner. Steven sits next to Ros, across from Fedor. Grisha and Rivka are on opposite sides. Teresa places a large, steaming bowl down on the table. Rivka makes a move, as though preparing to stand.

TERESA

No, you can't help with anything.

Smiles all around. Teresa goes back to the stove. Whatever she's cooking isn't quite done.

A peek at Grisha's hands reveal that he's yet to sustain his injuries.

RIVKA

Where is Gabe this evening?

STEVEN

With Jana.

GRISHA

Such a nice young lady.

Ros grumbles under her breath.

GRISHA (CONT'D)

What are their plans?

STEVEN

For this evening?

Grisha shakes his head.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

I think Gabe would like to marry,  
but his upcoming service...

Teresa returns from the stove. She grips Steven's hand.

TERESA

We're worried for him.

RIVKA

You should be.

GRISHA

Rivka!

Teresa heads back to the stove.

TERESA

We need to prepare ourselves.

Ros grumbles.

STEVEN

Mother, stop with the mumbling and grumbling, speak to us.

ROS

You work like dog, three children, two of whom don't care to see you, the one who adores you, is soon to perish in a War, you ask why I grumble.

STEVEN

Better to have stayed in the village?

Ros twitches. Steven looks at his guests.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Do you know why mama and I came to the states?

FEDOR

The two of you?

TERESA

Istvan and I met here.

STEVEN

There was a pogrom. Many Jews were maimed, some were killed. It reached one village to the West.

ROS

We left. All those behind. Who knows what became of them.

STEVEN

We did not leave. We fled.

Ros and Steven exchange brutal glares.

EXT. UPTOWN STREET - NIGHT

Gabe and Jana walk along, hand in hand. They're dressed very well, Gabe in a suit, Jana in a long skirt. Gabe smiles at her. She smiles in return. But something's amiss. There's tension between them.

EXT. FARRIS EATERY - NIGHT

A fancy eatery, on the corner of 116th street and 2nd avenue. Several MEN IN TOP HATS enter.

INT. FARRIS EATERY - NIGHT

Every man in the place wears either a conventional suit or a tuxedo. Women are in dresses, all dolled up.

Gabe and Jana are at a corner table, off the beaten path. Jana's impressed by the place, not to mention the location of the table. Gabe pours wine into Jana's glass. She's dubious.

GABE

What?

JANA

How can you afford to take me here?

Gabe prepares to answer. Jana beats him to the punch.

JANA (CONT'D)

How'd you get us this table?

JIM FARRIS (50's), the gregarious owner of the eatery, comes hopping by.

FARRIS

Nice wine, Gabe?

GABE

Perfect. Thank you, Mr. Farris.

FARRIS

Sure. Enjoy your meal.

Farris bounds away.

GABE

I know the proprietor.

JANA

I can see that, funnyman, but how?

Gabe nods at the middle of their table. There's a salt shaker, a pepper shaker. A bowl of sugar. And a handcrafted sculpture. Jana picks it up.

JANA (CONT'D)

Yours.

GABE

Aye. Take a look around.

Jana does as instructed. Every table she can see has a handcraft in the center. She smiles. Raises her glass. Gabe raises his, and they touch.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER/LOBBY - NIGHT

Sol Orenstein's movie theater/vaudeville house. Gabe and Jana walk through the lobby. They marvel at posters for various films. There's one for Griffith's *Intolerance*. Another for Abel Gance's *Napoleon*.

The earlier tension has left the couple -- the wine? -- they're totally relaxed. Jana leans over and kisses Gabe.

ANDY (O.S.)

Hiya.

Jana and Gabe pull back. Andy greets his sister and Gabe with a huge smile. A smile so infectious, the two don't seem the least bit upset at the interruption.

GABE

Andy.

Andy allows Gabe to muss his hair. The kid responds with a light tap on Gabe's arm.

Jana looks at the concession area. The busy ticket seller's area. The busier usher's area.

JANA

You're not working tonight?

ANDY

Course I am.

(grins)

On stage.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - NIGHT

A full house. The lights are dim. Gabe and Jana watch George Melies' 1903 classic short *A Trip to the Moon*.

GABE

I've seen this so many times.

JANA

Never gets old.

GABE

Never.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - NIGHT

The lights are on. Andy is among a group of five PRE-TEENS onstage, performing a vaudeville revue. Four of the kids race around the stage. It's impossible to discern who's chasing who... but the audience laughs anyhow.

Andy appears, wearing a makeshift police uniform, replete with bowler hat and false moustache, holding a cane. He waddles into the middle of the fracas.

ANDY

Stop! Police!

The four young men stop short. They succeed only in colliding with one another and dropping to the floor. This draws even bigger laughs.

As the four kids lie "unconscious."

Andy twirls his moustache with great relish, to the delight of the paying crowd. He crouches down over the nearest of the fallen. Engages the crowd with his eyes, drawing chuckles. And proceeds to lift the young man's wallet.

The audience erupts.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER/LOBBY - NIGHT

Back in his regular clothing, Andy accepts congratulations from numerous PATRONS. He appears gracious, modest, even. Gabe and Jana are amused by all the attention Andy's receiving. Andy excuses himself and joins Gabe and Jana.

Andy's exhausted. He fights off a yawn.

ANDY  
Walk the two of you home?

Jana's about to follow her brother out.

GABE  
We're going to stay a while longer.  
You were great.

JANA  
C'mere.

Andy goes to his sister. She gives him a hug.

JANA (CONT'D)  
Good show, kid.

Andy grins.

ANDY  
Night, folks.

Jana watches as Andy slinks out of the theater.

JANA  
Why aren't we going home?

No answer. Jana turns to face her beau...

... And finds herself staring at a golden ring.

JANA (CONT'D)  
Gabe, I... you leave in three weeks.

GABE

I know I may not come back.

Jana shuts her lids tight.

JANA

Stop, don't say such things.

GABE

Such things? You make it sound like the odd chance. Abie Licht. He was but one week at the front.

JANA

This is how you choose to convince me?

GABE

If I have you to come back to, if I have a life path waiting for me...

Jana draws back.

JANA

That's just talk. Abie had three people who loved him dearly. They will never recover.

Gabe sinks a few inches.

EXT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - NIGHT

Gabe and Jana are the last ones to leave. Orenstein follows them out, locks the place up.

ORENSTEIN

Good night, kids.

Though Orenstein certainly meant nothing by that word, Gabe and Jana take a hard look at the man, then each other.

EXT. UPTOWN STREET - NIGHT

Gabe and Jana walk, a few feet apart. They don't speak.

EXT. BARTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gabe has seen Jana to her door. The two are despondent.

JANA

Gabe, I... don't want to answer right now, this evening, please, let me...

Jana kisses him, a slow and tender kiss.

GABE  
Hold onto the ring.

INT. KLEIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Teresa is almost done cleaning up from dinner and coffee with the Lichts. Steven, in pajamas, helps her out.

Gabe enters. He takes off his suit jacket.

STEVEN  
Where did you go?

GABE  
Farris.

Gabe steps to the kitchen table. He holds his right hand out, braces his body against the edge. To the astute observer, it would seem the table is preventing him from falling down.

STEVEN  
Mr. Farris, your, uh, business partner, hm. Was Jana impressed?

GABE  
She was.

TERESA  
Then?

GABE  
Orenstein's. Few pictures, then her brother and his friends entertained.

Teresa makes her way over to Gabe. She doesn't like the look in her son's eyes.

STEVEN  
Little Andy. That kid's gonna make a lot of out himself, you watch and see. He's a real scrapper.

Gabe's body language is all wrong. Teresa puts her arms on her son's shoulders.

TERESA  
Gabor?

Teresa's use of their son's given name prompts Steven to take a closer look. He doesn't like what he sees, either.

STEVEN  
Goodness.

GABE  
I've asked her to marry, before I take my leave.

TERESA

And?

GABE

She does not know.

TERESA

And you?

GABE

You've always dreamed of me attending college. Become a doctor. A lawyer. I dreamed of such things. But it's not in the cards.

Teresa and Steven wince.

GABE (CONT'D)

You know this now. Difficult for you to face. But it is the truth. All I want is to get home. Alive.

STEVEN

And then?

GABE

I can make a strong livelihood, doing what I've been doing.

Teresa and Steven look at one another.

GABE (CONT'D)

Father, since I've finished high school, I have made more money than even you. I tell you this not to boast. You do better than anyone else at 121st street. We could have moved two years ago. You're ashamed of your success.

STEVEN

Not ashamed. Grateful. No need to parade around our good fortune.

GABE

I find my work... easy. People like what I do. And I enjoy it. Perhaps someday I open a store and sell my own tchotchkes.

As his parents wait for more.

GABE (CONT'D)

I want to raise a family. Then I'll do everything in my power to ensure that our children go to college.

INT. KLEIN APARTMENT/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Teresa and Steven lie in separate beds, several feet apart.

TERESA

I believe the girl is *shvenkert*.  
This is why he rushes to marry, not  
his leave of her. Of us.

STEVEN

No. She is not with child. He would  
have told us this.

TERESA

I don't know.

STEVEN

He would have told us this.

The sharpness in Steven's voice takes Teresa by surprise. She gets out of bed. She goes to Steven. Kneels down.

TERESA

How scared must he be?

STEVEN

So.

Teresa and Steven kiss. She climbs atop him. The kissing intensifies. Steven attempts to roll onto Teresa. The two crash to the floor.

INTERCUT.

In a matter of seconds, the loud noise is heard by the Lichts, the Bartons, The Graus, the Dolbergs, and the Berks.

INT. KLEIN APARTMENT/BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Teresa and Steven are on the floor, hysterical with laughter. They get right back to making out.

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - MORNING

Although it's a chilly day, Grisha sits on the front stoop in shirtsleeves. His hands are bandaged. Gabe puts his work bag down, takes a seat next to Grisha.

GRISHA

Gabor. Where do you go so early?

GABE

Find some new buyers this morning.  
Nice of Meyer to let you stay home  
until you feel better.

Gabe stares Grisha down, waiting for a reply.

GABE (CONT'D)  
I should not have said that. I know  
what's happened.

Gabe puts an arm around Grisha. Slides some currency into  
Grisha's shirt pocket.

GABE (CONT'D)  
From father and I.

Gabe rises.

GABE (CONT'D)  
Good day.

Gabe heads downtown. Grisha takes the money from his shirt  
pocket: a ten-dollar bill.

EXT. 14TH STREET - DAY

Gabe walks crosstown. A string of theaters run from Delancey  
Street to 14th, along 1st, 2nd, and 3rd avenues.

EXT. GILDEN'S THEATER - DAY

A large theater, on third avenue. Gabe enters.

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER - DAY

The cast (Jana included) goes through rehearsal. Director  
ISAAC OLEM (40's) claps his hands.

OLEM  
Lunch.

The cast begins to disperse. A handsome FELLOW CAST MEMBER  
(20's) smiles at Jana.

FELLOW CAST MEMBER  
Like to go around the corner for a  
sandwich? My treat.

Jana spots Gabe.

JANA  
I brought from home, but thank you  
for offering.

The cast member notices Gabe standing several feet away. He  
walks by, offers Gabe a half-nod.

GABE  
Did you want to say yes?

JANA  
No. Even if you hadn't been  
standing there.

Gabe chuckles.

GABE  
You're too quick.

JANA  
How was your morning?

GABE  
Good. Sold a bunch. Rehearsal?

JANA  
Excellent. We're ready.  
(beat)  
Colder than normal this morning,  
yes? I had to bundle up.

Silence.

GABE  
What do you think of President  
Wilson and the League of Nations?

JANA  
Huh?

GABE  
Buy any war bonds yet?

No answer.

GABE (CONT'D)  
What do you make of France's  
contribution to the war effort?

Jana starts to get Gabe's drift. She produces Gabe's ring. He holds for a beat.

GABE (CONT'D)  
Can I have the honor of putting it  
on your finger?

Jana hands the ring back to him.

GABE (CONT'D)  
What're you doing?

JANA  
We need to make a clean break.

Though part of Gabe had to be expecting this, he reels back upon actually hearing the words.

JANA (CONT'D)  
I don't want to be beholden to a  
man who may not return.

GABE

A man? It's not "a man," it's me.

JANA

You'll find some *shiksa* while  
you're over there, she'll keep you  
happy.

Jana laughs -- gallows humor. Gabe's not amused.

GABE

I think I'll have more pressing  
matters at hand. I'm leaving in one  
week. Seven days.

Jana goes to him.

JANA

Seven days we can spend together.

GABE

And then a, what did you call it,  
"clean break," is what you want?

JANA

No. What I want is you. But I can't  
have that.

Despite their words, the two young lovers fall into a hug.

GABE

We're finishing each other's  
sentences. Have been for months.

JANA

I know.

Jana pulls back, looks into his eyes.

JANA (CONT'D)

Gabe. I can't marry you.

GABE

It's not fair to either of us.

JANA

Yes.

GABE

I'm going to walk out of this  
theater now. I don't expect to see  
you again before I leave.

JANA

You won't even come to the --

Jana cuts herself off, realizing the frivolity of what she was about to say.

GABE  
Premiere of your show. The night  
before I report.

Gabe turns to leave. Jana grabs him by the arm.

JANA  
Don't go. Not like this.

Jana leans into him. He kisses her, as hard as he can. She grabs him behind the head, so as to pull him as close to her as possible. The kiss ends with their foreheads against one another. They look at each other. Sniffle.

Several members of the cast and crew are either ascending the stage, or about to.

GABE  
Goodbye.

Gabe turns from Jana. He jumps down from the stage.

EXT. GILDEN'S THEATER - DAY

Gabe makes his way out, into the midday sun.

INT. FARRIS EATERY - NIGHT

It's a quiet night at Farris Eatery. Teresa and Steven have finished their meal. Steven looks at the bill.

STEVEN  
Three dollars and eleven cents.

Steven puts the bill aside. His eyes carry past his wife.

STEVEN (CONT'D)  
It was that table over there.

Teresa swivels, finds the specific table.

STEVEN (CONT'D)  
Remember?

TERESA  
Nineteen years ago, tonight. Our  
first time out. So long ago.

STEVEN  
Not that long. You are still such a  
looker.

Teresa smiles. She slides a hand across the table, finds Steven's.

STEVEN (CONT'D)  
Treska?

TERESA  
Istvan?

STEVEN  
She won't marry him.

Apparently, this is the first Teresa is hearing of this. She reels back in her chair.

TERESA  
She'll wait till he... returns.

STEVEN  
She says she won't.

Gabe's parents share an awkward moment. Steven picks up the table's handcraft, settled between the salt and pepper shakers. Teresa and Steven smile.

INT. KLEIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gabe puts some essentials into a suitcase -- toothbrush, razor, etc.. Already packed are a few changes of clothes. He closes the suitcase, sits down on the couch, tired and a little sad.

There's a knock at the door. Gabe forces himself to rise, heads over to the door. Opens it: Andy.

ANDY  
Let's go, don't want to be late.

Gabe weighs his response.

GABE  
I'm leaving in the morning.

Andy pretends not to hear.

ANDY  
Curtain up in twenty minutes, lessgo, Jana's big debut, you can't miss this.

GABE  
Your sister and I didn't leave things very well, Andy.

ANDY  
I know. C'mon, get your coat. You're sitting with me.

Gabe thinks things through for a moment. Nods his head.

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER - NIGHT

Crowded. Gabe and Andy make their way down the center aisle. Andy motions at the two empty seats in the front row.

ANDY  
There we are.

GABE  
Good seats.

Andy nearly chokes on his laugh. He and Gabe take their seats, Gabe on the right.

ANDY  
I know someone in the show.

Elisabeth Grau is three seats right of Gabe. She and Gabe acknowledge one another. They pay no heed to the couple between them, necking furiously at present.

GABE  
How is Barbara?

ELISABETH  
Fine now, thank you for asking. I hear you're leaving us?

GABE  
Tomorrow.

Elisabeth wishes she hadn't brought it up. The conversation is broken by the sound of Andy... giggling.

GABE (CONT'D)  
What amuses you so?

ANDY  
To your right.

GABE  
Couple of kids necking still make you giggle?

ANDY  
When I know them.

The necking couple pulls back: it's Victor and Ania!

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Ania, which do you rather, toss the Spaldeen with Andy here, or smooch-smooch with Victor?

Even Victor finds that one funny.

GABE  
Looks like smooch-smooch.

A hush falls across the theater. Curtain up...

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER - LATER

Gabe watches, as Jana emotes onstage. The Act ends and the curtain closes. The lights come up.

ANDY  
One more to go.

Suddenly, Andy's gripped by panic.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Whoops.

Andy jumps from his seat.

GABE  
Where you going?

ANDY  
You'll see. I'll be back before the  
third act closes.

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER - LATER

With the balance of the cast looking on with great interest, Jana and her LEADING MAN embrace.

Gabe twitches. He was enjoying the proceedings until just now. He'd rather be somewhere else.

The audience cheers, as the curtain falls. The cheers turn into a standing ovation.

ANDY (O.S.)  
Miss me?

Andy holds a long, thin brown bag.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Get up.

Gabe scowls.

GABE  
Giving me a lot of orders this  
evening, young man.

ANDY  
Preparing you.

GABE  
You're not kidding.

The standing ovation ends. The lights come up, as the cast takes their bows. First, Jana and her leading man. Then, the rest of the cast. Then, all together.

ANDY (O.S.)  
Curtain up, Gabe.

GABE  
What does that mean?

Andy hands Gabe the brown bag. Gabe slides out the contents: a beautiful red rose. Gabe's speechless.

ANDY  
You don't need to think of funny remarks, even to thank me.

The leading man takes bows on his own. A YOUNG WOMAN approaches. He leans over and kisses her.

GABE  
Are you sure you're but twelve years of age?

The leading man recedes. Now, it's Jana's turn for the individual accolades. She comes to the front of the stage to soak up the cheers.

ANDY  
Just get up there.

Gabe is nervous as all get out.

Will and Ceilie Barton head up to congratulate their daughter, giving Gabe precious extra seconds to gather his thoughts, gain control of his body.

Andy almost forgets to join his parents. At the last minute, the kid charges from his seat to the stage, as everyone in the surrounding area chuckles.

Andy showers Jana with kisses, drawing laughter from the crowd. Jana laughs as well, until she realizes Gabe is heading her way.

Slowly, Gabe makes his way to the stage. He crosses paths with Will and Ceilie, who offer him a warm smile. Andy grabs him by the shirt collar.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Don't leave before squaring with her.

Andy lets Gabe go. Gabe reaches the bottom of the stage. He hands her the rose. The audience *oohs* and *ahs*.

JANA  
Did you like the show?

Gabe manages a nod. He tries to find the courage...

GABE  
Meet you here when it empties out?

JANA  
Yes.

Gabe exhales. From the looks of him, he believed that question to be a fifty/fifty proposition.

Gabe returns to his seat. Andy puts his coat on.

ANDY  
Were you really not going to come?

GABE  
If you hadn't knocked? I don't know. But I'm glad you thought to do what you did.

Andy offers a hand. Gabe shakes.

ANDY  
Wishing you the best of success.

GABE  
You never answered my question.

ANDY  
Huh?

GABE  
Are you sure you're but twelve years of age?

Andy grins.

ANDY  
Take care.

Andy joins many of the other theater-goers, as they head for the exit.

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER - LATER

The place has emptied out. Gabe and Jana sit at the edge of the stage, neither on the verge of saying anything.

Jana jumps from the stage. Offers Gabe a hand. He takes it, climbs down.

EXT. GILDEN'S THEATER - NIGHT

The wind chills PASSERSBY to the bone.

A WEALTHY THEATERGOER loses his top hat in the breeze. His equally WEALTHY WIFE laughs as he scampers about, in an attempt to flag it down.

Gabe and Jana are immune to the wind and cold. They walk toward the FANCY HOTEL just up ahead. At this hour, it's the only business still lit from outside.

JANA  
We'll fetch your folks in the morning, Soldier.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL - DAY

The train's about to depart. The Kleins stand with their son, saying their goodbyes. Teresa and Steven are strong; no tears. Gabe turns to Jana.

GABE  
I'll write. As often.

JANA  
So will I.

They kiss. Gabe grabs his gear. He takes a nice, long look at his surroundings, then disappears into the train.

**Fade To Black.**

FADE IN:

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

Row upon row of ladies' hats lie on a conveyor belt.

**Card: Monday, November 19th.**

Will Barton is the last man on the floor to handle the hats.

**Card: The Bartons -- "A Corner in Wheat"**

Will's hands are nimble as he trims and trims.

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DAY

One building left, the dairy.

INT. DAIRY - DAY

Towards the back of the dairy is a chicken market. Ceilie Barton sits on a chair, right by the counter. She's in sight of IVAN KIPNIS (40's), who runs this section of the store.

A PLUMP WOMAN (50's) purchases a whole chicken -- feathers and all.

KIPNIS  
Would you like it plucked?

The Plump Woman chuckles. Kipnis, however, wasn't trying to draw a laugh.

KIPNIS (CONT'D)  
The lady to your right appears to be free at present, she'll do it for fifteen cents.

The Plump Woman looks Ceilie up and down.

PLUMP WOMAN  
What does she give you for the right to sit in that chair?

KIPNIS  
A nickel, per.

The Plump Woman continues to stare at Ceilie, who hasn't understood a word of the exchange.

PLUMP WOMAN  
How come she does not speak for herself?

KIPNIS  
Some have more trouble than others picking up our strange language.

PLUMP WOMAN  
What's your name, ma'am?

The word `name' triggers a flicker of recognition in Ceilie.

CEILIE  
Ceilie Bartkowiak.

Ceilie's Polish accent is very thick.

KIPNIS  
Uh, Barton she means.

The Plump Woman places the chicken on Ceilie's work table.

PLUMP WOMAN  
Okay. For fifteen cents.

The clock behind Kipnis reads `10:32.'

INT. DAIRY - LATER

The Plump Woman sits in a chair, reading the day's *Brooklyn Eagle*. As Ceilie plucks the final feather. She puts the chicken into a box and hands it to the Plump Woman.

The Plump Woman hands Ceilie fifteen cents.

PLUMP WOMAN  
Thank you, ma'am. Good day now.

The Plump Woman is on her way. Ceilie flips Kipnis a nickel. He catches it out of the air. The clock behind him reads `11:06.'

KIPNIS  
Hypnotic, watching you work.

Ceilie narrows her gaze.

EXT. 14TH STREET - DAY

Jana walks crosstown, toward the string of theaters. She sings a tune to herself, betraying a wonderful singing voice.

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER - DAY

Jana arrives for rehearsal. One of her co-stars, LEO (20) is already onstage.

JANA  
Morning, Leo.

LEO  
Jana.

Leo points to his head.

LEO (CONT'D)  
All my lines up here, no more script for me.

JANA  
You have but three lines.

LEO  
Yes. But they're memorable ones.

Jana smiles.

LEO (CONT'D)  
When we break for lunch, want to come with me to the coffee shop?

Jana continues to smile.

JANA  
Thank you for asking, but, no.

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER - LATER

Rehearsal. Jana emotes (M.O.S.).

Just offstage, four male members of the cast gaze longingly at her. Given their positioning, this doesn't appear to be part of the show.

As Olem joins Jana onstage.

OLEM  
 Little less emotion in voice, a  
 little more in face and body.

EXT. GILDEN'S THEATER - DAY

Jana exits, with another of her co-stars, NATHAN, a dashing young man of eighteen. He walks alongside her for several steps, until she stops.

NATHAN  
 What?

JANA  
 I'm with Gabe. You know this.

NATHAN  
 Only want to see you to the subway.

Nathan tries not to falter.

NATHAN (CONT'D)  
 Gabe's a wonderful person, we all  
 envy him, for the company he's  
 kept. But... he *is* leaving.  
 You're such a treasure.

Jana's inscrutable.

NATHAN (CONT'D)  
 I don't wish you to be nervous  
 around me, or any of the other  
 gents. I live the other way. I'll  
 leave you now.

Nathan turns tail.

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DAY

Andy plays stoop ball, by his lonesome. Spring exits the building. He gets out of Andy's line of sight.

SPRING  
 May I join you for a moment?

ANDY  
 Sure.

Spring grabs the ball on a short hop, flips it against the stoop. Andy races to snatch it out of the air.

SPRING

Nice catch. Have you been to the pictures since I last saw you?

They take turns throwing and catching.

ANDY

I saw one called *Coney Island* over at Orenstein's.

SPRING

With Fatty Arbuckle?

ANDY

And that Keaton guy.

SPRING

I saw it. Didn't take enough advantage of Arbuckle's skills.

(beat)

That's probably a bit beyond you.

ANDY

You mean that Roscoe's so light on his feet for a fat guy?

Spring laughs.

SPRING

You sure you're only twelve? You ought to see Orenstein.

Andy catches the ball, stopping play.

ANDY

For what?

SPRING

He works like a fiend. He could use a kid like you to help out.

ANDY

Work?

SPRING

I had my first job, I was but a mite older than you are today. I bet you'd get to see the pictures free of charge.

Andy considers Spring's idea.

INT. BARTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ceillie, Will, Jana, and Andy are at dinner.

CEILIE  
 (to Jana)  
 Riv... u?

JANA  
 Hm?

Ceilie's eyes cloud. She's uncertain the word has come out properly.

WILL  
 Re--vue.

Andy clicks.

ANDY  
 How is the Revue progressing, Jana?

JANA  
 Very well. We're nearly ready for people to see and hear us.

Will smiles.

WILL  
 Goot. Feddy goot.

INT. BARTON APARTMENT - LATER

Andy and Jana play checkers. Jana's winning, four kings to two. She moves a red piece forward. Andy looks over the board. Suddenly, his eyes flash.

ANDY  
 Funny thing.

JANA  
 What? Bad move?

ANDY  
 Well, yes, but...

Using a king, Andy executes a triple-jump. He removes Jana's checkers, puts them aside.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
 Mother and father. Their English.

Jana retreats with her one remaining king.

JANA  
 Weak. But between the two of them, they make a better living than anyone we know.

Andy's two kings close in for the kill.

ANDY  
Except for the Kleins.

JANA  
This is true.  
(beat)  
I hope I can make it. We can all  
move to a nicer place.

By now, Jana's king is trapped in the left corner. They go back and forth for a few moves.

ANDY  
With real bathrooms. Give up?

JANA  
No. Play it out, see what happens.

Andy shrugs. He executes "the trick," the only way to draw one's opponent out of the corner in this situation. He quickly jumps her king, winning the game.

ANDY  
It's over.

JANA  
Now, it is.

EXT. GILDEN'S THEATER - DAY

Jana's about to head down the subway drop, when she spots a kosher bakery a block up. She decides to check the place out.

EXT. GERST'S - DAY

Gerst's is without question the ritziest kosher bakery Jana has ever seen.

INT. GERST'S - DAY

The counter is shaped at a 45 degree angle, and stretches across more than 2/3 of the establishment. Well-dressed JEWISH WOMEN line the store. Jana finds an empty slot at the counter. Smiles at the BASHFUL CASHIER, a young man her age. Her good looks unnerve him.

BASHFUL CASHIER  
First time here?

JANA  
That clear?

BASHFUL CASHIER  
Yes. What can I get for you?

JANA  
How much for a corn bread?

BASHFUL CASHIER  
Fifty cents.

Jana reacts as though her ears have been scorched.

JANA  
Another day.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - DAY

FOLKS mill about, Andy among them. He scurries around, searching high and low for... something.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER/PROJECTION ROOM - DAY

Orenstein sits back, as the last reel of Thomas Ince's *Civilization* unspools on the screen below.

A knock on the projection room door.

ORENSTEIN  
Come.

Andy enters, bearing the most serious expression we've seen. Orenstein smiles.

ORENSTEIN (CONT'D)  
Hello, Mr. Barton!

Andy's nervous. He steps forward.

ANDY  
Mr. Orenstein. Why're you showing a movie from last year?

ORENSTEIN  
We never actually screened this picture. So what brings you to the projection room today?

ANDY  
I'd like a chance to work for you, Sir.

ORENSTEIN  
What would you do?

ANDY  
Anything. Mopping floors, selling food, taking tickets, projection room, whatever you want.

Orenstein's tone is one of gentle mockery.

ORENSTEIN  
I have enough people, except for mornings when it's not busy.

You can't make it here mornings,  
with school.

ANDY  
You don't have to pay me, I'll work  
for free.

ORENSTEIN  
I couldn't do that.

ANDY  
How about this, I'll bring some  
friends on Saturday afternoons,  
we'll put on vaudeville shows.

Orenstein is now fully engaged in the conversation.

ORENSTEIN  
Also free of charge?

ANDY  
Yes, Sir.

Orenstein moves closer to Andy. He studies the boy's face and  
neck. Seconds later, he offers Andy a hand.

ORENSTEIN  
Mr. Barton, you have yourself a deal.

Andy's bewildered. Orenstein chuckles.

ORENSTEIN (CONT'D)  
Needed to be certain you did not  
have scarlet fever.

Andy grins. He accepts Orenstein's handshake.

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER - DAY

Nathan and Jana are alone onstage. Olem watches, as does the  
rest of the cast.

OLEM  
Hold it, hold it.

Nathan and Jana turn to face their director.

OLEM (CONT'D)  
Now, without words, you have to  
sell the paying customers, that the  
two of you are in love, so in  
love... I need to see that from  
you. Try it again.

Nathan and Jana stare into each other's eyes. Jana sells the  
emotion perfectly. Nathan's stab at emotion comes across as  
forced. Olem is aggravated. He races up the stage.

OLEM (CONT'D)  
Nathan!

NATHAN  
Sir?

OLEM  
She loves you, anyone can see that,  
you look at her as though this is  
your little sister on her first day  
of school and you're oh-so-proud...

Laughter from the peanut gallery.

OLEM (CONT'D)  
Focus!

Olem turns his attention to Jana. She tries to hide her nerves.

OLEM (CONT'D)  
Jana?

JANA  
Yes.

OLEM  
Magnificent.

And with that, he retreats from the stage. Jana allows herself the tiniest of smiles.

INT. GERST'S - DAY

Jana checks out the bakery shelves, radiating confidence and charm. The Bashful Cashier spots her.

BASHFUL CASHIER  
Hello.

JANA  
What do you do with these?

Jana points to a stack of freshly-baked, damaged corn breads, all damaged in the same fashion -- one side appears to have been blown up, while the other side has a big scar.

BASHFUL CASHIER  
The damaged corn breads? We get rid  
of 'em.

JANA  
How?

BASHFUL CASHIER  
We give them to shelters, hungry  
folk at the end of the day.

JANA  
Sell them?

BASHFUL CASHIER  
Two breads for a quarter.

JANA  
I'll take two.

INT. BARTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ceilie performs surgery on one of the corn breads. She slices off the section with the big scar, then she cuts away the "blown up" section. What's left is about 90% of a perfect corn bread.

INT. BARTON APARTMENT - LATER

The Bartons enjoy dinner. Ceilie places a tray of sliced bread on the table. Everyone grabs a slice. Chomps down. A moment's pause...

ANDY  
That is the most delicious bread  
I've ever tasted.

No objection from the family, either.

EXT. PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Andy races out of the school. Smiling broadly.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - DAY

Andy arrives. Orenstein is there to greet him, broom in hand.

ORENSTEIN  
Mr. Barton. Wasn't sure you'd show.  
So two hours weekdays, then four  
hours each, Saturday and Sunday.

ANDY  
Yes, Sir.

ORENSTEIN  
Start by sweeping the lobby floor.

Orenstein hands him the broom.

ANDY  
Yes, Sir.

**Montage.**

Andy settles into his new job. He's a jack-of-all-trades, alternatively:

-- sweeping/mopping floors  
 -- selling/taking tickets  
 -- hawking concessions  
 -- learning how to operate/operating the projector  
 -- Gorging himself on nonpareils, popcorn, and soda pop during breaks  
 -- (Luckily, not missing a beat with the knife and fork at home)  
 -- Putting on vaudeville acts with FRIENDS, for APPRECIATIVE CUSTOMERS  
 -- Going up and down the aisles, cleaning up the mess said customers have made

**End Montage.**

Andy, broom and pail in hand, finishes cleaning the theater.

ORENSTEIN  
 Bravo, Mr. Barton.

Andy produces a bowler hat. He dons it for a moment, doffs it, and bows.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER/LOBBY - LATER

Andy's by the concession stands. He puts his coat on.

ANDY  
 Time for me to be getting on home.

ORENSTEIN  
 Before you go, Mr. Barton.

Orenstein slips a bunch of dollar bills into Andy's coat.

ANDY  
 We agreed on no payment.

ORENSTEIN  
 You didn't really expect me to keep that promise, did you?

Andy inspects the contents of his coat pocket.

ANDY  
 This is four dollars!

ORENSTEIN

For sixteen hours, Mr. Barton.  
Good, hard work. And a funny  
vaudeville routine.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/BASEMENT - NIGHT

Andy and Jana wear heavy coats, carrying towels and other personal effects. Their breath is visible.

JANA

You go first.

Andy and Jana approach the shower. She hands him a bar of soap.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/BASEMENT - SHOWER

Andy washes his hair.

JANA

What will you do with the money?

ANDY

What do you think I oughta do?  
(beat)  
Okay, done! Towels!

Jana closes her eyes. Manages to get two towels to her brother, as he exits the shower. He leaves the water running.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Ah, cold, wow, wow, wow! Hoe! Hee!  
Ha! Who!

Andy wraps himself in the towels. He shivers like there's no tomorrow. Shuts his lids.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Shut!

Jana disrobes, jumps into the shower.

JANA

I'm in.

Andy's lids pop open.

JANA (CONT'D)

Gabe's asked me to marry him.

ANDY

Marry him? You mean before he leaves. What'd you tell him?

JANA

That I needed to think.

Jana's speech is either being affected by tears, or the water. Andy tries to figure out which.

ANDY

And?

JANA

I didn't... didn't have the heart to up and tell him on the spot.

Andy processes.

ANDY

You don't even want to *stay* while he's... over there, do you?

No answer. Andy picks up on his sister's soft weeping.

ANDY (CONT'D)

You love him.

JANA

Yes.

ANDY

But you don't want to lose him over there. And there's a chance that's your life a year from now.

JANA

You sure you're only twelve?

This time, Andy's not amused.

ANDY

Just because I'm small doesn't mean I don't attention.

(beat)

So it's two years apart.

Some soap gets into Jana's eyes.

JANA

Ow.

ANDY

No closeness. No hugs, no kisses.

Jana shuts the water off.

JANA

Lids. Towels.

Andy shuts his eyes, hands his sister a pair of towels. She gets out, wraps herself. Shivers.

JANA (CONT'D)  
 Sounds horrible when you take it  
 down to that.

ANDY  
 It is.

JANA  
 We had such plans. College for him.  
 Marriage after college. Children.  
 House in the mountains.  
 (beat)  
 You don't believe I could love  
 someone else?

ANDY  
 How could I know? I'm only twelve.

EXT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - DUSK

Andy leaves work, holding a large bag. He needs both hands to  
 carry it.

EXT. LICHT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Andy's outside the door. Rivka opens it.

RIVKA  
 Andrzej!

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Fedor and Grisha (hands bandaged) are at the kitchen table.  
 Andy studies their faces.

ANDY  
 You haven't eaten today.

Silence.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
 I bring good news.

Andy tears open the bag. The contents? Popped popcorn. Cooked  
 hot dogs. Melted Nonpareils. And that's just what's visible  
 to the naked eye.

FEDOR  
 What's this?

ANDY  
 The food Mr. Orenstein prepared,  
 but did not sell today. Will keep  
 'til tomorrow evening at least.

RIVKA  
 Why did he give them to you?

ANDY

He tells me tonight, "God forgive me, I've always simply thrown out what I could not move on the day, when it's still perfectly healthy to eat. Do something good with the food, Mr. Barton."

GRISHA

He does not know you bring to us?

ANDY

No.

GRISHA

Then we accept it as a gift.

RIVKA

Not a handout.

ANDY

I come to you now first thing every day, after work.

RIVKA

Take some of the nonpareils home with you?

ANDY

No. I've eaten thirty so far this afternoon. Even I have my limits.

RIVKA

Will you be able to eat supper?

ANDY

One more may give me problems.

Rivka cracks a smile.

INT. BARTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Andy fights his way through supper. Barely finishes the mashed potatoes on his plate.

INT. BARTON APARTMENT - LATER

Andy goes through a picture album. He smiles at photos of himself and Jana in various guises. Here's a photo showing him wearing a ladies' hat, with his father standing beside and smiling. He turns a page.

Each photo on this and the succeeding page is of Andy and the late Abie Licht, clowning around. Andy stops smiling as he studies the pictures.

EXT. MANUFACTURERS TRUST - DAY

The bank is located on 125th street and Madison Avenue, a major hub of business activity. Wide street. Cars drive in both directions. Horse and wagons are nearer the curb.

INT. MANUFACTURERS TRUST - DAY

Andy and Jana sit with one of the BANK MANAGERS, a starchy man of fifty. Andy slides his four dollars across the desk. The manager signs a piece of paper.

BANK MANAGER  
 Congratulations on your new savings  
 account, Andy.

Andy pockets the paper. He and Jana rise.

ANDY  
 Thank you, Sir. I expect to be  
 seeing a lot more of you and your  
 fine...

As the kid searches for the right word.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
 Institution.

The Bank Manager laughs. Offers Andy a hand. Andy shakes.

BANK MANAGER  
 Better keep a close eye on this  
 young man.

JANA  
 I'll do my best.

Andy and Jana make their way toward the exit.

JANA (CONT'D)  
 I'm so proud of you. To take a job  
 knowing you weren't going to be  
 paid, then work so hard --

Andy stops walking.

JANA (CONT'D)  
 What?

ANDY  
 Long as I did what Mr. Orenstein  
 asked, I knew I would be paid.  
 Would not have done it otherwise.

JANA  
 How could you know such a thing?

ANDY

Orenstein's a good man. I knew this just from seeing the pictures at his theater, how he treated me with respect, like I was any other patron, not a little kid.

Jana looks her brother up and down.

ANDY (CONT'D)

He'd never take advantage like that. All I needed was to convince him to let me work there. The free goodies are a happy bonus.

Jana smiles.

ANDY (CONT'D)

We have smart folks, Jana. People dismiss them because of their English. I don't. They do whatever they must. As will I.

JANA

And I.

ANDY

You have a little ruthlessness in you, too. This business with Gabe? The right and proper thing to do is marry. You know this.

JANA

Yes.

ANDY

You're not interested in right and proper. You want to do what you want to do.

JANA

Selfish.

ANDY

You can be selfish, but still do good by people.

JANA

Are you sure you're only twelve?

INT. LICHT APARTMENT - DAY

Andy sits with Rivka, chowing away on hot dogs, popcorn, and soda pop. They're looking over the pictures of Andy and Abie. Rivka smiles at Andy and her son's various poses.

ANDY  
We used to have so much fun.

RIVKA  
You were the little brother he  
didn't have.

ANDY  
I really miss him.

RIVKA  
Who took these?

ANDY  
It was, um... Abie's lady friend.

RIVKA  
Claire.

Sorrow clouds Rivka's good mood.

RIVKA (CONT'D)  
Sweet girl. Good family.

Andy's about to say something, but thinks better of it.

RIVKA (CONT'D)  
What?

ANDY  
How'd they... leave things?

RIVKA  
They broke it off. He was very sad.  
His first letters home, he still  
asked about her.

EXT. GILDEN'S THEATER - NIGHT

A hanging sign out front reads 'Opening Night!' A few FOLKS  
purchase tickets.

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER/BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Jana's getting into costume, along with the rest of the cast.  
She's cool, preternaturally calm. Olem sits opposite her.

OLEM  
How is your mind?

JANA  
Can't wait till curtain up.

EXT. KLEIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Andy stands outside. Struggling with himself. He puts a hand to the door, then retracts. Hand to the door. Holds for an instant. Retracts.

ANDY  
C'mon, Andrzej.

Andy knocks. Seconds later, Gabe opens the door. Andy feigns confidence in what he's doing.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Let's go, don't want to be late.

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER/BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Jana's in full costume.

OLEM  
Two minutes, everybody!

Jana decides to take a peek at the assembled throng. She pulls back the curtain ever-so-slightly...

Ceilie and Will appear to be more nervous than she is. Jana chuckles. She spots Ania and Victor, necking.

JANA  
So cute together, you two.

Andy's standing on his chair, pointing and laughing at Ania and Victor.

JANA (CONT'D)  
Get down, you dolt, you'll fall --

Andy loses his balance. Gabe grabs him before he falls.

Jana wasn't expecting Gabe to be here. She pulls back from the curtain, pale as a ghost.

OLEM  
What's wrong?

Jana sits down on the stage floor, dazed. Olem is vexed.

JANA  
He's here. First row center.

Olem holds for a beat.

OLEM  
One minute to curtain, Jana.

Jana doesn't move. Fellow cast members involved in the First Act find their opening marks. Each of them in their own way wondering what's the matter with the leading lady.

Olem crouches down next to her.

OLEM (CONT'D)  
This is your time. Yours alone. I  
know you hurt. Focus it.

The lights in the auditorium dim.

OLEM (CONT'D)  
Right now.

Olem scurries off the stage. Jana sucks in a long breath. She forces her body upright.

The curtain opens. The audience applauds, in anticipation...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Gabe studies the phone, next to the bed. Jana looks at herself in the room's full-length mirror.

GABE  
You hungry?

JANA  
Very.

GABE  
Nice phone. Call up for some food?

JANA  
In a while. After.

Gabe joins Jana by the mirror. He holds her from behind, plants a soft kiss on her neck.

GABE  
Are you certain?

JANA  
Yes. If it happens, it happens.

They face one another. Kiss.

INT. BARTON APARTMENT - DAY

Must be a Saturday, as Mr. Spring is here. Will hands him eleven dollars.

SPRING  
Where is the young one?

WILL  
Dressing for verk.

Andy emerges, nearly dressed and ready.

SPRING  
How is the job?

ANDY  
Great. Would you like to come by  
later? Give you a tour, settle you  
in for a picture or few?

SPRING  
Why thank you, young man!

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DAY

Andy exits the building, dressed in his Saturday best. He holds up: The Lights and all of their belongings are by the curb. Steven, Teresa, and Gabe are there, commiserating.

TERESA  
Just one more dollar.

STEVEN  
You'll stay with us until you find  
work.

RIVKA  
No, we won't impose. We'll find  
shelter, no worries.

GABE  
What if we give Spring the money  
right now?

Andy twitches at the mention of his friend's name.

GRISHA  
No matter. Have a peek.

Spring greets a young husband and wife by the entrance. They each carry two large satchels. Spring leads them inside.

FEDOR  
What is this?

TERESA  
They're moving in. The ink is not  
even dry. Spring, that bastard.

Andy makes his way over to Rivka.

ANDY  
I'm sorry. If I'd have known --

RIVKA  
Shush, not your responsibility.

EXT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - DAY

Andy's as angry as can be. He slams his foot into the garbage pail next to the theater, knocking it over.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER - DAY

Andy pours a tub of seeds into the popcorn machine.

ORENSTEIN (O.S.)  
Mr. Spring.

Andy puts down the tub. He leaves the concession area and approaches Spring, a smile forced onto his face. Spring grins at Andy's approach.

ORENSTEIN (CONT'D)  
Let's show him around, Mr. Barton,  
shall we?

Andy nods.

INT. ORENSTEIN'S THEATER/PROJECTION ROOM - DAY

The three check out the projection room. Spring is thrilled.

ORENSTEIN  
How was your morning?

SPRING  
Usual. Delinquency, removal.

ANDY  
Delinquency?

Spring laughs.

SPRING  
I think we've finally found a word  
Mr. Barton is not familiar with!

Normally, Orenstein would smile at such a line, but he merely offers a stone-face to Spring.

SPRING (CONT'D)  
Family had been warned not to let  
their debt balance increase, no  
matter the amount.

ORENSTEIN  
Of course. Business is business.

SPRING  
Exactly.

ORENSTEIN  
 Why don't you have a seat, we'll  
 run a few pictures for you.

Spring clasps his hands in excitement. He rushes out of the projection room. Orenstein closes the door behind him. Andy sits, palms under chin.

ORENSTEIN (CONT'D)  
 Any ideas?

It hits the kid like a bolt of lightning.

ANDY  
 Yes.

Andy searches high and low, through the stacks of film cans, until he comes to what he's looking for.

ORENSTEIN  
 What is it?

ANDY  
*A Corner in Wheat.*

ORENSTEIN  
 Perfect.

Down below, Spring has located a prime seat. He waves at Andy. Orenstein hits a switch and the lights dim.

*A Corner in Wheat* begins. When the title comes up, Spring has no reaction; he's never seen this film.

**Montage.**

Spring watches as the film unfolds. It's a short film, about fifteen minutes or so... about a wheat tycoon -- "The Wheat King" -- who decides to corner the world market in wheat.

Spring enjoys the proceedings. The images and intertitles allow one to follow the story with ease.

The Wheat King's pursuit of the dollar is all-consuming. He cares nothing for those who work for him, or for the multitudes who go hungry as a result of his nasty dealings.

Spring nods to himself, a small smile fixed to his face.

The Wheat King gets his comeuppance at the end: unwilling to trust anyone, he gets stuck in a grain elevator and is buried alive at film's end.

Spring's gripped by confusion.

**End Montage.**

The Lights come up. Spring rises. Andy's waiting by his seat.

SPRING  
Why did you show me this?

The child burns a hole into Spring with his gaze.

SPRING (CONT'D)  
You don't pay, you don't stay! I've  
a business to run, you little  
ingrate!

Orenstein appears behind Andy.

ORENSTEIN  
Get out of my theater.

SPRING  
What?

ORENSTEIN  
And don't return. I've a business  
to run.

Spring remains defiant.

SPRING  
I'll find another theater.

ORENSTEIN  
That's right. Now, get out.

Spring makes his way out of the theater.

ORENSTEIN (CONT'D)  
Good show, Andy.

ANDY  
But it didn't work.

ORENSTEIN  
He knows what he is. If he can live  
with that? I pity him.

ANDY  
Mr. Orenstein, the Lights are on  
the street.

**Fade to Black:**

FADE IN:

INT. GARMENT FACTORY - DAY

**Card: Monday, November 19th.**

Joe Grau sews fine garments, in yet another near-sweatshop.

**Card: The Graus -- "The American Dream"**

Joe's work area is towards the middle of the factory.

EXT. PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Barbara's at recess. She plays jumping jacks with three of her CLASSMATES. Andy watches with interest.

ANDY  
Nickel on Barbara, any of you?

No answer.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - DAY

The triplets, Zeev, Gene, and David, run around the apartment.

Elisabeth sits at her typewriter. Off to her right: a hefty stack of typewritten material. She picks up the stack and leafs through it. Perhaps this helps her to concentrate.

Elisabeth returns the stack to its former resting spot. She sighs. Goes back to typing.

As Barbara enters. Takes off her coat.

ELISABETH  
Good afternoon. How was your day?

BARBARA  
Terrif.

Barbara produces some change.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Andy made me thirty-five cents just for playing jumping jacks.

ELISABETH  
Andy, the little Meshuggeneh. Start getting supper ready.

Barbara heads for the kitchen.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - NIGHT

The family crowds around the dinner table.

JOE  
How'd you make out today?

ELISABETH  
Four pages.

JOE  
Good.

Joe tries to find the right pitch for this next one.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Are you finally ready to try and  
sell the others?

ELISABETH  
The finished ones?

Joe looks at his wife.

JOE  
What are you working towards?

ELISABETH  
These producers, the idea of a  
Jewish woman playwright is so funny  
to them.

JOE  
That's not an answer.

ELISABETH  
Best one I have. Bath, or laundry?

Joe hesitates.

JOE  
Laundry.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - LATER

The kitchen sink in these apartments is more like a tub.  
Translation: if a child is small enough, he or she can be  
given a bath.

The triplets take their turns in the sink, laughing and  
flailing away, with Elisabeth doing her darnedest to "make"  
them fit under the stream of water. It's a real knees-under-  
the-chin experience.

Barbara helps her brothers dry off. Joe and Elisabeth share a  
quiet word, out of earshot.

ELISABETH  
That's the last time they'll fit.

Joe smiles. Kisses his wife on the cheek.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - LATER

Joe does laundry, in the sink. He scrubs and scrubs. Quite  
skilled at it, actually, and he takes great care in this  
particular assignment.

EXT. PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Barbara tries to sling her book bag over her shoulder. She can't manage it. Her face is pale, drawn.

EXT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT - DAY

Andy and Victor play stoop ball. They cease, upon Barbara's approach. Victor grins.

VICTOR

Boriska!

Shivering, coughing weakly, Barbara struggles to make it up the front steps.

ANDY

You don't look well.

Barbara staggers. Falls to the ground. Andy and Victor panic. For once, Andy has no answer, and it's up to the older boy to take charge.

VICTOR

We'll get you upstairs.

Andy and Victor help Barbara to her feet. They walk her into the building.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - DAY

Barbara's in bed, wearing multiple layers, covers pulled up tight. Still, she shivers. Joe brings a mug of hot cocoa to her lips. She trembles, but is able to get the swig down without too much trouble.

JOE

Throat hurt?

Rather than croak a reply, Barbara nods. As Joe adjusts the covers, the telltale signs of skin rash (which accompanies scarlet fever) can be spotted on Barbara's neck. Joe tries not to have too big a reaction to the sight of the rash.

EXT. GRAU APARTMENT - DAY

Siggie heads down the hallway. He notices that a sign has been posted on the apartment door. He stops to look. The sign says "Scarlet Fever."

SIGGIE

Vey.

Siggie knocks at the door. Joe answers.

JOE

Hello, Zygmunt.

SIGGIE  
It's Barbara?

Joe nods.

JOE  
What're you doing home on a week day?

SIGGIE  
Hirsch gave me the day. I was about  
to inquire of you.

JOE  
I had Scarlet Fever as a child.  
Elisabeth didn't. She can't get close  
to Barbara until the Doc is sure  
she's not contagious.

SIGGIE  
The triplets?

JOE  
Fine, so far. We're keeping them as  
far away from Barbara as we can.

SIGGIE  
How about work?

JOE  
Can't go. My boss understands, but  
he can't pay me while I'm out. We  
may not be able to make next  
month's rent.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - NIGHT

Elisabeth is at the typewriter, working by candle light. Joe  
kisses her on the back of the neck.

JOE  
She's asleep.

ELISABETH  
How is she?

JOE  
So tired, she can barely move.

Joe moves in front of Elisabeth.

JOE (CONT'D)  
We need to try and sell your work.

ELISABETH  
I know.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - DAY

Jana enters.

JANA  
Hello, Elisabeth. How is Barbara?

ELISABETH  
The rash is going. Just some skin peeling around the neck.

JANA  
Good. You wanted to see me?

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - LATER

Jana sits with Elisabeth and Joe.

JANA  
I can get your work to the owner, he's very wealthy, probably purchases ten plays for every one he produces, but... he doesn't think women can write worth a spit. He'll laugh me off.

JOE  
You mean he won't read the plays?

JANA  
No.

JOE  
Then what do you suggest we do?

ELISABETH  
There's only one thing...

INT. GILDEN'S THEATER/OWNER'S OFFICE - DAY

Bavarian Jew HARRY GILDEN (50'S) sits in the spacious office. He beams as Jana enters, with Joe. Joe carries a satchel.

GILDEN  
Jana! How is the performance coming along?

JANA  
Very nicely. This is Joe Grau, the man I was telling you about.

Gilden rises, offers Joe a hand. Joe shakes.

GILDEN  
Pleased to meet you. You have some work for me to read?

Joe undoes the bag. He takes out Elisabeth's three plays, lays them down on the desk. The title pages of each are visible. All bearing the name "Joe Grau."

GILDEN (CONT'D)  
 Three plays. I'll have a busy weekend then. Tell me, Joe, where do you find your impetus to write?

The answer catches in Joe's throat. He tries again.

JOE  
 My wife.

Jana barely suppresses a giggle.

EXT. GILDEN'S THEATER - DAY

Joe -- visibly embarrassed -- walks alongside Jana. She breaks up laughing.

JANA  
 He reads fast. He'll probably collar me tomorrow, next day, let me know if he likes them.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - MORNING

Barbara's out of bed, fully dressed. Color has returned to her cheeks. Joe looks her over.

BARBARA  
 I'm fine. Can I go?

JOE  
 On one condition.

EXT. PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Joe has walked his daughter to school. He crouches down, gives her a nice little smooch, and sends her off.

INT. PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Barbara enters her classroom. FELLOW STUDENTS are happy that she's back and healthy.

EXT. GILDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Joe is outside the office, waiting for the right moment. He holds for a beat, then knocks.

GILDEN (O.S.)  
 Come.

Joe enters.

GILDEN (CONT'D)  
 Mr. Grau. Enjoyed your work very  
 much. I'd like to purchase two of  
 the three, if that's okay.

Joe blinks.

GILDEN (CONT'D)  
 Working on anything right now?

JOE  
 Uh... no.

GILDEN  
 Good. Would you like to go to work  
 for me?

JOE  
 Writing?

GILDEN  
 No, trimming ladies' hats.

Joe's about to correct Gilden, before he shuts himself up.

GILDEN (CONT'D)  
 Of course writing. I have several  
 scenarios I'd like to see turned  
 into full-length plays.

JOE  
 I'll... have to ask my wife.

Gilden offers up a quizzical expression.

JOE (CONT'D)  
 Our writing is more of a team effort.

Gilden smiles.

GILDEN  
 A Jewish woman playwright?

Joe nods.

GILDEN (CONT'D)  
 Jana was right to lead you in that  
 direction. I likely would have  
 dismissed the work out of hand. Now  
 that I've read it?

JOE  
 Yes?

GILDEN  
 I can't wait to meet your wife.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - DAY

Joe and Elisabeth engage in a staring contest. Each affixes as sober an expression as they can muster.

Barbara wanders in.

BARBARA  
What're you doing?

Elisabeth's concentration breaks. She laughs.

ELISABETH  
How much for the two plays?

Joe grins. He kisses his wife's neck, on the way toward whispering a number into her ear. Elisabeth shrieks as he whispers. Barbara is taken aback.

ELISABETH (CONT'D)  
And how much to draft the scenarios?

Joe whispers again. Elisabeth shrieks again.

JOE  
And he wants to meet you.

ELISABETH  
Why would he --

Elisabeth panics.

ELISABETH (CONT'D)  
You told him?

JOE  
I owed it to you to take the chance. Gilden's a fine fellow. You don't need a front.

EXT. MIDTOWN APARTMENT BUILDING/RIVERSIDE DRIVE - DAY

The west side of Manhattan. Many affluent Jews around here. The Graus, a short distance away, are spellbound... for the building is magnificent.

INT. MIDTOWN APARTMENT BUILDING/A UNIT - DAY

The Graus are with the LANDLADY, checking out the unit. It's nearly 4x the size of their apartment on 121st street, with:

-- A huge kitchen

-- three separate bedrooms

-- REAL BATHROOMS. In fact, one of the two bathrooms has a stand-alone shower.

Barbara's so excited to be in this place, to be healthy in this wonderful place, she fairly leaps about from room to room, leading the triplets by hand (two of them, anyway; the third piggy-backs on her).

Joe and Elisabeth smile at the landlady.

ELISABETH  
We'll take it.

INT. GRAU APARTMENT - NIGHT

Joe, Elisabeth, and the children are packed and ready to leave. Joe opens the door.

Andy stands in front of them.

BARBARA  
Andy's come to say goodbye!

Barbara races to Andy and throws herself into a hug, pulling the young man almost to the ground. Joe and Elisabeth laugh. Andy wriggles free.

ANDY  
Jana told me. Congratulations.

Andy's demeanor unnerves Joe.

JOE  
Andy?

ANDY  
It's the Lichts. They're out.

Elisabeth sags.

ELISABETH  
Such nice people. I was always sorry we didn't get to know them.

ANDY  
Can you help them?

ELISABETH  
Help them? Help them what?

ANDY  
They've nowhere to go. They won't stay with the Kleins.

JOE  
Are you proposing we simply...

ELISABETH  
Give them money to get a new place?

ANDY

I'm proposing that you meet with Spring and come to some kind of arrangement. You can afford it.

ELISABETH

Jana tells me you make good money.

ANDY

Don't change the topic.

Joe glares at the kid.

ANDY (CONT'D)

This is too serious to worry manners. Your deal is with me, not the Lichts. I'll give you what I have, help you move into your new place, whatever you require, to square things.

(beat)

Theatrical, if need be.

ELISABETH

Yes, we've seen you on the stage. Curious. But funny.

INT. RITZY MIDTOWN APARTMENT BUILDING/GRAU'S - DAY

The Graus settle into their new apartment. Elisabeth sets up her typewriter on a table near the kitchen.

JOE

I'm going to have a shower.  
(grins)  
Right through that door.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/EMPTY APARTMENT - DAY

The Graus old apartment is now empty, save for a single piece of paper resting in the middle of the floor.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/BASEMENT - SHOWER

Spring takes a wrench to the shower head.

JOE (O.S.)

Mr. Spring?

Spring turns. Smiles.

SPRING

My friends. How is your new place?

ELISABETH

What're you doing down here?

SPRING  
Fixing the shower head, again. What  
can I do for you?

JOE  
The Lights.

SPRING  
Shame, isn't it, after losing their  
boy.

Elisabeth's about to give Spring what-for. Joe steps in front  
of her.

JOE  
We'd like to make a business  
proposition.

INT. RITZY MIDTOWN APARTMENT BUILDING/GRAU'S - DAY

Andy keeps watch over the triplets, who adore him. Barbara  
prepares lunch in the kitchen.

ANDY  
What's for lunch, Boriska?

BARBARA  
Matzoh Brie. You like?

Andy's visage darkens.

ANDY  
(quiet)  
Yecch.  
(normal)  
Sure, smells delicious.  
(quiet)  
Yecch.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/BASEMENT - SHOWER

Spring shakes hands with Elisabeth, then Joe.

SPRING  
You understand, if the Lights fail  
to meet the rent, we wind up just  
where we were.

ELISABETH  
We know that.

JOE  
We have *faith* in them. Why don't  
you?

Spring has no answer.

INT. RITZY MIDTOWN APARTMENT BUILDING/GRAU'S - DAY

Elisabeth strikes a final key. She exhales, as Joe looks on.

ELISABETH

Done.

JOE

What do you call it?

Elisabeth offers Joe a wry smile.

INT. 121ST STREET TENEMENT/EMPTY APARTMENT - DAY

This apartment lacks any sort of lived-in look, almost appears as though no one's ever lived here. There's a piece of paper in the middle of the floor; that's it.

The door opens. Through it come Grisha, Rivka, and Fedor, carrying all of their belongings. They drop the stuff to the floor, exhale as one.

RIVKA

Nice to be back.

GRISHA

Yes. Different floor, but...

FEDOR

No complaints. It's a great miracle that we're back in this building.

RIVKA

Indeed it is.

Rivka spots the piece of paper at her feet. She bends down to pick it up.

GRISHA

What is that?

RIVKA

Elisabeth must've left it. It's a front page, one of her stories.

**Montage.**

Rapid cuts of each and every player in the tale, during one of their "moments," from the Berks on down, holding for a count of three on Andy Barton and Elisabeth Grau.

**Back to Scene.**

GRISHA

What does she call it?

Rivka cracks a smile.

RIVKA  
*Harlem, 1917.*

FADE OUT: