

LA GIARA - *The Cursed Water Jug*

*By Patricia King Haddad*

*A musical that blends opera, jazz, & Brazilian rhythm*

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### **ABOUT LA GIARA - (la gee-ahr-a) The Water Jug**

A curse follows Nunzio from Sicily to America after he breaks a treasured water jug, releasing a mythological spirit. Later, abusive Nunzio forbids his daughter's star-crossed love. Norma flees, bringing along her sister and mother, ultimately changing their family's destiny, as the three Minissale women lift the curse through their strength and love.

*La Giara's* narrative and powerful music uplift and offer meaning to women and the immigrant story, reaching audiences of all ages, ethnic, and socio-economic groups. Rooted in the past, yet relevant today, *La Giara* is about longing for our past and the cultures from which we originate. Five family characters, along with Sicilian Water God Anapos- whose commentary and timeless presence represents other-world realms and Sicilian culture- perform dramatic/comedic songs touching on the notion of family, human fragility and strength.

This work is suggested for theaters interested in a work that lies between musical theater and opera, suited for well-trained singers/actors seeking songs with emotional depth and range. Written in a variety of styles (jazz, opera, music theater, Brazilian rhythm), the live orchestra members may participate on stage, jumping into a variety of minor roles. Performed by six main characters who also double, or as a larger cast, *La Giara* requires a simple set – a proscenium or two on wheels, mirrors, and a screen for shadow puppetry which can be enhanced with video projections.

Based on a true Philadelphia story, the author's auto-biographical work addresses themes of immigration, oppression, mental illness, and sexism that her Sicilian family experienced in adapting to a new world. Water, mirrors and reflection serve as metaphors throughout the story in the process of tragedy, illumination, and evolution of characters. Moving song performances illustrate psychological challenges that characters face when irrelevant old-world traditions no longer serve, and a family must evolve in order to pave a brighter future.

\* This work includes mild domestic violence and thoughts of suicide.

### **PRODUCTION HISTORY**

*LA GIARA* has been performed four times as a narrated concert production to full houses in Philadelphia, PA, at World Cafe Live (2014, 2017, 2019), and The International House of Philadelphia (2015).

*Isn't It Love* was voted "Best Love Song" by New York's York Theater in 2019.

*LA GIARA* was invited to present two songs in a "New Musical Works" event created by Carol De Giere with Stephen Schwartz in 2019.

### **LA GIARA STORY SYNOPSIS:**

The Minissale family is seemingly fractured beyond repair, much like *la giara*, a family water jug that young, arrogant Nunzio shattered long ago in Sicily, in an incident believed to have irreparably cursed his family and the release of Sicilian Water God/dess Anapos.

Nunzio, an enigmatic, layered villain, flees from Sicily to America, where he encounters beautiful Annunziata and woos her with countless love letters until they marry, raising daughters, Norma and Mimi. Nunzio is a maladjusted, tyrannical patriarch who is simultaneously loved, loathed, and

feared by his family who suffocates in the severely strict household, especially after Nunzio forbids Norma to see her true love. But Norma secretly plans to run away and when Mimi and Annunziata discover her plan they join Norma on the spot, and all hop a West-bound train under false identities.

Nunzio's women are enjoying their true independence until Nunzio tracks them down with the help of a private investigator. Nunzio lures his family back under his control and into a mansion, full of gilded mirrors, fountains, and singing birds. The Minnisale women come to regard their gilded palazzo as no better than an opulent prison they yearn to escape. While Norma remains obstinate, tragedy strikes obedient Mimi, who is most affected by the curse of the Water Jar.

La Giara is full of idiosyncrasies and superstitions that permeate many immigrant families caught, culturally, between two worlds—striving for success in the new, yearning for the familiar customs of the old. In this family saga, Anapos guides family members to discovers that, with love and care, families, like water jugs, can be put back together again. *La Giara* confronts issues like oppressive gender dynamics and cultural loss that are at once American and universal, and also acutely resonant in this American moment.

#### MAJOR CHARACTERS:

Three women, three men. Suggested doubling and minor roles below.

ANAPOS: F and M, alto. Age range: ageless. A Sicilian Water Goddess and Shadow Puppeteer. Strong, dynamic, satirical, acrobatic, trickster, playful, compassionate, figure. ANAPOS is unleashed in the breaking of the water jug, ANAPOS is a storyteller and plays a part in healing the family's curse. ANAPOS may also perform shadow play, and minor roles of MARIO, BLUE-EYE, POLICEMAN, DINO and SERENADER if needed.

YOUNG NUNZIO:M, Tenor. Age range 17-24. MARIA's son. The one who breaks the water jug, the impetus that drives the story. A moody, precocious, rascal who outgrows his Sicilian village and makes his way to America where he woos Annunziata. (Opening, ADDIO, LOVE AND AFFECTION) Joins ENTOURAGE

MATURE NUNZIO MINISSALE, M, Bass Baritone. Age range 24-70's. Father to Norma and Mimi, Annunziata's husband. Handsome, and charming, yet vulnerable, lonely, explosive, and a tyrant. The so-called villain of the story.

ANNUNZIATA PICCIONE F, Legit Soprano. Age range 20's-70's. Mother to Norma and Mimi. Talented, ambitious, and levelheaded Annunziata is wooed by Nunzio. When betrayed by Nunzio, she finds her own independence. Can also play MARIA.

NORMA MINISSALE F, Belt Soprano. Age range 20's-40's-70's. Annunziata & Nunzio's disobedient daughter. Defiant and reckless, Norma breaks from family tradition and is the instigator of the family women's "runaway" plan; she never gives into her father's dominance and is the only character who creates a brighter future for herself. Can also play Vincenza.

MIMI MINISSALE, F, Legit Soprano. Age range 20's-40's-70's. Annunziata & Nunzio's obedient daughter. The beauty of the two daughters, Mimi is cultured, coy and obedient; lives her tragic life catering to her parents in their dark, lonely mansion, robbed of any love relationships. The one most damaged by the "water jug curse."

EUGENE COHEN, M, Tenor. Age range 20's. Norma's Jewish boyfriend, and a

violinist. When harassed by Nunzio about NORMA'S whereabouts, a guilty Eugene divulges their secret. This actor can also play ANTONIO and a PEASANT and additional small roles.

#### MINOR CHARACTERS

ANTONIO, M, Baritone/Tenor - Age range 16 - 20's/30's. Nunzio's younger brother. Can be played by Eugene. Can also play a God, Street Guy, Shadow Performer.

MARIA, F, - mezzo, Age Range 40's. Nunzio's mother. Wise.

VINCENZA - Age range- 40's, Annunziata's mother, Nunzio's aunt. Bad tempered.

GOD/DESSES/ENTOURAGE, (M/F) Set up scenes, place props, shadow puppet characters, play TOWNSPEOPLE, SERENADERS, SHOP WORKERS, PEASANTS.)

MICHELE, F, Soprano/Alto, Age range - 18-22, Norma's daughter. Vincenza, Shop person, Street Gal

DINO, M/F - Nunzio's Detective- any age, gregarious,

Cast can be expanded with minor character roles - shop people, God/desses, towns people, and in shadow play scenes.

#### COSTUMES

- Present/1980: Colorful Tunics over basic dark Dress.
- Sicily/Old World: Women- Basic dark Dress, Shawls. Men- Caps and vests
- 1930's/40's: Basic Dark Dress embellished color with smart hats, heels, jewelry, stoles. Men- suitcoats and fashionable hats
- Anapos: Blue Water-colored Robe, shimmery fabric

#### MUSIC AND INSTRUMENTATION

The musical style of LA GIARA is a combination of Puccini-like melodies, Jazz harmonies, and Brazilian rhythms. Vocalists perform a mix of operatic and musical theater styles.

Instrumentation - piano, bass, guitar, accordion, mandolin, (basic ensemble) plus percussion (guitarist plays percussion), clarinet/oboe. Percussionists plays sound effects of sewing machines, cooking scene (pots and pans), etc., using instruments to provide sound tapestry, etc.

Musicians can also participate on stage as minor characters.

#### VISUALS/SET DESIGN/SOUND

For the main visual treatment of the production, mirrors, water imagery and video projection and shadow puppetry are used to reference water themes and reflection of characters' illuminations. At times, water imagery is projected on mirrors. Video projection of historical photos of Philadelphia, Sicily, the mansion, real life characters, and old black and white footage also help illustrate location and time period.

A Dress Shop Unit on wheels revolves to different sides to portray the Dress Shop in various eras of the story. Mannequin props are costumed as well to portray different eras. Abstract visuals enhance theatricalization and song performances. La Giara has used very basic video projection which was

created on iMovie for early performances. <https://minasmusic.com/la-giara>  
(link to photos used in prior productions)

This framed unit(s) on wheels can serve as the dress shop, a train, Annunziata's kitchen, etc. Fabrics, mirrors, etc. can be used throughout to represent water imagery and water's symbolism in the story. Sound cues provided by percussion - such as rhythm of sewing machines in CHEZ MARIE, moving water, Etc. - augment the overall sound tapestry of the piece.

#### SHADOW PLAY/PUPPETRY

Puppetry is reminiscent of Sicilian culture and can bring a playful, surreal element to naturalistic scenes, and to explore other realms or bigger than life characters such as gods, or Nunzio. Sicilian water Goddess, Anapos' role can be enhanced by shadow puppetry.

#### ACT ONE

1. LONGING (NORMA, MIMI, MICHELE)
2. IT WAS JUST A FAMILY WATER JAR + TO MATTER (TOWNSPEOPLE/NUNZIO)
3. SICILIA (PEASANTS, NUNZIO, MARIA, ANTONIO)
4. ADDIO (MARIA AND NUNZIO)
5. WELCOME TO AMERICA (STREET GUY, 2 SALOON GALS)
6. DILEMMA (ANNUNZIATA)
7. YOUR LOVE AND AFFECTION (NUNZIO, ANAPOS, SERENADER(S))
8. CHEZ MARIE (ANNUNZIATA, NORMA, MIMI, SHOP WORKERS)
9. BROKEN PROMISES (ANNUNZIATA)
10. THROW YOU TO THE LIONS (NUNZIO, NORMA)
11. ISN'T IT LOVE? (EUGENE AND NORMA)
12. NO MORE (NORMA/ MIMI/ ANNUNZIATA, CHORUS)

#### ACT TWO

13. MR. EVIL (EUGENE + CHORUS)
14. I LONG FOR THE SUN (NUNZIO)
15. THERE ONCE WAS A FAMILY
16. WATER (MIMI) + TO MATTER (NUNZIO)
17. A LITTLE PINCH OF THIS & THAT (ANNU., MIMI, NORMA, NUNZIO, ANAPOS)

18. STITCHES OF TIME (NUNZIO, ANNUNZIATA + CHORUS)

19. LONGING REPRISE (NORMA, MIMI, MICHELE, CAST)

20. ISN'T IT LOVE (NORMA, MIMI, and CAST6

## ACT ONE

### Act 1, Scene 1 Present Time

(SHADOW PLAY. Dynamic imagery of Goddess, ANAPOS' arrival, emerging from a cracked Water Jug. Shocked/disoriented, ANAPOS jumps when she sees the audience.)

ANAPOS

Oh, my - where am I? (to AUDIENCE). And *who* are you??

Dio! What a voyage through time *that* was! (Fixing appearance.) Even though we Gods can travel swiftly, it's never easy! Particularly in a tight-fitting Water Jug!

Now... why am I *here*? (to AUDIENCE) You wouldn't happen to know, would you? I mean, we all arrive from different places - don't we? *Most* of us, anyway.

(ANAPOS picks up a shard of broken water jar.)

Oh!! Now I remember! Do I have a lot to explain! Viene Qua!

(ANAPOS summons God/desses who sweep up pieces of Jug.)

ANAPOS

Once in a while, mortal cries summon us Gods to sweep up broken pieces of an altercation, set lovers on their path... or even create a little mischief! In this case there was the Minissale family who had become quite distressed over the breaking of a family Water Jug - tsk-tsk- by one of their family members.

You see, in the Minissale's village, the breaking of a family jug meant the unleashing of Sicily's Water Goddess, "Anapos". (Clears throat). I mean... (irritated) *Me*... And that is precisely *why* I am here - because of that water jug incident!

Can you imagine my boredom after *years* baked in that clay? And *now* that I'm finally released-- I've been assigned to set a curse for the *perpetrator* who broke this water jug!

This certain perpetrator had learned his dark ways in a land ruled *fiercely* by *men*. *However*, little did he know - Ha! - that the Minissale women had more strength than a river's might!

Now- let me introduce you to these mighty Minissale women at their family Bridal shop - tsk-tsk- where *various d-ramas* occurred!

For fun, we will start our story backwards - as we Goddesses love to do! So - here is the ending- at the beginning! Ha-ha!

### Act 1, Scene 2

Bridal Shop. Present time

(LIGHTS RISE. ENTOURAGE rolls in SHOP UNIT showing PRESENT-TIME SIDE, with Mannequin dressed with present-time

garment. The MINISSALE WOMEN - NORMA's daughter, MICHELE is 25, NORMA and MIMI are in their 60's. Women are trying on dresses, hats for MICHELE'S wedding. NORMA and MIMI will dress MICHELE throughout show, adding to her bridal outfit until the end when MICHELE will be completely dressed to marry.)

NORMA

Look at this place - all the family pictures are still on the wall - just as Mother left it.

MIMI

Norma, look! Here's that old photograph of Sicily. Come see, Michele. (THEY gather to look.)

MICHELE

(Sighs) Why would your family ever leave such a beautiful place?

NORMA

It was because of the family curse.

MICHELE

(MICHELE) Oooh... A family Curse?? *Our* family?

MIMI

(Evasive) Oh - Papa and his Aunt Vincenza had that epic fight back in Sicily- all because of a water jug...

NORMA

After that fight, the villagers said they had become cursed. Here's a photo of the family before they came to America.

MICHELE

They look hungry.

MIMI

(wistfully) They left everything behind - arriving in America with their sacks of broken dreams.

MICHELE

(Studies photo) I feel as if I *know* them... it gives me such a longing -

NORMA

(NORMA gives MIMI a knowing look.)

Oh- our family calls it "the *longing* malaise" -

MIMI

(Trance-like) Yes, that longing - that constant *craving*...

NORMA

That void... as if something is *perpetually* out of reach...

MIMI



(Perplexed) A *pang* ... triggered by an aroma... a melody..

NORMA

Or church bells ringing from afar..

MICHELE

Yes- I know that feeling - it's like you *belong* to a place or something that you can't explain why..

**TRACK #1** (SONG: *LONGING*. Sung by NORMA and MIMI to MICHELE. [Longing/Opening](#)) Recording differs, disregard narration.

NORMA: WE ALL HAVE LEFT SOMETHING BEHIND  
A PERSON, A PLACE, A CERTAIN TIME  
WITH MEMORIES THAT LINGER TO REMIND  
THAT WE CAN NO LONGER TURN BACK  
TO A TIME THAT ALREADY HAS PASSED  
THAT LIES BEYOND OUR FOREVER-REACHING GRASP

MIMI: THE MORE WE TRY TO HOLD OUR MEMORY NEAR  
THE MORE DISTANT IT APPEARS

ANNUNZIATA: LEAVING TRACES BITTER SWEET AND OH SO DEAR

NORMA and MIMI: WE CAN TASTE IT & EVEN SMELL IT,

ANNUN. and NUNZIO: WE CAN HEAR IT AND ALMOST SEE IT

ALL: BUT WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO TOUCH IT AGAIN

NORMA: LONGING MAKES US PRONE TO FEEL  
WHAT IS GONE, IS STILL VERY HERE AND REAL  
SO CLOSE, SO FAR, LIKE A DISTANT BURNING STAR

MIMI IMPRESSIONS LODGED IN MEMORIES  
IN CORNERS OF ETERNITY  
SO PRESENT, YET CONFINED TO PAST REVERIE

NORMA, MIMI, MICHELE: THE MORE WE TRY TO HOLD OUR MEMORY NEAR  
THE MORE DISTANT IT APPEARS  
LEAVING TRACES BITTER SWEET AND OH SO DEAR  
WE CAN TASTE IT AND EVEN SMELL IT, WE CAN HEAR IT, AND ALMOST SEE IT  
BUT WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO TOUCH, NEVER BE ABLE TO TOUCH- IT AGAIN.

(WOMEN hug. MICHELE roams, finds a photograph, a picture falls out.)

MICHELE

My! Who's this young man? Signed- "Eugene".

NORMA

(NORMA grabs photo from MICHELE.)

Some questions are meant *not* to be answered!

(MIMI puts a finger to her lips, silencing MICHELE)

NORMA

Anyway - my father took care of *that*.

(NORMA, agitated, stares at photo, stashes it away.)

MIMI

(sarcastic) Our father was known for destroying people's love lives...

(MIMI takes a paintings from the wall.)

Look, Norma - here's your old painting of Sicily.

MICHELE

(MICHELE studies painting.)

Who are those three ghost figures floating above the mountain?

MIMI

Maybe our ancestors ... *Or*, the Sicilian Goddess Anapos who your Nona spoke of...

(MIMI pins dress on MICHELE)

NORMA

Mimi - why aren't you trying on any dresses - you're not going to wear that boring lilac gown again - are you?

MIMI

I hope *you're* not going to wear your hair like *that* to the wedding.

MICHELE

(To MIMI) Was there really a Goddess named Anapos?

MIMI

Oh, yes... you may find it hard to believe, but that's how the Old World worked. Who knows, maybe Anapos is still hanging around...

Now, I'm going to find a dress for myself - to *please* your mother.

(NORMA comes, ties a sash to MICHELE's dress.)

MICHELE

(whispering) Didn't Mimi ever marry?

NORMA

Shh...! No- and she never got over it...

MIMI

(MIMI approaches)

Norma, look! I found the perfect mother-of-the-bride dress - it won't make you look so pale. Oh- why are you two so serious?

MICHELE

Oh, nothing, we were just talking- about Gods.

MIMI

Well, don't get too carried away. Gods don't solve everything. I always wondered whose side the Gods were on, anyway.

MICHELE

(To NORMA) I can't stop thinking about that fight between your aunt Vincenza and Papa. Papa seemed so nice -

NORMA

(Primping her hair in the mirror)

Apparently you didn't know our father well enough.

(NORMA makes exaggerated gestures)

In the highlands of Sicily, *Nunzio Minissale*, was as deceptive as the village volcano, Etna. (SHE leans forward, narrowing her eyes) They say that's why he always exploded like fireworks!

(THEY all crack up.)

MIMI

You know what they say in Sicily: There are forces, there are Gods, and there are mortal wounds too deep to heal.

MICHELE

(MICHELE stomps her foot.)

*When* are you two ever going to tell me the story???

MIMI

Norma, tell her what happened...

NORMA

It all began back in Sicily - when your teenage grandfather was collecting water at the town fountain and *literally* ran into Aunt Vicenza...

MIMI

But *she* let him have it! (THEY crack up. LIGHTS OUT.)

Act 2, Scene three  
Sicily, 1912

YOUNG NUNZIO

(LIGHTS UP. PROJECTION of village setting. Teen age boys, NUNZIO AND ANTONIO, dressed in peasant style, look down the long water line and spot Aunt VINCENZA, holding her colorful water jug, uncracked.)

Holy Macaroni - look at that line! Antonio- there's Aunt Vincenza talking away. Go distract her for a minute. (HE shoos ANTONIO.) Ask her how her fig trees have been growing. She loves to brag about her garden.

ANTONIO

No way, Nunzio.

YOUNG NUNZIO

Don't be such a weakling. You distract her - I'll do the hard part. I'll sneak in front of her while she's blabbing away--

(ANTONIO doesn't move)

Antonio! you'll never get anywhere in life. (HE takes out a coin) How do you think I got this? (ANTONIO's eyes widen) This will be yours if you just go and talk to that old meanie.

ANTONIO

Oh... all right, but back me up, Nunzio.

(Approaches VINCENZA) Buon Giorno, Aunt Vincenza. How's your very beautiful and magnificent fig tree growing in your splendid, copious garden?

(While VINCENZA turns to ANTONIO, NUNZIO steals in front of her, staring ahead. VINCENZA turns around with a birdlike gaze and pokes NUNZIO'S shoulder.)

VINCENZA

Hey, little man - you think I didn't see you steal in front of me?

YOUNG NUNZIO

(With a broad smile.) Oh! Aunt Vincenza! I didn't realize you were standing *right* next to me. My - what a *spectacular* dress you're wearing today.

VINCENZA

Don't sweet-talk me, Nunzio. You just stole my place in line.

YOUNG NUNZIO

I've been here all along- you just need to get your spectacles adjusted.

VINCENZA

How rude! You move young man, or I'll move you myself!

(NUNZIO settles his weight as VINCENZA shoves. NUNZIO turns, swings his jug, crashing it into VINCENZA'S jug. A collective gasp sweeps through the townspeople.)

VINCENZA

You scoundrel! That was my family's heirloom jar!

(SHE collects pieces, whimpering, as consoling women help.)

(To TOWNSPEOPLE.) This is a bad omen! We'll ALL be cursed! You know what this means – the wrath of Anapos will be released!!

(BIG PIANO/PERCUSSION RUMBLE. TOWNSPEOPLE gesticulate fear and form a whisper line, which builds to a rhythmic chant.)

TOWNSPEOPLE

We'll be cursed, we'll be cursed, we'll be cursed... (Chant merges into song lyric) "It was just, it was just, it was just... a family water jar."

(NUNZIO, weaves through the crowd, grabs a piece of the jar, tucks it away, then HE is pushed in the middle of a circle by hysterical TOWNSPEOPLE who parade around him.)

**TRACK #2** (SONG: *IT WAS JUST A FAMILY WATER JAR!* Sung by TOWNSPEOPLE. [\*It Was Just a Family Water Jar\*](#)) (shortened from recording.)

**Develop More back and forth singing parts**

TOWNSPEOPLE: IT WAS JUST, IT WAS JUST, IT WAS JUST A FAMILY WATER JAR  
HOW COULD WE LET IT START THIS FAMILY WAR?  
WITH A CRASH, WITH A CRASH, IT TOOK A BLOW  
AND NOW WE'RE ETERNAL FOES!

IT WAS JUST, IT WAS JUST, IT WAS JUST A FAMILY WATER JAR  
BUT HATRED BECAME OUR GUIDING STAR  
WITH A CRASH, WITH A CRASH ALL BECAME INSANITY  
AND CHANGED OUR DESTINY

WOMEN: THAT RUDE BOY BROKE INTO THE WATER LINE  
HIT AUNTIE'S JAR WHO STARTED TO WHINE  
SAID SHE'D NEVER EVER EVER FORGIVE!  
SHE SAID SHE'D NEVER, EVER, EVER, FORGIVE HIM AS LONG AS SHE LIVED!

ALL: WE MUST FIND THE MAGIC TO FIX WHAT WILL BE TRAGIC – FOR YEARS  
WE MUST FIND SOMEONE TO TELL, HOW BREAK THIS EVIL SPELL AND ALL OUR TEARS!  
WE HAVE A NOTION, LOVE'S THE SECRET POTION  
TO HEAL OUR FEARS AND ALL OUR TEARS, THAT WE WILL CRY FOR YEARS!

**WOMEN: THAT RASCAL CAUSED THE WATER JAR TO CRACK**  
THAT'S WHEN THINGS GOT SO VERY VERY OUT OF WHACK  
THAT LITTLE DEVIL'S NOT ONE TO TRUST  
HE'S NOT ONE TO TRUST  
CAUTION IS A MUST! (CAUTION IS A MUST!)

WE MUST FIND THE MAGIC TO FIX WHAT WILL BE TRAGIC  
WE MUST FIND SOMEONE TO TELL US HOW TO BREAK THIS EVIL SPELL!  
WE HAVE A NOTION THAT LOVE'S THE SECRET POTION  
TO HEAL OUR FEARS AND ALL OUR TEARS  
THAT WE WILL CRY FOR YEARS AND YEARS AND YEARS AND YEARS AND YEARS!

(CRASH, LARGE PERCUSSION RUMBLE. ANAPOS appears with her GOD/DESSES ENTOURAGE who hold mirrors that represent water.)

ANAPOS

Basta! All of you - Stop!

VINCENZA

Dio!! Anapos has been released! (Makes the sign of the cross)

(ANAPOS walks among TOWNSPEOPLE. GOD/DESSES shine mirror on townspeople. ANAPOS stops in front of NUNZIO- in ominous tone.)

BREAKING AN ANCESTRAL HEIRLOOM  
WILL BRING ONE DOOM  
AND FOR THIS AGGRESSION  
WHAT WILL BE YOUR LESSON,  
THE CORRECTION, FOR YOUR INDISCRETION  
THAT IS THE QUESTION--

YOUNG NUNZIO

Please! It was an accident -

ANAPOS

Silence! Who are you to speak - thoughtless boy.

YOUNG NUNZIO

I'm no boy! I'm *Nunzio Minissale*!!

(*SONG: TO MATTER Music to be written:*)

NUNZIO:

ALL OF YOU WHO CAST YOUR STONES  
WITH SCOWLS FROM EMPTY THRONES  
FENCED BY MOUNTAINS FROM ALL SIDES  
YOUR MINDS IN VALLEYS CRITICIZE  
MY MISTAKE YOU READILY DAMN  
YOU HARDLY KNOW - WHO I AM  
BUT I HAVE SIGHTS, I HAVE SCHEMES  
THIS SMALL TOWN HAS NEVER SEEN  
I HAVE HOPES TO CLIMB A LADDER  
TO A PLACE WHERE I WILL MATTER, TO A PLACE WHERE I WILL MATTER.

ANAPOS

Matter?? Hmmpf... You want to matter? Ha! What *matters*, is that *one* must *matter* for *all*!

(ANAPOS concentrates, recites curse, Percussion rumble.)

Now, young man- let us see which waters will run through your life...  
hmmm... A family water jug, cracked by a swift hand in one thoughtless gesture,  
begets a broken family, *cursed* with an *eternal* malaise of *longing* -

(ANAPOS forces NUNZIO to look into mirror.)

A marriage will give you 2 daughters. The weaker daughter with the gentle heart, will swim in lonely, murky waters. And the stronger daughter... will swim against the tide- and denied the love of her life...

(CROWD gasps. ANAPOS walks about, thinking.)

And you, Nunzio- you will be a broken man - *until* you understand the wisdom of loving *others*, as much as you love *yourself*!

(ANAPOS hits ground.)

Prepare for imminent doom!

(TOWNSPEOPLE struck to the ground. ANAPOS and NUNZIO face each other defiantly, each holding up their piece of the water jug. LIGHTS OUT.)

#### Act I, Scene Four

(LIGHTS RISE as *SICILIA* plays. PUPPETS enact a SHADOW PLAY behind a back-lit unit of peasants farming in synchronized choreography, humming Sicilian blues. NUNZIO and mother, MARIA, are working the field.)

MARIA

Look at these meager crops! We used to fill basketfuls at the end of day.

YOUNG NUNZIO

Those wealthy land barons, tramping all over our land... telling us what and where to plant. Mama- we *have* to fight for our rights-

MARIA

We have to fight for our *future*. We will find a way...

YOUNG NUNZIO

Papa says, that you dream too much...

MARIA

Well, that's all you've got sometimes.

YOUNG NUNZIO

(Scoops up dirt and lets it run through fingers).

Dreams are made of air - but I believe in *this*!

PEASANTS

(PEASANTS sing *SICILIA*. Choreography - picking up dirt, running it through their fingers.)

**TRACK # 3** (SONG: SICILIA) [Sicilia](#) (differs from recording)

SONG: *SICILIA* Sung by PEASANT CHORUS. Lyrics in Sicilian dialect)

O SICILIA TERRA MIA  
QUAN/AMURI CIAIU PI TIA  
KINA DI SULI E KINA DI LURI  
KU NU MARI CA SEMPRI CANTO DA MURI  
TI PIENSU SEMPRI SICILIA MIA.  
LU CORI A LA VITA TI DUNGNU A TI  
O SICILIA SEMPRI MIA

HUM:CHORUS: (B PART) - not on recording. Song ends.

MARIA

(MARIA holds NUNZIO's face in her hands.)

*Listen*, Nunzio- open your eyes! You're forgetting that this land is less and less our own. And since this water jug incident, you've become victim of a town's hunger for drama! You have to leave!

YOUNG NUNZIO

Leave?? Where would I ever go??

MARIA

Why - the land of promise! America!

YOUNG NUNZIO

America?? So far! Leave my home, our family?

(MARIA pulls ring from her apron pocket.)

**TRACK #4** SONG: ADDIO (MARIA/MIMI, AND YOUNG NUNZIO) [ADDIO](#)

(Arrangement differs from recording)

MARIA: TAKE MY FATHER'S RING, IT'S ALL I HAVE  
I CAN'T BELIEVE LIFE'S COME TO THIS...SO DESPERATE.  
OUR LAND ABUNDANT WITH FRUIT AND TREES  
WHERE FIELDS OF WHEAT MEET AQUA SEAS  
HOW COULD WE THINK, SOMEDAY WE'D LEAVE?

NUNZIO: LIFE CHANGED, PROMISE IS GONE, I'LL TAKE THIS CHANCE TO CARRY ON  
DESOLATION URGES FLEE, TO LEAVE BEHIND ALL THAT MEANS TO ME  
FAMILY, FRIENDS AND LAND OF SUN AND SEA

MARIA: YOU'LL MISS THE ROAM OF GOLDEN HILLS  
THE OLIVE GROVES AND FICKLE GIRLS, YOUR YOUTH WILL NEVER FULFILL  
YOU MUST CROSS THE SEA WITH MOCK BRAVERY, WHEN NO COURAGE IS LEFT IN THEE  
TO FATHOM THE FORTUNE TO BE FREE

NUNZIO: ALL I WANT TO DO IS STAY, BUT I CAN'T REMAIN ANOTHER DAY  
SO LET ME GO BEFORE I CHANGE MY HEART  
YOU KNOW I'D RATHER DIE THAN TEAR OUR HOME APART-



MARIA: SAY GOOD BYE TO ONES YOU LOVE  
DON'T TURN YOUR GAZE AROUND TO US  
WHO REMAIN WHERE YOUR SHADOW WAS  
GIVE YOUR HAND, I CAN'T MEET YOUR EYES TO SAY THIS FINAL SAD GOOD BYE  
THIS LAST LOOK PRINTS IN MY MIND LIKE A PHOTO FROZEN IN TIME

NUNZIO: DEAR GOD, MAKE IT WORTH THIS SACRIFICE  
GIVE ME STRENGTH TO FIND A BETTER LIFE  
TO TRAVEL TO A LAND UNKNOWN, **ON** DREAMS BUILT **OF** YOUTH AND HOPE  
THAT HUNGER FEEDS ON FAITH ALONE  
(NO INTERLUDE)

**MARIA: PLEASE GO BEFORE YOU CHANGE YOUR HEART**

**NUNZIO: TIME HAS COME FOR US TO PART**

**MARIA NUNZIO: PLEASE LEAVE BEFORE YOU CHANGE YOUR HEART  
NOW LET US TAKE OUR UNWANTED PART**

.

(VIDEO/SHADOW PROJECTION simulates travel across sea.)

MARIA: SAIL WATERS TO TAKE YOUR FAR, TO FOLLOW PATHS OF DISTANT STARS  
AND LOSE YOUR PAST IN THIS SEA  
I'LL SETTLE MY DREAMS ON THE HORIZON, FOR I MUST LEARN TO FORGET MY SON  
AND OLDEN DAYS WHEN WE ONCE WERE FREE.

ANNUNZIATA

(Whispers looking out to sea.) Addio...

(SPOT DIMS on MARIA)

Act I, Scene Five  
PHILADELPHIA circa 1912

(LIGHTS UP. PROJECTION of 1912 era, Philadelphia. NUNZIO  
arrives at a dock in peasant clothes. ANAPOS spots NUNZIO.)

ANAPOS

Nunzio! You made it! Oh my, we've got to do something about your clothes...

(NUNZIO walks, dizzy with movement of the big city.)

NUNZIO

Dio - what tall buildings! Everything moves at such a fast pace! And the  
language - it's as crisp as the cold air!

(MUSICIANS surround NUNZIO and ANAPOS, playing "Welcome  
Ragtime Vamp". ENTER the STREET GUY, and flirtatious STREET  
GALS, who eye NUNZIO and ANAPOS.)

STREET GAL

(GALS link arms with ANAPOS and NUNZIO)

Well, hello strangers- Don't look so lost! Welcome to America! You're gonna  
love this place in no time!

**TRACK #5** (SONG: WELCOME TO AMERICA, sung by STREET GUY, GALS)  
[Welcome to America](#)

ALL: DOO- DOO -DOO DOO - DOO (1x)  
STREET GUY: WELCOME TO AMERICA  
COME AND STEP INTO THE LAND OF MILK AND HONEY  
THERE'S A HUNDRED WAYS  
TO SHINE YOUR POCKET WITH A LITTLE BIT OF MONEY  
WELCOME TO PHILADELPHIA  
YOU'RE IN THE CITY OF PROMISE AND PLEASURE  
SO MUCH OPPORTUNITY, THAT THERE'S NO WAY THAT YOU CAN EVEN MEASURE.

GALS: IT'S OBVIOUS YOU'RE FROM FOREIGN DESCENT  
TO THE NEW LAND YOU HAVE BEEN SENT  
TO FIND, FOLLOW AND BUILD YOUR DREAMS  
TO CHOOSE FROM A 1022 SCHEMES

STREET GUY: STRUTTIN' DOWN CHESTNUT STREET  
YOU'RE IN THE PLACE WHERE NIGHT LIGHTS ARE DAZZLIN'  
CLICK YOUR HEELS TO THE BEAT, COME JOIN US WITH SOME FANCY DANCIN'!

ALL: DOO- DOO -DOO DOO - DOO (2x)  
GALS: YOU'RE IN THE LAND OF RAGTIME AND BLUES  
YOU CAN DANCE TO THE MUSIC YOU CHOOSE  
THERE'S A RHYTHM IN THIS CITY'S STEP  
A SNAPPY TEMPO YOU WILL NEVER FORGET  
STREET GUY: WELCOME TO AMERICA  
YOU'RE IN THE LAND OF PROMISE AND PLEASURE  
SO MUCH OPPORTUNITY,  
GALS: YOU CAN'T MEASURE  
STREET GUY: A PLACE TO FIND A HONEY  
GALS: AND MAKE A BIT OF MONEY  
STREET GUY: OH LIFE'S RICH AND SNAZZY,  
ALL: CUZ AMERICA'S BRIGHT AND JAZZY!  
DOO-DOO (2x)  
(LIGHTS OUT.)

#### Act I, Scene Six

Scene Five features several settings- a barber shop, the street, a montage of NUNZIO's first year in America:. NUNZIO'S costumes become increasingly fine during this scene.

(Barber shop where NUNZIO is employed: The opera singer MARIO arrives, sees NUNZIO tediously pronouncing big words from the newspaper. NUNZIO seats him.)

MARIO

Mighty impressed with you, Nunzio. Your vocabulary is quite sophisticated for the short time you've been here!

YOUNG NUNZIO

(Sharpening razors) I've been working on my English... *and* poetic writing!  
Actually, *I'm* the person to see if one needs a special love letter to impress  
a sweetheart!

MARIO

Ha! Maybe you can write a letter for *me*! I've got my eye on one of the  
chorus girls in the opera.

(NUNZIO soaps up MARIO's face, who sings "UN BEL DI,  
VEDREMO" dramatically waving arms.)

UN BEL DI, VEDREMO  
LEVARSI UN FIL DI FUMO  
SULL'ESTREMO CONFIN DEL MARE  
E POI LA NAVE APPARE

(NUNZIO is astounded.)

MARIO

Bravo, Nunzio, you like the music - heh? Listen, I happen to have an extra  
ticket to my performance tonight.

(MARIO pulls out a ticket; NUNZIO looks at it shyly.)

Take it! And wait til' you see the leading lady - hmmm!

YOUNG NUNZIO

Grazie, Mario - Grazie!!

ANAPOS

(ANAPOS ENTERS, NUNZIO knots a fancy tie.)

Where are you going??

YOUNG NUNZIO

To see an opera! *And* the leading lady!

ANAPOS

Aren't you a little overdressed?

YOUNG NUNZIO

Why not? In America one can use ambition to one's advantage!

ANAPOS

Just remember, stay away from the blue-eyed boys. Make sure you walk on *your*  
side of the street.

YOUNG NUNZIO

(Darkens) If they mess with me, I'll show them.

(LIGHTS CROSSFADE to a PROJECTED IMAGE of a dark alley  
scene. A member of the "blue-eyed" gang enters and  
points to NUNZIO hurrying to the opera.)

BLUE-EYE

There's the uppity Dago - the one who wears the fancy clothes. I'm tired of seeing his face!

(ANAPOS enters and speaks to AUDIENCE.)

ANAPOS

All was going well with Nunzio- until those blue-eyes began to harass "the dark, Sicilian boy" who didn't keep to *his* side of the street. After several scuffles, Nunzio decided to defend himself, with implements from the barbershop, hidden deep in his pocket.

(ENTOURAGE enact SHADOW PLAY behind the back-lit framed unit, while MUSIC plays the "*Water Jug Theme*" and percussion provides suspense. PUPPET BLUE-EYE hurls an orange, just missing PUPPET NUNZIO's head, PUPPET BLUE-EYE closes in on PUPPET NUNZIO, there is a scuffle, PUPPET NUNZIO strikes PUPPET BLUE-EYE with weapon; PUPPET BLUE-EYE falls lifeless, MUSIC and rhythm stop abruptly. SHADOW PLAY LIGHTING fades.)

ANAPOS

How could you let things get so out of hand?!!

YOUNG NUNZIO

(hysterical) I swear it was self-defense! I never thought our scuffle would result in a... in a murder!

ANAPOS

Make yourself scarce, Nunzio!

(NUNZIO runs to hide. Percussion resumes.)

(To AUDIENCE) While Nunzio stayed off the streets, the Italian neighborhood kept the incident hushed from city officials. Life in America was becoming more complex than Nunzio ever imagined.

Nunzio began to feel depressed... then euphoric- like a ship tossed from one wave to the other! That was when Nunzio left his boyhood behind, finding comfort in cards, alcohol, and the ladies - diving into a deep pool of endless urges. Several years passed. Thankfully, on one of his darkest days, a letter arrived.

(MATURE NUNZIO enters, replacing YOUNG NUNZIO. ANAPOS hands HIM the letter - smirking at her own doing. NUNZIO reads.)

NUNZIO

Mama is on her way to America!"

(NUNZIO kisses the letter over and over.)

ANAPOS

And your Aunt Vincenza is coming, also!

NUNZIO

(MUSIC: "*Water Jug*" stops)

Aunt Vin-cen-za??

ANAPOS

And... her daughter, A-nnun-zi-ata! Ha!!

(Whispers to AUDIENCE) Thank Goddess, Annunziata has finally arrived. Now we can get to work!

(NUNZIO turns around and sees his mother, MARIA and AUNT VINCENZA arriving. NUNZIO and MARIA, warmly hug. AUNT VINCENZA scoffs at NUNZIO and struts off, revealing her daughter, ANNUNZIATA. NUNZIO is stunned by ANNUNZIATA.)

YOUNG NUNZIO

Annunziata! What a surprise! Don't you remember me?

ANNUNZIATA

(Haughtily) Yes?? How can I forget you - *Nunzio*?

(ANNUNZIATA lifts her chin, walks off. Enraptured NUNZIO runs to a desk, whips out a pen, starts writing love letters, one after another.)

ANAPOS

Another letter???

NUNZIO

Love never runs out of words—

ANAPOS

(NUNZIO hands letters to ANAPOS, who delivers them to ANNUNZIATA, running back/forth. Each delivered letter elicits a different reaction from ANNUNZIATA. ANAPOS finally exhausted.)

Annunziata, Can't you just respond to *one* of Nunzio's letters??

ANNUNZIATA

I'm keeping my distance from him and his questionable reputation! And don't forget - the one who broke my mother's water jug! Anyway, I'm determined to become a successful dressmaker in America, and I'm *not* going to let anyone distract me from my dreams!

ANAPOS

Cara Annunziata, time is ticking. How many men do you know who can write *such* letters? Although... one must be careful not to be swept away by words...

ANNUNZIATA

Sometimes he charms me so - other times he strikes such a fear in me. This-- is my dilemma.

(LIGHTS FADES on ANAPOS, SPOT on ANNUNZIATA)

**TRACK #6** (SONG: *DILEMMA* Sung by ANNUNZIATA. [Dilemma.](#))

ANNUNZIATA: TOO MANY LETTERS, TOO MANY THOUGHTS, TOO MANY WORDS.  
I THOUGHT I KNEW YOU, YOU SEEM SO DIFFERENT

FROM WHAT I HAVE HEARD  
BUT WHEN I READ THE WORDS YOU WRITE AND WHAT THEY MEAN  
I FIND YOU MORE THAN I EVER DREAMED.

YOUR PAST HAS STORIES, I'VE HEARD THE RUMORS THEY TALK ABOUT  
YET IN YOUR LETTERS, I UNDERSTAND YOU MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE  
IN MY DILEMMA, YOUR WORDS FIND WAYS TO CONSOLE ME  
WHEN LOVE IS COUNTING MY LONELY DAYS  
LONELY NIGHTS, WHILE I QUESTION MY LIFE

SHOULD I LISTEN TO MY YEARNING HEART  
OR TO REASONS THAT WOULD JUST KEEP US APART?  
I'VE WAITED TOO MANY YEARS AND TOO LONG  
TO BUILD A LIFE WITH SOMEONE I BELONG.  
I'VE SEEN TWO DIFFERENT SIDES THAT YOU SHOW  
ONE SIDE TO FEAR, ONE TO FILL MY SOUL.  
I BELIEVE YOU COULD CHANGE FOR US TO START ANEW  
WOULD I EVER MEAN THAT MUCH TO YOU?

TOO MANY DOUBTS, TOO MANY VOICES, I CAN'T DENY  
YOUR PASSION'S STRONG, PULLS ME ALONG, I PRAY IT'S NOT A LIE  
YOUR CHARM, YOUR KISS, BLINDS ALL REASONING  
THIS LOVE'S A RISK, BUT ALL YOUR PROMISING  
CONFUSE MY THOUGHTS, I FEEL SO LOST AND CAN'T RESIST  
THIS LOVE, THIS RISK, I CAN'T RESIST!

MY FRIENDS HAVE FAMILIES AND HUSBANDS TO LOVE  
AND I'VE NEVER FOUND ONE WHO INSPIRED ME ENOUGH  
NOW I'M OLDER AND WITHOUT A MATE  
AND I FEAR MY TIME WILL SOON BE TOO LATE  
I CAME HERE WITH A HANDFUL OF DREAMS  
TO MAKE A LIFE I COULD SOMEDAY ESTEEM  
WOULD YOU CHANGE - IS YOUR LOVE SO TRUE  
WOULD I MEAN THAT MUCH TO YOU?

TOO MANY OFFERS, TOO MANY QUESTIONS, NO ANSWER APPEARS  
I MUST DECIDE NOW, BEFORE YOUR WORDS, UNCOVER ALL MY FEARS  
I'M TIRED OF WAITING, FOR LOVE'S ARRIVAL HAS BEEN LATE  
WHEN YOUR PROMISES COULD CHANGE MY LONELY FATE.

ANAPOS

(ANAPOS walks hesitantly to ANNUNZIATA, takes her hand.)

(Gently) Annunziata - Nunzio's *here*.

ANNUNZIATA

Here?

ANAPOS

Yes - He wants to personally deliver his last letter.

ANNUNZIATA

His *last*?

(SERENADERS enter. NUNZIO kneels to embarrassed  
ANNUNZIATA. MUSICIANS join to serenade ANNUNZIATA. NUNZIO  
jumps about singing his mating dance, macho style.)

**TRACK #7** (SONG: *YOUR LOVE AND AFFECTION* Sung by SERENADERS, YOUNG NUNZIO.)  
[Your Love and Affection.](#)

A.NUNZIO: Rubato)OH THIS LETTER SEALS MY LOVE  
WITH EVERY THOUGHT AND WORD  
PLEASE DON'T BLAME MY SILLY HEART  
FOR THIS LOVE THAT HAS OCCURRED  
FOR YOUR BEAUTY REIGNS MY HEAD AND MAKES ME ACT A FOOL  
HOW CAN A GENT LIKE MYSELF, REMAIN SO CALM AND COOL?

B.(Rhythm) WHEN YOU WALK ACROSS THE STREET  
MY DEAR HEART QUICKLY BEATS  
YOUR GRACE MOVES ME SO.  
WHEN YOU OPEN UP THIS LETTER  
WILL YOU SWOON LIGHT AS A FEATHER  
WILL MY WORDS MAKE YOU SMILE FROM HEAD TO TOE?

C.SERENADERS: OH MADONNA, WE SAY OUR PRAYERS  
THAT HIS WORDS SET YOU ON FIRE  
OH HIS LONELY, FERVENT HEART  
NEEDS YOUR LOVE AND DESIRE  
OH CUPID SEND YOUR POTENT ARROW  
RIGHT TO HER HEART TO DO ITS TASK  
D. NUNZIO: OH, MY LITTLE ANGEL, I'LL SOON PROVE TO YOU  
NOT TO BE DISSUADED BY MY LIVELY PAST  
SERENADERS: OH, MY LITTLE ANGEL, HE'LL SOON PROVE TO YOU  
NOT TO BE DISSUADED BY HIS LIVELY PAST

E.SERENADERS: WORDS CAN CHANGE UNDECIDED LOVE  
AND GIVE IT A SIMPLE DIRECTION  
OH GIVE YOURSELF TO THIS EARNEST ONE  
WHO HOLDS YOU WITH UTMOST AFFECTION

F.HE PROMISES TO LOVE, TO PROTECT YOU  
FROM SUITORS WHO COULD CAUSE YOU HARM  
D. NUNZIO: ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TRUST MY WORDS  
AND FIND YOUR WAY INTO HIS OPEN ARMS.  
SERENADERS: ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TRUST HIS WORDS  
AND FIND YOUR WAY INTO HIS OPEN ARMS.

(INSTRUMENTAL/CHOREOGRAPHY)

A. NUNZIO: ALL MY WORDS HAVE BEEN SELECTED  
LIKE BEST GRAPES FROM THE VINE  
SO SWEET AND PLUMP AND TENDER  
BURSTING BLISS IN THEIR PRIME Lucious

YOUR YOUNG BEAUTY WAITS TO BE PLUCKED  
AND WITH OUR LOVE YOU WILL FIND  
WE WILL MAKE A FRUITFUL BLENDING  
OF A SUPREME VINTAGE WINE.

B. SERENADERS: LET HIS WORDS CONVINCE YOU SO  
THAT YOUR LOVE WAS MEANT TO KNOW  
WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE A LOVING PAIR  
NUNZIO: WHEN YOU OPEN UP THIS LETTER  
WILL YOU SWOON LIGHT AS A FEATHER  
WILL MY WORDS MAKE YOU SMILE FROM HEAD TO TOE?

C. SERENADERS: OH MADONNA, OH MADONNA,  
PLEASE ANSWER HIS SOLEMN PRAYER  
ALL HE ASKS IS FOR A SIMPLE KISS  
AND FOR YOU TO TAKE A LITTLE DARE

NUNZIO: I'VE SAID MY CONFESSIONS, MADE MY COMMUNION,  
I PROMISE ALL MY DEVOTION  
(Rubato) ALL YOU HAVE TO SAY IS "YES, AMORE"  
AND LET OUR LOVE PROCEED.  
(RHYTHM) SERENADER: ALL YOU HAVE TO SAY IS YES, AMORE,  
AND LET THIS LOVE PROCEED.  
NUNZIO: LET OUR LOVE PROCEED –  
ALL: LET THIS DESTINED LOVE PROCEED, LET THIS LOVE PROCEED!  
(LIGHTS OUT.)

ACT I, Scene Seven  
Simple DRESS SHOP 1920

(LIGHTS UP. ANAPOS/ENTOURAGE roll in dress shop showing  
ANNUNZIATA's simple SHOP. NUNZIO passes, sees ANNUNZIATA  
sewing, and pokes head inside the shop.)

NUNZIO  
Hello there!

ANNUNZIATA  
Oh! You scared me!

NUNZIO  
Well, I saw this beautiful girl working away and thought she looked kind of  
lonely.

ANNUNZIATA  
(SHE rolls her eyes.) I'm not lonely... Anyway, I *like* being alone.

NUNZIO  
Not always...

ANNUNZIATA  
Most times...

NUNZIO  
Mind if I come in?

ANNUNZIATA



I'm afraid there's nothing here to interest you. I'm just sewing some dresses.

NUNZIO

I myself like a fashionable piece of clothing...

ANNUNZIATA

So— I've noticed.

NUNZIO

(HE looks through a dress rack.)

These dresses are quite unique. Have you thought of selling more?

ANNUNZIATA

Oh, my space is too small. But someday I'll have a magnificent shop in Center City!

NUNZIO

Annunziata, your work is magnificent... And you—well, you know how wonderful I think you are.

ANNUNZIATA

Don't start Nunzio...

NUNZIO

(Suddenly serious.) Annunziata, you have to know how I feel by now.

ANNUNZIATA

You and your friends embarrassed me to death, serenading me like that.

(SHE playfully throws a tape measure at NUNZIO.)

Now everyone is making all kinds of comments about you and me.

NUNZIO

I meant everything I said...

ANNUNZIATA

(SHE holds fabric to the light.)

Sometimes I wonder how you can mean all those things...

NUNZIO

Annunziata, the day I saw you come off the boat... I knew immediately.

ANNUNZIATA

(Quiet, cutting.) How do you know these things so quickly?

NUNZIO

Listen, I'm thinking of taking a job in another city.

ANNUNZIATA

(Stops.) Why? Why would you leave Philadelphia?

NUNZIO

Because I want to start my life... And I need to know if there's any chance of your consideration... (HE fumbles with his hat.) I mean... aren't you at all interested in settling down?

ANNUNZIATA

(SHE gives NUNZIO full concentration.)

Nunzio, honestly, I hardly know you. Even though your *letters* are wonderful.

NUNZIO

So what is holding you back?

ANNUNZIATA

You know... (SHE becomes quiet) - your past, Nunzio.

NUNZIO

Christo! Why do people keep bringing up my past??

(HE slaps his hand on the table, turns from ANNUNZIATA to hide his agitation.)

ANNUNZIATA

(SHE boldly stands.) Trust is important to me, Nunzio...

(ANNUNZIATA'S strength has an effect on NUNZIO.)

NUNZIO

Annunziata, What does your heart say?

ANNUNZIATA

I don't have time to pay attention to my heart ...

NUNZIO

You've been avoiding your heart for too long. Annunziata - you know I'd change everything for you.

ANNUNZIATA

How can I believe that?

NUNZIO

Please give me a chance, Annunziata. Just get to know me. (HE takes her hand, pulls her closer.) I have dreams like you. I can help you build your business. (HE steps closer.) I promise to give you a life bigger than you ever imagined.

(HE pulls her to him, strokes her face, gently kisses ANNUNZIATA, SHE softens.)

Trust me, Annunziata...

(HE backs out door, holding her eyes in his.)

Trust me...

(HE exits. ANNUNZIATA Stunned.)

CHEZ MARIE SHOP:

(Scene changes to CHEZ MARIE SHOP 18 years later. ANAPOS enters and commands ENTOURAGE to roll in shop unit that includes two sewing machines, bolts of fabric, as HE speaks to audience. This roll-on unit is revolved to 1930 SIDE of CHEZ MARIE SHOP.

(NUNZIO is in his 40's. The Minissale dress shows success, and ages. ANNUNZIATA and NUNZIO are 43 and 45 years old, MIMI and NORMA, 20 and 18.)

ANAPOS

Annunziata finally said yes! Soon, Nunzio and Annunziata were raising their two girls, Mimi and Norma – of course they were named after opera characters. Through the years, Nunzio managed Annunziata's CHEZ MARIE dress shop while scoring real estate deals on the side – but- it was Annunziata who was the true success in the family.

Nunzio also managed his daughters – Norma and Mimi. Oh- those poor teenage girls treated like prisoners– working day to day, at the command of their tyrant father!

(ANNUNZIATA enters and stashes some money into a jar then runs to the table and fakes sewing before NUNZIO's entrance. CHEZ MARIE TABLEAU comes alive. NUNZIO enters looking for girls.

NUNZIO

(NUNZIO enters, loud controlling voice.) Mimi? Norma? Where are the girls?

ANNUNZIATA

Nunzio, please – lower your voice.

NUNZIO

(Mocks a whisper) Hey Annunziata, listen. You got an extra few bucks?

ANNUNZIATA

What happened to *your* savings?

NUNZIO

I want to make a bid on that building – just a little something- that's all I'm asking for.

ANNUNZIATA

I need money to buy fabrics – pay another seamstress – Do you know how hard it is to save money?

NUNZIO

(Seductive) I know how to make money grow –

(NUNZIO starts looking around for money stash.)

Where do you keep all your extra cash anyway - why are you so private?

ANNUNZIATA

(Irritated by his snooping. Pushes Nunzio away) Nunzio, leave me alone- I have work to do !

NUNZIO

(NUNZIO changes focus. Overbearing.) Girls!

(MIMI and NORMA scurry on stage. NUNZIO commands girls who reluctantly sit at sewing machines. NUNZIO dumps fabrics on sewing machines and stands on the side, looks at his watch. WE hear percussion play the oppressive ticking clock.)

(*CHEZ MARIE* INTRO. Not recorded.)

MIMI: UGH! ALL THIS CUTTING AND STITCHING

NORMA PINNING AND HEMMING...

MIMI: BASTING AND SNIPPING...

ANNUNZIATA: SSHHH! HE'LL HEAR YOU COMPLAINING.

MIMI: WE'LL MISS TODAY'S MOVIE

NORMA: WHY IS HE ALWAYS MOODY?

MIMI: EVERYTHING FEELS SO GLOOMY...

ANNUNZIATA, NORMA, MIMI: SOOO GLOOMY...

(MUSIC: lively intro. Percussion instruments assimilate sewing machines' rhythm. SHOP PEOPLE join in upbeat number- dancing with fabrics, mannequins, etc.)

**TRACK #8** (SONG: *CHEZ MARIE*. Sung by ANNUNZIATA, MIMI, NORMA and NUNZIO. [Chez Marie](#). Note: Verses switched/arrangement differs)

NUNZIO: IT'S TIME TO WORK, IT'S TIME TO SEW

WE HAVE MANY HOURS TO GO

DRESSES TO FASHION WITH ARTISTIC PASSION

TO PUT ON A FABULOUS SHOW

YOU MUST WORK FASTER

YOU MUST BE A MASTER

OF EVERY STITCH THAT YOU SEW

WITH CUSTOMERS WAITING

NO TIME FOR DEBATING

TO PUT ON A STUPENDOUS SHOW

(WOMEN sing robotically)

NORMA AND MIMI: OFF TO THE STORE,

JUST ANOTHER DAY TO BEAR

OF SEWING PEARLS AND BUTTONS

EVENING GOWNS AND BRIDAL WEAR

WITH ALL THEIR FANCY CUFFINS.

THE FLASHING NEEDLE, THE ROARING MACHINES

PEDALS RUMBLE AND WAIL

IT'S MADDENING ALL THE GOWNS I'VE PRESSED AND STEAMED

OF ENDLESS BOLTS OF CHIFFON AND VEIL.

ANNUNZIATA: OH, ALL THE SEQUINS THAT WE SEW  
ALL THE TINY LITTLE BOWS  
ALL THIS BEADING MAKES MY EYES CROSS AND BURN  
ALL THE SATIN AND THE SILK  
I'M FEELING RATHER ILL  
OH THE MONEY WE WILL NEVER EVER EARN

MIMI: MY FINGERS WILL NEVER LAST  
AS I TRY TO SEW THIS FAST  
TO STITCH THESE SEAMS STRAIGHT AND EVEN  
NORMA, MIMI: IF WORK DOESN'T GET DONE  
TO THE CONVENT TO BE A NUN  
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

ANNUNZIATA, NORMA AND MIMI AND SHOP WORKERS:  
THE GROANS OF MACHINES RUMBLE AND GRUMBLE  
THE RHYTHM OF THE PECKING NEEDLE  
ALL THE WHEELS AND BELTS SEEM TO HUM  
WEEDLE NEEDLE DEEDLE WEEDLE DEEDLE  
WEEDLE NEEDEL DEEDLE WEEDLE DEEDLE.

MIMI: SNIP, SNIP, SNIP, CUT HERE, CUT THERE  
ROLLS OF FABRIC AND THREADS GALORE  
SCISSORS CUT EVENING WEAR  
DISPLAYED ON DRESS FORMS IN THE STORE

NORMA: STITCH, STITCH, STITCH, GOWNS TO PREPARE  
TO ADORN MANNEQUINS IN THE WINDOW  
CUSTOMERS WILL GASP AND STARE  
AT THE NEXT FASHION TO FOLLOW.

(SHOP WORKERS ENTER, dancing with fabrics)

ANNUNZIATA, NORMA AND MIMI AND SHOPWORKERS:  
THE DRAPING, THE FITTING  
THE CUTTING, THE SNIPPING,  
SPINNING SPOOLS OF THREADS MAKES ME DIZZY.  
ALL THE SEAMS AND HEMS THAT GO  
ZIGGY ZAGGY ZIGGY ZAGGY ZIGGY  
ZIGGY ZAGGY ZIGGY ZAGGY ZIGGY!

(NUNZIO bursts in. MUSIC: instruments assimilate tick-tock  
clock rhythm for NUNZIO'S verse.)

NUNZIO:  
IT'S TIME TO WORK, IT'S TIME TO SEW  
WE HAVE MANY HOURS TO GO  
DRESSES TO FASHION WITH ARTISTIC PASSION  
TO PUT ON A FABULOUS SHOW  
YOU MUST WORK FASTER  
YOU MUST BE A MASTER  
OF EVERY STITCH THAT YOU SEW  
WITH CUSTOMERS WAITING  
NO TIME FOR DEBATING  
TO PUT ON A STUPENDOUS SHOW.

MIMI: THE HATS, THE SHOES, THE BAGS, THE GLOVES  
ON THAT WEDDING DAY ALL DRESSED IN WHITE

NORMA: TELL ME IS IT WORTH ALL THE LOVE  
DOES IT MATTER IF THE BRIDE VEIL HANGS JUST RIGHT?

ANNUNZIATA: BRIDESMAIDS POSED IN FORMAL ROWS  
LIKE FLOWERS IN A GARDEN  
WITH POLITE AND SWEET SMILES  
AS IF BEGGING LOVE'S PARDON

(ANAPOS/ENTOURAGE join, dancing with mannequins.)

ANNUZIATA, NORMA AND MIMI AND SHOPWORKERS, ANAPOS:  
THE THINNING, THE PINNING, THE BASTING, THE LACING  
SUCH A FRANTIC STATE, OH THE WORRY  
THE PACING, THE PACING, THE DESPERATE RACING  
HURRY SCURRY WORRY HURRY SCURRY!  
HURRY SCURRY WORRY HURRY SCURRY!—

(TEMPO picks up)

ANNUNZIATA, NORMA AND MIMI:  
OH TIME IS QUICKLY RUNNING OUT  
WHILE A DEADLINE LOOMS ABOUT  
ANOTHER WEDDING TO PREPARE.  
ALL: SO SNIP AND CUT AND SEW  
ONLY HOURS 'TIL THE SHOW  
TIL LOVERS MAKE A SACRED WEDDED PAIR.  
AND LITTLE DO THEY KNOW  
ALL THE DAYS WE HAD TO SEW  
TO MAKE THIS BRIDE APPEAR DEMURE

IN OUR SEWING CELL  
HELD HOSTAGE NOT TO TELL  
'BOUT CHEZ MARIE AND ALL WE ENDURED!  
'BOUT CHEZ MARIE AND ALL WE ENDURED!  
'BOUT CHEZ MARIE AND ALL WE ENDURED—  
WE ENDURED!

OH WEEDLE NEEDEL WEEDLE DEEDLE  
ZIGGY ZAGGY ZIGGY ZAGGY  
HURRY WORRY SCURRY HURRY!  
HURRY WORRY SCURRY WORRY HURRY!  
HURRY SCURRY!

(ENSEMBLE collapses over sewing machines. LIGHTS OUT.)

ACT I, Scene Eight  
Music Studio and Dress Shop - mid 1930s

(SET: Both MUSIC STUDIO and DRESS SHOP. SPOT on ANAPOS)

ANAPOS

Nunzio kept Norma and Mimi under a tight watch, only allowing them to leave the shop for tutoring and music lessons. But little did Nunzio know what *kind* of music *Norma* was making.

(LIGHTS RISE on NORMA at a piano. EUGENE on side of stage/or shadow box. ANAPOS pantomimes opening studio door with a mischievous grin, violin music floats into NORMA's studio.)

One day, as Norma practiced her piano, she heard the sound of the most beautiful violin—

(NORMA listens 2-3 times to violin, each time stops playing, then tries to concentrate, plays on.)

Something *unlocked* in her heart.

(EUGENE swoons outside her door, then recites his letter.)

EUGENE

"Dear Norma, each song that you play brings me such joy- as if I can sense you in *each and every* note - which sets my heart into ... into... a-ha!- into a very rapid rhythm!"

(HE adds last words and seals the letter. As NORMA leaves studio, EUGENE jumps in front of her.)

Oh hello! I'm Eugene.

(HE smiles awkwardly, snaps fingers on violin strings. HE holds out hand to shake.)

We've never met formally. Excuse me, I don't mean to be forward, but I, uh, wrote something for you.

(HE hands her the letter, NORMA reads it quickly, scurries out of the studio, and blurts:)

NORMA

I- I...I loved your violin playing, also!

(NORMA runs, crosses over to CHEZ DRESS SHOP.)

NORMA

Mimi!!

MIMI

What's all the excitement?

NORMA

I just had the most beautiful encounter!

MIMI

Oh no, Norma! Who???

NORMA

Don't burst my bubble— just for once! (SHE spins.) I am in love!

MIMI

Just like that (SHE snaps her fingers)— the minute you meet a boy, you're in love??

NORMA

Oh – I’ve already been watching him when Mother and Papa take us to the opera. Oh, the back of his cute, brown, curly head of hair– and he *always* looks back at me. (SHE gushes.) Read what he wrote to me!

(MIMI reads EUGENE’S letter.)

MIMI

Papa will have a fit...

NORMA

Papa would never understand a thing about true love–

(NUNZIO, ANNUNZIATA, ENTOURAGE enter in festive mood, dressed in high fashion, carrying packages.)

NUNZIO

Girls! Did you forget our party today?! We have much to prepare!

(MUSIC: “*Chez Marie*” instrumental plays. ANNUNZIATA enters and makes a stop at the counter and pulls money discreetly from a jar and puts in her pocket. ANAPOS /ENTOURAGE run about preparing a celebration with trays of Champagne and serve NUNZIO and ANNUNZIATA. ANAPOS takes some for herself. NORMA and EUGENE meet on side of the stage, grab a kiss. MIMI carries fabric bolts around.)

NUNZIO

(NUNZIO hugs ANNUNZIATA) Here we are celebrating *Chez Marie* – Philadelphia’s most elegant dress shop! It’s what you dreamed of Annunziata, right?! Your store in Center City! And look – all these grand flower arrangements and champagne – everything for you!

ANNUNZIATA

Uh... But, Nunzio, it was *my* designs that paid for everything.

Listen, I want to manage my *own* store. So look, here is a bit of money that I saved for you to build your real estate business – and now you can let me run my own business.

(SHE hands HIM a money sachet. NORMA watches in disbelief.)

NUNZIO

You are my golden angel.

(The shop bell rings, and NUNZIO runs to accept a delivery. NORMA pulls ANNUNZIATA to the side.)

NORMA

Mother! Why are you giving him *your* money? Don’t you know he’ll gamble it away?

ANNUNZIATA

Don’t worry –



NORMA

You know he's in one of his manic moods again!

ANNUNZIATA

I just gave him some money to keep him happy for a minute.

(ANNUNZIATA, NORMA exit. Agitated NUNZIO runs onto stage. WE hear ANNUNZIATA scream off stage; SHE ENTERS/chases NUNZIO.)

And what do you do? You make a bad deal - at some stupid gambling house!

NUNZIO

It was just a quick visit! I thought I could win my loss back - for us!

(HE reaches out to ANNUNZIATA who dodges HIM.)

ANNUNZIATA

For us?! All you care about is the money! (Steps up to NUNZIO.) I've never felt safe with you, Nunzio.

(NUNZIO raises arm to hit ANNUNZIATA but SHE slaps NUNZIO.)

I'm done with you! Just leave!!

(Stunned NUNZIO grabs his hat, forgets coat, exits, slamming the door. Crying, ANNUNZIATA closes up shop, grabs NUNZIO'S coat, and an envelope falls from its pocket.)

ANNUNZIATA

"My dearest Nunzio, your love has given me a new life..." (Gasps)

You and your countless love letters! Full of lies and lies! All the years I had faith that you would change.

(ANNUNZIATA rips up letter:)

I will stay with you for only one reason Nunzio Minissale- to raise my family. For my love for you - is *gone*.

(*PROMISES* Music intro: ANAPOS, hands a container of love letters for ANNUNZIATA, who rips them up.)

**TRACK #9** (SONG: *BROKEN PROMISES*. Sung by ANNUNZIATA. [Broken Promises](#).)

ANNUNZIATA: I WASN'T ONE TO BELIEVE SO EASILY  
IN THE PROMISES THAT YOU FIRST MADE  
IT TOOK ALL MY FAITH TO FOLLOW THROUGH  
TO BE PERSUADED THAT YOU, ALWAYS WOULD BE TRUE

I GAVE YOU MY LOVE, I GAVE MY YOUTH  
CONVINCED IT WAS THE THING TO DO

I THOUGHT OUR LOVE HAD A SPECIAL PLACE  
THAT ONLY YOU AND I KNEW ITS SECRET ESCAPE

YOU PROMISED HEAVEN WITH OUR OWN STAR  
HOW COULD I THINK YOU'D REACH THAT FAR?  
A BROKEN PROMISE IS WORSE THAN NO PROMISE AT ALL  
YOU PLEDGED UNDIVIDED LOVE, DON'T YOU RECALL?

I GAVE YOU MY LOVE, I GAVE MY YOUTH  
CONVINCED IT WAS THE THING TO DO  
I THOUGHT OUR LOVE HAD A SPECIAL PLACE  
THAT ONLY YOU AND I KNEW ITS SECRET ESCAPE

I WHO WAS AFRAID TO FLY, YOU GAVE ME WINGS THEN SAID GOODBYE  
AFTER FIRES WERE SET AND SOULS WERE BEARED  
WITH NOTHING LEFT AND NOTHING SPARED, AFTER ALL WE SHARED

(Despondent, ANNUNZIATA rips Nunzio's letters.)

I GAVE YOU MY LOVE, I GAVE MY YOUTH  
CONVINCED IT WAS THE THING TO DO (MEANT)  
I THOUGHT OUR LOVE , WOULD RISE ABOVE AND SOAR TO THE SKY,  
LIKE BIRDS WHO LIVE TO SING AND FLY, TO THE OTHER SIDE  
I THOUGHT OUR LOVE WOULD RISE TO THE SKY  
LIKE BIRDS WHO LIVE TO SING AND FLY - TO THE OTHER SIDE

(SHE withers, torn letters strewn about.LIGHTS OUT.)

#### ACT 1: Scene Nine

(LIGHTS UP. NORMA secretly crosses the stage and ANAPOS  
hands latest love letter from EUGENE for NORMA to read.)

NORMA

"My dearest Norma, I'm listening to Rachmaninoff - all I can think of is  
you."

(Staring off in bliss, SHE absentmindedly drops the letter  
to the ground and walks on.)

ANAPOS

(To AUDIENCE) One thing Norma and Eugene had never thought of... was that she  
was *Italian*, and he was *Jewish*. The timing of World War 11 was *not* a good  
era to be in love with a *Jewish* boy - *according* to Nunzio Minissale.

(NUNZIO enters, sees the letter, snatches and reads it. HE  
runs after NORMA, shaking the letter in her face.)

NUNZIO

"Lovvvve- Eugene -Cohen???"

NORMA

How could you snoop into my life?!

NUNZIO

That's what happens when someone goes about dropping their *love* notes! Don't think that you can act like a loose American girl.

NORMA

Well, I *am* American! And why would *you* - of *all* people - have anything to say against *love* letters?

NUNZIO

You??? In love?? How ridiculous is *that*!

(*LIONS* INTRO: MUSICIANS stomp rhythm, imitating heavy footsteps. NUNZIO sings *LIONS* in monster-like fashion.)

**TRACK #10** (SONG: *THROW YOU TO THE LIONS*. Sung by NUNZIO and NORMA.)

([Throw you to the Lions.](#))

(Music being written for NORMA's part.)

NUNZIO: DO YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT LOVE?  
YOU CAN'T MAKE ME LAUGH, ENOUGH  
YOUR UNFEMININE, MODERN WAYS  
DON'T FORGET WHILE IN MY HOUSE  
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO SAY

DO YOU THINK HIS WORDS SPEAK OF LOVE?  
HA! YOU'RE SO NAIVE, RIDICULOUS  
SO IMMATURE, SO DEFIANT  
YOU BETTER WATCH GIRL, YOU BETTER WATCH-  
OR I'LL THROW YOU TO THE LIONS  
OH--TO THE LIONS.

NORMA: DO YOU THINK YOUR WORDS SCARE ME SO?  
YOU WOULD NEVER GO THAT LOW  
I WILL LOVE, WHO I LOVE  
ALL YOUR THREATS AREN'T ENOUGH  
YOU WILL NEVER OWN ME  
YOU WILL NEVER CAGE ME  
I WILL LOVE, WHO I LOVE!

NUNZIO: KEEP YOUR EYES TO THE GROUND  
DON'T YOU MAKE A SOUND  
KEEP SILENT, SILLY GIRL  
OR I'LL THROW YOUR LOVER BOY- OUT OF TOWN

NORMA AND NUNZIO: OH---

NUNZIO: THROW YOUR LOVER

NORMA: YOU'RE A MONSTER

NUNZIO: THROW YOUR LOVER BOY OUT OF TOWN  
AND YOU...

NORMA: AND WHAT??

NUNZIO: AND YOU - TO THE LIONS.

(LIGHTS OUT. Rhythmic stomping continues with stomp choreography with SHADOW PLAY TRANSITION to next scene.)

ACT I, Scene Ten  
Music Studio

(NORMA practices piano. EUGENE pops into her studio.)

EUGENE

How's my favorite pianist?

(NORMA jumps up. They hug.)

Hey, I have something for you.

(EUGENE hands NORMA a box. NORMA unwraps gift.)

NORMA

Oh, Eugene... this is too much!

EUGENE

You mean the world to me -

NORMA

(solemnly) But - my father... we can't keep hiding from him-

EUGENE

We belong to each other, Norma.

NORMA

I don't know if I can ever stand up to him -

EUGENE

Look at me. (HE holds HER face.) We're going to fight for our love...

**TRACK #11** (SONG: *ISN'T IT LOVE?* Sung by EUGENE and NORMA.)

[Isn't It Love?](#) (Recording doesn't reflect DUO performance.)

EUGENE: ISN'T IT LOVE THAT WE LIVE FOR?  
ISN'T IT LOVE THAT OPENS HEART'S DOOR?  
ISN'T IT LOVE THAT WAKES OUR HOPES AND DREAMS  
AND BRINGS US A NEW DAY IT SEEMS?

NORMA: ISN'T IT LOVE THAT LIGHTS THE ROOM  
OH ISN'T LOVE THE ANSWER TO GLOOM  
ISN'T IT MAGICAL WHEN LOVE HAPPENS AT FIRST SIGHT  
DOESN'T LOVE COMPLETE YOU WHEN IT'S RIGHT

EUGENE: ISN'T LOVE WRITTEN THROUGHOUT HISTORY  
THE QUEST OF EVERYONE WHO WE MEET  
WHO CHASE LOVE FROM THE MOMENT THEY BREATHE?

SO YOU MUST ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR HEART  
NEVER QUESTION FROM THE START  
LISTEN TO LOVE WHEN IT TAKES ITS HOLD AND MAKES ITS CALL  
ISN'T LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING OF ALL?

NORMA: ISN'T IT LOVE THAT RISES WITH THE SUN  
ISN'T IT LOVE THAT MOVES EVERYONE

EUGENE: OH, ISN'T IT LOVE THE STRONGEST MEMORY WE HOLD  
THAT LASTS A LIFETIME I'VE BEEN TOLD

BOTH: ISN'T LOVE WRITTEN THROUGHOUT HISTORY  
THE QUEST OF EVERYONE WHO WE MEET  
WHO CHASE LOVE FROM THE MOMENT THEY BREATHE?  
SO YOU MUST ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR HEART  
NEVER QUESTION FROM THE START  
LISTEN TO LOVE WHEN IT TAKES ITS HOLD AND MAKES ITS CALL  
ISN'T LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING OF ALL?

(Tenderly)

EUGENE:: WITH ONE TOUCH, ONE EMBRACE

NORMA: LOVE HEALS US WITH GRACE

BOTH: ISN'T LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING OF ALL?

OH ISN'T IT LOVE? ISN'T LOVE,

ISN'T LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING OF ALL?

(As NORMA and EUGENE part with a kiss, NUNZIO spies them. LIGHTS OUT)

Minissale house:

(LIGHTS UP. ANNUNZIATA reaches into a jar where she hides her money, and gasps.)

ANNUNZIATA

He found my money!! (She feels more into the jar). He took it all - every bit of it!

(ANNUNZIATA goes wild about room, then finally sits down and waits for NUNZIO. Set shows passing of hours into the night. NUNZIO quietly opens the door and jumps when he sees ANNUNZIATA.)

NUNZIO

Annunziata, why are you up so late?

ANNUNZIATA

Why are you home so late - that's the question. (Spitting words) Were you having fun at the gambling house?

NUNZIO

What? Let me explain, Annunziata - I got myself in a hole again - I just needed to pay a few bills-

ANNUZIATA

So - you thought you could just steal *my* money? *All* my savings? *Years* of saving!

NUNZIO

I was going to pay it all back - honestly...

ANNUNZIATA

(ANNUNZIATA screams.) Never - never will I ever trust you again. Every dollar that *I* made and saved - independent of you - went through your filthy hands! For what? Your gambling pleasure? Your whore mistress? Get out!

(NUNZIO runs through house, slams fist on wall, exits. ANNUNZIATA weeping, collapses. LIGHTS DOWN)

Minissale House:

(LIGHTS Rise on NORMA at home, talking into phone.)

NORMA

I don't know what's wrong with her, Aunt Emma. Mama hasn't come out of her room - or eaten a thing! Yes - I know she didn't come to work - and I can tell she's been crying. I've never seen her like this.

(MIMI enters, upset.)

MIMI

Is she any better?

NORMA

No - and she won't tell me what happened... she just keeps mentioning some jar. And she said *not* to call Papa -

MIMI

Well, Papa is looking for you! He said he saw you with Eugene!

(NUNZIO bangs the door open.)

NUNZIO

*There* you are!

(Fearfully, NORMA pulls MIMI to the corner.)

ANNUNZIATA

(ANNUNZIATA comes out of her room.)

What is all this noise?? Nunzio??

NUNZIO

Annunziata, do you know our daughter is involved with a J-ew-ish boy?  
Have you read the papers? These are dangerous times!

ANNUNZIATA

We can discuss this as a family.

NUNZIO

This is for me to handle - alone!

NORMA

You can't change my mind!

NUNZIO

(NUNZIO roughly grabs NORMA'S chin.)

If I ever see him again- or find one of your silly love letters --

NORMA

I hate you!!!

(NUNZIO lands a blow on her face, storms out of the  
room. ANNUNZIATA consoles sobbing NORMA.)

ANNUNZIATA

Hold on - I'll be back. I have some words for your father--

(ANNUNZIATA exits muttering.)

Of *all* the people in the world to not understand love letters.

NORMA

(NORMA crosses to shop mirror, examining her bruised face.)

It's not the first time... But it will be the *last*!

**TRACK# 12** (SONG: *NO MORE*. Sung by NORMA, MIMI, ANNUNZIATA and ENSEMBLE.  
([No More](#).) (Narration/Dialogue different from link.)

NORMA:: NO MORE, NO MORE, WHAT AM I WAITING FOR  
NO MORE, NO MORE, TIME TO EXIT OUT THIS DOOR  
SEASONS TURNED INTO SO MANY YEARS  
WHILE I NEVER HAD THE CHANCE TO DRY MY TEARS  
NO MORE, NO MORE, NOW I REALIZE, NOW REALIZE, IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

THE LAST TIME YOUR HAND WILL CROSS MY FACE  
THE LAST TIME I FEEL YOUR PENETRATING GAZE  
TOO MANY YEARS HAVE HARDENED YOUR BLOWS

WELL LET ME TELL YOU THAT THIS WAS MY LAST DOSE  
THE LAST TIME I'LL HEAR YOUR BITING WORDS  
FILLED WITH DISGUST AND YOUR UGLY ANGER  
SO WHEN I STASH MY BELONGINGS IN THIS SACK  
YOU CAN BET THAT I WILL NEVER BE BACK!

NO MORE, NO MORE, WHAT AM I EVER WAITING FOR  
NO MORE, NO MORE, TIME TO EXIT OUT THIS DOOR  
YOU'LL WAKE UP ONE DAY AND FIND ME GONE  
DID YOU EVER WONDER THAT I WAS ALREADY DONE?  
WITH YOUR OWNERSHIP AND ALL OF YOUR CONTROL  
I'M ON MY WAY NOW, CUZ I'VE FINISHED THIS ROLE!

(MUSIC: Piano vamp. NORMA and MIMI enact ANAPOS'  
narration in simple dressing room curtain/shadow play.)

ANAPOS

Norma planned her escape. Every day she dressed in two layers of clothing and when she arrived at the bridal shop, she stole into the dressing room. There she removed the second layer of her outfit, then *secretly* stashed it in a hidden suitcase. All was going according to plan...

(MIMI enters, walks to the dressing room to hang clothes,  
opens the curtain and catches NORMA changing her clothes.)

MIMI

What is going *on*, Norma??

NORMA

Close those curtains! Sshh! Mother will hear you!

MIMI

(MIMI steps into the dressing room.)

What are you *doing*?

NORMA

(Haughtily.) I'm running away. Don't you *dare* give me away!

MIMI

Running away? You're insane! It's too dangerous to travel on your own!  
(Suddenly fearful.) You're going to leave me *alone*— with Papa!

(MIMI closes the curtains, stomps away, suddenly turns  
around and snaps open curtains. MUSIC stops.)

I'm coming with you!

(SONG: Part Two of *NO MORE*.)

MIMI: THE LAST TIME YOU SPEAK TO ME LIKE I'M NO ONE

CUZ YOU DON'T EVEN THAT KNOW THAT I'M READY TO RUN  
FAR FROM THIS PLACE FROM THIS BURNING HOLE



CUZ YOU NEVER GUESSED THAT THIS WAS THE FINAL BLOW!

MIMI: IT'S MY LIFE, MY LIFE!, YOU TRIED TO MAKE IT YOURS  
IT'S MY LIFE, MY LIFE, YOU TRIED TO USE YOUR FORCE  
IT'S MY LIFE, MY LIFE, YOU TRIED TO SHUT OUR DOORS

-

-

YOU TRIED TO OWN EVERYTHING THAT I AM  
WELL GUESS WHAT, NOW - I DON'T REALLY GIVE A DAMN!

(PIANO VAMP continues. NORMA arrives with two travel bags  
and tickets, hands MIMI one of the bags.)

NORMA

Eugene's in on our plan. Now, here are our tickets to California - you're  
Susie Smith and I'm Annie Rice! While Papa's in New York, we'll escape under  
new identities!

MIMI

Gee, Norma! This is kind of dangerous- two young girls traveling alone... Maybe  
if we had an adult ...

NORMA

Don't get any ideas. Just the two of us.

MIMI

I know, but-

NORMA

But what?

MIMI

It's just that- well ...

NORMA

Well what?? (SHE corners MIMI.)

MIMI

(Blurts) I told Mother!

(MUSIC stops. MIMI bites her lip, whimpers.)

(Hastily) But she said she's coming, too!

(ANNUNZIATA appears with a suitcase.)

(SONG: Final verse and chorus of *NO MORE*.)

ANNUNZIATA: THE LAST TIME YOU SPEAK TO ME LIKE I'M NO ONE  
CUZ YOU DON'T EVEN THAT KNOW THAT I'M READY TO RUN  
FAR FROM THIS PLACE FROM THIS BURNING HOLE  
YOU NEVER GUESSED THIS WAS THE FINAL BLOW!

TRIO: IT'S MY LIFE, MY LIFE!, YOU TRIED TO MAKE IT YOURS  
IT'S MY LIFE, MY LIFE, YOU TRIED TO USE YOUR FORCE  
IT'S MY LIFE, MY LIFE, YOU TRIED TO SHUT MY DOORS  
NORMA: SO I COULD NOT BE WHO I REALLY AM  
MIMI: YOU TRIED TO KNOCK ME DOWN AND OFF OF MY STAND  
ANNUNZIATA: YOU NEVER THOUGHT I'D KNOW HOW TO LAND  
WELL GUESS WHAT, NOW - WE DON'T REALLY GIVE A DAMN!

(Whole cast joins on "No More" refrain.)

ALL: NO MORE, NO MORE, NO MORE.

(LIGHTS FADE at ANAPOS' command, as the women regard each other, holding their suitcases. END of ACT ONE.)

## ACT TWO

Act II, Scene 1  
PHILADELPHIA, 1942-44

(LIGHTS RISE on the Minissale home. ANAPOS enters.)

ANAPOS

Nunzio hadn't a clue what was waiting for him as he sipped his port at the New York train station. On arriving home, he pushed open the door to a dark, silent house.

NUNZIO

What the hell? Where's my family?

(HE runs to phone the dress shop.)

Emma, how come the girls aren't home? What?... You thought they were with *me* in New York?... For the past *two days*??

(MUSIC: PERCUSSION plays a train rhythm.)

ANAPOS

Nunzio gunned his car down to the police station, filed a report, and hired a private detective. But by that time- his women were *miles* and *miles* away...

(PROJECTION: Mountains and a TRAIN stop. A speaker announces "Denver Colorado." ANNUNZIATA steps out.)

ANNUNZIATA

Oh that mountain - just like Mount Etna -

(SHE runs back to gather girls.)

Norma! Mimi - please, let's stop here - just for a quick stop.

ANAPOS

(The rhythm stops.) That "quick stop" turned into *two years*!

(ANAPOS looks at her watch. Percussion starts up again.)

Nunzio's private detective couldn't find his family. So, Nunzio took matters into his *own* hands! He made it his routine to harass poor Eugene about his family's whereabouts. And like a hound, hunting down a fox, his search only intensified.

(EUGENE runs on stage. Percussion stops.)

EUGENE

Everywhere I look - there he is! The music studio - the coffee shop - the bank!

(Percussion resumes. NUNZIO appears, grabs EUGENE as he runs by.)

NUNZIO

Not so fast young man, let's take a little detour. (NUNZIO fakes friendliness.) Listen, I know *a* you know where my Norma is. You wouldn't want her to fall into any danger, would you?

(EUGENE releases NUNZIO's grasp. A POLICEMAN passes by.)

POLICEMAN

Is there a problem Mr. Minissale?

(NUNZIO Runs off.)

POLICEMAN

(Percussion stops. POLICEMAN addresses EUGENE.)

Everything okay with you and Mr. Minissale?

EUGENE

(MUSIC: "MR. EVIL" vamp begins. EUGENE to the POLICEMAN.)

That man's scaring the living daylights out of me! Can you imagine being stalked by Mr. Minissale? Jumping out from nowhere - with his fierce eyes and hot breath blowing anger in your face??!!

(SHADOW PLAY: *EUGENE* chased by *NUNZIO* enlarged on screen.)

**TRACK# 13** (SONG: *MR. EVIL*. Sung by EUGENE and CAST. [Mr. Evil](#).)

EUGENE: HE'S MR. EVIL, HE'S MR. EVIL  
HE'S CHASIN' ME AROUND, AS I RUN ABOUT TOWN TO HIDE!  
HE'S MR. EVIL, MR. EVIL  
SNIFFIN' LIKE A HOUND, I'M AFRAID I'LL BE FOUND, I CAN'T HIDE  
HE'S ON MY PATH, WITH HIS WRATH  
HE'S EVERYWHERE, SNIFFIN' AIR  
HE'S CUNNING, SO TIRED OF RUNNING  
THAT DARK OLD FOREIGNER, HUNTS ME INTO A CORNER  
CATCHES ME W/ HIS BAIT, BEGINS TO INTERROGATE, SO WORRIED 'BOUT MY FATE!

HE'S MR. EVIL, HE'S MR. EVIL  
NEWS IS LEAKING OUT, HE'S SEEKING US OUT, THERE'S NO DOUBT!  
HE'S MR. EVIL, MR. EVIL  
HE'S ON OUR TAIL, GOT A WHIFF OF OUR TRAIL, WE'LL BE FOUND!  
HE'S ON OUR PATH, WITH HIS WRATH  
HE'S EVERYWHERE, SNIFFIN' AIR  
HE'S CUNNING, SO TIRED OF RUNNING  
THAT DARK OLD FOREIGNER, HUNTS ME INTO A CORNER  
Trying to catch me with his bait!  
CATCHES ME W/ HIS BAIT, TRYING TO INTERROGATE, SO WORRIED 'BOUT MY FATE!

CHORUS: ENDLESS CONFRONTATION FOR INFORMATION  
HIS DETERMINATION WANTS EXTERMINATION  
WE ALL NEED A VACATION FROM MR. EVIL'S INVASION!  
FROM MR. EVIL'S INVASION!  
HE'S MR. EVIL! MR. EVIL . HE'S MR. EVIL, HE'S EVERYWHERE!  
HE'S EVERYWHERE!  
HE'S MR.EVIL! (3X)

(LIGHTS: BLACKOUT.)

Act II, Scene Two (5 PARTS)

PHILADELPHIA and DENVER VIGNETTES

(Split vignettes on each side of stage: ANNUNZIATA, NORMA, and MIMI in Denver Dress Shop, NUNZIO in Philadelphia. Lights illumine active vignettes; inactive vignettes are frozen tableaux. SPOT always on ANAPOS, situated between both vignettes, as she reacts.)

ANNUNZIATA

1.Dress Shop:

(The WOMEN in new dress shop. ANNUNZIATA displays a dress in the window, NORMA paints a sign, MIMI cuts fabric.)

This latest design must be novel here in Denver! Norma, your gown sketches have to be finished, and Mimi, we need your writing skills for the ad in the paper. Boy, these Westerners love to shop!

2.Philadelphia apartment:

(SICILIA plays, ANAPOS addresses AUDIENCE. NUNZIO in despair, sits, holds his head in his hands..)

ANAPOS

When winter's chill arrived Nunzio felt a profound longing for his sunny home land. As winds blew through his opened heart, Nunzio found that nothing could fill the void of his lost women. But— it was Nunzio, who was truly lost.

TRACK #14 (SONG: *I LONG FOR THE SUN.* Sung by NUNZIO. [I Long for the Sun.](#))

NUNZIO: I HAVE A SOUL THAT'S BEEN DARK SINCE I KNOW  
A SHADOW HOVERS NEAR, NEVER LETS ME FEEL WHOLE  
HOW I REMEMBER FROM THE START  
THIS HEAVINESS THAT CONSTANTLY INVADES MY HEART, MY HEART.  
I HAVE A HUNGER THAT NEVER GOES AWAY,  
THAT EATS MY BEING AND TORMENTS MY DAY  
I TRY TO FIX MY UNFORGETTABLE PAST  
BUT HAUNTING MEMORIES ARE MADE TO LAST  
I TRY TO SEEK THE PATH OF THE SUN  
BUT GOODNESS SOMEHOW COMES UNDONE  
WHEN I LONG FOR THE SUN  
FORGIVE ME, I NEVER MEANT TO BETRAY  
THOSE I LOVE MOST, I'VE **PUSHED** AWAY  
~~HEAL ME~~ I NEVER ASKED TO BE THIS WAY.  
OH HOW I LONG FOR THE SUN MORE THAN A DAY  
OH HOW I LONG FOR THE SUN

I HAVE A SOUL THAT HAS LOST ITS LIGHT  
THAT NEVER SEEMS TO CHOOSE THE PATH THAT LEADS ME RIGHT  
WHEN I LONG FOR THE SUN  
FORGIVE ME, I NEVER MEANT TO BETRAY  
THOSE I LOVE MOST, I'VE **TURNED** AWAY  
HEAL ME FROM ALL THAT I'VE DONE  
OH HOW I LONG FOR THE SUN MORE THAN A DAY  
OH HOW I LONG FOR THE SUN.

(LIGHTS fade on NUNZIO.)

3. Denver:

(LIGHTS UP. MIMI finds NORMA in bed.)

NORMA

I'm having a bad day...

MIMI

Norma, come, sit up...

(MIMI takes brush, caringly brushes NORMA's hair.)

NORMA

Look... (SHE pulls a letter from her pocket.)

MIMI

"I'm sorry, Norma, your father has finally convinced me that he is stronger than us both. Please don't feel that our love was in vain. Love, always, Eugene."

(NORMA cries. MIMI dabs NORMA's tears. **SONG: ALL IN VAIN?**)

NORMA

I knew our love didn't have a chance.

(LIGHTS DOWN.)

#### 4. Philadelphia Apartment:

(LIGHTS UP. A phone is ringing on a table downstage, along with a framed wedding photo. DINO, a detective, walks into the SPOT with a phone in his hand. Finally, NUNZIO sits up, unshaven, wearing a robe. ANAPOS hands NUNZIO the phone. HE answers, wearily.)

NUNZIO

Yes?

DINO

(Speedily.) Hey Nunzio! Listen - you are never gonna believe it! Last night I came across a gold mine of information. (Melodically) I found Eugene - I ran into him at Vinnie's.

NUNZIO

Whoa, whoa - slow down! What?

DINO

Oh man, I'm tellin' you, he just served it right up! He was shakin' like a leaf! Thought I was the goddamn Mafia! (Has a fit of laughter.) Well, he said that your Norma and he secretly communicate messages through some monthly magazine- but not only *that*. I have some news that is going to make you happier than a gurglin' baby. (HE clears his throat.) I found out where your girls are! (whistles into the phone) You ready, Nunzio?

(DINO's laughter wheezes out. NUNZIO rubs forehead)

Your family is ... just guess where the hell they are?

NUNZIO

Dino, how the hell do *I* know where they are? That's what I hired you to figure out *two* years ago!

DINO

Get this, Nunzio! Ready? (HE bursts into hysterics.) They are in ... drumroll ... your family is living ... drumroll ... far away'a ... really far away ... all - the way - out - in the god-damn West, in some freakin' state called Colorado!

NUNZIO

(HE stiffens, steadies his voice.) I never want to see them again.

(NUNZIO picks up the wedding photo on the table and looks at it sadly, turns it face down.)

DINO

Oh come on, Nunzio, it's a bit of a shock— hee hee— but a good shock! Right, my friend? Don't take it so hard. This is what you've wanted for, for so long.

NUNZIO

Dino— I'm in no shape to see them.

DINO

Aww, Nunzio - you don't mean that! Listen, I have a plan! And by the way, I kind of got Eugene a little upset- he could go to the police or somethin' - so I gotta skip out of town for just a little while.

(DINO wheezes again, laughing, and EXITS, walking out of his spot. NUNZIO stares at the receiver in his hand and slowly hangs it up. ANAPOS appears.)

ANAPOS

(Sadistic) Look at you Nunzio! Tsk, tsk - What a mess you've gotten yourself in - so melancholic! I'm getting pretty weary of you nearsighted, earthly beings! Just go and ask Annunziata to forgive you! Give her an irresistible present - make her happy for Goddess' sake. (SHE looks at her watch.)

Oh... just let me warn you - your women are a huge success out in Colorado!

NUNZIO

They're doing well? I mean... I thought they'd be struggling a little... you know... without me...

ANAPOS

(Laughs) I'm afraid to inform you that you have some pretty smart women, Nunzio. And they're running the show.

5. Denver setting:.

(NUNZIO crosses over to ANNUNZIATA. ANAPOS watches.)

Honestly, Annunziata - I've changed.

ANNUNZIATA

Nunzio, do you know how many times I've heard that? You look terrible. Where are you staying?

NUNZIO

Well, uh - that's why I'm here. You *have* to see this place that I bought - it's the most magnificent mansion -

(ANNUNZIATA turns away. NUNZIO Reaches for HER.)

What do you say - let's consider this a peace treaty?

ANNUNZIATA

Look Nunzio - I've had a lot of time to think out here. Guess what - I discovered that I'm quite fine on my own - maybe even a little better.

NUNZIO

How can you think that? After all I've given you and the girls-

ANNUNZIATA

(Laughs) Well- I don't need anything from you. Now the girls... that's a different story. You see, I've decided that they need a father around - even though we've all been quite happy.

NUNZIO

Happy?

ANNUNZIATA

Yes - very happy. I love my career, and my freedom has been so- fulfilling.

But, I'm tired and I simply don't want to raise our daughters on my own for the rest of my life. And- I couldn't live with myself if something ever happened to you. I wish I could stop worrying about you. It's always been my *dilemma* Nunzio-

NUNZIO

Please, Annunziata...

ANNUNZIATA

If only there hadn't been so many broken promises...

(ANNUNZIATA sings verse from *BROKEN PROMISES*)

YOU PROMISED HEAVEN WITH OUR OWN STAR  
HOW COULD I THINK YOU'D REACH THAT FAR?  
A BROKEN PROMISE IS WORSE THAN NO PROMISE AT ALL  
YOU PLEDGED UNDIVIDED LOVE, DON'T YOU RECALL?

(ANNUNZIATA faces NUNZIO)

I GAVE YOU MY LOVE, I GAVE MY YOUTH  
CONVINCED IT WAS THE THING TO DO  
I THOUGHT OUR LOVE , WOULD RISE ABOVE AND SOAR TO THE SKY,  
LIKE BIRDS WHO LIVE TO SING AND FLY, TO THE OTHER SIDE  
I THOUGHT OUR LOVE WOULD RISE TO THE SKY  
LIKE BIRDS WHO LIVE TO SING AND FLY - TO THE OTHER SIDE

(ANNUNZIATA away from NUNZIO)

NUNZIO



Annunziata, I've always loved you...

ANNUNZIATA

(SHE Faces NUNZIO) Well - it has to be a different kind of love now, Nunzio. You and I... we'll be friends of some sort -

NUNZIO

What the hell does that mean? I've never heard such a thing!

ANNUNZIATA

Well, I guess your'e hearing it for the first time. So... I'll agree to come and live in this so-called mansion that you bought, for the *girls'* sake. We will give our daughters a family and a home. But - I will continue on with my life, my shop, my money, *my* way... Yes or no, Nunzio?

(NUNZIO gathers face in hands, obviously giving up)

Projection of Mansion appears:

(Philadelphia vignette gets replaced by projection of Denver mansion. ANAPOS walks excitedly to the mansion projection and Shows magnificent house.)

ANAPOS

Of course, Nunzio caved in! Ha- Ha!!!

(ANAPOS makes "score" gesture.LIGHTS OUT.)

Act Two, Scene Three

ANAPOS

The Minissales found themselves in the most *impressive* circumstances - living in an *amazing* Italian Palazzo- where life seemed like quite a fairytale.

(ENTOURAGE and family move about- pantomiming, opening curtains, and setting up props in festive mood.)

You see, this Minissale house was no ordinary house! It was enchanted with (shows projected house image) fountains, gilded mirrors, and extraordinary gardens - (sensually) where sounds of opera, singing canaries, and exquisite aromas filled their grand house!

(Squinting as if getting a headache.)

Except... the owner of the house had quite a temper and it was said that his women were rarely seen. No wonder neighbors began to circulate tales about the mansion's occupants - (stop) And like most tales, their story had a villain of some sort - and that villain was... (announces with a Circus leader tone, PERCUSSION rumble:) Nunzio Minissale!

(MUSIC vamp begins. ANAPOS and GOD/ESSES, FAMILY perform Commedia dell'Arte/Waltz, with objects from song-birdcage, puppets, etc. in front of projected Mansion/shadow screen.)

**TRACK #15** (SONG: *THERE ONCE WAS A FAMILY*. Sung by ANAPOS and ENTOURAGE)

(There Once Was a Family)

ANAPOS: THERE ONCE WAS A FAMILY WHO LIVED IN A MANSION  
RULED BY AN ANGRY OLD MAN  
WHO SHUNNED ANY VISITORS AND ALL HIS NEIGHBORS  
WHO PUZZLED TO UNDERSTAND  
WHY THE GIRLS IN THE MYSTERIOUS HOUSE WERE NEVER OUTSIDE TO PLAY  
HIS LOVELY WIFE, AND 2 YOUNG DAUGHTERS, WERE HARDLY SEEN AT DAY

WOMEN: HIS FAMILY TRIED TO PLEASE HIM  
BUT HIS TEMPER NEVER CALMED DOWN  
THEY GROVELED, THEY YIELDED, THEY EVEN BOWED  
BUT HE ONLY GAVE THEM A SCOWL, HE ONLY GAVE THEM A SCOWL

ANAPOS: THIS MANSION STOOD LIKE A HAUNTED CASTLE  
EVERYONE HELD IN HIS SPELL  
HE TREATED HIS FAMILY LIKE GUARDED PRISONERS  
OH WHAT A SAD FAIRY TALE!

ALL: TO SEE THEIR HAPPINESS LOCKED AWAY, WITH HIS POSSESSIVE KEY  
THEY TRIED TO WIN HIS LOVE AND FREEDOM  
BUT HE WOULD NEVER EVER FEED THEM  
A MORSEL OF LOVE OR AFFECTION  
THEY WERE JUST PART OF HIS COLLECTION.

ANAPOS THE HOUSE WAS MAGICAL, ENCHANTED BUT SO ILLOGICAL  
ALL: AND ALL LIVED IN A CONSTANT FEAR WHEN THEIR PAPA WAS NEAR  
WOMEN: LIKE BIRDS INSIDE A CAGE, CRINGING AT HIS AWFUL RAGE  
THIS POOR FAMILY RULED BY A NASTY TYRANT

ANAPOS: THE GIRLS INVENTED THEIR FAMILY STORY/SHOW  
A COMEDY TO HELP THEM SURVIVE  
THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MAZE IN THE MANSION  
FILLED WITH DARK SECRETS AND LIES  
MEN: WHEN PAPA EVER SAW HIS FAMILY HAVE FUN  
HE RANTED, RAVED & THEIR **ANTICS WERE** DONE  
THE ENCHANTMENT OF THE MAGIC HOUSE, WAS DESTROYED **AS** HE MADE A SCENE  
ALL: IT WAS CRUEL, IT WAS RUTHLESS, HEARTLESS, MALICIOUS, AND MEAN  
SELFISH AND SENSELESS, AND VICIOUS, IT WAS SO MEAN.

THE HOUSE THAT STOOD LIKE A CASTLE, WAS HAUNTED BUT ALSO DAZZLED  
AND ALL THOSE DRAWN TO THE SPELL, DISGUISED SO NO OUTSIDER COULD TELL.  
WHILE LIVING IN THE HOUSE, ONE CREPT LIKE A TIMID MOUSE  
THOSE POOR YOUNG WOMEN RULED BY A NASTY TYRANT  
THEY TRIED TO WIN HIS LOVE AND FREEDOM  
BUT HE WOULD NEVER EVER FEED THEM  
A MORSEL OF LOVE OR AFFECTION

THEY WERE JUST PART OF HIS COLLECTION - 3X

(MUSIC FADES. LIGHTS DOWN.)

Act II, Scene Four  
DENVER MANSION, 1945

(LIGHTS UP. NORMA hums, straightens house. MIMI ENTERS.)

MIMI

What's this good mood about??

NORMA

(Slyly) I've been down to the courthouse. My name's not Norma any more -

MIMI

What??

NORMA

I changed my name to Carol! Isn't it a great name? (MIMI astounded) Well?? It's all legal - as of yesterday. I just marched right down and changed it - simple as that! I hated Norma anyway. I left Papa a note- and signed it from "Carol". (Giggles)

MIMI

(Sickened) Oh boy... here comes trouble. (Pensive) I wish I had the guts to stand up to Papa the way you do.

NORMA

Look, Mimi, you're damned if you do, and you're damned if you don't.

MIMI

(Timidly) Hey listen, I have a date with Edzio tonight. Well- Edzio wants me to arrange a blind date for his buddy - would you consider -

NORMA

Forget it, Mimi.

MIMI

Come on - I hear he's a *Captain*! Anyway, I already said you'd go!

NORMA

Well, I'm not going... (Exits.)

(Doorbell rings. MIMI runs to open the front

door and ANNUNZIATA enters, peering from behind MIMI.)

MIMI

Oh! Captain King! Uh..please excuse us - we will be right back!

(THEY make a dash, drag NORMA back onto stage.)

Norma!! (Gushing) There's a smil-ing - dark-haired-blue-eyed soldier at the door!

(ANNUNZIATA catches up to MIMI, out of breath, hair disheveled, exclaiming in her exaggerated accent.)

ANNUNZIATA

Oh, Dio - he is'a so hand-a-som-a!

(MIMI shakes her finger in NORMA's face.)

MIMI

You better get yourself ready! Your future husband is waiting for you!

(THEY grab NORMA, shoving her shoes on, etc and push NORMA unwillingly to front door. NORMA sees JOHN, whose back is to audience. SHE's speechless, then greets him charmingly.)

NORMA

Oh, so nice to meet you, Captain King!

(LIGHTS OUT. ONCE WAS A FAMILY INTERLUDE.)

ACT II, Scene Five:

(LIGHTS UP.)

MIMI

(Next Day: ANNUNZIATA and MIMI sewing clothes.)

Norma was speechless alright when she *first* met John King - but she sure made up for it the rest of the night! (*Sassy*) - Oohing, and awing, all over Captain King. (Groaning) It was unbearable watching those two lovebirds -

ANNUNZIATA

(SHE pats MIMI'S cheek) Your time will come, Mimi.

MIMI

I'm beginning to feel like an old woman.

ANNUNZIATA

I once felt that way. I thought I'd never be complete until I found someone. But Norma said there's been a young man calling for you.

MIMI

Papa's been hanging up on him every time he calls. Don't tell him I told you.

ANNUNZIATA

Don't you worry, I've learned how to handle your father. You find a way to talk more with this nice boy- ok?

(NORMA ENTERS in a bad mood, throws her coat off.)

MIMI

What's eating you?

NORMA

(SHE whips off scarf. Mimics NUNZIO.)

'Why can't you date an Italian for once?' Then Papa says - 'Don't be thinking about that art school scholarship. Your place is working in the shop'.Grrrrr!

ANNUNZIATA

You know he'll never change...

NORMA

Well, I told John - and he said I shouldn't be treated like that! (slowly)  
Then John said maybe we should... get... married.

ANNUNZIATA

(Gasps) Oh!

NORMA

And move back East.(quiet)

MIMI

Oh - No!!

(MUSIC: *ISN'T IT LOVE INTERLUDE.*)

NORMA

I haven't felt this wonderful since... since Eugene.

MIMI

Oh, Norma. this time, you *have* to follow your heart.

(THEY hug. LIGHTS DOWN)

#### Act II, Scene Six

COLORADO: The Denver Mansion 1950

(LIGHTS RISE. MIMI is writing in her diary.)

MIMI

Dear Diary, It's been 5 years since Norma left with John. I watch her life fill up with children, while I take care of Mother and Father in this dark empty house. On occasion, I meet Tom when Papa is distracted. Tonight we have a date. I know Tom would like us to spend our lives together. I wish I didn't feel scared by that thought. But I'm 35 years old and can't seem to believe that I will ever leave this place...

(Door bell is ringing. MIMI secretly answers the door.)

MIMI

(Whispers through open door) No, Tom - I did *not* tell my father!

(NUNZIO enters.)

NUNZIO

Did I hear the bell ring?

MIMI

Papa - it's my friend-

NUNZIO

Friend?

(HE throws open the door. MIMI rushes in front of NUNZIO.  
HE pushes her to the side. WE do not see CALLER/TOM.)

Who are *you*, coming here unannounced??

MIMI

Papa - stop!

NUNZIO

Mimi's, not available.

(MIMI tries to push HIM away.)

MIMI

No! Don't do that to him- oh please- please!

(NUNZIO locks door. MIMI goes into a rage.)

You are totally heartless!

NUNZIO

Let's not get so dramatic.

MIMI

You've ruined my life!

NUNZIO

(Scoffs) Calm down. Your mother needs you in the kitchen.

(NUNZIO exits. MIMI collapses against the door, crying.)

ANAPOS

(SPOT. To AUDIENCE) What did Mimi's obedience and devotion matter when goodness brought little reward? Mimi's boundless unhappiness drifted into a river of depression. Life had passed through her hands - like water...along with love, and all that mattered.

(We see PROJECTION of water IMAGERY. Trance-like, MIMI is drawn to the screen. MIMI sings "WATER". AN IMAGE of a jug breaks at the song's tragic climax. ANAPOS watches from the side and comes to holds MIMI at end.)

**TRACK #16** (SONG: *WATER*. Sung by MIMI. [Water](#) .)

MIMI: LOVE HAS PASSED THROUGH MY LIFE LIKE WATER  
TRAVELED FAR, FLOWED AWAY LIKE A RIVER  
LIFE HAS PASSED THROUGH MY HANDS AND FINGERS  
THROUGH MY HEART AND ALL THAT MATTERED  
I TRIED TO GRASP HOPE, BUT I COULD NOT SAVE  
DREAMS THAT FLOATED AWAY  
ON A SILENT FORCEFUL WAVE, I WATCHED MY YOUTH DRIFT AWAY

TIME HAS PASSED THROUGH MY LIFE LIKE WATER  
ALL THE YEARS AS YOUR FAITHFUL DAUGHTER  
LOST IN CURRENTS OF TROUBLED WATERS  
ERODED STONES OF HOPE IN A RIVER  
I TRIED TO LISTEN AND FOLLOW THE TIDE  
THROUGH WORK AND SACRIFICE  
THAT I THOUGHT WOULD FILL MY LIFE  
WITH HAPPINESS REWARDING STRIFE.

OH SADNESS I CANNOT BEAR, MEMORIES OF LOVES LOST CANNOT REPAIR  
GOODNESS DECEIVED ITS SCHEME AND ELUDED MY DREAMS  
AND LEFT ME DESPAIR, LEFT ME DESPAIR, I CAN NO LONGER BEAR

LOVE HAS PASSED THROUGH MY LIFE LIKE WATER  
OVER DAYS, OVER YEARS, SEEMS FOREVER.  
MY DESIRES RINSED HANDS OF OTHERS.  
IT'S TOO LATE TO EVER LOVE ANOTHER, ANOTHER, OH -

(Image of Water jug crashes to ground, breaking into  
pieces. MIMI picks up jug shard, holds as she sings,  
obvious that SHE is thinking of hurting herself.)

OH SADNESS I CANNOT BEAR , MEMORIES OF LOVES LOST CANNOT REPAIR  
GOODNESS DECEIVED ITS SCHEME, AND ELUDED DREAMS  
AND LEFT ME DESPAIR, LEFT ME DESPAIR, I CAN NO LONGER BEAR

(NUNZIO enters from side and grabs shard away from MIMI.)

I TRIED TO GRASP HOPE, BUT I COULD NOT SAVE  
DREAMS THAT FLOATED ASTRAY  
AS I WATCHED MY YOUTH DRIFT AWAY  
MY LIFE JUST WASHED AWAY. ON A SILENT MIGHTY WAVE  
MY LIFE JUST DRIFTED AWAY.

(Water imagery engulfs MIMI who collapses in NUNZIO's  
arms).

NUNZIO

I saw it coming and did nothing. My whole life - preoccupied with my own  
thirst- and not even with all the water about me, could I drink.

(NUNZIO bows his head and weeps.)

I could have loved her more. I could have loved them all more...

ANAPOS

(Water turns to mirror)

Look at yourself, Nunzio. Your mortal time is running out.

NUNZIO

(MIMI stirs. NUNZIO panics. HE Wails.)

Annunziata!! Where are you?!

(ANNUNZIATA runs into the room.)

ANNUNZIATA

Nunzio, what is it? What is wrong with Mimi?

NUNZIO

This all my fault- please, please - forgive me.

ANNUNZIATA

(ANNUNZ speaks as she tries to revive MIMI.)

Forgive? I won't carry the burden of *not* forgiving you, Nunzio.

(MIMI starts to comes to. ANNUNZIATA to NUNZIO.)

Now, you must ask for forgiveness - to your daughters, and those you have wronged. That is the only thing left for you to do.

NUNZIO

(NUNZIO goes to hold half-conscious MIMI and asks forgiveness.)

Please forgive me, Mimi. Why couldn't I see the damage I was causing - to you, your sister, your mother?

Why didn't I learn the day I broke that jug? I never apologized - never set things straight. If only I had thought more about others.

I could have stopped myself. I could have been kind, I could have given you happiness, believed in you, filled you with hope. I've only been the cause of your suffering.

(ANAPOS watches as NUNZIO looks into mirror.)

Now I must must change, not for myself, but for my loved ones.

(NUNZIO holds MIMI and sings- *MATTER*.)

NUNZIO:

I HAD HOPES TO BE



SOMEONE WHO WOULD MATTER  
WHO WOULD MATTER  
I PROMISE TO BE  
SOMEONE - WHO WILL MATTER  
(Whispers) WHO WILL MATTER FOR ALL, MATTER FOR ALL.

(LIGHTS OUT. LIGHT remains on ANAPOS)

ANAPOS

(Somberly.) Some forge ahead like a mighty river- some surrender to the force of its currents. Water takes many forms - at times its reflection mirrors one's life with such clarity.

(LIGHTS OUT)

ACT II, Scene Seven  
Denver Mansion 1960's

(*"ONCE WAS A FAMILY"* instrumental plays. LIGHTS UP ON MANSION. NUNZIO and ANNUNZIATA are in their 60's, MIMI is 38, NORMA 40. ENTOURAGE is fixing up house. ANNUNZIATA runs into the room.)

ANNUNZIATA

Norma - I mean "Carol" - is on her way! Oh goodness, everything must look beautiful!

(Bell rings. ANNUNZIATA pushes NUNZIO.)

Answer the door, Nunzio!

NUNZIO

(NUNZIO pushes ANNUNZ.) *You* answer the door. I'm sure she won't want to see me first- or at *all*...

ANNUNZIATA

(ANNUNZ. pushes NUNZIO) *You* answer the door!! Come on, Nunzio-- make an effort- at least for Mimi's sake! Seeing her sister will do her such good.

(ANNUNZIATA swipes at NUNZIO head, then rushes to door, joyfully hugs NORMA. NUNZIO hangs in the back.)

ANAPOS

Talk to Norma. For Goddess' sake- I need to get back to my life. (Looks at her watch.)

NUNZIO

(NUNZIO stops short of hugging NORMA, grabs her suitcase.)

Your sister is dying to see you.

ANNUNZIATA

I'll tell Mimi that you're here - she's been waiting all day!

(SHE leaves NUNZIO and NORMA awkwardly alone.)

NORMA

Well, Papa, it's been quite a while - (SHE looks around.) Being home certainly brings back memories. Let's remember the good times - right Papa?

NUNZIO

(Sullen) It would have been nice to have had an apology, Norma.

NORMA

Me? Apologize? I think it's the other way around!

NUNZIO

You left your sister behind - there are some things that I cannot forgive.

NORMA

But, Papa, Mimi was not *my* responsibility. And if I hadn't left, my life would have been destroyed- a *second* time.

NUNZIO

You betrayed your family.

NORMA

That's according to you, Papa. I was saving myself. All my life, running from your anger. And then, I fell in love.

NUNZIO

And what about love of family?

NORMA

Well - I have my *own* family now - and-

NUNZIO

So you can just forget about *us*?

NORMA

Oh, Papa, how can I forget you?

(SHE steps forward, hugs NUNZIO. HE hesitantly hugs her.)

NUNZIO

You and I are so similar - that's why we have always had our words. (Pause) We are closer than you think, Norma, (corrects himself)- I mean, Carol. To tell you the truth - I'm proud of you. You're a fighter. I always respected that.

NORMA

That's the first time you ever said anything like that to me, Papa.

(MIMI runs into the room. SHE and ANNUNZIATA are overjoyed to see NORMA and NUNZIO hugging.)

MIMI

Oh, Norma I have missed you more than anything!

ANNUNZIATA

My dear family! Come - let's all cook a *fabulous* dinner - just like old times. (She kisses each one, including a big kiss for NUNZIO.) Come on! We don't have all night!

(ANAPOS and ENTOURAGE walk in pushing dining carts loaded with pots of food, setting up kitchen.)

ANAPOS

(All smiles) And suddenly the mansion *filled* with laughter while Annunziata *filled* the house with her *spectacular* aromas, as she fluttered around the kitchen - sprinkling and tossing ingredients. Oh- the aromas!

Life's ingredients transformed into a new alchemy; souls were soothed, and troubles forgotten, as the family feasted on Annunziata's dishes- always finished with (pantomimes sprinkle) a spice of joy!

(MUSIC INTRO to "PINCH":) The family stands around ANNUNZIATA and several pots. NORMA and MIMI compete to stir a pot; NUNZIO peers into ANNUNZIATA'S pot, but she shoos him away. With a large spoon, NUNZIO bangs on a pot, stopping the commotion. ANAPOS takes over and conducts the cooking scene, sings/interacts with family with her ENTOURAGE. This all morphs into a dance number- pots and pans serve as percussion, as well.)

**TRACK #17** (SONG: A LITTLE PINCH OF THIS, A LITTLE PINCH OF THAT. Sung by the CAST. [A Little Pinch of this, A Little Pinch of that.](#))

ANNUNZIATA:

A LITTLE PINCH OF THIS AND THEN, A LITTLE PINCH OF THAT  
A HANDFUL OF PARSLEY, IT'S SUCH A SIMPLE TASK  
TO COOK WITH SIMPLE MASTERY AND CULINARY EASE  
TO MAKE A RECIPE THE WAY YOU PLEASE.

WOMEN: A LITTLE PINCH OF SALT AND THEN, A DROP OF OLIVE OIL  
SAUTE SOME GARLIC WHILE YOUR POT BEGINS TO BOIL  
TIMING IS IMPORTANT, YOU MUST ALWAYS BE AWARE  
TO COOK WITH STYLE AND CULINARY FLARE.

(ANNUNZIATA pushes all to the side - she's the boss)

ANNUNZIATA: THE KITCHEN IS MY PRIVATE DOMAIN  
MY COOKING NEVER TASTES THE SAME

ALL: AROMATIC DISHES AND DELECTABLE TASTES  
FROM THE KITCHEN RIGHT TO YOUR DINNER PLATE.

MEN: MASTERING FOOD REQUIRES A SPECIAL FEEL  
NOT EVERYTHING IS MEASURED IN A SCRUMPTIOUS MEAL

ALL: ANCESTORS' SECRET RECIPES, PERFECTED OVER CENTURIES

NUNZIO: FOR COOKING IS A MASTERY, ONE DOES WITH AUTHENTICITY

WOMEN: YOU MUST HAVE TENACITY TO COOK TO YOUR CAPACITY  
TIME TO BOIL THE MACARONI, MAKE THE SAUCE FOR RIGATONI  
IT'S A MAGNIFICO, IT'S A FANTASTICO!

WOMEN: SIMMER CHICKEN CACCIATORE, WITH TUTTO L'AMORE

ALL: AND WHEN THE FIRST COURSE ARRIVES  
EVERYONE FEAST THEIR EYES ON THE SAVORY SURPRISE  
FOR COOKING FROM THE HEART IS THE SECRET INGREDIENT  
THAT WITHOUT IT, ONE CAN NEVER DUPLICATE OR REPLICATE  
A RAVISHING, TANTALIZING MEAL

ANNUNZIATA: A HANDFUL OF HERBS AND THEN, A SPRINKLE OF HOT SPICE  
I NEVER MEASURE ANYTHING, THE PORTIONS MUST BE RIGHT  
MAGICAL COOKING AND DELECTABLE TASTE  
FROM THE KITCHEN, RIGHT TO YOUR DINNER PLATE.

MEN: MASTERING FOOD REQUIRES A SPECIAL FEEL  
NOT EVERYTHING IS MEASURED IN A SCRUMPTIOUS MEAL

ALL: ANCESTORS' SECRET RECIPES, PERFECTED OVER CENTURIES

WOMEN: FOR COOKING IS A MASTERY, ONE DOES WITH AUTHENTICITY  
YOU MUST HAVE TENACITY TO COOK TO YOUR CAPACITY

MEN: IMPROVISE AND VISUALIZE, SYNTHESIZE AND RITUALIZE

WOMEN: TENDERIZE AND VITALIZE, CRYSTALIZE AND EQUALIZE,  
VAPORIZE, AND HYPNOTIZE

ALL: TANTALIZE AND MESMERIZE, ANALYZE AND FANTASIZE

FLAVORS THAT MAKE US SING AND RHAP-SO-DIZE

OUR FOOD IS HOLIER THAN THOU

AND WITH GRACE WE LOWER OUR HEADS IN REVERENT BOW

TO HONOR THE FLAVORS OF THE GODS, WE APPLAUD

AND BLESS THE CULINARY MARY WITH A CEREMONY

FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE, MEMORABLE, PLEASURABLE, IMMEASURABLE

FANTASTICAL, CULINARY FEAT

ALL: MANGIA BENE...LET'S EAT! LET'S EAT, LET'S EAT!

NUNZIO

(NUNZIO spoons food into his mouth, sighs) This is what I call Un bel giorno!

ANAPOS

(ANAPOS takes a bite of food, smacks her lips.) My favorite earthly pleasure!

(SHE shakes NUNZIO's hand. NUNZIO pulls a jug piece from  
his pocket and hands it to ANAPOS. LIGHTS OUT.)

Act II, Scene Eight

BRIDAL SHOP-1970's.

(LIGHTS UP on BRIDAL SHOP. DRESS SHOP UNIT revolves to 1970  
era. NUNZIO and ANNUNZIATA are in their 70's, packing up  
the shop. ANNUNZIATA removes dress from mannequin.)

NUNZIO

My - that dress brings back memories!

ANNUNZIATA

(ANNUNZIATA looks around the shop, reminiscing.)

Yes - think of all these dresses we have sewn... it must be thousands!

NUNZIO

We were quite a team, my dear. We had our day in the sun, didn't we?

ANNUNZIATA

We had our moments. (Pensive) One can look at a beautiful dress without ever knowing the flaws underneath.

NUNZIO

I know I could have been better -

ANNUNZIATA

I wish I could remove certain times- just like stitches that I ripped from many a dress.

NUNZIO

But to everyone, we were a success. We endured, Annunziata.

ANNUNZIATA

Yes - but there are incidents that I can't forget, Nunzio. God knows how much I had to hold together... But somehow I made my life... Stitch by stitch...

TRACK #18 (SONG: *STITCHES OF TIME (PUNTI DI TEMPO.)* Sung by ANNUNZIATA and NUNZIO who never connect and sing independently, showing unresolved relationship. GOD/DESSES join in. Hand choreography of sewing (Shadow puppetry) [Stitches of Time](#).

ANNUNZIATA: STITCHES OF TIME SEWN IN SEAMS AND LINES

STITCHES THAT BIND MEMORIES LEFT BEHIND

SOME PERFECT, SOME WEAK THAT FRAYED

SOME MISTAKEN, SOME THAT SEWED OUR FATE

NUNZIO: PUNTI DI TEMPO, FATTI DI AMORE

PUNTI DI DESTINO, FATTI DI RANCORE

PUNTI DI GOIA, PUNTI DI FOLIA

PUNTI PERFETTI, PUNTI ERRATI.

ANNUNZ: WE'VE LEARNED TO FORGIVE MISTAKES THAT WE HAVE LIVED

FABRICS MADE OF JOY AND STRIFE

WOVEN FROM LIFE

NUNZIO: STITCHES OF LOVE, TENDER, MAD, AND ROUGH

STITCHES OF FORCE, BEARED IN-SPITE OF

PUNTI DI GOIA, PUNTI DI FOLIA,

PUNTI PERFETTI, PUNTI ERRATI

(The ENSEMBLE join; Arms choreograph sewing gestures.)

ANNUNZIATA, ANAPOS/ENTOURAGE:  
ALL THE STITCHES WE HAVE SEWN.  
ONE BY ONE WE HAVE GROWN  
STITCHES MADE FROM FLESH AND BONE  
THAT WE CALL OUR OWN  
NUNZIO OR MEN: NOI IMPARIAMO PARDONE I NOSTRO ERERRORI  
TESUTO DI LINO, DELLA NOSTRA VITA

CAST: STITCHES OF LOVE AND STITCHES OF HOPE,  
STITCHES OF TEARS, STITCHES TO COPE  
STITCHES OF JOY AND STITCHES OF SADNESS, STITCHES OF LIES  
NUNZIO AND ANNUNZ: STITCHES OF MADNESS..  
ANNUNZ: PUNTI DI TEMPO, PUNTI DI AMORE  
NUNZIO: PUNTI DI SPERANZA,  
NUNZIO AND ANNUNZ: PUNTI DELLA VITA - DELLA VITA-AAA  
ALL: ALL THE STITCHES WE HAVE SEWN.

(ANNUNZIATA stores the dress away. ANAPOS ENTERS quietly,  
waiting to say goodbye. ANNUNZIATA hugs ANAPOS who then  
follows ANNUNZIATA/NUNZIO through a SHADOW SCREEN, vanish,  
suggesting the end of their lives. LIGHTS DOWN)

Act II, Scene Nine  
BRIDAL SHOP-1970's

(The scene is a continuation to show's opening. The Bridal  
Shop Unit is revolved to PRESENT TIME SIDE. MICHELE tries  
on hats, humming. MIMI and NORMA are in back of shop. A  
WOMAN (ANAPOS) walks into the shop.)

ANAPOS

(Startled) Oh! I thought the shop would be closed.

MICHELE

It's supposed to be - my aunt had the key -

ANAPOS

(Confused). Oh, you used a key to get in. I see... And what is your name?

MICHELE

I'm Michele - our family used to own this shop. My mother and Aunt Mimi  
are in the back.

ANAPOS

(Jumps back) Mimi?? Your mother wouldn't be... Norma?

MICHELE

Oh yes!

ANAPPOS

Oh! I really must go. I actually came by to visit Nunzio and Annunziata. Oh I do get mixed up with all these time changes.

MICHELE

Oh, my grandparents passed away a while ago. Did you just fly in?

ANAPPOS

You could say that - but my favorite way of travel is by water. You're getting married?

MICHELE

Yes! I'm quite excited!

(MICHELE turns back to look through dresses. ANAPPOS leans over her shoulder.)

ANAPPOS

Tell me something - do you ever have... (draws out word)- *longing*?

(MICHELE jumps.)

Longing?

ANAPPOS

You know - longing - as a melancholy?

MICHELE

Why actually, *all* the time. It's a family thing, I'm told.

ANAPPOS

(Chuckles) Oh, you *do* have the longing! (To AUDIENCE) I *knew* my curse was a good one - (gleefully) my goddess!

(A WOMAN - ANNUNZIATA, who has been turned into a GODESS- enters as a customer. ANAPPOS discreetly greets HER.)

MICHELE

Your accent is very charming - where are you from?

ANAPPOS

Oh dear - I am very, very late... I must leave. Please say hello to your mother and aunt-

(ANAPPOS flies out the door.)

MICHELE

(To Herself) Who was *SHE*??

MIMI

(MIMI, NORMA appear with veils for MICHELE.

Being here at the shop makes me miss Mother so much.

MICHELE

The strangest woman just came in wearing a blue robe. She seemed to know our family and had an odd way of speaking... she talked about that longing -- it was really weird...

MIMI

(MIMI gasps) Norma, Michele -- let's get out of here!

NORMA

We have to find her! Hurry up Mimi, come on!

MIMI

Just give me a second to get my purse -- you're always rushing me, Norma.

NORMA

You've always been a slow poke-- some things never change.

(THEY tear out of shop looking for ANAPOS. Meanwhile, ANAPOS returns to SHOP w/ ENTOURAGE who greet ANNUNZIATA/fellow GODESS.) THEY set up 3 angled mirrors that reflect into each other, creating an image of timelessness for AUDIENCE to see. ANNUNZIATA/GODESS remains out of sight. NORMA, MIMI, MICHELE re-enter the SHOP.)

NORMA

We probably would have caught her if you didn't have to look for your purse!

MIMI

What do you expect *Mrs. Impatience*??

(Disgusted, SHE turns to MICHELE, slipping on bridal gown.)

Michele, let me help you with that gown.

(MIMI pushes MICHELE back to get a look).

Look, how beautiful you are -- that's a design our mother created years ago!



MICHELE

(MICHELE examines herself in the mirror and ponders.)

How does one know if they're making the right decision??

MIMI

We all have to make these important decisions - hopefully ones we don't regret...

MICHELE

(To NORMA and MIMI) Was there any thing that you ever regretted? (NORMA silent.) I mean it was so brave, Mother, about you running away -

NORMA

(Dismissively) Oh - that's all a matter of opinion. (Exhales.) Well,

(Suddenly turns to MIMI)

You know what, Mimi? I should have never left you back in Colorado. I was selfish...

MIMI

Norma, you were in love... I would never forgive myself if you had stayed. You left. You were the brave one.

NORMA

You were the good one.

MIMI

You rebelled. And *I* conformed - for what? *That*, Michele, was my regret.

(NORMA places a veil on MICHELE'S head.)

NORMA

Look at this veil - so light and transparent- almost too delicate for this world.

MICHELE

(suddenly pensive.) Mother, you know your painting of Sicily? Those 3 ghost-like figures above Mount Etna... who were they?

NORMA

Oh... yes...(slowly) Well, I guess they were Mother, Mimi and I - tied forever to our family land, yet ghost-like and boundless to fly away if we ever had to-

MICHELE

Run away...

MIMI

If we hadn't, you children wouldn't have the freedom you have today. It was your mother who changed your destiny.

NORMA

Come, stand here, Michele.

(NORMA indicates in front of the 3 mirrors reflecting into each other, creating an image of infinity. (MICHELE positions herself in future mirror, NORMA in present, ANNUNZIATA in the mirror of the past.)

Look how the past reflects into the present, and the present, into the future, creating an infinite image of time-

ANNUNZIATA

But, you see, it's the past that everyone longs for.

MIMI

(Stares off) That bitter-sweet longing-

NORMA

(Trance-like) That longing that is too remote to define... and too profound to forget.

**TRACK #19**

SONG: *LONGING*. [Longing/Opening](#)) Sung by NORMA and MIMI to MICHELE.

(RUBATO)

NORMA :THE MORE WE TRY TO HOLD OUR MEMORY NEAR  
THE MORE DISTANT IT APPEARS

MIMI: LEAVING TRACES BITTER SWEET AND OH SO DEAR

(RHYTHM)

NORMA, MIMI, MICHELE: WE CAN TASTE IT & EVEN SMELL IT, WE CAN HEAR IT AND  
ALMOST SEE IT  
BUT WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO TOUCH IT AGAIN

MIMI: LONGING MAKES US PRONE TO FEEL  
WHAT IS GONE, IS STILL VERY HERE AND REAL  
SO CLOSE, SO FAR, LIKE THE DISTANCE OF A BURNING STAR

NORMA: IMPRESSIONS LODGED IN MEMORIES  
IN CORNERS OF ETERNITY  
SO PRESENT, YET CONFINED TO PAST REVERIE

NORMA, MIMI, NICOLE: THE MORE WE TRY TO HOLD OUR MEMORY NEAR  
THE MORE DISTANT IT APPEARS  
LEAVING TRACES BITTER SWEET AND OH SO DEAR  
WE CAN TASTE IT AND EVEN SMELL IT, WE CAN HEAR IT, AND ALMOST SEE IT  
BUT WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO TOUCH IT AGAIN  
(Please disregard the narration on the link.)

(MODULATION)

CAST/ALL:  
WE ALL CAME FROM ANOTHER PLACE  
WHERE WE BELONGED THAT WILL NEVER ERASE  
WE TRY TO RELIVE OUR LIFE  
AS IF IT WERE A MYTH

BUT LONGING'S A FEELING WE CAN'T DEFINE  
FROM A PLACE, A THING, A PERSON, A TIME  
WE CAN NEVER REACH  
THAT PAST WE FOREVER SEEK.  
WE CAN NEVER REACH  
THAT PAST WE FOREVER SEEK.

Act II, Scene Ten

Present Time

(SPOT on ANAPOS who holds jug with one piece missing with  
MIMI and NORMA, MICHELE.)

MIMI

(To AUDIENCE.) This longing that flows through our veins like water that once  
flowed from our family water jug, has carved its path for a very long time.

NORMA

For we are vessels, recipients of the past. The flowing, spilling and  
untamed course of water has made us who we are, or - more accurately - *who* we  
have become... (slowly) Survivors, of survivors, of survivors. (silence)

ANAPOS

We Gods *also* long for our origins, long for love and family. I imagine my  
fellow Gods smiling to see our jug in repair - knowing that love endures...  
that life takes its *time* to put pieces in order. I'm supposing the Gods knew  
that - the day when Nunzio forced his way in to the water line.

Now I must return to my freedom, leaving my dear ones here, with a longing  
that will last an *eternity*. I'm sure that we have made YOU think of some  
longing of your *own*.

(ANAPOS takes jug piece to add to Jug. NORMA/ MIMI bid  
ANAPOS a sad good-bye. SHADOW IMAGERY shows ANAPOS merge  
into Water Jug- the vehicle that returns HER home.)

(NORMA fishes in her purse, hands a jug piece to MICHELE.)

NORMA

Listen, your Nonna told me to keep this for the family.

MICHELE

(MICHELE turns it in her hands) Is it a piece from that water jug?

NORMA

(NORMA, suddenly tears up.) One day you will long for *your* past - and you'll have this piece to prove that all those memories were *true*.

MIMI

And let me tell you - all we *really* have, are our memories.

MICHELE

That sounds *so* romantic... (MICHELE turns to NORMA.)

(MIMI hands MICHELE her bouquet. MICHELE stands fully dressed as a bride. MUSIC: "*ISN'T IT LOVE?*" underscores.)

Mother, did you ever see Eugene again?

NORMA

(*Saddened.*) I don't know what happened to him. (*brightening*) Oh - we were in love at such a tender age... (*brightens*) But- if I hadn't met Eugene, I may never have run away. And- I would have never met *your* father, and all of *you* would never have existed!

But- you never forget your first love.

MICHELE

Yes! It's all you can think of- day and night!

NORMA

Yes! It is *everything*..

**TRACK# 20** (SONG: ISN'T IT LOVE REPRISE. Sung by NORMA, MIMI and CAST.)

ISN'T IT LOVE? - <https://youtu.be/kxde04h8lG0> (4:45)

NORMA: MIMI: ISN'T IT LOVE THAT WE LIVE FOR  
ISN'T IT LOVE THAT OPENS HEART'S DOOR  
ISNT IT LOVE THAT WAKES OUR HOPES AND DREAMS  
AND BRINGS US A NEW DAY, IT SEEMS

MIMI: ISN'T IT LOVE THAT LIGHTS THE ROOM  
OH ISN'T LOVE THE ANSWER TO GLOOM  
ISN'T IT MAGICAL WHEN LOVE HAPPENS AT FIRST SIGHT  
DOESN'T LOVE COMPLETE YOU WHEN IT'S RIGHT

MIMI, NORMA: ISN'T LOVE WRITTEN THROUGHOUT HISTORY  
THE QUEST OF EVERYONE WHO WE MEET  
WHO CHASE LOVE FROM THE MOMENT THEY BREATHE?  
SO YOU MUST ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR HEART

NEVER QUESTION FROM THE START  
LISTEN TO LOVE WHEN IT TAKES ITS HOLD AND MAKES ITS CALL  
ISN'T LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING OF ALL?

NORMA: ISN'T IT LOVE THAT RISES WITH THE SUN  
ISN'T IT LOVE THAT MOVES EVERYONE  
MIMI OH, ISN'T IT LOVE THE STRONGEST MEMORY WE HOLD  
THAT LASTS A LIFETIME I'VE BEEN TOLD

(\*GOD/GODDESSES/MINISSALES/ANAPOS/CAST join in singing.)

ALL CAST: ISN'T LOVE WRITTEN THROUGHOUT HISTORY  
THE QUEST OF PERSON WHO WE MEET  
WHO CHASE LOVE FROM THE MOMENT THEY BREATHE?  
SO YOU MUST ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR HEART  
NEVER QUESTION FROM THE START  
LISTEN TO LOVE WHEN IT TAKES ITS HOLD AND MAKES ITS CALL  
ISN'T LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING OF ALL?

ISN'T IT LOVE THAT RISES WITH THE SUN  
ISN'T IT LOVE THAT MOVES EVERYONE  
ISN'T IT LOVE THE STRONGEST MEMORY WE HOLD  
THAT LASTS A LIFE TIME, WE'VE BEEN TOLD?

ISN'T LOVE WRITTEN THROUGHOUT HISTORY  
THE QUEST OF PERSON WHO WE MEET  
WHO CHASE LOVE FROM THE MOMENT THEY BREATHE?  
SO YOU MUST ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR HEART  
NEVER QUESTION FROM THE START  
LISTEN TO LOVE WHEN IT TAKES ITS HOLD AND MAKES ITS CALL  
ISN'T LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING OF ALL?

(NORMA pulls MICHELE in with a hug.)

NORMA: WITH ONE TOUCH, ONE EMBRACE  
MIMI: LOVE HEALS US WITH GRACE  
ALL: ISN'T LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING OF ALL?  
MEN: OH ISN'T IT LOVE? WOMEN: ISN'T LOVE,  
ALL: ISN'T LOVE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING... OF ALL?

(LIGHTS FADE on the CAST, and the water jug. BOWS accompanied by  
an instrumental of *ISN'T IT LOVE*.)

LA GIARA YOUTUBE/TRACKS OF WATER JUG CONCERT READING:

(Note: Lyrics have changed since the recordings below were made. Some  
specifics are included in the text of this version of the play.)

ACT 1

1. LONGING - OPENING - [https://youtu.be/A4yNryX\\_oss](https://youtu.be/A4yNryX_oss)

2. IT WAS JUST A FAMILY WATER JAR! <https://youtu.be/s4VxEEC8Ego> 3. SICILIA - [Sicilia](#) (1:15)  
 4. ADDIO - <https://youtu.be/bhIO4KCmk3A> (6:00/5:30)  
 5. WELCOME TO AMERICA - <https://youtu.be/3THBocq6-SQ> (3:00)

6. DILEMMA - <https://youtu.be/-389FMLL7GM>

(5:30) Y

7. LOVE AND AFFECTION - [https://youtu.be/Cl\\_nhbEOEds](https://youtu.be/Cl_nhbEOEds) (5:30/4:30)

8. CHEZ MARIE - <https://youtu.be/qDPKWXRbpm4> (4:30/4:00)

9. BROKEN PROMISES - <https://youtu.be/xESLEQIVRHI> (5:00)

10. THROW YOU TO THE LIONS - <https://youtu.be/WMZjrEr9CE> (4:15 )

11. ISN'T IT LOVE? - <https://youtu.be/kxdeO4h8lG0> (4:45)

12. NO MORE – 2017 -TRIO - <https://youtu.be/uB03nwWNHGQ> (6:30)

## ACT 2

13. MR EVIL 2014 - <https://youtu.be/FbcLZkJ8Hyo> (4:00)

14. LONG FOR THE SUN - <https://youtu.be/5MSMLuItI8M> (5:00)

15. THERE ONCE WAS A FAMILY - <https://youtu.be/kUwZPjbOdd8> (4:00)

16. WATER – <https://youtu.be/CqQ6F5xOOnA> (5:02) (6:00)

17. A LITTLE PINCH OF THIS AND THAT - <https://youtu.be/Vn2tg1g8sM8> (4:00) 18. STITCHES OF TIME – (2019) <https://youtu.be/igtvp2y1fSA> (4:15)

19. LONGING - LONGING REPRISE - <https://youtu.be/CexBPSkFxoM>

20. ISN'T IT LOVE REPRISE - <https://youtu.be/kxdeO4h8lG0> (4:45)

\*\*LA GIARA 5 MINUTE PREVIEW - [https://youtu.be/\\_HKn1DYBQ-s](https://youtu.be/_HKn1DYBQ-s)

\*\*LA GIARA – EXTENDED PREVIEW – <https://youtu.be/DQcwsxLf35s>

## **LA GIARA TIME LINE and AGE REFERENCE (2/24)**

BIRTHDATES: NUNZIO -1894, ANNUNZIATA -1896, NORMA - 1921, MIMI - 1923

1. 1975: INTRODUCTION TO STORY  
 MIMI, NORMA -60, 58, MICHELE - 25

2. 1912: (SICILIA) NUNZIO - 17

3. Later 1912 -Breaking of WATER JUG. (IT WAS JUST A WAR JAR...)

4. 1913: NUNZIO Arrives in AMERICA (WELCOME) NUNZIO 18  
 1915 - NUNZIO'S Mother, VINCENZA, ANNUNZIATA Arrive, Nunzio and Annunziata meet

5. 1917-1924 (?) (NUNZIO pursues/proposes/marries to ANNUNZIATA) (LOVE/AFFEC)  
 NUNZIO -22-29, ANNUNZIATA 20-27.

1918-NUNZIO and ANNUNZIATA Marry  
 MIMI and Norma born (1921 and 1923)

6. 1940 CHEZ MARIE Dress Shop(CHEZ MARIE)  
 NUNZIO 45, ANNUNZIATA -43

MIMI-20, NORMA- 18

7.1941 NORMA MEETS EUGENE (ISN'T IT LOVE?)

8. 1941-43 -ESCAPE -(NO MORE)

NUNZIO- 46

MIMI. NORMA -21, 19

9. 1943 (ACT II)(MR. EVIL)

NUNZIO-48

MIMI,NORMA - 23, 21

10. 1943 NUNZIO finds family.COLORADO MANSION, NORMA meets J. KING-(FAMILY)

NUNZIO-49

MIMI.NORMA - 24, 22

NORMA marries, moves back East.

11. 1950's MIMI (WATER)

NUNZIO-54

MIMI, NORMA, 31, 29

12.1960 - NORMA visits Denver (PINCH)

NUNZIO - 65 NORMA 63

MIMI, NORMA - 40, 38

ANNUNZIATA AND NUZIO are grandparents. Norma visits Denver

13.1970 -NUNZIO and ANNUNZIATA close down shop.(STICHES)

NUNZIO-74, ANNUNZIATA -72

MIMI, NORMA -50, 48

14. 1980 (ISN'T LOVE REPRISE)

MIMI, NORMA -60, 58

MICHELE - 25

15. 1980 - (LONGING)