

# **THE GARDEN BRIDGE**

**Book & Lyrics by Jill Ohayon**

**Music by Andy Li**

## CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

### **Itsik Steinburg**

43-year-old Viennese Jewish father and husband. Physician specializing in orthopedics. Dignified and proud.

### **Eva Steinburg**

38-year-old Viennese Jewish mother and wife. The glue of her family. Strong-willed and protective.

### **Josef Steinburg**

18-year-old Viennese Jewish son and brother. Gifted violinist. Were he alive today, he would likely be diagnosed with obsessive compulsive disorder.

### **Roza Steinburg**

12-year-old Viennese Jewish daughter and sister. Outgoing and unfiltered. Has always come second to her genius of an older brother.

### **Ye Xinfan (叶辛凡)**

45-year-old Chinese father. Rickshaw driver who once ran a successful business. Highly protective and highly volatile.

### **Ye Xuelin (叶雪琳)**

11-year-old Chinese daughter. Sweet, obedient (well, mostly), and resilient.

### **Ye Shufen (叶淑芬)**

76-year-old Chinese grandmother (and mother to Xinfan). Slow-moving, but with 76 years worth of wisdom that comes from having lived a difficult life.

### **Xiao Guo (小郭)**

40-year-old rickshaw driver. Loves a good party.

### **Xiao Li (小李)**

40-year-old rickshaw driver. Loves a good dumpling.

### **Judith Grünberg**

56-year-old Viennese Jewish woman. Owns a café in Shanghai with her husband.

### **Lionel Grünberg**

59-year-old Viennese Jewish man. Owns a café in Shanghai with his wife.

### **Wang Yaqi (王雅琪)**

35-year-old Chinese resident of the Hongkew Ghetto.

### **Zhao Xiuqin (赵秀琴)**

50-year-old Chinese resident of the Hongkew Ghetto.

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## PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

**Bai jia bei** = Bye dzee-ya bay

**Baruch hashem** = Ba-ruk h uh-shem

**Bubbe** = Buh-bee

**Cao ni ma de bi** = Tsao ni mah duh  
bee

**Challah** = kh-uh-luh

**Coolie** = koo-lee

**Eva** = Ee-va

**Hongkew** = Hong-ko

**Huangpu** = Wang-poo

**Itsik** = Eats-ick

**Jause** = Yao-zuh

**Jia Bing** = Dzee-uh Bing

**Jianzi** = Tsi-en-za

**Josef** = Yo-sef

**Judith** = You-dit

**NaiNai** = Nigh Nigh

**Oh Yang Lu** = Oh Yang Loo

**Qu Yang Lu** = Tsu Yang Loo

**Shufen** = Shoe-fun

**Si Jie Se** = Seh tzyeh suh

**Si Rou Si** = Seh Row Seh

**Si Yi Si** = Seh ee seh

**Si Yi Wa** = Seh ee wah

**Si You Ran** = Seh yoh ran

**Shul** = Shool

**Tante Vera** = Ton-tay Veh-ra

**Xinru** = Seen-Roo

**Xuelin** = Shu-ay-leen

**Xiao Guo** = See-ow Gw-oh

**Xiao Li** = See-ow Lee

**Xinfan** = Seen-fun

**Xiuqin** = Shu-tsin

**Yang Yi** = Yung-ee

**Yaqi** = Ya-tsi

**Ye** = Ye

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## ACT I

### SCENE 1

#### 1. OPENING: SHORT STAY / SHORT DAY

*A ship horn sounds. Lights up on a ship deck.*

**ROZA**

Will it really be like a vacation in Shang-hee?

**EVA**

Shanghai, Roza. Shanghai.

**ITSIK**

Yes. Like a vacation.

**ROZA**

How long will we be there?

**JOSEF**

Just a short time.

**ITSIK**

THEY'VE ASKED US FOR NO PAPERS.

THEY'VE INVITED US IN.

NO JEWISH QUOTA, NO BROWN SHIRTS, NO BLACK BOOTS.

**EVA**

THOUGH AUSTRIA WAS TAKEN FROM US,

FEAR DOESN'T WIN.

WE DIG OURSELVES UP AND WE PLANT NEW ROOTS.

**ROZA**

Will you have a job Papa?

**ITSIK**

Yes! I will be allowed to work once again. And the Rothmans will send our funds from England.

**JOSEF**

I'm getting hungry.

**ITSIK**

Do you want the rest of my sandwich? It's schnitzel and pickles.

**JOSEF**

I -

**EVA**

Itsik, you know Josef doesn't like to eat food other people have touched.

**ITSIK**

I know, but I haven't touched this half.

**ROZA**

Will there be schnitzel there? And black forest cake?

**EVA**

We will find you your schnitzel and cake, sweetheart.

**ITSIK**

I WILL FIGHT FOR MY FAMILY,  
THIS MUCH I KNOW.

**EVA**

I ASKED GOD TO KEEP US SAFE.  
AND HE GAVE US SOMEWHERE TO GO.

**EVA & ITSIK**

WE'VE CROSSED OVER SEAS,  
NOW WE'RE MOMENTS AWAY.

**JOSEF**

AND IT'S GONNA BE A SHORT STAY.

*Lights up on Shanghai.*

**YAQI**

ANOTHER SHIP COMES TO THIS SHORE.

**XIUQIN**  
MORE STRANGERS FROM FARAWAY PLACES.

**XIAO GUO**  
WE ALREADY HAVE ENGLISHMEN,

**XIAO LI**  
FRENCHMEN,

**XIAO GUO & XIAO LI**  
RUSSIANS, AND MORE.

**XIUQIN & YAQI**  
WE HAVE DEVILS WITH JAPANESE FACES.

*A Japanese soldier marches across the stage.*

**XIAO GUO**  
EVERY BARK,

**XIAO LI**  
EVERY LEER,

**XIAO GUO & XIAO LI**  
IS A BOOT UPON THE NECK.

**YAQI**  
THEY KEEP US IN HUNGER.

**XIUQIN**  
THEY KEEP US IN CHECK.

**XIAO LI**  
NO QUIET, NO REST,

**XIAO GUO**  
AND NO END IN SIGHT.

**XIAO LI & XIAO GUO**  
BECAUSE THEY NEVER BELIEVED



**XIAO LI, XIAO GUO, YAQI, & XIUQIN**  
WE WOULD PUT UP A FIGHT.

**YAQI**  
MY BACK HURTS,

**XIUQIN**  
MY HEART ACHES,

**YAQI & XIUQIN**  
I'M WASTING AWAY.

**XIAO GUO & XIAO LI**  
WASTING AWAY.

**YAQI AND XIUQIN**  
WASTING AWAY.

**XIAO LI, XIAO GUO, YAQI, & XIUQIN**  
OH, PLEASE LET IT BE  
LET IT BE  
LET IT BE A SHORT DAY.

*SHUFEN and XUELIN in their home.*

**SHUFEN**  
Xuelin, did you make the rice? Your father should be on his way home.

**XUELIN**  
Yes, Nainai.

**SHUFEN**  
And the laundry? Is it dry yet?

**XUELIN**  
I'll hang it right now, Nainai. You can go lie down.

**XIAO LI**  
I REMEMBER LIFE BEFORE,  
BEFORE THE DARK BEFORE THE WAR.

**XIAO GUO**

BUT NOW THE CITY DRIPS WITH BLOOD.

**XIAO LI & XIAO GUO**

AND WHEN IT RAINS, IT FLOODS.

WHEN IT RAINS IT FLOODS.

**SHUFEN**

THE HOURS GO BY AND THE DAYS START TO BLUR.

THIS ISN'T THE LIFE THAT I WANTED FOR HER.

**XUELIN**

THE SUN IS OUT NOW

BUT I CANNOT GO PLAY.

**SHUFEN & XUELIN**

PLEASE LET IT BE A SHORT DAY.

*XINFAN enters carrying an empty rickshaw. A Japanese soldier stops him in his path.*

**SOLDIER**

You! Coolie! Stop right there.

**XINFAN**

Yes, sir?

**SOLDIER**

Bow.

*XINFAN puts down the rickshaw carefully and bows. It is not fast enough for the soldier.*

**SOLDIER**

Lower!

*XINFAN tries to go lower, but does not have time to do so before the soldier hits him hard in the shoulder with the butt of his rifle.*

*XINFAN screams out in pain. The soldier slaps him in his face.*

**SOLDIER**

Chinese filth. That'll teach you to know your place. Now get up!

*XINFAN stands up, holding his shoulder. The soldier holds his rifle up to XINFAN's chest.*

**SOLDIER**

Next time, coolie, I will not be so kind.

*SOLDIER walks away. XINFAN watches him with a look of mixed disgust and fear.*

**XINFAN** *(with difficulty)*

SHORT MAN.

SHORT FUSE.

SHORT TEMPER.

SHORT MAN.

SHORT FUSE.

JUST WALK AWAY. WALK AWAY.

OH, PLEASE LET IT BE A SHORT DAY.

*Back to the ship deck.*

**EVA**

And this is my husband.

**JUDITH**

Nice to meet you, Mr. Steinburg.

**EVA**

Doctor Steinburg, actually.

**JUDITH**

My apologies! Doctor St / [einburg]

**ITSIK**

/Oh, please. Call me Itsik.

*LIONEL enters.*

**ROZA**

I'm Roza.

**LIONEL**

Nice to meet you, Roza. Lionel Grünberg.

**JUDITH**

My husband.

**LIONEL**

And you are?

**JOSEF**

Josef Steinburg.

*LIONEL reaches out his hand to shake JOSEF's. JOSEF does not extend his own.*

**EVA**

My son is one of the most gifted violinists in all of Europe.

**JUDITH** (*with genuine interest*)

Is that so?

**ITSIK**

That's right. He was recruited early for the Vienna Philharmonic!

**LIONEL**

My goodness! You look so young! How long did you play with them?

*Beat.*

**JOSEF**

I didn't.

*Beat.*

**LIONEL** (*nodding*)

I see.

*The others continue their conversation in silence.*

**JOSEF** (*internal*)

WHEN SOMETHING IS TAKEN  
AND YOU'RE LEFT TO ROAM.  
YOU HOLD YOUR BREATH  
TIL YOU FIND YOUR WAY HOME.

**EVA** (*looking at her son*)

WHEN SOMETHING IS TAKEN,  
YOU ONLY CAN PRAY.

**JOSEF & EVA**

DEAR GOD, LET IT BE A SHORT STAY.

**LIONEL** (*pointing*)

We've made it! That's Shanghai on the horizon!

*The boat pulls up to the Bund (the harbor).  
The refugees line up to disembark the ship.*

**EVA**

BE CAREFUL. THE RAMP DOESN'T LOOK VERY STURDY.

**ROZA**

THE WATER IS YELLOW.

**JOSEF**

THE WATER IS DIRTY.  
AND WHAT'S THAT I'M SMELLING?  
OH GOD, IT'S VILE...

**SHIP CAPTAIN**

DISEMBARK SINGLE FILE!

*The REFUGEES dock and disembark the ship. They are met by a chaotic crowd  
of SHANGHAI LANDERS: rickshaw drivers, vendors, and beggars all vying for  
their attention.*

**EVA**

Roza, take off your earrings. Now.

*ROZA does as she is told.*

**ITSIK**

WHY ARE THERE SOLDIERS HERE?

**JOSEF**

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

**ROZA**

THAT MAN IS SO SCARY.

LOOK AT HIS FACE.

**SHANGHAILANDERS**

IN A CITY OF CHAOS AND STRUGGLE AND SMOKE,  
DON'T BREATHE IN TOO DEEPLY OR YOU MIGHT CHOKE.

**REFUGEES**

THEY SENT US TO DIE WHEN THEY SENT US AWAY.

DEAR GOD, LET IT BE A –

**SHANGHAILANDERS**

OH, LET IT BE A –

**REFUGEES**

GOD, LET IT BE A –

**SHANGHAILANDERS-**

OH, LET IT BE A

**ALL**

PLEASE LET IT BE A

**REFUGEES**

SHORT STAY.

**SHANGHAILANDERS**

SHORT DAY

**REFUGEES**

SHORT STAY

**SHANGHAILANDERS**

SHORT DAY

**ALL**  
**SHORT**

**REFUGEES**  
**STAY.**

**SHANGHAILANDERS**  
**DAY.**

**SOLDIER**  
All refugees are to move to the Hongkew District, effective immediately.

## SCENE 2

*The STEINBURG Family's fine clothing stands in stark contrast to the dilapidated one-room apartment that has just become their new home. They each carry a bag. JOSEF also carries his violin.*

**ROZA**

Wait. This is our house?

**EVA**

Yes.

**ROZA**

But it's so small.

**EVA**

Let's...let's get settled in. Come on.

*EVA, ITSIK, and ROZA walk into the apartment. JOSEF stands frozen at the door.*

**ROZA**

There's only two beds.

**ITSIK**

Yes, I suppose you and your brother will have to share for now.

**ROZA**

I don't wanna share with him.

**ITSIK**

It won't be for long, Roza. I will find work in a hospital and your brother will find work playing music and we will find a bigger apartment and get you your own bed.

**ROZA**

When?

**ITSIK**

Very soon. And we have plenty of money in the bank in England that the Rothmans will send, don't forget.



**EVA**

Take your things out of your bag, please. I would like them to air out. They've been sitting in there far too long.

*ROZA does as she is told. ITSIK unpacks, and finds the family's passports. He looks at them for a moment before placing them at the bottom of his suitcase and continuing to unpack.*

**EVA**

Josef, honey, didn't you say you needed to use the restroom?

*JOSEF remains standing frozen in the doorway.*

**JOSEF**

I – yes.

**EVA**

It should be that door.

*She points to the only other door in the apartment. JOSEF walks toward it. He opens the door. He gasps.*

**JOSEF**

No.

**EVA**

What is it?

**JOSEF**

No no no no no no no.

*JOSEF's breathing becomes quick and short. He places his hands on his knees, trying to catch his breath. EVA walks over to him and peeks into the bathroom.*

**EVA**

Oh boy.

**ITSIK**

What is it?

**EVA**

It's...I think...the toilet.

**ROZA**

Huh? That's not a toilet. That's a bucket.

*ITSIK looks at EVA. EVA brings JOSEF to sit down on the bed.*

**JOSEF**

I can't. No. I can't. Can't do this.

*JOSEF's panic attack worsens. ITSIK looks at the bathroom.*

**ITSIK**

Dear God.

**JOSEF**

I can't...we can't live here.

**EVA**

We can, Josef. We are together. All of us. Not everybody has been so lucky.

**JOSEF** (*incredulous, through short breaths*)

You call this lucky?!

## **2. EVA'S PRAYER**

**EVA**

WE WILL MAKE A HOME: A RESTFUL HOME.

AND GOD WILL KEEP US SAFE HERE.

WE WILL MAKE A HOME: A KOSHER HOME.

WE KNOW WHO WE ARE, AND WE HOLD IT DEAR.

*ROZA goes to sit beside her mother, who puts her arm around her daughter.*

**EVA**

SO BREATHE SLOW. IT'S ALRIGHT.

I HAVE SPOKEN TO THE RAYS OF GOLDEN SUNLIGHT.

LET YOUR TEARS FALL. IT'S OKAY.

WE'LL BE BACK IN VIENNA SOMEDAY.

**EVA**

Let's go for a walk.

**ROZA**

I don't wanna go for a walk.

**EVA**

We need to get some water.

**ROZA**

So? Why do I have to go?

**EVA**

Please, Roza. Don't be difficult. Let's give your brother some space.

*ROZA huffs but does as she's told. Eva kisses the top of Josef's head.*

## **SCENE 2B**

*EVA, ROZA, and ITSIK walk down the street, which is populated by dumpling stands, rickshaw drivers, and beggars.*

**ROZA**

It smells like dirty smoke.

**ITSIK**

Yes, it does, doesn't it?

*XUELIN and SHUFEN walk toward the STEINBURGS.*

**ITSIK**

These two seem to know where to find water.

**EVA** *(using big gestures)*

Excuse me! Where did you get that?

*XUELIN and SHUFEN look at her confused.*

**ITSIK** (*pointing to the bucket*)  
Your water?

**XUELIN** (*to SHUFEN*)  
I think they want to know where we got our water.

**SHUFEN** (*pointing*)  
Oh! From the stand around the corner.

**EVA**  
It looks like she's pointing to the man over there.

**ITSIK**  
Okay! Thank you!

**SHUFEN** (*smiling*)  
Welcome to Hongkew.

*XUELIN smiles and waves to ROZA, who waves back.*

## SCENE 3

### 3. THE WORK SONG

*XIAO LI and XINFAN stand together leaning against their respective rickshaws, taking a brief work break. XIAO GUO approaches them, looking agitated.*

**XIAO GUO**

UGH!

**XIAO LI**

What happened?

**XIAO GUO**

These customers! The Russian woman I bring every week to the Bubbling Well Road Paramount Club just complained that I smell bad. She insisted that, for next week, I “make sure to fix that.”

**XINFAN**

Ha! Let *her* try 12 hours on her feet under this sun. See how well she can avoid sweating.

**XIAO LI**

Some days, I think, ‘hey as bad as they are, at least they couldn’t get any worse.’ And then, do you know what they do?

**XIAO GUO**

What?

**XIAO LI**

They find a way to prove me wrong.

**XIAO LI**

TODAY, MY REGULAR COMPLAINED  
THAT I WAS PULLING HIM TOO SLOWLY.

**XINFAN AND XIAO GUO**

Ha!

**XIAO LI**

HE TOLD ME:

*(in a British accent)*

“MOVE IT! HURRY BOY!

YOU ARE NOTHING BUT A LOWLY COOLIE AND A POOR MAN.

DO NOW AS I SAY!

YOU ARE LUCKY TO HAVE MY BUSINESS.

DON'T MAKE ME TAKE IT AWAY!”

**XIAO LI**

I'll bet that Brit couldn't do this work with any speed when he hasn't eaten a thing all day.

**XINFAN**

Please! Empty stomach or not, he wouldn't last an hour on your feet.

**XIAO GUO**

Not a minute!

**XIAO LI**

OH, BUT...

IF I COULD WALK ON HIS FEET ONLY FOR A DAY,

I WOULD LOUNGE UPON A SOFA,

AND EAT THE EASY TIME AWAY.

I'D HAVE FAITHFUL PRIVATE COOKS

TO PULL MY NOODLES BY HAND.

AND THEY'D SERVE ME DUMPLINGS BIG AS WHALES

THAT WASH UP ON THE SAND!

**XIAO GUO AND XINFAN**

AND THEY'D SERVE HIM DUMPLINGS BIG AS WHALES

THAT WASH UP ON THE SAND!

**ALL**

AY-HO, SOME MEN ARE LUCKY.

AY-HO, SOME LIVES ARE CHARMED.

**XIAO LI**

AND IF I HAD BEEN BORN LUCKY,

WELL, WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN HARMED?

**ALL**

WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN HARMED?

**ALL THREE**

AY-HO.

AY-HO.

AY-HO.

**XIAO GUO**

TODAY, MY CUSTOMER DEMANDED  
THAT I PROVIDE A QUIET RIDE.

**XINFAN AND XIAO LI**

Ha!

**XIAO GUO**

THAT I STOP GRUNTING AND SIGHING,  
AND WITH GREAT EFFORT, I COMPLIED.  
THEN A CLOUD OF DUST ROSE UP,  
I COULDN'T HELP BUT TO COUGH.  
SO MY CUSTOMER, SHE HUFFED,  
PICKED UP HER STUFF,  
AND JUMPED RIGHT OFF.

**XINFAN**

Did she pay you?

**XIAO GUO**

Only about a quarter of the fare. But we were so close to the cabaret, she walked the rest  
of the way!

**XIAO GUO**

OH, BUT...

IF I COULD WALK ON HER FEET ONLY FOR A NIGHT,  
I'D ATTEND THE FINEST CLUBS UPON PERSONAL INVITE.

**XIAO LI AND XINFAN**

PERSONAL INVITE.

**XIAO GUO**

THEY WOULD BOW AND THEY WOULD GREET ME  
DOWN BUBBLING WELL ROAD.  
I'D TALK TO BUSINESSMEN AND STARLETS  
AS MY GIN CUP OVERFLOWED.

**XIAO LI AND XINFAN**

HE'D TALK TO BUSINESSMEN AND STARLETS  
AS HIS GIN CUP OVERFLOWED.

**ALL**

AY-HO, SOME MEN ARE LUCKY.  
AY-HO, SOME LIVES ARE CHARMED.

**XIAO GUO**

AND IF I HAD BEEN BORN LUCKY,  
WELL, WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN HARMED?

**ALL**

WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN HARMED?  
AY-HO.  
AY-HO.  
AY-HO.

**XINFAN**

DID I TELL YOU I HAD TO CROSS THE BRIDGE,

**XIAO GUO AND XIAO LI**

Oh no...

**XINFAN**

AND BOW TO THE SOLDIER?

**XIAO GUO AND XIAO LI**

UGH.



**XINFAN**

BUT I DIDN'T BOW LOW ENOUGH  
AND SO HE STRUCK ME IN MY SHOULDER.  
THEN THE LITTLE MAN STOOD UP  
AND HE SLAPPED ME IN MY FACE.  
HE SAID: "SOMEONE'S GOTTA TEACH YOU HOW TO KNOW YOUR PLACE."

OH, BUT...

IF I COULD STAND IN HIS PLACE FOR A LITTLE WHILE,  
I WOULD BUILD MYSELF A PALACE  
WITH A GATE THAT SPANNED A MILE.  
I'D HAVE TREES AND STREAMS AND GARDENS  
FOR MY DAUGHTER TO EXPLORE.  
I'D HAVE GUARDS WITH LOADED RIFLES  
STANDING READY AT THE DOOR.  
STANDING READY AT THE DOOR.

**XIAO LI AND XIAO GUO**

DOOR!

**ALL**

SOME MEN ARE LUCKY.  
SOME LIVES ARE CHARMED.  
IF I HAD BEEN BORN LUCKY,  
WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN HARMED?  
WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN HARMED?

*XIAO GUO, standing in the middle, gives his friends friendly smacks on their  
backs, getting XINFAN on his bad shoulder.*

**XINFAN**

Ow!

## SCENE 4

*The YE family's apartment. SHUFEN weaves a patchwork quilt. SHUFEN hums "On The Songhua River (松花江上)", a song evoking homesickness and patriotism written about the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.*

**XUELIN**

Are you making bai jia bei/百家被?

**SHUFEN**

Yes, for Yaqi's new baby boy.

**XUELIN**

Can I help you with it?

**SHUFEN**

After lunch.

*XINFAN walks in after a 12-hour work shift, tired and agitated.*

**SHUFEN**

How was your day? Xuelin and I went out and got some more rice.

**XUELIN**

And water. Hi Baba!

**XINFAN**

Hi Xuelin. *(to Shufen:)* Have you seen them?

**SHUFEN**

I've heard them outside all day. Xuelin and I met a family earlier.

**XINFAN** *(shaking his head)*

More white devils. There are so many of them, I could barely get back to the house.

**SHUFEN**

Yaqi told me we should expect over 18,000 new people.

**XINFAN**

Unbelievable. And we have no idea who the hell they are.

**SHUFEN**

They are Europeans.

**XINFAN**

And what do we make of that? Why are they here?

**SHUFEN**

It wasn't *their* choice to come to Hongkew, Xinfan. The Japanese are forcing them into the sector. They probably don't want to be here any more than we do.

**XINFAN**

It was their choice to come to Shanghai.

**SHUFEN**

You don't know that. Besides, you speak some of their language. This might be good for you.

*XINFAN shakes his head.*

**SHUFEN**

We were both once new to this city.

**XINFAN**

That's not the same thing.

**XUELIN**

Are you hungry, Baba? The rice is nearly ready.

**XINFAN**

Yes, very hungry. Thank you, Xuelin. (*turning back to his mother*) What do they think they're going to get from us? We have nothing to share. We have nothing to give.

**SHUFEN**

Who's to say they expect anything from us?

**XINFAN**

They have moved right into our neighborhood! As if we needed any more neighbors.

**SHUFEN**

Be kind, Xinfan. You have no idea what people have been through.

## SCENE 5

*The STEINBURG Family's apartment. JOSEF sits on the bed tuning his violin. EVA stirs a pot of rice and tomato sauce on the stove. ITSIK sits at the table.*

**ITSIK**

Still no mail today?

**EVA**

Nothing.

**ITSIK**

Okay. It'll come.

**EVA**

If you say so.

**ITSIK**

What do you mean "if I say so?" What, you think the Rothmans are going to steal our life savings?

**EVA**

It's not the Rothmans I don't trust, it's – Josef, my love, why don't you go sit outside for a little bit? It'll be good for you.

**JOSEF**

I'd rather not.

**EVA**

It's quiet today. Please. Just for a little bit.

*JOSEF sighs.*

**JOSEF** *(placing his violin in its case to take with him)*

Okay.

*He takes his violin and goes to sit on the stoop outside of the building.*

**EVA**

There is talk going around that the Japanese have been intercepting the mail. Lionel told me yesterday at shul. He heard it on his radio.

**ITSIK**

Our money will come.

**EVA**

And if it doesn't?

**ITSIK**

Then thank God I have a career doing something that people will always need.

**EVA**

If only they could pay you what your services are worth.

*ITSIK sighs.*

**ITSIK**

The money will come, Eva. It will come.

## SCENE 6

*A few months later, outside of the STEINBURG Family's apartment building.*

**ITSIK** (*calling out*)

Hi! Hello! Over here!

*XINFAN pulls over with an empty rickshaw.*

**XINFAN**

You need a ride?

**ITSIK**

You speak German!

**XINFAN** (*not matching ITSIK's enthusiasm*)

A little bit.

**ITSIK**

Wow. Do many of the rickshaw drivers here speak German?

**XINFAN**

A few.

**ITSIK**

How did you learn?

*XINFAN is not in the mood for conversation.*

**XINFAN**

Past work.

**ITSIK**

That is very impressive!

**XINFAN**

Where are you going?

**ITSIK**

Oh. I'm going to the medical clinic at, uh, 502 Ou...Yang...Lu.

**XINFAN**

Ou Yang Lu (欧阳路)?

**ITSIK**

Yes.

**XINFAN**

There is no clinic at Ou Yang Lu. Only houses.

**ITSIK**

No, no. This is the address I was given. 502 Ou Yang Lu.

*XINFAN sighs in frustration.*

**XINFAN**

Two *yuan*.

*ITSIK checks his wallet.*

**ITSIK**

That'll be fine.

*XINFAN lifts the rickshaw and begins pulling. It's crooked.*

**ITSIK**

Are you alright?

**XINFAN**

Fine.

**ITSIK**

Are you sure? It looks like you're in pain.

**XINFAN**

I will get you to your, uh, destination. Do not worry.

*A few moments of quiet during which all we hear is the rhythmic sound of the rickshaw wheels.*

**ITSIK**

So, how long have you lived in Shanghai?

*Beat. XINFAN takes a deep breath in. He is exhausted and in pain and does not want to be expending precious energy making small talk in another language.*

**XINFAN**

A while.

**ITSIK**

Ah. So you must know the city very well.

**XINFAN**

Yes.

**ITSIK**

Do you have any favorite spots?

*Beat as XINFAN considers revealing the name and location of his favorite park to ITSIK.*

**XINFAN**

No.

**ITSIK**

Alright.

*A few seconds of silence.*

**ITSIK**

Do you have any children?

**XINFAN**

Yes.

**ITSIK**

How old are they? I've got an 18-year-old and 12-year-old.

**XINFAN**

Girl. Eleven.

**ITSIK**

I see. And have you been doing this work for a long time?



*As they go on, XINFAN's breath becomes increasingly labored.*

**XINFAN**

Yes.

**ITSIK**

Is this the only work you've ever done?

*XINFAN sighs.*

**XINFAN**

No.

*XINFAN stops to catch his breath and stretch his shoulder.*

**ITSIK**

Are you sure that you're not hurt, sir?

*XINFAN is taken aback by having been called "sir". He softens ever so slightly.*

**XINFAN**

It's my shoulder.

**ITSIK**

I can see that.

*They pull up outside of a dilapidated residential building.*

**XINFAN**

502 Ou Yang Lu.

**ITSIK**

Oh. Um...

*ITSIK looks at the paper in his hands.*

**ITSIK**

Hmm. I don't think this is right. This... this is not a medical clinic.

*XINFAN closes his eyes for a moment in sheer annoyance, as if trying to stop himself from yelling.*

**XINFAN**

Show me the address.

*ITSIK hands it to him.*

**ITSIK**

Yes, well, it's written in Chinese because the assistant gave it / to me.

**XINFAN**

/This is Qu Yang Lu (曲阳路). Not Ou Yang Lu. Qu Yang. Qu. Qu.

**ITSIK**

And is that far from here?

**XINFAN**

Edge of the district, close to the Garden Bridge.

**ITSIK**

Oh. Oh my goodness. That's...that's quite far. I am so sorry.

*XINFAN sighs his annoyance. He puts down the rickshaw, stretches his shoulder, and groans in pain.*

**ITSIK**

Listen. I'm a doctor. I work in orthopedics. Let me help you.

**XINFAN**

No. No need.

**ITSIK**

Please. You should not be working in this condition.

**XINFAN**

No.

*XINFAN winces and attempts to suppress a groan. He fails.*

**ITSIK**

I insist. Please. No charge.

*A moment. No charge? Interesting.*

**XINFAN**

Okay.

**ITSIK**

Come by tomorrow morning. At the same place you picked me up.

**XINFAN**

Okay.

*Beat.*

**XINFAN**

Thank you.

**ITSIK**

Of course.

**XINFAN**

Okay. Now Qu Yang Lu. Here we go.

*XINFAN lifts the rickshaw again and begins on his way to the correct address.*

## SCENE 7

### 4. JIANZI

*The YE Family's apartment. XUELIN kicks a feathered shuttlecock between her feet. SHUFEN lies on the bed.*

**XUELIN**

I CAN CATCH IT WITH MY HEEL NOW!  
I'VE BEEN GETTING REALLY GOOD.  
I'M LEARNING ALL THE TRICKS  
THAT I NEVER THOUGHT I COULD.  
NOW IT'S YOUR TURN. HERE YOU GO!

*She kicks it against the wall and it comes back, but she misses it.*

**XUELIN**

LOOKS LIKE I'VE MET MY MATCH!  
IT'S YOUR TURN NOW!

*She kicks it to a cup on the windowsill. It lands inside of the cup.*

**XUELIN**

YES! GOOD JOB! GOOD CATCH!

*ROZA runs on stage.*

**ROZA**

JOSEF GETS THE BED *ALL* TO HIMSELF!  
JOSEF GETS THE BED!  
ROZA, COME AND SLEEP WITH US.  
YOUR BROTHER NEEDS TO CLEAR HIS HEAD.

ROZA, PLEASE, YOUR BROTHER'S SENSITIVE!  
HE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO SLEEP!  
FOR YOU, IT'S ALWAYS SO EASY.  
YOU'RE OUT AFTER COUNTING JUST A FEW SHEEP.

IT'S JOSEF'S WORLD. IT'S JOSEF'S WORLD!  
AND WE'RE ALL JUST LIVING IN IT.  
NO ONE CARES WHAT ROZA NEEDS.  
NOT EVEN FOR A SINGLE MINUTE.

**XUELIN**

Look Nainai! It's the girl we met! Remember? Her parents asked us where to get water?  
**(Beat.)** Oh no. She's crying! Can I go see her? I won't go far! Please Nainai?

*SHUFEN snores. XUELIN tiptoes out of the apartment.*

**XUELIN** *(holding up a feathered shuttlecock)*  
Jianzi?

**ROZA** *(startled)*  
Ah!

**XUELIN** *(also startled)*  
Oh!

**ROZA** *(laughing, wiping her tears)*  
Sorry! I didn't see you.

**XUELIN**  
Jianzi!

**ROZA** *(pointing at XUELIN)*  
I remember you. Your name is...Jianzi?

**XUELIN** *(pointing to herself)*  
Xuelin.

**ROZA**  
Xuelin. Oh! ***(pointing to the feathered shuttlecock)*** That is jianzi!

*XUELIN points to ROZA.*

**ROZA**  
I'm Roza.

**XUELIN** (*motioning to say “we play?”*)  
Roza. Wanna play jianzi?

**ROZA**  
Oh, um, I don’t really understand what / you’re saying...

**XUELIN**  
/ I CAN SHOW YOU HOW TO DO IT!  
I CAN SHOW YOU HOW TO PLAY!  
THERE’S NOTHING COMPLICATED TO IT.  
YOU CAN BE A PRO SOME DAY!

**ROZA**  
You want me to play?

*They play together.*

**XUELIN**  
YOU CAN USE ANY PART OF YOU,  
BUT YOU CAN’T USE YOUR HANDS.

**ROZA** (*nodding*)  
NOT ALLOWED TO USE MY HANDS.

**XUELIN**  
YOUR GOAL IS NOT TO BE THE ONE TO TOUCH IT

**ROZA**  
THE ONE TO TOUCH IT

**XUELIN**  
RIGHT BEFORE IT LANDS!

**ROZA**  
LANDS!

*SHUFEN wakes up.*

**SHUFEN** (*panicked*)  
Xuelin? Xuelin? Xuelin?!

*She looks out the window.*

**SHUFEN**

What does she think she's doing?! Does she want to give her father a heart attack?!

*ROZA catches the shuttlecock with the back of her neck. Both girls' faces light up and they squeal with excitement.*

**SHUFEN**

I haven't heard that sound in a long time.

**ROZA**

IT'S A SPORT.

**XUELIN**

IT'S AN ART.

IT'S A FRIEND.

**ROZA & XUELIN**

IT'S A START.

## SCENE 8

*The STEINBURG Family's apartment. JUDITH and EVA sit at the table. They sip tea. JOSEF sleeps on the bed behind them. ROZA and XUELIN continue to play jianzi right outside.*

**EVA**

Itsik didn't want to leave yet. He thought there was still hope. I was the one who learned about Shanghai through a friend from shul.

**JUDITH** *(raising her cup of tea)*

Only place on Earth with no Jewish quota.

*EVA clinks her own cup with JUDITH's.*

**JUDITH**

What changed Itsik's mind?

**EVA**

The bastards killed my mother. Made her get on her hands and knees and eat grass like a cow while they laughed.

**JUDITH**

Oh, Eva.

*ITSIK enters wearing a coat and hat.*

**JUDITH**

Hi Itsik. You look skinny.

**ITSIK** *(full voice)*

Ah, Judith. Hello.

**EVA**

Sh. Josef is asleep.

**ITSIK**

Oh, sorry.

*He looks around.*



**ITSIK**

Where's Roza?

**EVA**

Oh, she ran away from home.

**ITSIK**

She what?!

**EVA**

She was angry about the bed.

**ITSIK** (*panicked*)

So where is she?!

*EVA and JUDITH laugh at ITSIK.*

**EVA**

She's right outside, Itzik. I've been watching her play with our neighbor. You didn't see her on your way in?

**ITSIK** (*smiling, relieved*)

I didn't. And how are you, Judith?

**JUDITH**

Still alive, *baruch hashem*. Lionel and I are opening up a Viennese café with the funds we received through his cousin in America! And guess who I have hired to take care of our baked goods?

*ITSIK opens his mouth to speak but says nothing.*

**JUDITH**

Your Eva!

**ITSIK** (*shocked, and not in a good way*)

Oh!

**JUDITH**

I know how hard it's been. I'm glad that we can help your family.

**ITSIK**

Right. Yes, good.

**JUDITH**

Well, I'd better get going. I'll see you in shul on Saturday, Eva?

**EVA**

I'll be there.

*JUDITH exits. ITSIK and EVA linger in silence for a moment.*

**ITSIK**

I didn't realize you were looking for work.

**EVA**

Well, I wasn't, really, but Judith knows we've been struggling. And she desperately needs someone who can bake / Viennese pastries.

**ITSIK**

/ How does Judith know we've been struggling?

*Beat.*

**ITSIK**

You told her.

**EVA**

Well, yes. I told her that we still hadn't heard from the Rothmans, and that working in medicine / here is...

**ITSIK**

/ You talked about my work?

**EVA**

I told her that people always say that they're going to pay you and then they hardly ever do...

**ITSIK**

That's not – (*sigh*). Our family's finances are nobody else's business!

**EVA**

They are when somebody can help us.

*ITSIK sighs.*

**EVA**

She said they need a second baker. You could join me there...

*ITSIK puts on his coat.*

**EVA**

Where are you going?

**ITSIK**

I need some air.

*As ITSIK opens the door, ROZA runs in bursting with energy.*

**EVA**

Well hello, my daughter. I see you've decided to rejoin your family.

**ROZA** *(loud, out of breath)*

Papa, can I have three yuan?? My friend wants to take me to get a snack.

*JOSEF wakes up, gasping for air.*

**JOSEF** *(breathless)*

Rats! Rats! They were right...right there.

**EVA**

Josef.

*EVA runs over to him.*

**JOSEF**

They crawled into my mouth. My / hair...they...

**EVA**

/ Shhh, it's okay, Josef. It's okay.

*JOSEF tries to slow his breathing. EVA rubs his back.*

**ROZA**

Papa? Can I?

**ITSIK**

What? Oh. Sure, sweet/heart.

**EVA**

/Hold on. What exactly is this snack?

**ROZA**

Well, I don't know. I can't really understand what she says. But I think it's kind of like a dumpling?

**EVA**

No.

*Both ROZA and ITSIK look at EVA.*

**ROZA**

What?

**EVA**

I said no.

**ROZA**

Why?

**EVA**

There is pork in those.

**ROZA**

But Mama!

**EVA**

I'm sorry, Roza. No.

*ROZA scoffs.*

**EVA**

I'm going to start baking again. I can make you dumplings when I do.

**ROZA** (*whiny*)

Noooo that's not the same thing!

**EVA**

It's close enough.

**ROZA**

But that's not what people eat here!

*JOSEF pulls his violin out from under his bed and begins tuning it.*

**EVA**

Roza, we do not abandon who we are just because other people do things differently.

**ROZA**

This is so unfair!

**EVA**

Such is life, my dear girl. Is it the vendor on the corner?

**ROZA** (*mad, arms crossed*)

Yes.

**EVA**

You can go with your friend. But you eat at home.

*ROZA sighs.*

**ROZA**

Fine.

*ROZA exits. JOSEF begins rosining the bow of his violin. ITSIK prepares to leave.*

**EVA**

Itsik...

**ITSIK**

Not now.

*ITSIK exits.*

## SCENE 9A

### 5. SOMEONE WHO CANNOT PROVIDE

*The streets of Hongkew. It is now nighttime and ITSIK has been gone from home for a while. He sits down on an empty barrel.*

**ITSIK**

WHAT IS A MAN WHO HAS LOST HIS PRIDE?  
WHAT IS A HUSBAND, AND WHAT IS A FATHER,  
IF HE IS SOMEONE WHO CANNOT PROVIDE?

TWO DEGREES. TWO DEGREES!  
BIOLOGY, MEDICINE: TWO DEGREES IN MY NAME.  
FOR TWO DECADES, TWO DECADES...  
I WORKED TIRELESSLY TO BE WHAT I BECAME.  
A TRUSTED PHYSICIAN.  
I SAW EVERYTHING THROUGH.  
THEY'D SAY: "CALL DOCTOR STEINBURG!  
HE'LL KNOW JUST WHAT TO DO!"

TWO HOUSES. TWO HOUSES.  
ONE IN THE CITY  
WHERE WE'D SPEND MOST OF THE YEAR.  
TWO HOUSES. TWO HOUSES!  
WITH TWO EXTRA ROOMS AND A GLASS CHANDELIER.  
AND ONE IN THE COUNTRY FOR EACH WARM SUMMER DAY  
WITH AN ACRE OF WOOD  
WHERE MY CHILDREN WOULD PLAY.

THAT'S WHAT I GAVE TO THEM!  
THAT WAS MY LIFE!  
TWO WELL-CARED-FOR CHILDREN AND A PROUD, HAPPY WIFE.  
HOW MUCH MORE CAN BE TAKEN WHEN SO MUCH HAS DIED?  
WHO AM I NOW? WHO AM I?  
IF I AM SOMEONE WHO CANNOT PROVIDE?

## SCENE 9B

*Rowdy men's loud voices are heard from offstage. XIAO GUO, XIAO LI, and XINFAN enter, their arms around each other (no rickshaws). They laugh and speak loudly in Chinese. They carry cups and glass bottles.*

**XIAO GUO**

And he never even saw me!

**XIAO LI**

Probably because you're so goddamn short.

*XIAO GUO punches XIAO LI on the arm. They all laugh.  
XINFAN spots ITSIK sitting alone on a metal barrel, his gaze to the ground.  
XIAO GUO and XIAO LI notice him looking.*

**XIAO GUO**

Who's that?

**XIAO LI**

I think it's his friend.

**XIAO GUO**

The doctor?

**XINFAN** *(to them)*

Yes.

**XIAO LI**

OOOOH! The *dooctor*!

**XIAO GUO**

Hey, what do you charge him for rides? Twice the regular fare?

**XIAO LI**

Better be at least three times.

*ITSIK looks up and notices XINFAN.*

**ITSIK**

Oh! Xinfan. Hi.

**XINFAN**

Hello, Dr. Steinburg.

**ITSIK**

How's the shoulder? Any better since Tuesday?

**XINFAN**

There is still some pain, but not as much.

**ITSIK**

Okay. Good. Next week, we'll, we'll uhh... *(he loses his train of thought)*.

**XINFAN**

Are you...okay, Dr. Steinburg?

**ITSIK**

I - yeah, thanks.

**XIAO GUO** *(to XIAO LI)*

Why does the doctor look so sad?

**XIAO LI** *(to XIAO GUO)*

Very sad doctor. Perhaps we should show this white man a good time.

**XINFAN**

Shut up. Don't be ridiculous.

**XIAO LI**

Why not?

**XIAO GUO**

Yeah, maybe he'll bring some of his own stuff. Oh, I'd like to try a European gin!

**XIAO LI** *(placing his arm around ITSIK)*

What do you say, doctor?

**XINFAN** *(stern)*

Stop it. I'm serious.

*ITSIK does not understand.*



**XIAO GUO**

Why? Put some of those doctor bills back in your pocket.

**XIAO LI**

Yeaaah. Now there's an idea.

**XINFAN** (*shouting*)

I don't pay him! (*Beat.*) He treats me for free.

*The other two are surprised. Their demeanor toward ITSIK shifts.*

**XIAO LI**

Well in that case, we *definitely* have to show him a good time.

**ITSIK** (*to XINFAN*)

What's going on?

**XINFAN**

Forgive them. They are just –

*XIAO GUO and XIAO LI look at XINFAN expectantly.*

**XINFAN** (*sighing, smiling*)

They would like me to invite you to join us tonight.

**ITSIK** (*surprised*)

Oh, that's so kind. But that's okay, I really should be getting home.

**XIAO GUO** (*tapping XINFAN, impatient*)

What did he say?

**XINFAN**

He said he needs to go home.

*XIAO GUO and XIAO LI's express their disappointment through exaggerated facial expressions. XIAO LI puts his arm around ITSIK. He speaks directly to him although he knows ITSIK does not understand.*

**XIAO LI**

No man should go home with such a long face.

*ITSIK looks to XINFAN for translation.*

**XINFAN** (to *ITSIK*, smiling)

Maybe it will be fun? We can show you our favorite spot.

*XIAO GUO and XIAO LI look at ITSIK with smiles and hopeful expressions.*

**ITSIK**

Okay.

**XINFAN**

You'll come?

**ITSIK** (smiling, giving in)

Why not?

*XINFAN nods at XIAO GUO and XIAO LI.*

**XIAO GUO**

Yeaaaah!!!

**XIAO LI**

Let's go!

## 6. THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES THE SAME

*XIAO GUO and XIAO LI put their arms around each other. XINFAN and ITSIK walk alongside them.*

**XIAO GUO & XIAO LI**

HEY HEY OH OH OH!

HEY HEY OH OH OH!

FORGET YOUR TROUBLE!

FORGET YOUR SORROW!

FORGET YOUR OWN NAME!

*They all clink their cups.*

FOR WHEREVER YOU STAND IN THE WORLD, BROTHER:

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES THE SAME.

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES THE SAME!

*The men arrive at a park. Other men (in a version of a production where we can afford other men) sit at rickety tables and chairs drinking out of tin mugs and playing cards.*

**XIAO GUO & XIAO LI**

HEY HEY OH OH OH!

HEY HEY OH OH OH!

*XINFAN pours homemade rice wine from a foggy bottle into a tin cup and hands it to ITSIK.*

**XINFAN**

Try the wine!

*ITSIK takes a sip. It is strong and it tastes terrible.*

**XIAO GUO, XIAO LI, & XINFAN**

JOIN ME, BROTHER!

RAISE A CUP,

AND DRINK FOR A WHILE!

FOR THE SOBER MAN LIVES A LONG LIFE,

BUT THE DRINKING MAN DIES WITH A SMILE!

JOIN ME, BROTHER! FILL HER UP.

THINK ONLY OF TODAY!

CHEERS TO THE MAN BESIDE ME

AND THE ONE WHO IS OCEANS AWAY.

HEY HEY OH OH OH!

HEY HEY OH OH OH!

HEY HEY OH OH OH!

HEY HEY OH OH OH!

**XIAO GUO, XIAO LI, & XINFAN**

FORGET YOUR TROUBLE!

FORGET YOUR SORROW!

*XIAO GUO, XIAO LI, and XINFAN each take a swig.*

**XIAO GUO, XIAO LI, & XINFAN**

FORGET YOUR OWN NAME!

*ITSIK takes a swig.*

**ITSIK**

You know, this stuff doesn't taste too bad.

*XINFAN smiles and pats ITSIK on the back.*

*From here on out, all men become increasingly drunk throughout the scene.*

**XIAO GUO, XIAO LI, XINFAN**

FOR WHEREVER YOU STAND IN THE WORLD, BROTHER:

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES THE SAME.

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES THE SAME!

*All four men chug the rest of their wine. XIAO GUO picks up the bottle and refills each of their cups. He looks up at the sky.*

**XIAO GUO**

Look at the moon.

**XIAO LI**

Yeah.

**XIAO GUO**

It's late.

**XIAO LI**

Who cares?

**XIAO GUO**

My wife is going to care.

**ITSIK**

What are they saying?

**XINFAN**

His wife will be angry when he comes home late.

**ITSIK**

Ah.

**XINFAN**

Will your wife be angry?

**ITSIK**

My wife! Ha. No. Well. Maybe? My wife...my wife doesn't need me.

*ITSIK looks up to the sky for a long beat.*

**ITSIK**

You know, when I asked Eva to marry me, she said, "As long as I'm married to a doctor, I will know that I am always safe."

*ITSIK looks back up at the sky. XIAO LI and XIAO GUO continue to sing, dance, etc. while XINFAN and ITSIK talk.*

**XINFAN**

You were a doctor for how long?

**ITSIK**

Oh God. Almost, uh, twenty years I guess. Until I showed up one day and somebody else was working at my desk!

**XINFAN**

They fired you?

**ITSIK** (*nodding*)

For the crime of being a Jew.

**XINFAN**

Me, I used to be a clothing manufacturer. In Manchuria. Transportation. Then international shipments. How I learned German.

**ITSIK**

Wow. So what happened?

**XINFAN**

The Japanese took my city. Had to move to Shanghai.

**ITSIK**

You couldn't continue that work here?

**XINFAN**

No. Driving a rickshaw was the only work I could find.

*Both ITSIK and XINFAN take a sip of their drinks.*

**ITSIK**

That must have been hard.

**XINFAN**

I did what I had to.

**XIAO GUO**

Check it ooout!

*XIAO GUO pulls out 4 cigarettes. XIAO LI cheers loudly and in surprise.  
XINFAN and ITSIK turn to look at them.*

**XINFAN**

Where the hell did you get those?

**XIAO GUO**

I swiped them off a customer last night. The guy was so drunk I could've taken the hat off his head and he wouldn't have noticed. *(He pulls out a matchbox)* Shall we?

*XIAO GUO hands each man a cigarette. ITSIK hesitates for a moment and then gives in to the peer pressure. XIAO GUO strikes a match and lights each one up.*

*In unison, they each take a long drag of their cigarettes and exhale audibly.*

**XIAO GUO**

FORGET YOUR TROUBLE!

**XIAO LI**

FORGET YOUR SORROW!

**XINFAN, XIAO GUO, & XIAO LI**

FORGET YOUR OWN NAME!

FOR WHEREVER YOU STAND IN THE WORLD, BROTHER:

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES THE SAME.

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES THE SAME!

**XINFAN, XIAO GUO, XIAO LI**  
HEY HEY OH OH OH!  
HEY HEY OH OH OH!

*XIAO GUO and XIAO LI encourage ITSIK to join in.*

**XINFAN, XIAO GUO, XIAO LI, & ITSIK**  
HEY HEY OH OH OH!  
HEY HEY OH OH OH!

*They exit, arms around each other.*

## SCENE 10

*LIONEL and JUDITH's café. EVA is already there working in an apron. ITSIK enters.*

**LIONEL**

Welcome to Café Jause, Itsik! Thank you for agreeing to help us out.

**ITSIK**

Oh, yes. Of...of course.

*JUDITH hands ITSIK an apron.*

**ITSIK**

Oh, that's okay. I don't / need...

**JUDITH**

/You'll want to wear it. Trust me.

*ITSIK gives EVA a look. She shrugs. ITSIK takes the apron.*

**LIONEL**

Like I was telling your wife earlier, we will pay you each one week on and one week off.

**JUDITH**

I hope that will be okay.

**ITSIK** *(quietly)*

Yeah. Of course.

**EVA**

And as the business grows, our pay will grow with it.

**ITSIK**

Good. Yes. Thank you.

**JUDITH**

Alright, well, I guess we'll leave you to it!

**EVA**

Thank you both.



*JUDITH and LIONEL exit.*

**EVA**

Okay! Your first lesson: challah. I have a few loaves rising right now, so let's start on some new dough while we wait and then I'll show you how to.... Itsik?

**ITSIK**

I just don't understand you. *(Beat.)* For almost twenty years, I put not one but two roofs over your head. I gave you a kitchen full of bread and / pastries and wine and...

**EVA**

What are you / [talking about?]

**ITSIK**

/ And a maid to help prepare it all! Now, after twenty years, you have so little faith in me that you felt the need to go and share our private matters without even speaking / to me about it first.

**EVA**

/ I tried speaking to you! You make it impossible. You are so concerned with maintaining your pride that you refuse to face the truth! Nobody is paying the doctors here. Yet for months, you refused to give it up.

**ITSIK** *(holding up his apron)*

Well, I've certainly given it up now, haven't I?

*EVA sighs.*

**EVA**

I have to shape that dough.

**ITSIK**

What?

**EVA**

It rose. Look. It'll over-proof if I don't shape it now. I'll show you how to do it.

**ITSIK**

Okay.

**EVA**

See how I push down with the heel of my hand?

**ITSIK**

Mhm.

*He watches for a while as she demonstrates.*

**ITSIK**

You took your wedding ring off.

**EVA**

I – Yes, well, just while I bake.

*Beat. And another.*

**ITSIK**

Would you still have married me if I had been a baker when we met?

**EVA**

What?

**ITSIK**

Or a butcher or a shoemaker?

**EVA**

Itsik, what are you talking about?

**ITSIK**

When I asked you to marry me, you told me that you would always feel safe being married to a doctor. That I would take care of you financially and that I would take care of you if you ever got sick.

**EVA (softening)**

I said that?

**ITSIK**

You did.

**EVA**

I don't remember that.

**ITSIK**

Well, you did. **(Beat.)** The dough looks good.

**EVA**

Itsik...

**ITSIK**

Show me how to do it.

**EVA**

Itsik / I...

**ITSIK**

/Please?

**EVA**

Alright. So you start by pushing down on the edges.

**ITSIK**

Like this?

**EVA**

Yes, just like that. Good. **(Beat. And another.)** Of course I still would have married you. I thought you were the handsomest man I'd ever seen when we met.

**ITSIK** *(looking up at her)*

You did?

**EVA**

Without question. Your kind eyes and your warm smile...I would have married you if you had had no education at all.

**ITSIK** *(jokingly)*

Well, your father never would have allowed that.

**EVA** *(smiling)*

Well, that's true. **(Beat.)** Can I show you how to do it?

**ITSIK**

Yeah.

*ITSIK stands behind EVA and she places her hands over his. They slowly massage the dough together. She then removes both of their hands and interlaces their fingers. She wraps his arms around her waist. She leans her head back and kisses him. When she pulls away, he kisses her neck and moves down to her shoulder.*

*Lights down.*

## SCENE 11

*JOSEF tunes his violin and plucks its strings.*

**ROZA**

Can you stop doing that? I'm trying to do my homework.

**JOSEF**

Can't you go do it outside?

**ROZA** (*with attitude*)

No. I'm using the table. You go outside!

**JOSEF**

I don't want – I mean, I can't. There's too...it's / too much.

**ROZA** (*angry, attitude*)

/ You know, I really don't understand you. Why don't you ever *do* anything? You're 19 years old! Why don't you ever go anywhere? Why don't you have a job?!

**JOSEF** (*quiet, hurt*)

I...it's just...it's very hard for me here, Roza. It's...it's complicated.

**ROZA** (*pissed off, cutting*)

No it's not! It's simple! You would rather stay home and do nothing all day long while everybody else does everything for you. Meanwhile, Mama and Papa work so hard and they are so tired and they are so worried about everything and you never do anything to help.

**JOSEF**

What do you mean they're so worried about everything? How do you know that?

**ROZA**

Well, in case you forgot, since ~Prince Josef~ absolutely *had* to have his own bed, I sleep right beside Mama and Papa every night. And they talk to each other all the time when they think I'm sleeping. They're worried about Tante Vera and Onkel Shmul and Mama really misses Bubbe and they said the money they sent to the Rothmans in England is never coming because the Japanese people made a rule that nobody can get mail anymore!

**JOSEF**

No. **(Beat.)** You must have heard them wrong.

**ROZA**

I didn't! Mama sold her jewelry and Papa sold his wool coat and I want to sell the earrings Bubbe gave me.

**JOSEF**

Mama will never let you do that.

**ROZA** *(even angrier)*

Maybe she will! Because *now* they're worried about not having enough *food* for us. Did you even notice that some nights Mama doesn't eat at all? She says she's not hungry and then gives her food to YOU. **(Beat.)** Of course you didn't. Whatever. Tune your stupid violin all you want. I'm going outside.

*ROZA exits, slamming the door behind her. JOSEF puts down his violin and goes to look at himself in the mirror.*

## SCENE 12

### 7. RUMORS

*Outside on the streets of Hongkew. XIUQIN and YAQI fill up buckets of boiled water in the market together. XIAO GUO and XIAO LI take a work break.*

**XIUQIN & YAQI**

I HEARD

**XIAO LI & XIAO GUO**

HAVE YOU HEARD?

**YAQI**

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**XIAO GUO**

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**XIAO GUO**

I HEARD THEY'RE TAKING OVER  
ALL THE CITY'S UPSCALE PLACES,  
AND CONVERTING THE HOTELS AND CLUBS  
INTO THEIR ARMY BASES.

**XIUQIN**

I HEARD ABOUT A CAMP  
THAT THEY BUILT NEAR BEIJING.  
WHERE THEIR VICTIMS GO FOR DAYS ON END  
WITHOUT EATING A THING.

**XIAO LI**

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**XIUQIN**

IT'S GETTING WORSE

**XIUQIN**

I HEARD THEY'VE BEEN TAKING PRISONERS.

**YAQI**

Who has?

**XIUQIN**

THESE SO-CALLED "PHYSICIANS".  
INJECTING CAPTIVES SO THAT THEY DEVELOP  
FATAL CONDITIONS.

**XIAO LI**

I HEARD THEY'RE STEALING PEOPLE'S ORGANS,  
DOING WAKING OPERATIONS,  
DEPRIVING THEM OF WATER,  
AND FORCING AMPUTATIONS.

**XIAO GUO**

I HEARD ABOUT A MARCH,  
WHERE SOME SURVIVED AND SOME DID NOT.  
AND THOSE WHO FELL DOWN TIRED  
WERE SHOT DEAD ON THE SPOT.

**YAQI**

AND IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**XIAO GUO**

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**YAQI & XIQUIN**

SO MUCH WORSE.

**XIAO GUO & XIAO LI**

SO MUCH WORSE.

**XIAO GUO**

HAVE YOU HEARD?

**YAQI**

THEY QUESTIONED MY NEIGHBOR,  
AND THEY WERE NOT CONVINCED  
WHEN HE TOLD THEM HE KNEW NOTHING.  
AND NOBODY'S SEEN HIM SINCE.



**XIUQIN & XIAO LI**  
IT IS GETTING WORSE.  
IT IS GETTING WORSE.

**ALL**  
And what if we're next?

## SCENE 13

*The Steinburg Family's apartment. ITSIK stretches XINFAN's arm.*

**ITSIK**

So then what? He just jumped off of your rickshaw?

**XINFAN** *(laughing)*

Yes! And then he called me “crooked mule”! I had half a mind to go *hee-haw*!

**ITSIK** *(laughing)*

My God! Seems like a tough line of work.

**XINFAN**

Oh, it is.

**ITSIK**

This isn't your first-ever injury, is it?

**XINFAN**

Oh no no no. I've hurt myself before, but never this badly.

**ITSIK**

What kind of treatment have you sought out in the past?

**XINFAN**

Well, let me think about that. I followed a strict medical plan of... grunting, groaning, and, uuuh, complaining. That's always seemed to do the trick.

*ITSIK laughs.*

**ITSIK**

That's no good! It's very important to properly rest the muscle when you've injured it. You'll just do further damage if you don't. And then you'll make *my* life more difficult.

**XINFAN** *(laughing)*

Ah, you sound just like my wife.

**ITSIK**

How's that?

**XINFAN**

She used to force me to stay at home when I'd injured myself. She'd threaten to roll my rickshaw straight into the Suzhou Creek if I disobeyed her.

**ITSIK**

She would have made a fine physician.

**XINFAN**

Or a fine prison guard.

**ISTIK**

She sounds wise.

**XINFAN**

Yeah, she was.

**ITSIK**

What was her name?

**XINFAN**

Her name?

**ITSIK**

Yeah. You've never told me that.

## **8. SHE CHOSE ME**

**XINFAN**

Her name was Xinru. It means "gentle heart."  
AND FROM THE BITTERSWEET START,  
WE WERE NEVER APART.

**ITSIK**

How did you meet?

**XINFAN**

HER FATHER WAS MY FOREMAN  
BACK IN MY FACTORY DAYS.  
XINRU AND I FELL IN LOVE IN THE DARK,  
AWAY FROM HER FAMILY'S GAZE.

**ITSIK**

Did her family disapprove of you?

*XINFAN nods.*

**XINFAN**

THEY WANTED HER TO MARRY  
THE MAN THEY PICKED OUT.  
A WEALTHY MAN WITH ACRES OF LAND  
SO WHEN SHE CHOSE ME,  
SHE WAS KICKED OUT.  
BUT STILL, SHE CHOSE ME.  
SHE CHOSE ME.

OUR EARLY DAYS WEREN'T EASY.  
WE DID NOT LIVE A LAVISH LIFE.  
BUT I WAS PROUD TO BE HER HUSBAND,  
AND SHE, MY WIFE.  
BUT WHEN I JOINED THE UNDERGROUND  
DOING WHAT I FELT WAS RIGHT,  
SHE SAID I HAD TO CHOOSE  
BETWEEN MY FAMILY AND THE FIGHT.  
I THOUGHT I WAS DOING WHAT I SHOULD.  
I RECALL, I TOOK HER HAND,  
AND BEGGED HER PLEASE TO UNDERSTAND.  
AND AGAIN, SHE CHOSE ME.  
SHE CHOSE ME.

**ITSIK** (*shocked*)

The underground? Like the Resistance?

**XINFAN**

Yes.

**ITSIK**

You joined the Chinese Resistance?

*XINFAN nods, a little bit scared and regretful about having revealed that.*

**ITSIK** (*placing his hand on XINFAN's shoulder*)

Your secret is safe with me. I promise.

**XINFAN**

Thank you.

*XINFAN smiles and then turns solemn, staring off into the distance.*

**ITSIK**

So, forgive me for asking, but what happened to her?

**XINFAN** (*hesitant, and then all at once*)

TWO...

TWO....

TWO JAPANESE SOLDIERS

HEARD THERE WAS A COOLIE WORKING FOR THE RESISTANCE.

THEY CAME TO OUR DOOR,

AND ASKED WHERE I WAS,

WITH THEIR RIFLES

AND RUTHLESS INSISTENCE.

AND SHE KNEW. SHE KNEW!

SHE KNEW WHERE I WAS.

SHE HAD ALL THE INFORMATION.

SHE COULD HAVE GIVEN MY LOCATION!

BUT AS THE SOLDIER HELD HIS GUN

SHOUTING, "DON'T YOU OPPOSE ME!"

IN ONE FINAL BREATH,

FOR ONE FINAL TIME...

IN ONE FINAL BREATH,

FOR ONE FINAL TIME...

She...chose me.

She chose me.

*A moment.*

**XINFAN** (*moving his shoulder around*)

You know, this is feeling a lot better. You're a talented physician, Dr. Steinburg.

**ITSIK**

I am so sorry, Xinfan.

**XINFAN**

Thank you.

*XINFAN makes a big circle with his arm and then winces.*

**ITSIK**

It still hurts?

**XINFAN**

Yes.

**ITSIK**

Okay. It's been too long with too little improvement. I think the constant strain is limiting our progress. I know what you're going to say, but I'd like you to rest the arm for today and / tomorrow.

**XINFAN**

/ Oh, no I have to / work –

**ITSIK**

/Look, you can either take a couple of days off, or you can take many, many, many days off when you've hurt yourself beyond repair.

*XINFAN sighs.*

**ITSIK**

That's what I thought. Let me go and see if I can find something to fashion a sling. I'll be back in a moment.

*ITSIK exits. XINFAN stands up and looks around. ITSIK returns holding some fabric.*

**ITSIK**

Here we go! My daughter ripped one of her dresses playing outside the other day. We can make this work.

## SCENE 14

*XUELIN and ROZA play jianzi together on the streets of Hongkew. This scene is underscored with music.*

**XUELIN** (*pointing*)

In Chinese, that's called a "rickshaw".

**ROZA**

"Rickshaw."

*The girls kick the shuttlecock back and forth for the rest of the scene.*

**XUELIN** (*pointing to an apartment building*)

That's "house." Or "home."

**ROZA**

House. Home.

**XUELIN** (*pointing to her clothing*)

This is a dress.

**ROZA**

A dress.

*A man goes by with a basket of pears. XUELIN points to them.*

**XUELIN**

Ou! Ouuu! Pears! I love pears.

**ROZA**

Pears!

**XUELIN**

Delicious!

**ROZA**

Delicious!

*XUELIN points to ROZA.*

**XUELIN**

You.

*ROZA points to herself.*

**ROZA**

Roza?

**XUELIN**

You are my friend.

*XUELIN comes over and puts her arm around ROZA.*

**XUELIN**

My friend.

**ROZA**

Oh! Friend. You are my friend.

*The girls giggle and start to play again.*

**ROZA**

You...

*Kick.*

**ROZA**

Are...

*Kick.*

**ROZA**

My...

*ROZA kicks the shuttlecock, very hard and with much more force than either of them has before.*

**ROZA**

Friend!



*The shuttlecock lands with force, hitting a passing Japanese soldier.*

*All that can be heard is the girls' shallow breathing and the soldier's boots as he steadily approaches them.*

**ROZA** (*very very quietly, terrified*)

No...

*People around begin to look at what is happening.*

*XINFAN enters. His rickshaw is empty. He is oblivious to the situation until he is not.*

**XINFAN**

Xuelin?

*He drops the rickshaw with a thud.*

**XINFAN**

XUELIN!!!!

*ROZA ducks and runs away. XINFAN shields his daughter. XUELIN steps forward to stand between her father and the soldier.*

**XUELIN** (*to the soldier, voice shaking*)

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

**XINFAN**

XUELIN! MOVE! NOW!

*XINFAN pushes her backward, and then he falls to his knees.*

**XINFAN** (*begging*)

Please don't touch her. Please.

**SOLDIER** (*disgusted*)

Don't you tell me what to do, you filthy coolie.

*The soldier lifts his rifle and points it at XINFAN. Instead of shooting, he hits XINFAN's forehead with it. He then spits on XINFAN and walks away.*

## SCENE 15

*The YE Family's apartment. XINFAN drags XUELIN by the arm. His forehead bleeds. He pulls out a chair from the table.*

**XINFAN**

Sit down and don't move!

*XUELIN sobs loudly.*

**SHUFEN**

What's going on?

**XINFAN**

I don't fucking believe this.

**SHUFEN**

Hey!

*XINFAN is turned away from his mother, leaning on the dresser, his head in his hands.*

**SHUFEN**

What happened?!

*XUELIN cries loudly.*

**SHUFEN**

I haven't heard her cry like this / since... [she lost her mother].

**XINFAN**

/ She blatantly disobeyed me!

*SHUFEN gasps when she sees XINFAN's forehead.*

**SHUFEN**

You're bleeding!

**XINFAN**

Didn't you notice that she was outside by herself?!

**SHUFEN**

No. I was asleep. Xinfan, what happened?!

*XINFAN winces and touches his forehead.*

**XINFAN** (to XUELIN)

Why don't you tell her?

**XUELIN**

Baba...

**XINFAN**

Go on!

*SHUFEN goes to place her hands on XUELIN's shoulders.*

**XUELIN** (through sobs)

I was...I was playing with...with...my....friend...my....and....

**SHUFEN**

But why are you bleeding, Xinfan?! I highly doubt that's the work of a little white girl.

**XINFAN**

Because Xuelin managed to capture the goddamn attention of a soldier – (pause.)

Nobody mentioned that this friend was white.

*Beat.*

**XINFAN**

You knew.

**SHUFEN**

Xinfan...

**XINFAN** (furious)

THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE! Is there nobody I can trust?!

*He walks toward the door.*

**XUELIN** (still sobbing)

Baba, please. I'm sorry.

**XINFAN**

Don't you dare speak to me. I can't even look at you!

*XINFAN exits, slamming the door behind him. On the other side of the door, he doubles over and cries uncontrollably.*

**XUELIN**

Baba hates me.

**SHUFEN**

Of course he doesn't hate you.

**XUELIN**

Yes he does! He hates me! And now I will never be allowed to see Roza again!

## SCENE 16

*The STEINBURG Family's apartment.*

**ROZA**

I don't think she'll ever want to see me again.

**EVA**

Well, maybe we can go speak to her and her father. We can bring her a little gift. Do you know what she likes to eat?

**ROZA** (*shrugging, unenthused*)

She likes pears, I guess.

**EVA**

Okay. Those are pricey, but maybe we can work something out.

*ROZA sighs.*

**ROZA**

It smells bad.

**JOSEF**

What does?

*ROZA gives JOSEF a sideways glance.*

**ROZA** (*flatly*)

The air.

**ITSIK**

What does it smell like?

**ROZA**

I don't know. Bad. (*Beat.*) I miss Vienna. I don't like Sundays here.

**ITSIK**

Well, hey, look on the bright side. At least Tante Vera isn't here to comment on your hair not being properly combed.

**EVA**

And her husband Shmul isn't here to accuse me of burning the coffee.

**ROZA** (*sighing*)

I guess. But I still miss seeing them on Sundays. And I miss Bubbe.

*EVA, ITSIK, and JOSEF look at each other. ROZA's gaze remains down.*

**ROZA**

And Mama's Sunday food.

**ITSIK**

Well, I won't disagree with you there. Nobody can assemble a Sunday afternoon feast quite like your mom.

**JOSEF**

Do you remember the last one? Before we left? Onkel Shmul brought us chocolate from Switzerland. Have you heard from them lately, Papa? Tante Vera and Onkel Shmul?

**ITSIK** (*solemn*)

No, I haven't.

**ROZA**

I wish we were home right now.

*EVA walks to the window.*

**EVA**

Hey Roza. Come have a look at this.

**ROZA** (*still sulky and unmovable*)

At what?

**EVA**

Out there. In the distance. Look at those snowy hills!

**ROZA**

Those aren't hills? Those are ugly broken buildings...

**EVA**

And those linden trees! My goodness, they're beautiful at this time of year, aren't they?  
Come and help me prepare. The family will be arriving soon!

**ROZA**

Mama, what are you talking about?

## **9. VIENNA ON A SUNDAY**

**EVA**

LIKE EVERY SUNDAY BEFORE,  
I'VE BEEN PREPARING SINCE NOON.  
IT'S ALMOST FOUR, AND I'M SURE  
THEY'LL BE AT THE DOOR SOON!  
I'VE PREPARED A BOWL OF CREAM.  
I HAVE COFFEE IN THE POT.  
I HAVE DUMPLINGS IN THE OVEN  
FILLED WITH NUTS AND APRICOT.  
AND THAT'S THE SMELL OF VIENNA ON A SUNDAY!  
THAT'S THE SMELL OF VIENNA ON A SUNDAY.

**EVA**

Come on, Itsik! Don't you want to make the place nice for the family? Come and help me  
set the table!

*EVA gestures at ITSIK as if to say, "You'd better play along with this, man."  
ITSIK stands up and mimes helping her set the table.*

**EVA (to her kids)**

ON SUNDAYS, YOU WEAR YOUR VERY BEST CLOTHES.

*EVA wraps a tablecloth around Roza, who sits unmoved with her arms crossed.*

**ITSIK**

AND YOUR VERY BEST SHOES.

**EVA**

THOUGH THEY PINCH AT YOUR TOES.

*EVA tickles ROZA's feet and ROZA covers her mouth, stifling a giggle.*

**ITSIK** (to ROZA)  
YOU WILL CURTSY.

**EVA** (to JOSEF)  
YOU WILL BOW.

**ITSIK**  
AND I WILL GREET THEM WITH A SHAKE.

*EVA and ITSIK play out a serious-looking handshake.*

**ITSIK**  
AND THEN WE'LL SIT AROUND THE TABLE.

*EVA hands ROZA a bowl of rice.*

**EVA**  
ROZA, LOOK! BLACK FOREST CAKE!

**ROZA**  
Mama, this is not black forest cake. This is just plain white / rice.

**EVA & ITSIK**  
/ THAT'S THE TASTE OF VIENNA ON A SUNDAY!  
THAT'S THE TASTE OF VIENNA ON A SUNDAY!

*ITSIK eats a spoonful of rice.*

**ITSIK**  
Mmm. Good cake, Eva. Very good cake. Wouldn't you agree, Josef?

*JOSEF hesitates as ITSIK motions to ROZA as if to say, "Play along; we're cheering your sister up."*

**JOSEF**  
Yes. Your best ever, Mama.

**ITSIK**  
You must taste it, Roza!



*EVA smiles and goes to stand alone by the side of the stage. She sings this next part internally. The other three continue miming what they had been doing.*

**EVA**

OUTSIDE, THE SNOW FALLS SOFTLY  
LIKE A GENTLE SWEEPING HAND.  
AND WE ARE WARM IN HERE TOGETHER  
IN OUR TRANQUIL NATIVE LAND.  
LIKE THE ROLLING HILLS BEYOND,  
WE ARE PLANTED WHERE WE STAND.  
WHAT A SIGHT, MY VIENNA ON A SUNDAY.

**ITSIK**

And do you know what else will happen today, Roza?

**ROZA** *(still acting disinterested, but clearly amused and suppressing a smile)*  
What, Papa?

**ITSIK**

JOSEF WILL PLAY HIS VIOLIN  
AS A SPECIAL SUNDAY TREAT.  
GO ON, SON, GET TO TUNING!

**EVA** *(spoken-sung)*

ITSIK, LET THE BOY EAT!

**ITSIK**

WELL, FINE. THEN I WILL PLAY. Right Roza?

*ITSIK mimes playing the violin and hums a tune. He pulls ROZA to stand up, who reluctantly joins him, but then breaks out into a smile and hums along with him.*

**ITSIK, ROZA, & EVA**

THAT'S THE SOUND OF VIENNA ON A SUNDAY!

**ITSIK**

God, I miss that music.

**EVA** *(to JOSEF)*

Why don't you play for us, sweetheart?

**ROZA** (*with dwindling attitude*)  
Yeah! You never play anymore.

**JOSEF**  
No, no.

**EVA**  
Come on!

**ITSIK**  
Go on, son. We could use that.

**JOSEF**  
No, I –

**ITSIK**  
WON'T YOU PLAY FOR US?

**ROZA**  
WON'T YOU PLAY FOR US?

**ITSIK & EVA**  
WON'T YOU PLAY FOR US?

**ITSIK, EVA, & ROZA**  
JOSEF, PLAY FOR US!

**EVA**  
PLEASE, PLAY US SOMETHING!

**ITSIK**  
PLAY US SOMETHING!

**EVA**  
PLAY US SOMETHING!

**ROZA**  
PLAY THE VIOLIN!

**EVA**  
PLAY US SOMETHING!

**ITSIK**

PLAY US SOMETHING!

**EVA**

PLAY US SOMETHING!

**EVA & ITSIK**

PLAY US SOMETHING!

**ROZA**

VIOLIN!

**EVA, ITSIK, & ROZA**

JOSEF, PLAY!

**JOSEF**

I said no!

**EVA**

What's going on, Josef?

**JOSEF**

I sold it. (*Beat.*) I sold my violin.

## ACT II

### SCENE 1

#### 10. RUMORS (REPRISE)

*In the café, JUDITH and LIONEL listen to an illegally obtained radio from which they receive underground information about the war in Europe.*

**RADIO**

February 5, 1943. 600 students were arrested today in the Netherlands...

**JUDITH**

HAVE YOU HEARD?

**LIONEL**

I HEARD.

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**JUDITH** (*nodding*)

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**JUDITH**

WE'RE BEING LOOKED AT AGAIN  
WITH UNWARRANTED REPULSION.  
TODAY'S PAPER HAD AN ARTICLE  
DEMANDING OUR EXPULSION.

**LIONEL**

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**JUDITH**

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**LIONEL**

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**JUDITH**

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**LIONEL** (*hesitantly*)

I HEARD...

I HEARD...

I HEARD THEY BUILT A CAMP

SOMEWHERE NEAR BERLIN.

WHERE SOME ARE WORKED TO DEATH

AND OTHERS DIE BEFORE THEY EVEN BEGIN.

**JUDITH**

IT'S GETTING WORSE...

**JUDITH & LIONEL**

IT'S GETTING WORSE...

**JUDITH**

I HEARD...

**LIONEL**

WHAT HAVE YOU HEARD?

**JUDITH**

I HEARD...

I HEARD...

I HEARD...

HITLER LEARNED THERE WAS A GROUP OF JEWS

SURVIVING HERE IN THE EAST.

THE WORD IS THAT HE'S SENDING MEISINGER,

HIS CRUELEST BEAST.

**LIONEL**

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**JUDITH**

WORSE.

**LIONEL** (*getting louder*)

SO MUCH WORSE.

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

**JUDITH**

Sh!

**BOTH** (*quietly*)  
SO MUCH WORSE.

*A Nazi soldier marches stiff-legged across the stage.*

## **SCENE 2**

*XUELIN and SHUFEN in their apartment. XINFAN enters.*

**XUELIN**

Hi Baba.

*XINFAN ignores her. XUELIN sighs.*

**XUELIN**

I'll be in the other room.

*XUELIN exits.*

**SHUFEN**

Still refusing to speak to us both, I see?

*XINFAN ignores her.*

**SHUFEN**

Look over there.

*He looks over there.*

**SHUFEN**

In the bag.

*XINFAN goes to the bag and pulls out a pear.*

**XINFAN**

Where – where did you get this?

**SHUFEN**

I didn't. She did.

**XINFAN**

How?

**SHUFEN**

Her friend brought it to her.

**XINFAN**

Her friend – the one I said she couldn't see?! She came over / here?!

**SHUFEN**

With her father!

**XINFAN**

Unbelievable! After EVERYTHING I've / said, she –

**SHUFEN**

It's a gift for you! Xuelin wants you to have it.

*A few beats as XINFAN turns the pear over in his hands.*

**SHUFEN**

And by the way, her father? It's your doctor.

*Beat.*

**XINFAN** *(softening drastically)*

Dr. Steinburg?

**SHUFEN**

Yes.

**XINFAN**

I had no idea.

*XINFAN looks at the pear in his hands.*

**XINFAN** *(softening)*

It's been years since I had one of these.

## **11. THE PEAR TREE**

**SHUFEN**

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR SUMMERS

WITH YOUR UNCLE YANG YI WHEN YOU WERE A BOY?

I WOULD SEND YOU TO HIS FARM.

OH, IT BROUGHT YOU SO MUCH JOY.



IT WAS YOUR FAVORITE TIME OF YEAR.  
YOU WERE HAPPIEST OUT THERE.  
YOU TOOK TO PLANTING  
LIKE A FLEDGELING BIRD TAKES TO THE AIR.

YOU'D TELL ME:  
"MAMA, I KNOW EVERYTHING.  
AND THERE'S A LOT TO KNOW!  
MOST IMPORTANTLY,  
THE LIFE OF A FRUIT BEGINS FAR BELOW.  
IF THE LAND IS DRY WHERE THE ROOTS WILL LIE,  
A PEAR TREE CANNOT GROW."

**XINFAN**

I understand what you're getting at, Mama. But keeping Xuelin safe has to be my priority.

**SHUFEN**

Keeping her safe does not have to mean keeping her hidden away from the world.

**XINFAN**

I can't risk anything ever happening to her. She's everything I have.

**SHUFEN**

I KNOW THE WHISPERS OF THE PAST  
ARE COLD AND UNFORGIVING.  
BUT YOUR ATTEMPTS TO DROWN THEM OUT  
HAVE KEPT YOUR CHILD FROM REALLY LIVING.  
OF COURSE, SHE NEEDS PROTECTION,  
BUT SHE ALSO NEEDS CONNECTION.  
SO DO NOT NEGLECT THE TRUTHS THAT YOU KNOW:  
IF THE LAND IS DRY  
WHERE THE ROOTS WILL LIE,  
A PEAR TREE CANNOT GROW.

DO YOU TRULY KNOW YOUR DAUGHTER?  
DO YOU EVER REALLY TRY?  
SHE HAS TOLD YOU WHO SHE IS;  
IT'S IN THE BELLY OF HER CRY.  
LET HER SEE A LITTLE MORE!

LET HER RUN A LITTLE FREE!  
'CAUSE THIS IS NOT THE WAY  
HER MOTHER WOULD HAVE WANTED IT TO BE.

*XINFAN gasps.*

**SHUFEN**

I'm sorry, Xinfan. But Xinru was the most vibrant, headstrong person I have ever known. She would hate to see her daughter living like this.

**XINFAN**

I know. You're right. (*Beat.*) I miss her.

**SHUFEN**

ALL HAS NOT BEEN LOST.  
THERE'S A NEW LIFE TO BE BUILT.  
BUT YOU CANNOT LET YOUR CHILD  
BEAR THE BURDEN OF YOUR GUILT.  
YOU MUST NOT LET YOUR FEAR  
GUIDE THE THINGS YOU CANNOT KNOW.  
YOUR JOB IS TO SEE TO IT  
THAT THE PEAR TREE CAN GROW.  
YOUR JOB IS TO SEE TO IT

**SHUFEN & XINFAN**

THAT THE PEAR TREE CAN GROW.

**SHUFEN** (*placing a hand on his shoulder*)

Xinru died to protect you, Xinfan. Not to burden you.

*XINFAN nods.*

**XINFAN**

Xuelin?

*XUELIN enters.*

**XUELIN**

Yes, Baba?

**XINFAN** (*holding the pear in his hands*)  
Thank you for this wonderful gift.

**XUELIN** (*taken aback that he seems not to be angry with her*)  
You're welcome, Baba.

**XINFAN**  
May I share it with you?

**XUELIN**  
Oh, yes! Of course!

**XINFAN**  
And some for Nainai too?

*SHUFEN smiles. XUELIN nods.*

**XINFAN**  
Alright. Go and get me a knife.

### SCENE 3

*In the STEINBURG Family's apartment. ROZA and JOSEF are dressed in their best clothes.*

**ROZA**

Are you excited to celebrate Chinese New Year?

**JOSEF**

I guess so.

**ROZA**

I am! I think you look very handsome.

**JOSEF** *(taken aback)*

Thank you, Roza.

**ROZA**

Josef?

**JOSEF**

Yes?

**ROZA**

Do you miss playing the violin?

*Beat.*

**JOSEF**

Yeah. Sometimes.

*ROZA pulls something out from under her parents' bed. It is covered in a heavy dark cloth. She lifts it to reveal a violin case.*

**ROZA**

Josef?

**JOSEF**

Yes?

*He turns around to look at her.*

**JOSEF**

Roza, what is this? How / did you [get this?]

**ROZA**

/ I sold my earrings.

**JOSEF**

Bubbe's earrings?!

**ROZA**

Yes.

**JOSEF** *(in disbelief)*

You shouldn't have done that.

**ROZA**

I wanted you to have your violin back. I...I really really miss hearing you play it.

*She hands it to him. He runs his hand carefully along the contour of the case.*

**ROZA**

Will you play something?

**JOSEF** *(quietly)*

I don't think that I can.

**ROZA**

Why not?

*He stares at the case a moment longer and then looks up at her.*

**JOSEF**

I just need some time, okay?

**ROZA** *(disappointed but understanding)*

Yeah. Okay.

**JOSEF**

Can we put it back under the bed? Just for now?

*ROZA nods. They cover it back up together and place it gently under the bed.*

**JOSEF**

Thank you, Roza. So much.

*EVA and ITSIK enter*

**EVA**

Everyone ready? We don't want to be late.

**ROZA & JOSEF**

Yes, Mama.

## SCENE 4

*The YE Family's apartment. Three red lanterns hang from the ceiling. The table is partially set with tin cups and seven place settings, including red cloth napkins.*

*SHUFEN stands at the stove singing and stirring a pot of noodles. She is energized in a way we have not yet seen. XUELIN dances around swaying her new dress.*

### SHUFEN

Xuelin, can you finish setting the table?

### XUELIN

Yes, Nainai!

*XUELIN fills tin cups with rice wine for the adults and water for herself and ROZA, who will sit together. XINFAN comes out of the bathroom in his best clothes. He has combed his hair (that's new!).*

### XINFAN

You look very pretty in that dress, Xuelin.

### XUELIN

Thank you, Baba!

*EVA knocks on the door. XUELIN runs to open it.*

### XINFAN

Hello!

### ITSIK

Hi everyone!

### XUELIN

Hi Roza!!

### ROZA

Happy Chinese New Year!

### EVA

How are you?

*SHUFEN nods emphatically as if to say "I'm good!"  
JOSEF shakes XINFAN's hand.*

### JOSEF

Thank you for having us.

*XUELIN and ROZA hug.*

**EVA** (to SHUFEN)

We brought you some bread from our café.

**XINFAN** (to SHUFEN)

Bread from the European café where they work.

**SHUFEN**

Ah! How nice! Thank you.

**ITSIK** (proudly)

I braided it myself!

**EVA**

Thank you so much for having us over on this special occasion.

**XINFAN**

She says thank you for having us on / this special occasion.

**SHUFEN**

/ Ah! Of course. It's the least I can do for all that your husband has done to help my son.

*They continue their conversation amongst themselves while the girls speak separately.*

**XUELIN**

See my new dress?

**ROZA**

So pretty!!

**XUELIN**

I always get a new dress on Chinese New Year! It's the best day.

**EVA** (to XINFAN)

Do you say "Happy Chinese New Year?"

**XINFAN**

Yes, and then we add: "May you be prosperous!"

*XUELIN overhears and inserts herself.*



**XUELIN**

And *then* you say: hand me the red envelope.

*She motions for ROZA to repeat after her.*

**ROZA** (to XINFAN)

Hand me the red envelope!

*XINFAN laughs loudly.*

**XINFAN**

Xuelin, are you being a bad influence on your friend?

**XUELIN** (laughing)

Sorry, Baba.

**XINFAN**

Okay. Here you go.

*He hands XUELIN and ROZA each a red envelope. They open them to reveal two coins in each. He then hands one to JOSEF.*

**JOSEF** (taken aback)

Oh, for me?

**XINFAN**

Yes! For all the children.

**JOSEF** (smiling)

Thank you so much.

*SHUFEN motions for them to sit down.*

**SHUFEN**

Please, come take a seat. The food is almost ready.

*Everybody but SHUFEN sits down.*

**ITSIK** (grave)

Did you hear about the chef? Jia Bing 家冰?

**XINFAN**

Yes. Horrible. Xiao Li told me he saw him after it happened.

**ITSIK**

Oh my goodness.

**XINFAN**

Just lying there in a pool of his own blood.

**SHUFEN**

What are you boys talking about?

**XINFAN**

Nothing, Mama.

## **12. LET IT BE A LONG NIGHT**

**SHUFEN**

Don't lie to me, Xinfan. I can tell when you're discussing bad news. I told you: none of that tonight.

**SHUFEN**

JUST FOR THIS EVENING,  
WE ARE KEEPING IT LIGHT.  
NO TALK OF DARKNESS,  
OR SADNESS OR PLIGHT.

**XINFAN** (*holding up his cup*)

IN THAT CASE,  
LET IT BE

**SHUFEN**

LET IT BE

**XINFAN & SHUFEN**

A LONG NIGHT.

**SHUFEN**

Is this your first time celebrating Chinese New Year?

**XINFAN**

She asks if this is your first Chinese New Year.

**EVA**

Yes! Yes it is. Would you teach us about some of the traditions, Mrs. Ye?

**XINFAN**

Will you teach them about Chinese New Year, Mama?

**SHUFEN** (*beaming*)

Oh yes! Yes of course! You may call it 1945, but we call it the Year of the Rooster!

**SHUFEN**

WELCOME TO THE YEAR OF THE ROOSTER!

**XINFAN**

WELCOME TO THE YEAR OF THE ROOSTER!

**SHUFEN**

ON THE NEW YEAR,

**XINFAN**

ON THE NEW YEAR,

**SHUFEN & XINFAN**

WE SWEEP WHAT IS STALE AWAY.

WE HANG THE SIGN FOR 'LUCK' ON THE DOOR.

**SHUFEN**

CLEAN FROM CEILING TO FLOOR.

**XINFAN**

CLEAN FROM CEILING TO FLOOR.

**SHUFEN**

TO KEEP BAD SPIRITS AT BAY.

**XINFAN**

AT BAY.

**SHUFEN & XINFAN**

WELCOME TO THE YEAR OF THE ROOSTER!  
TONIGHT, WE REJOICE AND WE SAY:  
LET US DRINK! LET US EAT!  
LET US CALL IN THE LIGHT.  
OUR TABLE'S COMPLETE.  
WHAT A MARVELOUS SIGHT!

**SHUFEN**

AND LET IT BE

**XINFAN**

LET IT BE

**SHUFEN**

LET IT BE

**SHUFEN & XINFAN**

LET IT BE A LONG NIGHT!

*SHUFEN places a bowl of long noodles on the table.*

**SHUFEN**

LONG NOODLES FOR LONGEVITY!  
MAY YOU LIVE IN HEALTH ALL YEAR.  
MAY YOUR HOPE AND YOUR RESOLVE  
BE LOUDER THAN YOUR FEAR.

*SHUFEN goes to the counter and picks up a plate of dumplings and a plate of fish.*

**SHUFEN**

DUMPLINGS FOR WEALTH,  
FISH FOR PROSPERITY.  
MAY THIS YEAR BRING ABUNDANCE  
AND PEACE AND CLARITY.  
SO JUST FOR THIS EVENING,  
LET US BE THE LIGHT.

**SHUFEN**

LET US GATHER AND EAT

**XINFAN**

GATHER AND EAT

**SHUFEN**

GATHER AND EAT

AND MAY IT BE

**XINFAN**

MAY IT BE

**SHUFEN**

MAY IT BE

**XUELIN, SHUFEN, & XINFAN**

A LONG NIGHT!

*ROZA reaches over for a dumpling. EVA stops her hand.*

**ITSIK**

This all looks wonderful.

**XINFAN**

We save up for this night all year long.

**ROZA**

I want some noodles!

**EVA**

Patience, baby. Mrs. Ye is not finished.

**SHUFEN**

AND FOR THE FINAL DISH,

WE'VE PREPARED A BIG SURPRISE.

**XUELIN** (*jumping in her seat, unable to contain her excitement*)

IT'S BETTER THAN DUMPLINGS OR FISH!

**XINFAN**

BOTH IN FLAVOR AND IN SIZE!

**SHUFEN**

FOR OUR GUESTS OF HONOR,  
WE PLANNED SOMETHING BIG.  
IT'S THE LEAST WE COULD DO,  
AND I ALMOST HAD TO SPLIT THE THING IN TWO  
IT TOOK HOURS TO COOK ALL THE WAY THROUGH,  
BUT I'VE MADE IT JUST FOR YOU:  
NAINAI'S  
SPECIAL  
ROAST  
PIG!

*SHUFEN pulls a roast pork from the oven and places it in front of them. It takes up most of the table. Aside from the eyes, it is whole.*

*The YE's stare at the STEINBURGS with expectant smiles.*

**EVA**

Oh, um, we, um, we...

**ITSIK**

Yeah, so, actually, uh...

*ROZA clears her throat.*

**ROZA** *(with notable confidence)*

THANK YOU SO MUCH, NAINAI.  
FOR PREPARING SUCH A TREAT.  
IT'S JUST THAT PORK IS NOT A FOOD  
THAT JEWISH PEOPLE CAN EAT.

**SHUFEN**

Oh no.

**ROZA**

BUT NOW YOU CAN ALL HAVE LOTS!  
YOU CAN ALL ENJOY AND SAVOR IT.  
AND WE CAN HAVE NOODLES AND FISH –  
FISH IS MAMA'S FAVORITE!

**SHUFEN**  
OKAY, OKAY.

**JOSEF** *(to ITSIK)*  
Did you know that she could speak Chinese like that?

**ITSIK** *(in awe)*  
I had no idea.

*XUELIN hands ROZA the noodles.*

**XUELIN**  
HERE, ROZA!

**SHUFEN**  
PLEASE, GO AHEAD! START EATING!

*SHUFEN serves EVA a big piece of fish. EVA gags and places her hand over her mouth.*

**ROZA**  
What's wrong, Mama?

**XINFAN**  
Is everything okay?

*EVA and ITSIK give each other a look.*

**ITSIK**  
Um, maybe we can move the fish away from Mama.

**JOSEF**  
Why? What's going on?

**ITSIK** *(whispered sung)*  
DO YOU THINK IT'S TIME TO TELL THEM?

**EVA**  
IT IS EARLY, BUT I THINK YES? MAYBE?

*They nod at each other.*

**ITSIK**

YOUR MOTHER AND I –

**EVA**

YOUR FATHER AND I –

**ITSIK & EVA**

ARE GOING TO HAVE A BABY.

**ROZA**

WHAT?!

**JOSEF**

Oh my God!

**XUELIN**

A baby?!

**XINFAN**

Congratulations!

*ROZA leaps into her mother's arms. JOSEF wraps his arm around his mother's shoulder. XINFAN pats ITSIK on the back.*

**SHUFEN**

What did they say?

**XINFAN**

They're going to have a baby!

**SHUFEN**

A baby! That's WONDERFUL!

**JOSEF** *(smiling, to himself)*

I can't believe this. A new sibling.

**SHUFEN**

Alright, NOW everyone: dig in!

*Everybody begins to serve themselves. XINFAN takes a piece of challah.*

**ROZA**

Can I name the baby? Please please please?

*EVA and ITSIK laugh. ITSIK kisses EVA's cheek and puts his arm around her.*

**EVA**

That depends. What do you want to name it?



**ROZA**

Uuuuh. Johana.

**JOSEF**

And what if it's a boy?

**ROZA**

It won't be.

*ITSIK, EVA, and JOSEF laugh.*

**SHUFEN**

What did she say?

**XINFAN**

Roza wants to name the baby "Johana".

**SHUFEN**

Oh! And what does that mean?

**XUELIN**

She wants to know what it means.

**EVA**

Oh, Johana? Johana would mean... "God is gracious".

**XUELIN**

It means "God is gracious", Nainai.

**SHUFEN**

Ah! I might give her the name Si You Ran (司由然).

**EVA**

That's beautiful! (*Beat.*) What would my name be in Chinese?

**ROZA**

Mama's name Eva means "confident" and "beautiful".

**ITSIK**

Fittingly.

*EVA beams.*

**ROZA**

What would Mama's name be, Nainai?

**SHUFEN**

Hmm, that may be...Si Yi Wa (司伊娃).

**XUELIN**

And what about Roza's name?

**SHUFEN**

Like the flower, yes?

**ROZA and XUELIN**

Yes.

**SHUFEN**

This would be Si Rou Si (司柔丝), meaning "soft".

**ROZA**

What about my brother?

**SHUFEN**

Him! He would be, uh, Long Face.

*XINFAN and XUELIN laugh.*

**JOSEF**

What did they say?

**ROZA**

I didn't understand it.

**SHUFEN**

I'll give him Si Jie Se (司杰瑟).

**XINFAN**

That's the name of an ancient instrument.

*JOSEF and ROZA look at each other and smile.*

**SHUFEN**

And to Dr. Steinburg, I give Si Yi Si (司易思).

**XINFAN**

This means approachable and deep thinking.

*ITSIK blushes.*

**ITSIK**

Thank you, Shufen.

**EVA, ITSIK, JOSEF, ROZA**

LET US REJOICE!

LET US BASK IN THE LIGHT!

**XINFAN, SHUFEN, XUELIN**

OUR TABLE'S COMPLETE.

WHAT A MARVELOUS SIGHT!

**ITSIK & EVA**

AND JUST FOR THIS ONCE,

**ALL**

AS WE SIT HERE SAFE AND WARM,

**XINFAN & ITSIK**

LET IT BE

**EVA & SHUFEN**

LET IT BE

**XUELIN, SHUFEN, XINFAN**

LET IT BE

**ROZA, EVA, JOSEF, ITSIK**

LET IT BE

**XINFAN & ITSIK**

LET IT BE

**EVA & SHUFEN**

LET IT BE

**XUELIN, SHUFEN, XINFAN**

LET IT BE

**ROZA, EVA, JOSEF, ITSIK**

LET IT BE

**XINFAN & ITSIK**

LET IT BE

**EVA & SHUFEN**

LET IT BE

**ALL**

LET IT BE

A LONG NIGHT

A LONG NIGHT

A LONG NIGHT

*A loud knock at the door [Judith].*

**ALL**

A LONG—

*JUDITH bursts into the YE family's apartment.*

**JUDITH** (*out of breath*)

Steinburgs! Steinburgs. (*trying to catch her breath*) I've seen them. It's all true.

**ITSIK**

What have you seen?

**JUDITH**

The barges. They are for us. And the lists. Our names are on them.

*(She looks at ROZA and JOSEF)*

All of us.

**JOSEF**

What barges?

**JUDITH**

Death ships.

*EVA covers ROZA's ears.*

**EVA**

Judith, please.

**JUDITH** (*panicked*)

They are death ships!

*A beat.*

**JUDITH**

They are across the river. On Woosung Island. I've seen them! We are to be transferred onto them. And they are to be...

*ROZA forcefully peels her mother's hands off of her ears.*

**ROZA**

To be what?

*Beat.*

**JUDITH**

Set on fire.

*They all sit in stunned silence for a moment. SHUFEN does not understand the language, but can tell that something terrible is being discussed.*

*EVA reaches out to the center of the table and picks up a pork dumpling with her chopsticks. Everyone watches in breathless silence as she eats it.*

## SCENE 5A

### 13. GIVE ME A FAITH TO RENEW

**LIONEL**

AH

AH

**JUDITH, EVA, ROZA, JOSEF, ITSIK, & LIONEL**

AH

AH

**LIONEL**

So that's it. The bastards have won. What did it matter that we could run here? They have chased us to the edge of the earth. All that's left to do now is fall right off.

**LIONEL**

THE NIGHT COMES ON.

THE LIGHT IS GONE.

OH, HOW DO I CARRY ON?

**EVA**

A GUEST, I STAND

ON FOREIGN LAND.

A SHEEP TO A STRANGE SHEPHERD'S HAND.

**ITSIK**

We must try to remember that we are the Chosen People.

**LIONEL**

The Chosen People. How nice it is to be chosen! Chosen as those responsible for the plight of Germany. Chosen to be forced out of our homes and the homes of our mothers and fathers and their mothers and fathers. Chosen to be herded like cattle into a ghetto all the way on the other side of the world. And now? Now, they choose to focus their efforts on us yet again. You know, sometimes? Just for once? I think it might be nice not to be chosen.

**JUDITH & LIONEL**

DEAR GOD, I ASK IN A SILENT CRY:

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN MY WELL RUNS DRY?

**JUDITH**

I COME.

**LIONEL**

I GO.

**JUDITH & LIONEL**

MY TREAD IS SLOW.

**JUDITH, EVA, ROZA, JOSEF, ITSIK, & LIONEL**

NO CREDENCE IN THAT WHICH I KNOW.

**XIAO LI**

EACH DAY, THEY GROW CRUELER.

**XIAO GUO**

THEY HAVE STRUCK.

**XIAO LI & XIAO GUO**

WE HAVE BLED.

**XIUQIN**

IT WILL NOT BE ENOUGH

**XIAO LI, XIAO GUO, XIUQIN, YAQI**

UNTIL EACH OF US IS DEAD.

**XINFAN**

UNTIL ASIA IS CONQUERED,  
JAPAN AT THE HEAD.

**XINFAN**

UNTIL THE HUANGPU RIVER RUNS RED.

**XIAO LI, XIAO GUO, XINFAN, YAQI, & XIUQIN**

UNTIL THE HUANGPU RIVER RUNS RED.

**XINFAN, XIAO GUO, & XIAO LI  
ITSIK, & LIONEL**

AY-HO.

AY-HO.

AY-HO.

AY-HO .

AY-HO.

**JUDITH, EVA, ROZA, JOSEF,**

AH.

**XIUQIN**

THEY GRAB,

AND THEY STEAL,

AND THEY REAP WITH NO END.

WILL OUR LIVES EVER BE

WHAT THEY ONCE WERE AGAIN?

**SHUFEN**

STOLEN DAYS.

MISPLACED GUILT.

HOLLOWED OUT HOME, NEVER REBUILT.

**LIONEL**

HMM

HMM

**YAQI**

YESTERDAY'S GONE

NEVER REVIVED.

AND STILL, I STAND ALIVE.

**JUDITH**

HMM

HMM

**YAQI, SHUFEN, & XIUQIN**

AND STILL, I STAND ALIVE.

**JUDITH**

HMM

**LIONEL**

TELL ME WHAT HAPPENS

WHEN THE LAST OF US IS GONE?

WHO WILL YOU PIN

ALL YOUR TROUBLES UPON?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

WHEN YOUR GOAT IS DEAD?

WHEN THE BODY IS SKINNED

AND THE VULTURES ARE FED?

WHEN THEY ASK FOR THE CULPRIT,

WHO WILL YOU NAME?

WHEN YOUR TROUBLES PERSIST,

WHO WILL YOU BLAME?



**JOSEF & JUDITH**  
WHO WILL YOU BLAME?

**JUDITH, EVA, ROZA, JOSEF, ITSIK, & LIONEL**  
WHO WILL YOU BLAME?

**ITSIK**  
THE NIGHT COMES ON.  
THE LIGHT IS GONE.  
AND WEARY, I CARRY ON.  
AND

**YAQI, SHUFEN, & XIUQIN**  
I STAND ALIVE.  
  
I STAND ALIVE.

**EVA**

WEARY,  
I CARRY ON.

JUDITH	LIONEL	SARAH	XINFAN	XIAO GUO	XIAOLI	YAQI	SHUFEN	XIUQIN	EVA	ITSIK	JOSEF
AND WEARY, I CARRY ON.  I CARRY ON.  ON.	AND WEARY, I CARRY ON.  AND WEARY, I CARRY ON.		AY-HO AY-HO	AY-HO AY-HO	AY-HO AY-HO  AY-HO  AY-HO AY-HO AY-HO AY-HO AY-HO	AND I STAND. AND I STAND I STAND. AND I STAND.  I STAND.  I STAND.  I STAND.	AND I STAND. AND I STAND I STAND. AND I STAND.  I STAND.  I STAND.  I STAND.	AND I STAND. AND I STAND I STAND. AND I STAND.	AND WEARY, I CARRY ON.  ON.	AND WEARY, I CARRY ON.  ON.	AND WEARY, I CARRY ON.  ON.

<b>JOSEF, JUDITH , EVA, ITSIK</b>	<b>SARAH &amp; LIONE L</b>	<b>XIUQIN &amp; SHUFEN</b>	<b>YAQI</b>	<b>XIAO GUO</b>	<b>XINFAN</b>	<b>XIAO LI</b>
DEAR GOD, I ASK IN A SILENT CRY: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN MY WELL RUNS DRY?	I COME. I GO. A GUEST I STAND.	STOLEN DAYS. MISPLACED GUILT. AND STILL I STAND ALIVE.	AND I CARVE. AND I CARVE. AND I CARVE. AND I CARVE.	THE AIR GROWS THICKER . MY LUNGS BURN HOT.	AY-HO THE MORNIN G SUN WILL RISE. MY SPIRIT WILL NOT.	AY-HO AY-HO AY-HO MY SPIRI T WILL NOT.

**XINFAN**

THE NIGHT COMES ON.  
THE LIGHT IS GONE.

**ITSIK**

AND WEARY, I CARRY ON.

**XINFAN, XIAO GUO, XIAO LI, SHUFEN, YAQI, XIUQIN**

THE YELLOW RIVER  
FLOWS TO THE SEA.  
THE YELLOW SEA  
BELONGS TO ME.

**EVA**

THE NIGHT IS BLUE.

*JOSEF and ITSIK up at the sky.*

**JOSEF & ITSIK**

I TURN TO YOU.

*All look up at the sky.*

**EVA, ITSIK, SHUFEN, & XINFAN**  
GIVE ME A FAITH TO RENEW.

**ALL**  
OH, GIVE ME A FAITH TO RENEW.

**JUDITH**  
SH'MA YISROEL  
ADONAI ELOHEINU  
ADONAI EICHAD.

*The sound of bombs dropping.*

## SCENE 5B

**Note to Reader:** This scene will be largely dependent on movement and sound design, which is not adequately reflected in the libretto.

*Shouting. Bombs dropping. Rubble falling.*

### YAOI

Oh God. Oh my God. Hide! HIDE!

### LIONEL

Judith! Where are you?! Judith! Duck!

### XIAO GUO (*maniacally*)

It's the Americans! Look at the flags on the planes! They are bombing the Japanese bases! HAHAAHA! THEY ARE BOMBING THE JAPANESE BASES!

### JUDITH

Lionel! LIONEL!

### XIAO LI

Hide! Take cover! Hide!

### SHUFEN

Xuelin! Xuelin! Come here!

*ROZA covers her head as rubble falls. She gets stuck. The rest of the STEINBURGS are on the opposite side of the stage.*

### ROZA

Mama! Papa! Help!

*XIAO GUO cackles and stands tall among the falling rubble.*

### EVA

Where's Roza?!

*ITSIK stands up to search for her but quickly ducks as more rubble falls.*

**ITSIK**

I don't see her!

**ROZA**

Josef! Somebody! Please!

**XINFAN**

Roza!

*XINFAN hears ROZA and runs to her. He tries to pull her out, and then covers her as the bombing continues and more rubble falls.*

*Silence.*

**XIUQIN**

The war is over.

## SCENE 6

*The STEINBURG Family's apartment. ROZA sleeps in JOSEF's bed. She is badly injured. JOSEF and XUELIN sit at the table playing cards. ROZA stirs. She wakes up.*

**ROZA**

Hi.

**JOSEF** *(smiling)*

Hi.

**XUELIN**

How are you feeling?

**ROZA**

Pretty bad.

*XUELIN laughs. ROZA looks around.*

**ROZA**

Where are my parents?

**XUELIN**

They're still out helping. I'll go let them know that you're awake.

*XUELIN exits.*

**JOSEF**

Papa has treated so many injured people, I don't think he's slept at all. And he said Mama's been a great assistant.

*A moment.*

**ROZA**

Josef?

**JOSEF**

Yes?

**ROZA**

Will you play the violin for me?

#### **14. JOSEF'S VIOLIN SOLO**

*JOSEF reaches under the bed and pulls out the violin ROZA bought for him. He uncovers the case from the dark piece of fabric. He gently and carefully opens it and removes the violin. He plays. The whole world stands still for a moment.*

## SCENE 7

*The STEINBURG and YE families are gathered at the harbor. ROZA, wearing a dress that reveals the scarring on her leg, carries a suitcase. ITSIK carries two suitcases. JOSEF carries a suitcase in one hand and his violin in the other. EVA carries a newborn baby. Celebratory Chinese music plays out. The streets are decorated with tall sugar cane. Vendors call out to potential customers, selling food and goods of all colors. People walk free and relaxed down the street.*

**EVA** *(smiling)*

Six months later, and they're still celebrating.

**JOSEF**

I hope they never stop.

**XINFAN**

How long is the journey?

**ITSIK**

It should take just over three weeks.

*SHUFEN hands EVA a multicolored quilt.*

**SHUFEN**

For you. This is Bai Jia Bei (百家被).

**XINFAN**

The quilt of 100 houses. Woven with patches donated from the whole community.

**SHUFEN**

You see here, I have sewn in the five poisons.

**XINFAN**

You have: the centipede, the snake, the scorpion, the frog, and the spider.

**EVA** *(slightly horrified)*

Oh! My goodness!

**XINFAN** *(realizing how that sounds)*

These are said to keep the bad spirits away.



**SHUFEN**

They will protect the new child.

**XINFAN**

They will protect your Johana.

**EVA**

Oh, Mrs. Ye! Thank you. This is so special.

**JOSEF**

It's beautiful.

**SHUFEN**

Are they sure they don't want to raise the baby here?

**XINFAN**

Are you sure you don't want to raise Johana here in Shanghai?

**ITSIK** (*smiling*)

My brother and his wife are eagerly awaiting us in New York.

*A ship horn sounds.*

## **15. FINALE: A GARDEN GROWS**

**XINFAN**

NOW, ANOTHER SHIP COMES TO THIS SHORE.

LIKE SO MANY HAVE BEFORE.

I HAD TOO MANY NEIGHBORS; I DID NOT NEED MORE.

BUT YOU TAUGHT ME HOW TO OPEN UP THE DOOR.

**ITSIK**

YOU ASKED US FOR NOTHING. YOU WELCOMED US IN.

**EVA**

THOUGH THERE WAS SO LITTLE TO SPARE.

YOU HARDLY HAD ANY WATER

**JOSEF**

HARDLY ANY AIR.

**ITSIK**

WHEN THE WORLD CLOSED ITS DOORS TO US,  
SHANGHAI WAS THERE.

**ITSIK**

SO A PRAYER FOR THE MAN BESIDE ME.

**XINFAN**

AND THE ONE WHO IS OCEANS AWAY.

**ROZA** (to *XUELIN*)

My uncle said there's a bakery where they have black forest cake in, uh...

**JOSEF**

Brooklyn.

**ROZA**

Oh yeah, Brooklyn. I wish you could come.

**XUELIN**

I wish you didn't have to go.

**ROZA**

THINK OF ME WHEN YOU HEAR LAUGHTER.  
TODAY AND TOMORROW AND ALL THE DAYS AFTER.

**XUELIN**

THINK OF ME WHEN YOU PLAY,  
EVEN WHEN YOU ARE OCEANS AWAY.

**XINFAN**

RELEASE YOUR TROUBLE.

**ITSIK**

LAY DOWN YOUR SORROW.

**BOTH**

BUT DO NOT FORGET MY NAME.

**XINFAN**

FOR WHEREVER YOU STAND IN THE WORLD, BROTHER:

**BOTH**

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES THE SAME.

**SHUFEN**

EVEN BENEATH A BURNING SKY,  
YOU WILL FIND THAT THE RIVER FLOWS.

**EVA**

AND SOMETIMES, FROM SOIL LADEN WITH ASH,  
YOU WILL FIND THAT A GARDEN GROWS.

**EVA & SHUFEN**

YOU WILL FIND THAT A GARDEN GROWS.

*The STEINBURGS climb the ramp onto the ship. They wave goodbye.*

**ITSIK & XINFAN**

WHEREVER YOU STAND IN THE WORLD

**YE FAMILY**

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES

**STEINBURGS**

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES

**ALL**

THE MOON ALWAYS SHINES THE SAME.

*Lights out on the STEINBURGS, leaving only the YE family visible.  
Lights fade to black.*

**END OF SHOW.**

## **PHOTO GALLERY**

*“The Garden Bridge” and its characters are based on an amalgamation of real people and their stories that we have learned about through memoirs, documentaries, and photos. Below are a few of the photos that we have referenced over and over throughout the writing process as inspiration for creating and telling this story.*





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