

**Ragtime**  
**The Musical**

Book by Terrence McNally  
Music by Stephen Flaherty  
Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens

Based on "Ragtime" by E.L. Doctorow

## Characters

(In Alphabetical Order)

ADMIRAL PEARY  
BAND MEMBERS  
BARON ASHKENAZY  
BARON'S ASSISTANT  
BUREAUCRATS  
BLACK LAWYER  
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON  
BRIGIT  
CHARLES S. WHITMAN  
CHORINES & SOB SISTERS  
CLERK  
COALHOUSE WALKER, JR.  
COALHOUSE'S GANG  
CONDUCTOR  
DOCTOR  
EMMA GOLDMAN  
EVELYN NESBIT  
FATHER  
FIREMEN  
GRANDFATHER  
HARRY K. THAW  
HENRY FORD  
HARRY HOUDINI  
IMMIGRANTS  
J.P. MORGAN  
JUDGE  
JURY FOREMAN  
KATHLEEN  
THE LITTLE BOY  
THE LITTLE GIRL  
MATTHEW HENSON  
MOTHER  
MOURNERS  
MRS. WHITSTEIN  
PEOPLE OF HARLEM  
PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE  
POLICEMAN  
RALLYERS  
REPORTERS  
SARAH  
SARAH'S FRIEND  
STANFORD WHITE  
TATEH  
UMPIRE  
VACATIONERS  
WELFARE OFFICIAL  
WHITE ATTORNEY  
WILLIE CONKLIN  
YOUNGER BROTHER

**ACT ONE**

(Darkness. We hear the sound of a doorknob turning and a door swinging open.)

**#1 - Ragtime (Opening)**

(We see the silhouette of THE LITTLE BOY as he stands in the shaft of light from the open door.)

THE LITTLE BOY's footsteps echo as he walks down the shaft of light to a stereopticon viewer on the floor. He picks it up and brings it to his eyes.

Two scrims, each with an image of a large Victorian house, its inhabitants and neighbors, descend, merge and leap into three-dimension.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

In 1902 Father built a house at the crest of the Broadview Avenue hill in New Rochelle, New York, and it seemed for some years thereafter that all the family's days would be warm and fair.

(PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE are revealed.)

**PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE**

THE SKIES WERE BLUE AND HAZY,  
RARELY A STORM, BARELY A CHILL.

**WOMEN**

LA LA LA LA LA!

**PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE**

THE AFTERNOONS WERE LAZY,  
EV'RYONE WARM, EV'RYTHING STILL.

**MEN**

LA LA LA LA LA!

**ALL**

AND THERE WAS DISTANT MUSIC,  
SIMPLE AND SOMEHOW SUBLIME,  
GIVING THE NATION A NEW SYNCOPATION,  
THE PEOPLE CALLED IT RAGTIME!

(FATHER steps forward, a strong, commanding figure.)

**FATHER**

Father was well-off. Very well off. His considerable income was derived from the manufacture of fireworks and bunting and other accoutrements of patriotism. Father was also something of an amateur explorer.

(MOTHER steps forward, a gracious, appealing woman.)

**MOTHER**

The house on the hill in New Rochelle was Mother's domain. She took pleasure in making it comfortable for the men of her family and often told herself how fortunate she was to be so protected and provided for by her husband.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Mother's Younger Brother worked at Father's fireworks factory. He was a genius at explosives. But he was also a young man in search of something to believe in. His sister wondered when he would find it.

**GRANDFATHER**

Grandfather had been a professor of Greek and Latin. Now retired and living with his daughter and her family, he was thoroughly irritated by everything.

**PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE**

THE DAYS WERE GENTLY TINTED,  
LAVENDER, PINK, LEMON AND LIME.

**MOTHER**

LADIES WITH PARASOLS,

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

FELLOWS WITH TENNIS BALLS.

**FATHER**

THERE WERE GAZEBOS, AND  
There were no Negroes.

**PEOPLE OF HARLEM**

AND EV'RYTHING WAS RAGTIME!

**#1a - Ragtime (Harlem)**

(COALHOUSE WALKER, JR., is playing for a lively crowd of dancers.)

**PEOPLE OF HARLEM**

LISTEN TO THAT RAGTIME!

**COALHOUSE**

In Harlem, men and women of color forgot their troubles and danced and reveled to the music of Coalhouse Walker, Jr. This was a music that was theirs and no one else's.

**SARAH**

One young woman thought Coalhouse played just for her. Her name was Sarah.

**PEOPLE OF HARLEM**

OOOHH...

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

Booker T. Washington was the most famous Negro in the country. He counseled friendship between the races and spoke of the promise of the future. He had no patience with Negroes who lived less than exemplary lives.

**PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE**

LADIES WITH PARASOLS,  
FELLOWS WITH TENNIS BALLS.  
THERE WERE NO NEGROES  
AND THERE WERE NO IMMIGRANTS.

**#1b - Ragtime (Immigrants)**

(IMMIGRANTS are in a line to board a rag ship bound for America.

TATEH and THE LITTLE GIRL join them. They, too, are poorly clothed and undernourished. THE LITTLE GIRL is the same age as THE LITTLE BOY. TATEH looks old and we will think he is THE LITTLE GIRL's grandfather.)

**TATEH**

In Latvia, a man dreamed of a new life for his little girl. It would be a long journey, a terrible one. He would not lose her,

**(TATEH cont.)**

as he had her mother. His name was Tateh. He never spoke of his wife. The little girl was all he had now. Together, they would escape.

(HARRY HOUDINI appears above the crowd.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Houdini! Look it's Houdini!

**CROWD**

OOH...AAH!

OOH...AAH!

(HOUDINI spins in the air. He throws the straight jacket to the crowd below. HOUDINI's MOTHER frees him.)

**HOUDINI**

Harry Houdini was one immigrant who made an art of escape. He was a headliner in the top vaudeville circuits.

(HOUDINI's MOTHER point with pride.)

**HOUDINI'S MOTHER**

Ich bin die mutter des grossen Houdinis!

**HOUDINI**

He made his mother proud. But for all his achievements, he knew he was only an illusionist. He wanted to believe there was more.

(To THE LITTLE BOY)

Hello, sonny.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Warn the Duke!

**HOUDINI**

What did you say?

(CROWD silently applauds. The moment is broken as HOUDINI is enveloped by his crowd of admirers.)

**PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE**

AND THERE WAS DISTANT MUSIC

**(PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE cont.)**  
 CHANGING THE TUNE, CHANGING THE TIME.

**PEOPLE OF HARLEM**  
 GIVING THE NATION  
 A NEW SYNCOPATION!

**ALL**  
 LA, LA, LA, LA...

**J. P. MORGAN**  
 Certain men make a country great.

**HENRY FORD**  
 They can't help it.

**MORGAN**  
 At the very apex of the American pyramid-

**FORD**  
 -that's the very tip-top!-

**MORGAN**  
 Like Pharaoh's reincarnate, stood J.P. Morgan.

**FORD**  
 And Henry Ford.

**MORGAN**  
 All men are born equal.

**FORD**  
 But the cream rises to the top.

(EMMA GOLDMAN steps forward.)

**EMMA GOLDMAN**  
 Let me at those sons of bitches! These men are the demons who  
 are sucking your very souls dry! I hate them!

**MORGAN**  
 Someone should arrest that woman!

(MORGAN and FORD move away.)

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

The radical anarchist Emma Goldman fought against the ravages of American capitalism as she watched her fellow immigrants' hopes turn to despair on the Lower East Side.

(EVELYN NESBIT appears, dressed in her costume from MAMZELLE CHAMPAGNE.)

#1c - Ragtime (Evelyn)

**EVELYN NESBIT**

LA LA LA LA  
LA LA LA LA LA

Whee!

**EMMA**

But America was watching another drama.

**EVELYN NESBIT**

Evelyn Nesbit was the most beautiful woman in America. If she wore her hair in curls, every woman wore her hair in curls.

**STANFORD WHITE**

Her lover was the eminent architect, Stanford White, designer of the Pennsylvania Station on 33rd Street.

**HARRY K. THAW**

Her husband, the eccentric millionaire, Harry K. Thaw, was a violent man.

**EVELYN**

After her husband shot her lover, Evelyn became the biggest attraction in vaudeville since Tom Thumb.

(The music grows eerie, echoing.)

**NEW ROCHELLE WOMEN**

LA LA LA LA LA...

(THAW takes aim at WHITE with a small revolver.)

**MEN**

Bang!

**NEW ROCHELLE WOMEN**

LA LA LA...



**MEN**

Bang!

**NEW ROCHELLE WOMEN**

LA

**MEN**

Bang!

(EMMA GOLDMAN steps forward.)

**#1d - Ragtime (Emma Windup)****EMMA GOLDMAN**

And although the newspapers called the shooting the Crime of the Century, Goldman knew it was only 1906...

**ALL**

AND THERE WERE NINETY FOUR YEARS TO GO!

**EMMA**

Whee!

**ALL**

AND THERE WAS MUSIC PLAYING,  
CATCHING A NATION IN ITS PRIME.  
BEGGAR AND MILLIONAIRE,  
EV`RYONE, EV`RYWHERE  
MOVING THE THE RAGTIME...

**#1e - Ragtime (Dance)**

(The dance swirls around our three principals: MOTHER, TATEH and COALHOUSE, increasing in intensity. BLACKS, WHITES and IMMIGRANTS find themselves in moments of contact or confrontation; there is the potential for violence. The dance swells to a crescendo.)

**#1f - Ragtime (Conclusion)****ALL**

AND THERE WAS DISTANT MUSIC,  
SKIPPING A BEAT, SINGING A DREAM.

**WOMAN**

LA LA LA LA LA!

**ALL**

A STRANGE, INSISTENT MUSIC  
 PUTTING OUT HEAT,  
 PICKING UP STEAM.

**MEN**

LA LA LA LA LA!

**ALL**

THE SOUND OF DISTANT THUNDER  
 SUDDENLY STARTING TO CLIMB...

IT WAS THE MUSIC  
 OF SOMETHING BEGINNING,  
 AN ERA EXPLODING,  
 A CENTURY SPINNING  
 IN RICHES AND RAGS-  
 AND IN RHYTHM AND RHYME.  
 THE PEOPLE CALLED IT RAGTIME!  
 RAGTIME! (RAGTIME!)  
 RAGTIME! (RAGTIME!)  
 RAGTIME! (RAGTIME, RAGTIME!)

## #2 - *Admiral Peary's March*

(We hear the stentorian blasts of an ocean-going team vessel. Immediately we hear the confident sounds of a ship's Sousa-esque orchestra playing the "All ashore" music prior to its immediate departure. We are on the main deck of the ship that will be carrying FATHER on an expedition to the North Pole with ADMIRAL PEARY.)

FATHER is bidding goodbye to his FAMILY. They have all gathered to see him off. Various ship personnel, their families and an historical society mill about the pier below.)

**FATHER**

Everything will be fine, Mother. You'd think the world was coming to an end every time a man sailed off to the North Pole with Admiral Peary.

**MOTHER**

I shall miss you.

**FATHER**

Of course you will. But it's only a year. Nothing much happens in a year. The world will not spin off its axis. Nothing will change, Mother. We will miss each other but the world will stay the same.

**GRANDFATHER**

I hope not. What this world needs is a good swift kick in the pants.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Look! Down there! On the pier! It's her! Evelyn Nesbit! She's even more beautiful in real life than she is in the magazines. I'm going to try to speak to her.

(He goes. THE LITTLE BOY wants to follow.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Me too!

**FATHER**

Edgar, stay here.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

I want to see her, too.

**FATHER**

You're the man of the house now. You have to keep an eye on Mother for both of us. Will you do that?

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Yes, sir.

**FATHER**

That's my little soldier.

**GRANDFATHER**

I want to go now. My legs hurt. Everyone say goodbye.

(GRANDFATHER and THE LITTLE BOY start to go.)

**FATHER**

I'll miss you, sir.

**GRANDFATHER**

Then stay home.

(They are gone.)

**MOTHER**

Come back soon and safe to us.

**FATHER**

That is my intention.

**MOTHER**

And not too many polar bear skins.

**FATHER**

I promise. Now, unless you want to be the only woman left on a shipful of men, you'd better get ashore.

(This is FATHER's idea of a joke.)

I'm sorry. That was coarse. Goodbye.

(He kisses her.)

Stay well. God bless you.

### #3 - *Goodbye, My Love*

(The other wives and families are waving their final farewells to the departing explorers. MOTHER watches as the figure of FATHER recedes.)

**FATHER**

And remember to cancel our subscription to the Philharmonic. I left money for an emergency under the library rug. Don't smile. You can never have enough money. And you'll remember to bring in the dahlias? Goodbye. Say a prayer for us. God bless America. God bless each and every one of us.

**MOTHER**

GOODBYE MY LOVE.  
 GOD BLESS YOU.  
 AND I SUPPOSE,  
 BLESS AMERICA, TOO.  
 YOU HAVE PLACES TO DISCOVER,  
 OCEANS TO CONQUER.  
 YOU NEED TO KNOW  
 I'LL BE THERE AT THE WINDOW  
 WHILE YOU GO YOUR WAY.

**(MOTHER cont.)**

I ACCEPT THAT.

BUT WHAT OF THE PEOPLE  
WHO STAY WHERE THEY'RE PUT,  
PLANTED LIKE FLOWERS  
WITH ROOTS UNDERFOOT?  
I KNOW SOME OF THOSE PEOPLE  
HAVE HEARTS THAT WOULD RATHER  
GO JOURNEYING  
ON THE SEA.

TELL ME,  
WHAT OF THE PEOPLE  
WHOSE BOUNDARIES CHAFE,  
WHO MARRY SO BRAVELY  
AND END UP SO SAFE?  
TELL ME HOW TO BE SOMEONE  
WHOSE HEART CAN EXPLORE  
WHILE STILL STAYING HERE.  
LET THIS BE THE YEAR  
WE BOTH TRAVEL...

GOODBYE, MY LOVE...  
JOURNEY ON...

(FATHER and ADMIRAL PEARY can be seen on the  
bridge of their ship. It is night.)

#### #4 - *Journey On*

The ship rides a swell.)

**FATHER**

It's an honor to go on expedition with you, Admiral Peary. It's  
men like you who've made this country great.

**ADMIRAL PEARY**

It's men like you who will keep it great.

(MATTHEW HENSON appears.)

**HENSON**

All sails set, Admiral.

**PEARY**

Thank you, Mr. Henson. This is my First Officer, Mr. Matthew Henson.

**FATHER**

Good evening.

**HENSON**

Welcome aboard.

**FATHER**

What's that? In the distance? Such a ghostly glow.

**PEARY**

They're called rag ships. Immigrants from every cesspool in western and eastern Europe. Most of them become very patriotic Americans. They're your future customers.

**HENSON**

My people were also brought here on ships.

**PEARY**

Good watch, Henson.

(PEARY and HENSON go. FATHER stares across the dark waters to the rag ship. At some distance he sees TATEH and THE LITTLE GIRL.)

**FATHER**

You're a brave man, whoever you are. Coming so far, expecting so much.

A SALUTE TO THE MAN  
ON THE DECK OF THAT SHIP!  
A SALUTE TO THE IMMIGRANT STRANGER.  
HEAVEN KNOWS WHY YOU'D MAKE  
SUCH A TERRIBLE TRIP.  
MAY YOUR OWN GOD PROTECT YOU  
FROM DANGER.  
IS IT FREEDOM OR LOVE  
THAT YOU PRAY FOR  
IN YOUR GUTTURAL ACCENT?  
TOO LATE, LONG GONE.  
A SALUTE TO A FELLOW  
WHO HASN'T A CHANCE!  
JOURNEY ON.

(TATEH is combing THE LITTLE GIRL's hair.)

**TATEH**

If people ask, how old are you?

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

I don't answer.

**TATEH**

Your name?

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

No name.

**TATEH**

Where your mother is?

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

Dead.

**TATEH**

This is my father. He speaks for both of us.

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

This is my father. He speaks for both of us. Is that other ship going home?

**TATEH**

No! America is our home now. America is our shtetl.

**TATEH and THE LITTLE GIRL**

Amekhaye khlebn.

(A flare goes off, illuminating FATHER and TATEH.)

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

Look. Someone is waving. Where is he going?

**TATEH**

He's a fool on a fool's journey.

(THE LITTLE GIRL lies down and goes to sleep.)

YOU DEPART ON A SHIP  
FROM A COUNTRY LIKE THIS.

**(TATEH cont.)**

WHY ON EARTH WOULD YOU WANT TO  
BE LEAVING?  
WAS IT SOMETHING YOU LOST  
THAT YOU SUDDENLY MISS?  
ARE YOU ANGRY  
OR POSSIBLY  
GRIEVING?  
DO YOU SEE IN MY FACE  
WHAT YOU'VE LOST, SIR?  
ARE YOU MOVED BY THE DEATH SHIP  
WE SAIL UPON?  
WELL, PERHAPS YOU'RE A MAN  
WHO'S IN SEARCH OF HIS HEART.  
JOURNEY ON.

**FATHER**

JOURNEY ON.

**BOTH**

TWO SHIPS PASSING  
IN THE KINSHIP  
OF THE DARKNESS,

**FATHER**

ONE GOING FROM

**TATEH**

ONE COMING TO

**BOTH**

AMERICA!

TWO MEN MEETING  
AT THE MOMENT  
OF A JOURNEY.  
FOR A MOMENT  
IN THE DARKNESS,  
WE'RE THE SAME...

(Lights come up on MOTHER, now home in New  
Rochelle. She has put THE LITTLE BOY to bed.)

**MOTHER**

AND WHAT OF THE PEOPLE

**FATHER**

**TATEH**



**(MOTHER cont.)**  
WHOSE BOUNDARIES CHAFE,

WHO MARRY SO BRAVELY  
AND END UP SO SAFE?

I WILL BE JOURNEYING  
HERE, MY LOVE,  
AS YOU GO  
JOURNEYING

ON THE SEA.

**(FATHER cont.)**  
I SALUTE YOU,  
MY FRIEND

AS YOU GO

JOURNEYING  
ON THE SEA.

**(TATEH cont.)**

MAY YOU  
FIND WHAT YOU NEED

AS YOU GO

JOURNEYING

ON THE SEA.

**ALL THREE**

WE'RE TWO SHIPS PASSING  
AT A DISTANCE  
THROUGH THE DARKNESS,

**FATHER**

ONE GOING FROM

**MOTHER and TATEH**

ONE COMING TO

**ALL THREE**

AMERICA!

STRANGERS SHARING  
THE BEGINNINGS  
OF A JOURNEY!

**FATHER**

I SALUTE YOU

**TATEH**

GOD BE WITH YOU

**MOTHER**

I WILL MISS YOU

**ALL THREE**

IN THE DARKNESS  
OF THE DAWN.  
JOURNEY ON!

**#4a - Evelyn's Introduction**

(MOTHER'S YOUNGER BROTHER appears.)

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Mother's Younger Brother was in love with Evelyn Nesbit. Ever since that first glimpse of her on the pier, nothing else mattered. He was late for work. He forgot to shave. He dreamed of writing her name with fireworks in the sky. When she opened in a new review at Hammerstein's Olympia on West 44th Street, he took the day off and was first in line to buy a ticket!

(The JUDGE, JURY, SOB SISTERS and CHORINES run on in chaos.

YOUNGER BROTHER runs to his seat in the second balcony, a spectator at the "Trial of the Century".)

**JUDGE**

And now, testifying for the defense, Miss Evelyn Nesbit.

**#5 - Crime of the Century (Part 1)**

(EVELYN NESBIT makes her "entrance.")

**EVELYN**

WHEE!

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**

LA LA LA LA  
LA LA LA LA LA.

**EVELYN**

WHEE!

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**

LA LA LA LA  
LA LA LA LA LA.

**EVELYN**

YOUR HONOR,  
I WAS ONCE THE LADY FRIEND OF STANFORD WHITE.

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**  
HE'S THE FAMOUS ARCHITECT!

**EVELYN**  
YES, THAT'S RIGHT.  
HE PUT ME ON A VELVET SWING.  
AND MADE ME WEAR, WELL, HARDLY ANYTHING!

Ruined at the age of fifteen!

YOUR HONOR!  
THEN I WENT AND MARRIED MR. HARRY THAW,

**EVELYN, CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**  
ECCENTRIC MILLIONAIRE.

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**  
OH! OH!

**EVELYN**  
HARRY'S A JEALOUS MAN!

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**  
BANG! BANG!

**EVELYN**  
THAT WAS THE END OF STAN!

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**  
BOO HOO!

**EVELYN**  
YOUR HONOR, BE FAIR!  
MY HARRY WENT CRAZY, I SWEAR!

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**  
LA LA  
LA LA LA

**ALL, EVELYN**  
NOW IT'S THE  
CRIME OF THE CENTURY!  
CRIME OF THE CENTURY!  
GIVING THE WORLD A THRILL!

**EVELYN**

HARRY'S IN TROUBLE  
AND STANNY'S IN HEAVEN  
AND EVELYN IS IN VAUDEVILLE!

**ALL, EVELYN**

THE CRIME OF THE CENTURY!  
CRIME OF THE CENTURY!  
ALL FOR A YOUTHFUL FLING.  
FORTUNE, FAME,  
AND A RUINED NAME!

**EVELYN**

AND NOW I'M THE GIRL ON THE SWING!  
WHEE!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

From what had become his regular seat in the front row of the second balcony, Younger Brother would lean far over the railing, hoping his goddess would notice him. One night he almost fell. Evelyn caught sight of him and smiled. Life was suddenly wonderful and full of delicious possibilities.

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**

OH! OH!

**EVELYN**

HARRY MUST NOT BE HUNG!

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**

(as JUDGE bangs gavel)

BANG! BANG!

**JUDGE**

LET'S HAVE THE VERDICT SUNG!

**CHORINES and SOB SISTERS**

BOO HOO!

**JURY FORMEN**

Your honor, we find that Harry's not guilty!

**EVELYN**

My Harry's not guilty!

**ALL**

`CAUSE HARRY IS OUT OF HIS MIND.

AND IT'S THE CRIME OF THE CENTURY!  
 CRIME OF THE CENTURY!  
 MAKING THE WORLD GO "WHEE"!  
 HARRY'S IN TROUBLE  
 AND STANNY'S IN HEAVEN

**EVELYN**

AND EVELYN GETS PUBLICITY!

**ALL**

THE CRIME OF THE CENTURY!  
 CRIME OF THE CENTURY!  
 NOT SUCH AN AWFUL THING.

**EVELYN**

STANNY'S KILLED,  
 BUT MY MOTHER'S THRILLED!  
 `CAUSE NOW I'M THE GIRL ON THE

**ALL**

NOW SHE'S THE GIRL ON THE...

**EVELYN**

NOW I'M THE GIRL

**ALL**

ON THE SWING!

**EVELYN**

WHEE!

(JUDGE, JURORS & CHORUS GIRLS exit.)

**#5a - Crime of the Century (Part 2: Reporters)**

(Outside the theatre. EVELYN enters. She is being hounded by an unrelenting REPORTER.)

**REPORTER**

Daily Journal Miss Nesbit! Is it true you haven't visited your husband in the asylum since the trial?

**EVELYN**

I don't know what you're talking about!

**REPORTER**

And you have nightmares about your lover's shot-off face?

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

(stepping forward)

Leave the lady alone.

**EVELYN**

Thank you. You! You're at the theatre every night. You've never missed a performance. You deserve a reward.

(She kisses him.)

Is that what you wanted?

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I love you, Miss Nesbit.

**EVELYN**

Would you repeat that for the press?

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

No, I really love you.

**EVELYN**

You love the Girl on the Swing. Well, now you can say she kissed you. But she could never love a man as poor or as thin or as nice as you. I'll blow you a kiss from the stage tomorrow night, if I haven't forgotten all about you.

(She goes, followed by the REPORTER. YOUNGER BROTHER sinks to his knees in despair.)

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I was going to change the world for you.

*#5b - Crime of the Century (Part 3: Victrola)*

(We hear "CRIME OF THE CENTURY" being played as a Victrola recording now. The words seem to mock YOUNGER BROTHER. At the same time, MOTHER and THE LITTLE BOY will enter. She is humming along with the song, making ready to work in the garden of her home.)

**YOUNGER BROTHER, CHORINES**

CRIME OF THE CENTURY,  
 CRIME OF THE CENTURY!  
 ALL FOR A YOUTHFUL FLING.

**MOTHER**

FORTUNE, FAME,  
 AND A RUINED NAME!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I never want to hear that song or her name again.

(HE rushes into the house as GRANDFATHER passes  
 through the garden.)

**GRANDFATHER**

I guess he met her.

(GRANDFATHER exits.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Is Evelyn Nesbit the Harlot of Babylon?

**MOTHER**

Where did you hear that?

**THE LITTLE BOY**

I read it in one of Uncle's magazines.

**MOTHER**

I don't want you going in his room. I'm sure Evelyn Nesbit is a very nice person. She's just confused. She's strayed from the path.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

What path?

**MOTHER**

The right path. The one we all want to be on if only we could and if only it weren't so difficult.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Not for women it's not. Men are tested almost every day of their Christian lives.

**MOTHER**

Not everyone's a Christian. You know that.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

They are in New Rochelle.

(A plane flies above, advertising an appearance by HOUDINI. MOTHER starts digging in the earth.)

*#5c - Houdini's Airplane*

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Houdini! Houdini's coming! Can we go? I'll do anything. Please!

**MOTHER**

We'll see.

(THE LITTLE BOY calls up to HOUDINI's plane as it circles overhead.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Warn the Duke!

(HE stands watching the plane disappear overhead as we hear it fly away. MOTHER looks at him, troubled.)

**MOTHER**

Edgar! Why did you say that?

**THE LITTLE BOY**

I don't know.

**MOTHER**

What did you mean, "Warn the Duke"?

**THE LITTLE BOY**

I don't know.

**MOTHER**

The things you children say. Read Father's letter if you're not going to tell me.



**THE LITTLE BOY**

"Dear Mother. This letter will reach you via the supply ship ERIK..."

**#6 - What Kind of Woman**

(MOTHER has stopped digging in the earth. She has found something.)

**MOTHER**

Get Kathleen.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

What's wrong?

**MOTHER**

Get Kathleen, I tell you.

(THE LITTLE BOY runs into the house. KATHLEEN, the Irish maid, and YOUNGER BROTHER join MOTHER. In silence, they look at the swaddled infant MOTHER is holding in her arms.)

**KATHLEEN**

Oh Holy Mother!

**MOTHER**

Get water, clean linens. Call the doctor.

(YOUNGER BROTHER goes back into the house.)

**KATHLEEN**

Is it alive? Oh, please, God, let it be.

**MOTHER**

It's alive. It's a Negro child. A newborn baby boy.

**KATHLEEN**

It's like Moses in the bulrushes.

**MOTHER**

It's like nothing of the sort.

**KATHLEEN**

What's to become of us?

**MOTHER**

For the last time, Kathleen, make yourself useful.

(KATHLEEN runs into the house. MOTHER holds the swaddled infant. THE LITTLE BOY silently watches them.)

**MOTHER**

WHAT KIND OF WOMAN  
WOULD DO SUCH A THING?

WHY IN GOD'S NAME  
IS MY HUSBAND NOT HERE?

I'M SUCH A FOOL!

WHY DID I SAY  
HE WAS FREE TO GO?  
WHAT AM I TO DO?  
WHERE ARE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS  
MY DEAR?

YOU LEFT ME LISTS.  
EVERYTHING IN LISTS!  
WELL, YOUR LITTLE LISTS  
AREN'T VERY HELPFUL,  
I FEAR!

EACH DAY THE MAIDS  
TRUDGE UP THE HILL.  
THE HIRED HELP ARRIVES.  
I NEVER STOPPED TO THINK  
THEY MIGHT  
HAVE LIVES BEYOND OUR LIVES...

(YOUNGER BROTHER appears.)

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

They're here.

(A POLICEMAN enters with SARAH, simultaneously  
with the DOCTOR, KATHLEEN and GRANDFATHER.)

**POLICEMAN**

We found her in the cellar of a home on the next block. She's a washwoman there. Her name is Sarah.

(MOTHER approaches SARAH.)

**MOTHER**

Are you the mother? Thank God, I found him. What if I hadn't been working the the garden today?

**POLICEMAN**

Don't waste your time, ma'am. She won't say a word to anyone.

**MOTHER**

Where will you take her?

**POLICEMAN**

To the charity ward. Eventually she will have to stand charges.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

What charges?

**POLICEMAN**

Well, attempted murder, I should think.

**MOTHER**

What's going to happen to the baby?

**DOCTOR**

They have places for unfortunates like this.

**MOTHER**

I will take the responsibility. For mother and child. Please take Miss Sarah inside.

(The DOCTOR, POLICEMAN and LITTLE BOY exit, as KATHLEEN ushers SARAH inside, led by GRANDFATHER. MOTHER is left holding the baby.)

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Thank you.

(HE goes into the house.)

**MOTHER**

WHAT KIND OF WOMAN  
WOULD DO WHAT I'VE DONE...  
OPEN THE DOOR  
TO SUCH CHAOS AND PAIN?

**(MOTHER cont.)**

(as if to FATHER)

YOU WOULD HAVE GENTLY  
CLOSED THE DOOR,  
AND GENTLY TURNED THE KEY,  
AND GENTLY TOLD ME NOT TO LOOK  
FOR FEAR WHAT I MIGHT SEE.

WHAT KIND OF WOMAN  
WOULD THAT HAVE MADE ME?

(We are at Ellis Island. Waves of immigrants are  
arriving and waiting for processing. They will  
go through a series of massive, foreboding  
gates.)

**#6a - A Shtetl Iz Amereke (Ellis Island)****TATEH and THE LITTLE GIRL**

A SHTETL IS AMERIKE,  
AMEKHAYE KHLEBN.

**TATEH, THE LITTLE GIRL, JEWISH IMMIGRANTS**

ES RUT OYF IR DI SHKINELE,

**ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS**

MERICA, MERICA, BEL MASSOLINO DI FIOR.

**TATEH, LITTLE GIRL,  
JEWISH IMMIGRANTS**

MIR ZOLN AZOY LEBN.

MIL KHOMES, BIKSN,  
MENTSHN BLUT  
DARFN MIR  
OYF TSORES,

A GUBERNATOR DARF  
MENNIT,

A KEYSER, OYF  
KAPORES.

**ITALIAN  
IMMIGRANTS**

BEL MASSOLINO  
DI FIOR.

MERICA, MERICA,  
BEL MASSOLINO  
DI FIOR.

MERICA, MERICA,

BEL MASSOLINO  
DO FIOR.

**HAITIAN  
IMMIGRANTS**

GRAN MESI,  
WASHINGTON,  
KI BA NOU LAMERIK.

GRAN MESI,  
WASHINGTON,

GRAN MESI,  
WASHINGTON,

KI BA NOU LAMERIK.

**(JEWS cont.)**

AMERIKE!  
 AMERIKE!  
 AMERIKE!  
 AMERIKE!  
 AMERICA!

**(ITALIANS cont.)**

MERICA! MERICA!  
 MERICA! MERICA!  
 MERICA! MERICA!  
 MERICA! MERICA!  
 AMERICA!

**(HATIANS cont.)**

LAMERIK!  
 LAMERIK!  
 LAMERIK!  
 LAMERIK!  
 AMERICA!

**#7 - Success (Part 1)****TATEH**

I PROMISED YOU AMERICA  
 AND LITTLE ONE, WE'RE THERE.

**IMMIGRANTS, LITTLE GIRL**

AMERICA!

**TATEH**

OUR FEET ARE ON THE SOLID GROUND  
 AND HOPE IS IN THE AIR.

**IMMIGRANTS, LITTLE GIRL**

AMERICA!

**TATEH**

YOU'LL SOON BE EATING APPLE PIE  
 FROM OFF A CHINA PLATE.  
 PRETTY DRESSES, PRETTY DOLLS,  
 JUST WAIT!  
 FOR SHINING IN YOUR TATEH'S EYE  
 AND JUST BEYOND THIS GATE:

**ALL**

AMERICA!

(The final gates are raised. There is a surge forward and we are on New York's bustling Lower East Side.)

**TATEH**

HERE IN AMERICA  
 ANYONE AT ALL CAN SUCCEED.  
 DO WHAT YOU DO,  
 AND THE WORLD WILL COME TO YOU,  
 GUARANTEED!  
 I MAY BE JUST A MAKER OF ART,  
 BUT HERE YOU COULD START WITH LESS

**IMMIGRANTS**

AMERICA! HERE IN AMERICA!  
 AMERICA! WE'RE IN AMERICA!

**(TATEH cont.)**

AND MAKE A SUCCESS!

(TATEH begins to set up his cart and begins to address people on the street.)

**TATEH**

Step right up and have a silhouette made by a real artist! With ordinary paper, a pair of scissors and some glue I will give you a thing of such beauty! A life-like portrait of someone you love. Silhouettes of your favorite celebrity.

*#7a - Success (Part 2)*

**TATEH**

EVELYN NESBIT! HEY, LOOK!  
SHE'S ON HER VAUDEVILLE STAGE.  
HARRY HOUDINI! HE PRACTIC'LLY ESCAPES  
FROM THE PAGE.  
ONLY A NICKEL.  
DON'T WALK AWAY!  
SOMEDAY, THESE WILL IMPRESS  
WHEN I'M A SUCCESS!

(EMMA approaches TATEH's cart. SHE examines his silhouettes.)

**EMMA**

J.P. Morgan! You should be ashamed of yourself, comrade.

**TATEH**

Don't make a lecture, Mrs. Goldman. I'm here to work, not make politics.

(HE begins to cut her silhouette.)

**EMMA**

Work is politics.

**TATEH**

You are barking up the wrong tree, Mrs. Goldman. I am an artist. I work for no one. Trade unions are fine but they are not for me. Now be nice and don't move. This is a complimentary silhouette because I admire you anyway.

(EMMA starts to say something.)

**(TATEH cont.)**

Sshh! That doesn't mean I have to listen to you. I was in your socialist frying pan over there; I'm not jumping into the same fire over here.

**EMMA**

What's your name?

**TATEH**

They gave me a name I can't pronounce so you can call me Tateh like everyone else.

**EMMA**

What about her mother?

**TATEH**

Dead. I said I worked for no one. Not true. I work for my child.

(HE hands HER the silhouette.)

With my compliments, Mrs. Goldman.

**EMMA**

You can call me Emma.

(SHE reacts to the silhouette.)

Mein Gott, what a kisser!

(SHE reaches in her pocket.)

Here.

**TATEH**

You're insulting me, Mrs. Goldman

**EMMA**

It's not for you. It's for the child.

**TATEH**

Thank you.

**IMMIGRANTS (2 GROUPS)**

AMERICA...

AMERICA...

**TATEH**

LOOK AT THE SILHOUETTES

HERE IN THE TENEMENTS,

BENT OVER SEWING

**(TATEH cont.)**

OR DANCING OR ARGUING.  
THOUSANDS OF SILHOUETTES,  
THOUSANDS OF STORIES TO TELL.

LOOK AT THEM, LITTLE ONE,  
SUCH OPPORTUNITY!  
RIGHT ON THE CORNER OF  
ORCHARD AND RIVINGTON.  
WE'LL MAKE OUR SILHOUETTES.  
THINK HOW THEY'LL SELL!  
WE'LL JOIN THE PARADE  
OF AMERICANS ALL DOING WELL!

(Now J.P. MORGAN thunderously appears. As HE begins to speak, the bridge he walks on drops with his sheer weight, until it practically crushes the IMMIGRANTS.)

**TATEH and IMMIGRANTS**

SUCCESS!  
SUCCESS!

#7b - Success (Part 3)

**MORGAN**

I'M J.P. MORGAN, MY FRIENDS,  
THE WEALTHIEST MAN ON THIS EARTH!

**TATEH and IMMIGRANTS**

SUCCESS!

**MORGAN**

YOU IMMIGRANTS, LOOK UP TO ME,  
AND YOU'LL SEE WHAT MONEY IS WORTH!

**TATEH and IMMIGRANTS**

SUCCESS!

**MORGAN**

ONE DAY, YOUR IMMIGRANT SWEAT  
MIGHT GET YOU THE WHOLE U.S.!

(The IMMIGRANTS are squashed beneath MORGAN.  
HOUDINI appears.)



HE sings directly to TATEH.)

**HOUDINI**

AND IF YOU'RE TRAPPED  
AND FAILURE SEEMS IMMINENT,  
THINK OF HOUDINI,  
THAT FABULOUS IMMIGRANT!  
BREAK THOSE CHAINS WITH ALL YOU POSSESS!

(HE has freed himself again. HE holds his chains  
above his head in triumph.)

**TATEH and IMMIGRANTS**

THIS IS AMERICA!  
THIS IS THE LAND OF SUCCESS!  
SUCCESS!!

(The streets return to "normal." As the seasons  
change [we have begun in summer and will end in  
bitter winter] TATEH's attempts to "succeed" as a  
silhouette-maker become more and more desperate.  
IMMIGRANTS continue to leave the stage until it  
is nearly bare.)

**EMMA**

The angry, fetid tenements of the Lower East Side were worse  
than anything Tateh and his wife had suffered in Latvia. The  
little girl was often sick now. Tateh wrapped her in his prayer  
shawl. What rabbi would disapprove?

(A chill wind begins to blow.)

**IMMIGRANTS**

AMERICA...

**EMMA**

Are you a rich man yet, Tateh?

**TATEH**

Don't make fun.

**EMMA**

I'm not making fun. I think you are already rich in spirit and  
good of heart. It's just your pockets that are a little empty.

**TATEH**

Please, Mrs. Goldman. I'm working. This is my busiest time. You're blocking the sidewalk.

**EMMA**

I'm sorry.

(The streets are empty of course.)

**TATEH**

Step right up! Without art, what is our existence but chaos?

**EMMA**

Tateh, there's a rally tonight at Union Square.

**TATEH**

I told you, Mrs. Goldman, no politics. My daughter needs to eat!

(A MAN has stopped and addresses TATEH.)

**MAN**

How much?

**TATEH**

(delighted, to EMMA)

You see? Opportunity knocks, I answer.

*#7c - Success (Part 4)*

**MAN**

I said, how much?

**TATEH**

Five cents but for you I'll make it three. You have a small head, I'll save on the paper.

**MAN**

Not for a silhouette, you idiot Yid. How much for the little girl?

(TATEH takes a moment to digest this and then violently attacks the MAN. A POLICEMAN rushes forward to pull TATEH off the frightened MAN.)

**POLICEMAN**

Hey, easy, you want to kill him?

**TATEH**

Yes! I want to reach inside and pull his heart out!

**POLICEMAN**

You people.

**TATEH**

I am not "you people." I am Tateh. And she is not for sale.

**#7d - Success (Part 5)**

(TATEH holds THE LITTLE GIRL close to him. He can no longer escape the reality of his failure and unfulfilled dreams.)

**TATEH**

LOOK AT MY DAUGHTER, GOD.  
 WHY HAVE YOU BROUGHT US HERE?  
 HOW CAN I FEED HER OR CLOTHE  
 OR PROTECT HER HERE?  
 WHERE'S THE AMERICA  
 WE WERE SUPPOSED TO GET?  
 WHAT IT A SILHOUETTE?!!  
 HEY, MISTER!  
 HERE IN AMERICA  
 ANYTHING YOU WANT, YOU CAN BE!  
 SUCKER, STEP UP,  
 AND I'LL CUT YOU OUT YOUR OWN GUARANTEE!  
 COME SEE THE ARTIST,  
 BIG SHOT, OH, YES!  
 RED, WHITE AND BLUE!  
 HOORAY AND GOD BLESS!  
 I'M A SUCCESS!  
 I'M A SUCCESS!  
 SUCCESS!  
 SUCCESS!

(A large silhouette image of HOUDINI forms and grows on the drop behind TATEH.)

**HOUDINI**

IF YOU'RE TRAPPED  
 AND FAILURE SEEMS IMMINENT,

**(HOUDINI cont.)**

THINK OF HOUDINI,  
 THAT FABULOUS IMMIGRANT!  
 BREAK THOSE CHAINS WITH ALL YOU POSSESS!

**TATEH**

I PROMISED YOU AMERICA,  
 AND LITTLE ONE,  
 We will find it.

(TATEH and THE LITTLE GIRL pack their belongings  
 onto his peddler's cart and aggressively push the  
 cart offstage.)

**#8 - His Name Was Coalhouse Walker**

(Harlem. The lights come up and we are in the  
 Tempo Club.)

**PEOPLE OF HARLEM**

HIS NAME WAS COALHOUSE WALKER.

**SOLO MAN**

WAS A NATIVE OF ST. LOUIS SOME YEARS BEFORE.

**SOLO WOMAN**

WHEN HE HEARD THE MUSIC OF SCOTT JOPLIN

**SOLO MAN**

IN ST. LOUIS

**SOLO WOMAN**

BOUGHT HIMSELF SOME PIANO LESSONS  
 WORKING AS A STEVEDORE.

**SOLO MAN**

HERE WAS A MUSIC  
 THAT TRULY INSPIRED HIM.

**LADIES**

DANCERS REQUIRED HIM.

**MEN**

CLUB OWNERS HIRED HIM.

**ALL**

THE STRIVERS OF HARLEM  
RESPECTED AND ADMIRER HIM.

**SOLO MAN**

FOR TURNING HARLEM INTO ART.

**COALHOUSE**

BUT COALHOUSE HAD A BROKEN HEART.

The Good Lord looked down and saw me lonely and loveless and He thought to Himself: "Enough is enough. I'm putting Sarah in Coalhouse's life."

*#9 - The Gettin' Ready Rag (Part 1)*

**COALHOUSE**

...AND HE DID...

This wasn't a woman. This was an angel, a gift of God. Coalhouse loved this woman, but not wisely and not too well. She left me without a word or trace. There was no pity for me.

**SARAH'S FRIEND**

None at all, Coalhouse.

**COALHOUSE**

NOW SHE IS HAUNTING ME,  
JUST LIKE A MELODY,  
THE ONLY SONG I SEEM TO KNOW.  
SARAH, MY LIFE HAS CHANGED.  
SARAH, I MISS YOU SO.  
SARAH, I DID YOU WRONG.  
SARAH, WHERE DID YOU GO?

**COALHOUSE**

And then this morning, the miracle happened. I found out where she is and I'm going to do my damndest to see she takes me back. Ladies and gentlemen, the Gettin' Ready Rag!

*#9a - The Gettin' Ready Rag (Part 2)*

**ALL**

GETTIN' READY RAG!  
GETTIN' READY RAG!

(The dance becomes more joyous, more frenzied.  
The scene opens out from the dance club to become

other parts of Harlem as COALHOUSE re-creates himself.)

**ALL**

GETTIN', GETTIN', GETTIN' READY RAG!

**WOMEN**

ANYTHING IT TAKES,

**MEN**

ANYTHING YOU NEED!

**ALL (EXCEPT COALHOUSE)**

YA GOTTA FIND YOUR GIRL COALHOUSE  
AND WIN HER BACK!

(Dance Break continues)

**ALL**

GETTIN' READY RAG!

**MEN (EXCEPT COALHOUSE)**

READY AS YOU'LL EVER GET.

**COALHOUSE**

NOT YET!

**WOMEN**

GOTTA WIN THE GIRL, COALHOUSE.

**COALHOUSE**

THINK O' WHAT A BETTER MAN SHE'LL SEE  
WHEN MISTER HENRY FORD PUTS ME  
AT THE WHEEL OF A MODEL T!

## #10 - Henry Ford

(COALHOUSE sees an assembly line in motion and a Model T being built. HENRY FORD appears and sings to COALHOUSE.)

**FORD**

SEE MY PEOPLE?  
WELL, HERE'S MY THEORY  
OF WHAT THIS COUNTRY  
IS MOVIN' TOWARD.

**(FORD cont.)**

EVERY WORKER  
A COG IN MOTION.  
WELL, THAT'S THE NOTION OF  
HENRY FORD.

ONE MAN TIGHTENS  
AND ONE MAN RATCHETS  
AND ONE MAN REACHES  
TO PULL ONE CORD.  
CAR KEEPS MOVING  
IN ONE DIRECTION.

**ALL (EXCEPT HENRY FORD)**

A GENUFLECTION TO  
HENRY FORD!

HALLELUJAH!  
PRAISE THE MAKER  
OF THE MODEL T!

**FORD**

SPEED UP THE BELT!  
SPEED UP THE BELT, SAM!

**ALL (EXCEPT HENRY FORD)**

HALLELUJAH!

**COALHOUSE**

HELL, I'LL TAKE HER!

**ALL (EXCEPT HENRY FORD)**

SURE AMAZIN'  
HOW FAR SOME FELLAS CAN SEE!

**FORD**

SPEED UP THE BELT!  
SPEED UP THE BELT, SAM!  
SPEED UP THE BELT!  
SPEED UP THE BELT, SAM!

**ALL (INCLUDING HENRY FORD)**

SPEED UP THE, SPEED UP THE,  
SPEED UP THE, SPEED UP THE,  
BELT!

**ALL (EXCEPT HENRY FORD)**

MASS PRODUCTION  
WILL SWEEP THE NATION,  
A SIMPLE NOTION,  
THE WORLD'S REWARD.

**FORD**

EVEN PEOPLE WHO AIN'T TOO CLEVER  
CAN LEARN TO TIGHTEN A NUT FOREVER.  
ATTACH ONE PEDAL  
OR PULL ONE LEVER.

**ALL (EXCEPT HENRY FORD)**

FOR HENRY FORD!  
HENRY FORD!  
HENRY FORD!  
HENRY FORD!

**FORD**

GRAB YOUR GOGGLES!

**ALL (INCLUDING HENRY FORD)**

AND CLIMB ABOARD!

**COALHOUSE**

I'm ready, Lord!

**#10a - Henry Ford Playoff**

(COALHOUSE drives off in his new car as MOTHER  
and THE LITTLE BOY appear at the trolley stop in  
New Rochelle.)

**MOTHER**

You have to wear a tie for the same reason I'm wearing this very  
unflattering dress. We have to look businesslike if we're going  
to take care of Father's affairs while he's gone.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Father says a woman's place is in the home.

**MOTHER**

Then your father should have stayed home and your uncle  
shouldn't spend all his nights prowling around New York City  
looking for God-knows-what.



**THE LITTLE BOY**

I know what.

**MOTHER**

I hope not.

(TATEH and THE LITTLE GIRL appear on the opposite side of the trolley tracks. TATEH has put a rope around her arm, which he keeps tied around his own waist. They both carry their belongings. Only the peddler's cart has been jettisoned. As TATEH approaches a TROLLEY CONDUCTOR, MOTHER and THE LITTLE BOY watch, fascinated.)

**TATEH**

Mister, please, where is this?

**CONDUCTOR**

You're in New Rochelle.

(TATEH shows him a handful of coins.)

**TATEH**

How much farther can I get on this?

(CONDUCTOR looks at coins.)

**CONDUCTOR**

That should see you and the little girl clear to Boston and environs.

**TATEH**

What's further than Boston?

**CONDUCTOR**

Nothing's further than Boston. You can take the rope off her. This ain't the city.

(HE laughs, smiles at THE LITTLE GIRL and goes.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Mother!

*#11 - Nothing Like the City*

**MOTHER**

I see! I see! He's afraid of losing her. Immigrants are terrified of losing their children. So are we but just not so conspicuously. Don't stare. It's not polite to stare.

**TATEH**

He's a rude little boy. Ignore him. People of good breeding do not stare at other people. They acknowledge them politely with a bow. Like this.

(HE bows across the platform to MOTHER.)

**TATEH**

GOOD DAY.

**MOTHER**

GOOD DAY, SIR.

**TATEH**

SHE CALLED ME "SIR".  
WITHOUT A DOUBT,  
WE'RE REALLY OUT  
OF NEW YORK CITY.

**MOTHER**

FINE WEATHER, ISN'T IT?

**TATEH**

ISN'T IT?  
NOW THAT WE'RE OUT OF THE CITY,  
ISN'T IT?

**BOTH**

NOTHING LIKE THE CITY...

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

He's still staring.

**TATEH**

Never mind.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

MY FATHER'S AT THE NORTH POLE,  
WITH ADMIRAL PEARY AND ESKIMOS!  
WHERE IS YOUR MOTHER?

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

DEAD.

**MOTHER**

Edgar!

**THE LITTLE BOY**

MY NAME IS EDGAR. WE'RE OFF  
TO VISIT OUR FIREWORKS FACTORY.  
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

NO NAME.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.  
EVERYONE HAS A NAME.  
EVEN THE LITTLE NEGRO BABY  
WHO LIVES IN OUR ATTIC!

**MOTHER**

SSSHHH! DO NOT BE RUDE!  
HE TALKS.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

I NEVER KNEW ANYONE  
WHO STAYED ON A ROPE  
LIKE A PUPPY DOG.  
WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE?

**TATEH**

I SEE THAT.

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

SAFE.

**MOTHER**

HE ALSO STARES.  
YOU'D THINK  
HE'D NEVER

**THE LITTLE BOY**

SAFE?

SEEN SOMEONE  
FROM NEW YORK CITY.

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

YES.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

EVERYONE'S SAFE  
IN NEW ROCHELLE.

**TATEH**

THAT'S CHILDREN,  
ISN'T IT?

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

SAFE?

**MOTHER**  
ISN'T IT?

**THE LITTLE BOY**  
YES.

**MOTHER** and **TATEH**  
ALWAYS ANOTHER SURPRISE,  
ISN'T IT?

**CONDUCTOR**  
Boston Post Road trolley! Boston!

**MOTHER**  
Well...

**TATEH**  
Well...  
HAVE A PLEASANT DAY, MA'AM.

**MOTHER**  
HAVE A PLEASANT TRIP, SIR.

**MOTHER** and **TATEH**  
NOTHING LIKE THE CITY...

(TATEH and THE LITTLE GIRL depart, leaving MOTHER  
and THE LITTLE BOY looking after them.)

**CONDUCTOR**  
Mamaroneck! All aboard for Mamaroneck!

**THE LITTLE BOY**  
We know those people.

**MOTHER**  
That's ridiculous. They're poor foreigners.

**THE LITTLE BOY**  
Then we're going to know them.

**MOTHER**  
Who put such thoughts in your head?

(MOTHER and THE LITTLE BOY exit to board the  
trolley.)

(COALHOUSE's search for SARAH has taken him past the Emerald Isle firehouse. The FIREMEN and their chief, WILLIE CONKLIN, are outside in their shirtsleeves horsing around. They stop at the sight of COALHOUSE.)

**COALHOUSE**

Good day, gentlemen. I'm looking for Broadview Avenue in New Rochelle.

**WILLIE CONKLIN**

This ain't it. This is the Emerald Isle volunteer firehouse and this is a private road, nigger. Try turning around and going back where you came from.

**COALHOUSE**

I can see that I am not going to receive the courtesy of an answer from you gentlemen. Good day.

(HE tips his hat and drives off.)

**FIREMAN**

Did you see that, Will? That impudent, cocky, king of the road smirk?

**WILLIE CONKLIN**

That, gentlemen, is a man to be pitied: A nigger who doesn't know he's a nigger. If he's smart, he won't pass this way again.

(THE FIREMEN exit as lights come up on SARAH, alone, rocking her baby.)

**#12 - Your Daddy's Son**

**SARAH**

OOH...

DADDY PLAYED PIANO,  
PLAYED IT VERY WELL.  
MUSIC FROM THOSE HANDS COULD  
CATCH YOU LIKE A SPELL.  
HE COULD MAKE YOU LOVE HIM  
'FORE THE TUNE WAS DONE.  
YOU HAVE YOUR DADDY'S HANDS.

(SARAH cont.)

YOU ARE YOU DADDY'S SON.

OOH...

DADDY NEVER KNEW  
 THAT YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY.  
 HE HAD OTHER LADIES  
 AND OTHER TUNES TO PLAY.  
 WHEN HE UP AND LEFT ME,  
 I JUST UP AND RUN.  
 ONLY THING IN MY HEAD...  
 YOU WERE YOUR DADDY'S SON.

COULDN'T HEAR NO MUSIC  
 COULDN'T SEE NO LIGHT.  
 MAMA, SHE WAS FRIGHTENED,  
 CRAZY FROM THE FRIGHT.  
 TEARS WITHOUT NO COMFORT,  
 SCREAMS WITHOUT NO SOUND.  
 ONLY DARKNESS AND PAIN,  
 THE ANGER AND PAIN,  
 THE BLOOD AND THE PAIN!  
 I BURIED MY HEART IN THE  
 GROUND!  
 IN THE GROUND...  
 WHEN I BURIED YOU IN THE  
 GROUND.

DADDY PLAYED PIANO.  
 BET HE'S PLAYIN' STILL.  
 MAMA CAN'T FORGET HIM.  
 DON'T SUPPOSE I WILL.  
 GOD WANTS NO EXCUSES.  
 I HAVE ONLY ONE...  
 YOU HAD YOUR DADDY'S HANDS.  
 FORGIVE ME.  
 YOU WERE YOUR DADDY'S SON.

*#13 - The Courtship*

(MOTHER gently takes the baby from SARAH.)

**MOTHER**

Sarah, let me take him for awhile. You haven't slept.

(MOTHER takes the baby to the kitchen and puts him in a small crib. THE LITTLE BOY is there. There comes a knock at the screen door.)

**MOTHER**

Yes?

**COALHOUSE**

I'm looking for a young woman of color whose name is Sarah. She is said to reside in one of these houses.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

She's here. She's living in our attic.

**COALHOUSE**

Will you tell her, please, that Coalhouse Walker, Jr. desires to speak with her?

**MOTHER**

Certainly. Please wait there. Edgar.

(MOTHER goes upstairs.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

This is Sarah's baby. You want a cookie?

(THE LITTLE BOY goes into the pantry.)

**MOTHER**

Sarah, you have a caller. A Mr. Walker. Will you come down to the kitchen?

**SARAH**

No, ma'am. Send him away, please.

(COALHOUSE opens the screen door, comes into the kitchen and looks down at his son. HE picks him up.)

**MOTHER**

Well, that's the most words you've spoken since you've been here.

**COALHOUSE**

HMMM...

(MOTHER comes back into the kitchen and is surprised to see that COALHOUSE has presumed to come into the house and pick up the baby.)

**MOTHER**

Sarah is unable to see you. Good day.

**COALHOUSE**

Thank you, ma'am. Tell her I'll come back next Sunday.

(HE goes.)

**GRANDFATHER**

Such was the coming of the colored man in the car to Broadview Avenue.

(YOUNGER BROTHER and THE LITTLE BOY join GRANDFATHER in the front parlor.)

**MOTHER, GRANDFATHER, YOUNGER BROTHER, LITTLE BOY and  
ENSEMBLE (OFFSTAGE)**

EACH SUNDAY HE'D COME DRIVING.  
CURTAINS WOULD PART.  
NEIGHBORS WOULD PEEK.

(MOTHER opens the door for COALHOUSE.)

**MOTHER**

I'm sorry, Mr. Walker. Sarah still will not receive you.

**COALHOUSE**

Will you see that she gets these flowers ma'am.

**ALL**

WEEK AFTER WEEK.  
AND AFTER WEEKS OF SUNDAYS,

**MOTHER**

SENDING HIM OFF SEEMED A CRIME...  
Mr. Walker, it must be a long drive for you. Perhaps you would like a cup of tea before you go?

**ALL**

IT WAS THE MUSIC OF SOMETHING BEGINNING...



(COALHOUSE sips his tea without any embarrassment.)

**COALHOUSE**

I am a professional pianist ma'am. I'm now with the Jim Europe Clef Club Orchestra. They're quite well known. It's important for a musician to find a place that is permanent, a job that requires no traveling. I am through traveling. I am through going on the road.

**MOTHER**

Won't you play something for us, Mr. Walker?

(COALHOUSE tests the piano.)

**COALHOUSE**

This piano is badly in need of a tuning.

**MOTHER**

Oh yes. We are terrible about that.

(COALHOUSE plays a few more notes.)

**GRANDFATHER**

Do you know any coon songs?

(COALHOUSE stops playing.)

**COALHOUSE**

Coon songs are made for minstrel shows. White men sing them in black face. This is called Ragtime.

(HE resumes, now in earnest.)

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Small, clear chords hung in the air like flowers. The melodies were like bouquets. There seemed to be no other possibilities for life than those delineated by his music.

**GRANDFATHER**

Ill-tuned or not, the Aeolian had never made such sounds.

**ALL (INCLUDING MOTHER and YOUNGER BROTHER)**  
AND MONTHS FLEW BY IN MOMENTS,  
HEARING THOSE MELODIES CLIMB...

(FATHER returns from the North Pole. He stands in the front hall, bearded, rough-hewn, laden with exotic gifts. BRIGIT, the new maid, enters with a dust mop. From the parlor, we can hear COALHOUSE playing.)

**FATHER**

I'm home! Mother! Grandfather!

(BRIGIT screams at the sight of him.)

**BRIGIT**

Who the hell are you?

**FATHER**

Who in God's name are you?

**BRIGIT**

I'm Brigit! All right, that's enough, the back door for you, you brazen peddler.

**FATHER**

This is my home. I live here.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Father! Father!

**BRIGIT**

Oh Holy Mother, it's the master!

(SHE runs out, embarrassed.)

**FATHER**

You were in short pants.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Short pants are for little boys!

(MOTHER enters. She has pencils in her hair. She carries the baby under one arm and a ledger book under the other.)

**MOTHER**

Hello. I hope that's you under all that or I am going to kiss a strange man.

(SHE kisses FATHER.)

**(MOTHER cont.)**

It's him! Welcome home. We've missed you terribly. Did you get all the way to the North Pole?

**FATHER**

No, only Admiral Peary and his first officer, Mr. Henson did.

**MOTHER**

Well, they're professionals.

**FATHER**

I got to 72 degrees, 46 minutes, a very respectable way.

**MOTHER**

I should say so!

**FATHER**

My left heel kept freezing.

**MOTHER**

We'll get you into a nice hot tub then. I look a fright. You weren't expected. You're just in time to help with the six-months audit. Business is wonderful. I adore going down there. I think you should pay me a salary.

**FATHER**

What are you holding?

**MOTHER**

Sarah's child.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

We found him in the garden.

**FATHER**

Who's Sarah? What is that music?

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Coalhouse. He's courting Sarah. That's their baby. He comes every Sunday.

**MOTHER**

He's hoping Sarah will eventually take pity and come down to him.

**FATHER**

How long has this been going on?

**MOTHER**

I don't remember.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Five months. I've been counting. Coalhouse is teaching me to play the piano.

**MOTHER**

I think what we are witnessing is, in fact, a courtship of the most stubborn Christian kind.

**FATHER**

Yes, if you can call a courtship what has already produced a bastard child.

**MOTHER**

I find that an unkind remark.

**FATHER**

I find your welcoming of such a situation unfathomable.

**MOTHER**

There was suffering and now there is penitence. It's very grand and I'm sorry for you that you don't see it. I did not expect you to come home a different man but I had hoped to find you a kinder one. I'll see about your tub.

(SHE goes. FATHER is alone, confused. HE reacts as COALHOUSE strikes up a new tune on the piano in the parlor.)

**#14 - New Music**

**FATHER**

WHERE HAVE I BEEN?  
HOW DID WE CHANGE,  
CAUGHT IN THIS STRANGE  
NEW MUSIC?  
SAY,  
WAS I AWAY TOO LONG?

**MOTHER**

JUST LIKE THAT TUNE,

**FATHER**

**(MOTHER cont.)**

SIMPLE AND CLEAR,  
 I'VE COME TO HEAR  
 NEW MUSIC.  
 WHY,  
 WHY CAN'T YOU HEAR THE SONG?

**(FATHER cont.)**

NEW MUSIC.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

HIS FINGERS STROKE THOSE KEYS  
 AND EV'RY NOTE SAYS, "PLEASE,"  
 AND EV'RY CHORD SAYS, "TURN MY WAY."

**MOTHER and FATHER**

I THOUGHT I KNEW  
 WHAT LOVE WAS  
 BUT THESE LOVERS PLAY

**MOTHER, FATHER and YOUNGER BROTHER**

NEW MUSIC!  
 HAUNTING ME  
 AND SOMEHOW TAUNTING ME...  
 MY LOVE WAS NEVER HALF AS TRUE.

**FATHER**

AND I ASK MYSELF,  
 WHY CAN'T I SING IT, TOO?

**WORKERS and NEIGHBORS**

HIS FINGERS STROKE THOSE KEYS,  
 AND EV'RY NOTE SAYS, "PLEASE"  
 AND EV'RY CHORD SAYS, "TURN MY WAY."

**ADD FAMILY**

I THOUGHT I KNEW  
 WHAT LOVE WAS,  
 BUT THESE LOVERS PLAY  
 NEW MUSIC!  
 HAUNTING ME  
 AND SOMEHOW TAUNTING ME.  
 MY LOVE WAS  
 NEVER HALF AS TRUE.

**COALHOUSE**

SARAH, MY LIFE HAS CHANGED.  
 SARAH, YOU'VE GOT TO SEE.  
 SARAH, WE'VE GOT A SON.

**(COALHOUSE cont.)**

SARAH, COME DOWN TO ME...

(SARAH stands upstairs, undecided. SHE slowly moves toward the door.)

<b>SARAH</b>	<b>COALHOUSE</b>	<b>ALL</b>
YOU AND YOUR MUSIC, SINGING DEEP IN ME, MAKING NICE TO ME, SAYING SOMETHING SO NEW. CHANGING EV`RYTHING, MEANING EV`RYTHING, CALLING MY HEART TO YOU...	NEW  MUSIC...	
PLAY THAT MELODY, YOUR SWEET MELODY, CALLING MY HEART TO YOU...	ALL FOR YOU, GIRL... YOU, SARAH,  YOU..	OOH... AHH...

(SARAH comes down the stairs. The FAMILY reacts as she walks into COALHOUSE's embrace.)

**ALL (EXCEPT COALHOUSE and SARAH)**

JUST LIKE THAT TUNE,  
SIMPLE AND CLEAR,  
I'VE COME TO HEAR  
NEW MUSIC...  
BREAKING MY HEART,  
OP'NING A DOOR,  
CHANGING THE WORLD!  
NEW MUSIC!  
I'LL  
HEAR IT FOREVERMORE.

**#14a - New Music Playoff**

(SARAH nods a happy, tearful assent. The music changes into the vamp for "WHEELS OF A DREAM" as we find ourselves on an idyllic hillside in the country. COALHOUSE has been polishing his car. SARAH, amused at his fastidiousness, holds their son.)

**SARAH**

You've been polishing that car so hard there ain't gonna be anything left for us to ride home in!

**COALHOUSE**

You laugh but you wait, you'll see. This is no ordinary car, Sarah. This car is going to take us to a better day and a better time.

**SARAH**

Who have you been talking to, Coalhouse?

**COALHOUSE**

No one, but I've been reading the words of Mr. Booker T. Washington. He's a great man, Sarah.

**SARAH**

I think you're a great man, Coalhouse.

**COALHOUSE**

Not like that, Sarah, not like that. Harvard University awarded him a degree. Imagine that. Imagine what this child's life can be.

*#15 - Wheels of a Dream*

(SARAH gives COALHOUSE the baby.)

**COALHOUSE**

I SEE HIS FACE.  
I HEAR HIS HEARTBEAT.  
I LOOK IN THOSE EYES.  
HOW WISE THEY SEEM.  
WELL, WHEN HE IS OLD ENOUGH,  
I WILL SHOW HIM AMERICA  
AND HE WILL RIDE  
ON THE WHEELS OF A DREAM...

**COALHOUSE**

WE'LL GO DOWN SOUTH  
AND SEE YOUR PEOPLE.  
WON'T THEY TAKE TO HIM  
LIKE CATS TO CREAM!

**SARAH**

GO DOWN SOUTH.  
SEE MY FOLKS.  
THEY'LL TAKE TO HIM  
MMM...

**COALHOUSE**

THEN WE'LL TRAVEL ON FROM THERE...

**SARAH**

CALIFORNIA OR WHO KNOWS WHERE!

**BOTH**

AND WE WILL RIDE  
ON THE WHEELS OF A DREAM...

**COALHOUSE**

YES, THE WHEELS ARE TURNING FOR US, GIRL,  
AND THE TIMES ARE STARTING TO ROLL.  
ANY MAN CAN GET WHERE HE WANTS TO  
IF HE'S GOT SOME FIRE IN HIS SOUL.  
WE'LL SEE JUSTICE, SARAH,  
AND PLENTY OF MEN  
WHO WILL STAND UP  
AND GIVE US OUR DUE.  
OH, SARAH, IT'S MORE THAN PROMISES.  
SARAH, IT MUST BE TRUE...  
A COUNTRY THAT LETS A MAN LIKE ME  
OWN A CAR, RAISE A CHILD, BUILD A LIFE WITH  
YOU...

**COALHOUSE**

WITH YOU...

**SARAH**

WITH YOU...

**BOTH**

BEYOND THAT ROAD,  
BEYOND THIS LIFETIME,  
THAT CAR FULL OF HOPE  
WILL ALWAYS GLEAM!

WITH THE PROMISE OF HAPPINESS.  
AND THE FREEDOM HE'LL LIVE TO KNOW.  
HE'LL TRAVEL WITH HEAD HELD HIGH  
JUST AS FAR AS HIS HEAR CAN GO.  
AND HE WILL RIDE,  
OUR SON WILL RIDE  
ON THE WHEELS OF A DREAM.

**#16 - Tateh at the Loom**

(The lights come up on TATEH. HE is laboring in  
a mill. EMMA GOLDMAN enters.)



**EMMA GOLDMAN**

I have just returned from Lawrence, Massachusetts. I met an old friend there, an artist, a poet with scissors and paper, but who now stands at a loom sixty-four hours a week. His fingers were bleeding. I almost did not recognize him. His pay is six dollars.

**TATEH**

My daughter is shivering! There is no heat. There are worms in the scraps they feed us.

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

He looks like his own daughter's grandfather.

**TATEH**

I will not bow down to these mill owners. I will dine on their coffins, she will dance on their graves.

**EMMAN GOLDMAN**

This is not the America he came here for. None of us did. None of us!

**#16a - The Night That Goldman Spoke at Union Square (Part 1)**

(STRIKERS enter, shouting, and we see that EMMA GOLDMAN is addressing a rally. YOUNGER BROTHER is in her audience. It snows.)

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

But there is hope comrades. Eight weeks ago these same workers - Italians, Poles, Belgians, Russian Jews - with one voice said "No!" to the mill owners and went on strike. They are starving, their children are dying, but they are holding firm and we must support them.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

IT WAS WINTER IN NEW YORK  
AS THE SNOW BEGAN TO FALL  
AND THE WORKMEN'S HALL HAD NOT A SEAT TO SPARE,  
WHEN A YOUNG MAN DUCKED INSIDE  
JUST TO WARM HIMSELF, WAS ALL.  
THE NIGHT THAT GOLDMAN SPOKE AT UNION SQUARE.

**EMMA**

What is happening in Lawrence is happening everywhere. Let us at last make this the land of opportunity for all people and not

**(EMMA cont.)**

just the owners. The land of opportunity for Tateh and his little girl. We cannot rest!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

SHE WAS SPEAKING LOUD AND FAST  
THROUGH A HAZE OF NOISE AND HEAT  
AND THE SMELL OF SWEAT AND ANGER IN THE AIR.  
THE POLICE WERE STANDING BY  
BUT THE CROWD WAS ON ITS FEET,  
THE NIGHT THAT GOLDMAN SPOKE AT UNION SQUARE.

**EMMA**

You!!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

HE THOUGHT HE HEARD HER SAY:

**EMMA**

What brings you here today?

*#16b - The Night That Goldman Spoke at Union Square (Part 2)*

**EMMA and RALLYERS**

POOR YOUNG RICH BOY

**EMMA**

MASTURBATES FOR A VAUDEVILLE TART!  
WHAT A WASTE OF A FIERY HEART,  
DEAR!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

HE THOUGHT SHE SAID:

**EMMA and RALLYERS**

POOR YOUNG BOURGEOIS,

**EMMA**

THERE ARE THINGS THAT YOU'VE NEVER  
THOUGHT.  
COME TO EMMA AND YOU'LL BE TAUGHT  
HERE.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

HIS HEAD WAS  
SPINNING!

**EMMA and RALLYERS**

PEOPLE FEATHERED AND TARRED, MY FRIEND.  
 UNIONS BROKEN AND WHY FOR?  
 CHILDREN LABORING, WOMEN STILL ENSLAVED!  
 LEAVE YOUR LITTLE BACKYARD, MY FRIEND,  
 THERE ARE CAUSES TO DIE FOR!

**RALLYERS**

STRIKE!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

IN THE GUTTERS OF THE CITY  
 I HAVE TRIED TO FIND SOME MEANING,

**RALLYERS**

STRIKE!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

IN THE ARMS OF FALLEN WOMEN,  
 IN THE THOUGHT OF SUICIDE.

**RALLYERS**

STRIKE!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

LIKE A FIREWORK UNEXPLODED,  
 WANTING LIFE, BUT NEVER  
 KNOWING HOW...

**EMMA**

MY BROTHER,  
 LIFE HAS MEANING!  
 I'LL SHOW YOU HOW!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

TILL NOW!

MY BROTHER, YOU ARE  
 WITH US NOW!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

HE WAS CALLING OUT HER NAME,  
 SHOUTING WHAT, HE DID NOT KNOW  
 AND HE FOUND THAT HE WAS STANDING ON A CHAIR  
 WITH A HEART AS CLEAN AND NEW  
 AS THE FRESHLY FALLEN SNOW,  
 THE NIGHT THAT GOLDMAN SPOKE...

**EMMA**

I've been waiting for you.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

AT UNION SQUARE!...

**#16c - Lawrence, Mass. Sequence****WORKERS**

STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE!

(EMMA is being arrested. YOUNGER BROTHER picks up the challenge. We are now in Lawrence, Mass. Men with rifles assemble. STRIKE ORGANIZERS try to calm the STRIKERS.)

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

The strike in Lawrence became famous. The press called it the Children's Crusade. Public indignation grew. The mill owners were not slow in calling in the militia to protect their property.

**VARIOUS ORGANIZERS**

(to TATEH)

Take the bread. It's not charity. Your bosses want you weak.

**WORKERS**

STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE!

(TATEH and THE LITTLE GIRL are in their room, getting ready for her departure.)

**TATEH**

This is a wise plan. It's too dangerous here. You're going to a nice Jewish home in Philadelphia. Kosher. I made certain. These are your mittens. See? I put a string, so you don't lose them. Your Tateh thinks of everything. Mrs. Whitstein will be on the train with you children. I'll come for you soon. Now hurry! You'll miss the train!

(Train whistle.)

**MRS. WHITSTEIN**

Put the children on the train! Get them out of here!

(TATEH gives THE LITTLE GIRL to a woman boarding the train.)

MILITIAMEN raise their rifles. WOMEN scream. Suddenly, violence is everywhere. Another WOMAN runs near TATEH, she is struck down by a MILITIAMAN and falls to the ground. TATEH bends to help her.)

**TATEH**

I hate you, goddamned America!

(A POLICEMAN cracks him on the head with his nightstick.)

TATEH stumbles away. He is dazed and nearly vanquished. The platform around him is crowded with bloodied bodies and victims. We hear the sound of the train beginning to move off.)

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

Tateh! Tateh!

(TATEH is suddenly aware of what is happening. HE begins to run in the direction of the train.)

(further off)

Tateh! Tateh!

(almost inaudible)

Tateh! Tateh!

**#17 - Gliding (Part 1)**

(TATEH jumps onto the back of the train. HE climbs onto the caboose and holds THE LITTLE GIRL.)

**TATEH**

Don't cry. Don't be afraid. I'm here. We're together. Sssh. Sssh. Look what I've made for you.

(HE shows her a small handmade book.)

SEE THE SILHOUETTES.  
IT'S A LITTLE BOOK OF SILHOUETTES.  
WHEN YOU FLIP THE PAGES, THEY MOVE.  
LOOK HOW NICE!  
THIS IS YOU ON SKATES,  
TURNING PRETTY FIGURE EIGHTS

**(TATEH cont.)**

ON THE SMOOTH, COOL ICE...

WE ARE GLIDING,  
 GLIDING ON A POND.  
 CLOSE YOUR EYES,  
 CLOSE YOUR EYES.  
 WE ARE GLIDING,  
 GLIDING FAR BEYOND.  
 CLOSE YOUR EYES,  
 CLOSE YOUR EYES.  
 FEEL THE WIND  
 AS YOU PIROUETTE.  
 ARE YOU HAPPY YET?  
 ARE YOU HAPPY YET?

YOUR MAMEH WOULD TELL YOU,  
 "IMAGINE YOU'RE FEARLESS.  
 IMAGINE YOU'RE FEARLESS  
 AND SOON, YOU WON'T FEAR!"  
 WHEN I AM AFRAID,  
 I IMAGINE YOUR MAMEH.  
 SHE SKATES JUST AHEAD.  
 CAN YOU SEE HER?  
 SHE'S HERE!

AND WE'RE GLIDING,  
 GLIDING FAR AWAY.  
 PIROUETTES.  
 FIGURE EIGHTS.  
 SILVER SKATES.  
 JUST DOWN THE TRACK.  
 GLIDE WITH ME, LITTLE ONE.  
 GLIDE WITH YOUR TATEH.  
 WE'LL NEVER LOOK BACK.

(The train comes to a stop and a CONDUCTOR enters  
 into the platform to announce their station.)

**CONDUCTOR**

Philadelphia! Last stop, Philadelphia!  
 (calling to an unseen engineer)  
 All clear!

(TATEH and THE LITTLE GIRL disembark from the train. The CONDUCTOR notices the book she is flipping through.)

**CONDUCTOR**

My kid would like that. How much?

**TATEH**

It's not for...one dollar?

**CONDUCTOR**

It's a deal. What do you call it?

**TATEH**

I...

**CONDUCTOR**

It's gotta have a name. I'm not paying this much for something without a name.

**TATEH**

They move. I call them movie books.

(CONDUCTOR goes.)

### *#17a - Gliding (Part 2)*

**TATEH**

Your father is a smart man! With this money, we'll get a clean bed and a hot bath, and tomorrow we'll make more of these and we will sell them for two dollars. Tateh's movie books! Everyone will want them. They just don't know that yet!

WE ARE GLIDING,  
GLIDING FAR AWAY.  
PIROUETTES.  
FIGURE EIGHTS.  
SILVER SKATES.  
JUST DONW THE TRACK.  
GLIDE WITH ME, LITTLE ONE...  
GLIDE WITH YOUR TATEH...  
WE'LL NEVER  
LOOK BACK.

### *#18 - Booker T. Washington's Speech*

(Lights come up on BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, making a speech.)

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

And I say to you, gentlemen, that every race or nation that has ever got upon its feet has done so through struggle and persecution; and out of this very resistance to wrong, out of the struggle against odds, they have gained strength.

(COALHOUSE, SARAH and the baby are returning to New Rochelle in the Model T.

WILLIE CONKLIN and his MEN appear, goofing off in front of the firehouse. We hear the familiar sound of a Model T coming toward us. The MEN begin to fan out. COALHOUSE and SARAH find their way barred by WILLIE CONKLIN and the EMERALD ISLE FIREMEN. Nastiness hangs in the air.)

**COALHOUSE**

Sarah. Go down the road and wait.

**SARAH**

I'm not going to leave you.

**COALHOUSE**

Do it, Sarah.

**SARAH**

Stubborn, righteous man.

(SARAH hurries off with the baby.)

**COALHOUSE**

Let me pass.

**CONKLIN**

Gladly. That will be twenty-five dollars. This is a private toll road.

**COALHOUSE**

Since when?



**CONKLIN**

Since some high-falutin' nigger and his whore and his whore's baby thought they could drive that goddamn car of theirs any place they pleased, that's since when.

(COALHOUSE gets out of the car.)

Running away, nigger?

**COALHOUSE**

I am going to find a policeman. If anyone touches my car before I return, he will answer to Coalhouse.

**CONKLIN**

Tell him Fire Chief Will Conklin sends his regards!

(The FIREMEN laugh as COALHOUSE walks away.)

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

We must exhibit patience.

**#18a - The Trashing of the Car**

(THEY descend on the car and destroy it.)

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

Self-control. Forbearance. And dwell above hatred and acts of cruelty.

(BOOKER T. WASHINGTON disappears.)

**COALHOUSE**

Coalhouse found a policeman but he refused to help. When he returned to his car, the Model T was spattered with mud. There was a twenty-inch tear in the custom pantasote top. The tires had been slashed and all the windows broken. Deposited on the seat was a mound of fresh human excrement.

**CONKLIN**

Come on, fellas, let's roll her into the pond and see if she floats!

(CONKLIN and the FIREMEN exit, laughing and pushing COALHOUSE's car as SARAH returns.)

**SARAH**

Come on, Coalhouse. It doesn't matter.

**#19 - Justice****COALHOUSE**

WE'LL SEE JUSTICE, SARAH,  
AND PLENTY OF MEN  
WHO WILL STAND UP AND GIVE US OUR DUE!

**TOWN HALL BUREAUCRAT**

Well, you can sign another complaint, Mr. Walker, but volunteer firemen are not municipal employees and therefore do not come under the jurisdiction of the city. I'm sorry.

**SECOND BUREAUCRAT**

I'm still tracing your first complaint, Mr. Walker. Are you sure you filed it with this office? Let me look again.

**COALHOUSE**

JUSTICE, SARAH.  
THIS IS AMERICA.

**MOTHER**

I am ashamed that our community is represented in his mind by that bunch of toughs.

**FATHER**

Let me talk to my lawyer.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

That's all it will be: talk, talk, talk!

**COALHOUSE**

THE LAW'S THE LAW.  
THE LAW'S BEEN BROKEN.  
WHY SHOULD I TURN THE OTHER CHEEK?  
WHAT ABOUT JUSTICE?

**PEOPLE OF HARLEM**

THE BUREAUCRATS AND BUNGLERS,  
THE ATTORNEYS WHO SMILED...

**WHITE ATTORNEY**

My advice, recover your car and forget the whole matter.

**PEOPLE OF HARLEM**

THE CLERKS AND THE OFFICIALS  
AND THE FORMS THAT WERE FILED...

**A CLERK**

This to get a place on the court calendar. This for change of venue...

**PEOPLE OF HARLEM**

SO MANY ROADS TO JUSTICE  
AROUND THE BEND...

**BLACK LAWYER**

I want justice for our people so bad I can taste it. But I won't waste my time on a mere case of vandalism when I have real injustices to take to the courts!

**PEOPLE OF HARLEM**

AND EVERY ROAD A NEW DEAD END.

**COALHOUSE**

I WILL NOT MOVE  
FROM WHERE I'M STANDING  
TILL WHAT'S MINE IS RESTORED TO ME.  
I'M NOT SOME FOOL.  
I'M NOT THEIR NIGGER!  
I WILL HAVE WHAT'S FAIRLY OWED ME.  
AND TILL THEN,  
I WILL NOT MARRY...

(MOTHER approaches SARAH.)

**MOTHER**

We understand Mr. Walker's outrage. We share it. All decent people do.

**SARAH**

HE SAID, "WHEELS ARE TURNING FOR US, GIRL..."

**MOTHER**

But I'm sure there's a way to settle this affair without calling off the wedding.

**SARAH**

HE SAID, "TIMES ARE STARTING TO ROLL."

**MOTHER**

To be so close to the happiness you both deserve and have it come to this!

(SARAH moves away from MOTHER.)

**SARAH**

WELL, I KNOW HE'LL GET WHERE HE WANTS TO  
 'CAUSE HE'S GOT THAT FIRE IN HIS SOUL.  
 SAID, "THERE'S JUSTICE, SARAH,  
 AND PLENTY OF MEN  
 WHO WILL STAND UP AND GIVE US OUR DUE..."  
 WELL, YOU'LL HAVE YOUR DUE.  
 COALHOUSE,  
 YES, YOU'LL HAVE YOUR DUE...

**#19a - President**

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

The Republican vice-presidential candidate was to be in the city that evening to attend a rally. The Secret Service was at the ready. The recent assassination of President McKinley had been a lesson well learned. Guns were going off everywhere.

(The Vice-Presidential campaign enters. Posters, banners, a marching band, the INCUMBENT CANDIDATE waving. HE poses for photographs with MORGAN on the back of a train.

But it's all slightly surreal as filtered through SARAH's consciousness.)

**SARAH**

I'll tell him:

PRESIDENT,  
 I AM COMING TO YOU  
 ON BEHALF OF COALHOUSE WALKER.  
 HE DON'T KNOW I'M HERE.  
 HE'S MUCH TOO PROUD!  
 AND I AIN'T MUCH OF A TALKER.

BUT PRESIDENT,  
 HE NEEDS YOUR HELP.  
 SIR, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE,  
 'CAUSE COALHOUSE, HE WON'T MARRY ME  
 TILL THIS THING IS DONE.  
 AND PRESIDENT,  
 WE GOT A SON!

(The march music is suddenly very loud, very real. SARAH breaks through the police barricade and rushes towards him, her arm outstretched to him.)

**SARAH**

President! Mr. President!!

**MORGAN**

She's got a gun!

(The POLICE OFFICERS club SARAH with their nightsticks. SHE falls to the ground.)

*#20 - Till We Reach That Day*

**MORGAN**

I saw a gun!

(The CROWD, MORGAN, THE CANDIDATE and POLICEMEN disappear. COALHOUSE enters and rushes to SARAH's lifeless body.)

**COALHOUSE**

Noooo!!!

(HE sobs.)

PEOPLE lift SARAH up. The dirge begins.)

**MOURNERS**

(offstage)

OH...

OH...

OH...

(We are now at SARAH's funeral. To the slow rhythm of a drum, a processional enters bearing SARAH's coffin.)

**SARAH'S FRIEND**

THERE'S A DAY OF HOPE  
MAY I LIVE TO SEE  
WHEN OUR HEARTS ARE HAPPY  
AND OUR SOULS ARE FREE.  
LET THE NEW DAY DAWN,

**(SARAH'S FRIEND cont.)**

OH LORD, I PRAY.  
 WE'LL NEVER GET TO HEAVEN  
 TILL WE REACH THAT DAY.

**SARAH'S FRIEND and PEOPLE OF HARLEM**

IT'S A DAY OF PEACE,  
 A DAY OF PRIDE,  
 A DAY OF JUSTICE  
 WE HAVE BEEN DENIED.  
 WHEN A MAN CAN LIVE  
 AND A CHILD CAN PLAY.  
 WE'LL NEVER GET TO HEAVEN  
 TILL WE REACH THAT DAY...

**COALHOUSE**

WHAT THEY DID TO HER,  
 WHAT THEY TOOK FROM HER.  
 SHE HAD LIFE IN HER.  
 LORD, SHE HAD MY BABY!  
 LOOK WHAT THEY LEFT OF HER,  
 LEFT OF HER,  
 LEFT OF MY GIRL!

(In other parts of the city, others sing.)

**EMMA**

SHE WAS NOTHING  
 TO THEM.  
 SHE WAS A WOMAN.

**COALHOUSE**

MY GIRL!

**MOTHER**

NOTHING AND NO ONE TO THEM,

**EMMA, MOTHER and COALHOUSE**

SO THEY BEAT HER  
 AND BEAT HER AND BEAT HER AND...

**MOURNERS (FULL ENSEMBLE)**

A DAY OF PEACE,

**COALHOUSE**

THERE WAS BLOOD ON THE  
 GROUND!

**(MOURNERS cont.)**

A DAY OF PRIDE,

**COALHOUSE, EMMA,  
MOTHER, TATEH**  
SHE WAS ONLY A GIRL.

A DAY OF JUSTICE

**COALHOUSE, EMMA, MOTHER,  
YOUNGER BROTHER, TATEH**  
IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN!

WE HAVE BEEN DENIED.

**ADD OTHER IMMIGRANTS,  
PEOPLE OF HARLEM**  
IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN  
AND AGAIN  
AND AGAIN!

LET THE NEW DAY DAWN  
OH LORD...

**TATEH**

WHY DOES NOBODY CARE?

**YOUNGER BROTHER, EMMA**

THERE IS BLOOD IN THE AIR!

**HARLEM WOMEN**

WE HAVE VOICES AND SOULS!

**MOTHER, EMMA, YOUNGER BROTHER, TATEH**

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS COUNTRY?

**IMMIGRANTS**

SHE WAS SOMEBODY'S CHILD!

**HARLEM MEN**

THERE ARE NEGROES OUT THERE!

**IMMIGRANTS, HARLEM, MOTHER, YOUNGER BROTHER,  
LITTLE BOY, WOMEN and EMMA (shouting over)**

THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE!

**MORE PEOPLE**

GIVE THE PEOPLE

**ALL (EXCEPT FATHER AND GRANDFATHER)**

A DAY OF PEACE,  
A DAY OF PRIDE,  
A DAY OF JUSTICE  
WE HAVE BEEN DENIED.

**(ALL cont.)**

LET THE NEW DAY DAWN,  
OH LORD, I PRAY!

WE'LL NEVER GET TO HEAVEN  
TILL WE REACH THAT DAY!

**END OF ACT ONE**



**ACT TWO****#21 - Entr'acte****#23 - Coalhouse's Soliloquy**

(COALHOUSE stands alone.)

**COALHOUSE**

SAY GOODBYE TO MUSIC,  
 SAY GOODBYE TO LIGHT.  
 ANYTHING I CARE FOR,  
 TAKE IT FROM MY SIGHT.  
 LET ME SEE NO FUTURE.  
 LET ME HEAR NO SOUND.  
 ONLY DARKNESS AND PAIN,  
 THE ANGER AND PAIN,  
 THE BLOOD AND THE PAIN.  
 THEY BURIED MY HEART IN THE GROUND.  
 IN THE GROUND.  
 WHEN THEY BURIED YOU IN THE GROUND.

I SEE YOUR FACE  
 AND WE WILL RIDE  
 ON THE WHEELS OF A NEW DREAM,  
 SARAH,  
 A NEW TIME, SARAH.  
 NOW!  
 I'LL PLAY THEM THE MUSIC  
 OF SOMETHING BEGINNING,  
 AN ERA EXPLODING,  
 A CENTURY SPINNING.  
 MY LAW AND MY JUSTICE  
 IN RHYTHM AND RHYME.  
 LISTEN TO THAT RAGTIME!

(Three gun shots are fired - "Three Firemen  
 Dead.")

**#24 - Coalhouse Demands (Part 1)****NEWSBOY #1**

Extra! Arsonist destroys Emerald Isle Engine Company!

**NEWSBOY #2**

Negro gunman shoots three dead!

**NEWSBOY #3**

Extra! Terror stalks New Rochelle! Murderer's demands revealed!

**COALHOUSE**

One - that my car be returned to me in its original condition.  
Two - that the white excrescence known as Fire Chief Will Conklin, the one who instigated this crime, be turned over to me for my justice. Nothing less, nothing more.

(All over the city, people react to the news.)

**#24a - Coalhouse Demands (Part 2)****ALL**

SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY  
THERE'S A MADMAN WAITING,  
STANDING IN THE SHADOWS  
WITH A GUN IN HIS HANDS!  
A MAN OF COLOR  
WHO IS CALMLY STATING:  
COALHOUSE DEMANDS!  
COALHOUSE DEMANDS!

**#24b - Coalhouse Demands (Part 3)****NEW ROCHELLE MEN AND WOMEN**

HE DEMANDS!

**HARLEM MEN AND WOMEN**

HE DEMANDS!  
COALHOUSE DEMANDS!

**NEW ROCHELLE MEN**

WHO IS HE TO DEMAND?

**HARLEM MEN AND WOMEN**

HE DEMANDS!

**NEW ROCHELLE MEN AND WOMEN and NEWSBOYS**

HE DEMANDS!

**NEWSBOYS**

(shouting)  
KILLER NEGRO DEMANDS!

**HARLEM MEN AND WOMEN**

ABOUT TIME A BLACK MAN DEMANDED!

**ALL**

HE CALLS CONKLIN THE WHITE EXCRESCENCE...

**THE LITTLE BOY**

WHAT'S EXCRESCENCE?

**FATHER**

Edgar, go to your room!

(MOTHER is greatly agitated. GRANDFATHER and SARAH'S FRIEND are with her. THE LITTLE BOY does not leave.)

**MOTHER**

Three firemen were killed. One of them was Mrs. Gallagher's nephew. Six more were badly injured when the boiler exploded.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

And one of them will be dead by tonight. It was Coalhouse, wasn't it?

**FATHER**

I said, go to your room.

**MOTHER**

Edgar.

(MOTHER and THE LITTLE BOY leave together.)

**GRANDFATHER**

I told you we hadn't heard the last of that Negro.

**ALL**

COALHOUSE DEMANDS!

**COALHOUSE'S GANG and YOUNGER BROTHER**

IT'S AN EYE FOR AN EYE.  
CALL IT JUSTICE, FRIEND!

**HARLEM WOMEN and SARAH'S FRIENDS**

PEOPLE'S LIVES FOR A CAR  
 AIN'T JUSTICE.  
 AN EYE FOR AN EYE, THAT AIN'T!

**FIREMEN**

HE WANTS WILLIE CONKLIN!

**CONKLIN**

WILLIE CONKLIN!  
 HE EVEN MISPELLED MY NAME.  
 WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT!  
 WITH A "K"!

(HE laughs but it is a hollow laugh.)  
 HE CAN'T TAKE A JOKE, NOW CAN HE?  
 SENSITIVE, AIN'T HE?  
 (another laugh)  
 DOES HE THINK ONLY NIGGERS GET SHIT?  
 WE IRISH HAD TO GET USED TO IT!

**FIREMAN**

You goddamned, gutless Mick, look what you got us into!

(WILLIE is shocked and confused that people are  
 turning their backs on him and are angry.)

**CONKLIN**

YOU'RE GONNA PROTECT ME, AIN'T YA?  
 HIDE ME? AIN'T YA?!!

**FIREMAN**

Get out of town, Will, before they kill us all!

(COALHOUSE'S MEN surround him. They stand in  
 solidarity.)

**COALHOUSE'S MEN**

WHAT THEY DID TO YOU,  
 WHAT THEY TOOK FROM YOU.  
 WE ARE ONE WITH YOU.  
 NOW THE WORLD WILL KNOW  
 THERE ARE NEGROES OUT THERE  
 TO MAKE THEM LISTEN!  
 WE'RE ALL COALHOUSE!

(THEY don matching bowler hats and brandish their guns.)

**#24c - Coalhouse Demands (Part 4)**

(BOOKER T. WASHINGTON is surrounded by REPORTERS.)

**REPORTER #1**

Do you have a statement for us, Mr. Washington?

**REPORTER #2**

What do you think of these Negro renegades, Mr. Washington?

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

FOR THE SUM OF MY LIFE  
I HAVE LIVED IN HOPE  
WE MIGHT ALL BE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS.  
I HAVE WORKED TO PERSUADE  
EV'RY WHITE-SKINNED MAN  
THAT NE NEED NOT FEAR OUR RACE.

I deplore Mr. Walker's actions, and the irreparable harm he has done to my people.

AND I WISH THAT I MIGHT TELL HIM  
FACE TO FACE.

**#24d - Coalhouse Demands (Part 5)**

**HARLEM WOMEN (GROUP 1)**

NOT ONE OF OURS.  
NEVER HEARD OF HIM.  
WE DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE.  
NOT ONE OF OURS.

**HARLEM WOMEN (GROUP 2)**

NOT ONE OF OURS.  
NEVER HEARD OF HIM.  
DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE.  
NOT ONE OF OURS.

**ALL HARLEM WOMEN**

DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.  
(to each other)  
AND I WOULDN'T TELL  
THOSE PECKERWOODS  
EVEN IF I DID!

**GROUP 1**

NO ONE KNOWS WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE.  
NO ONE KNOWS WHERE HE IS.

**CONKLIN and OTHERS**

SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY,  
WAITING IN THE DARK!

**(GROUP 1 cont.)**

NO ONE KNOWS HOW TO STOP HIM.

SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY  
THERE'S A MADMAN WAITING,  
STANDING IN THE SHADOWS  
WITH A GUN IN HIS HANDS!

**ALL**

A MAN OF COLOR  
WHO IS CALMLY STATING:  
COALHOUSE DEMANDS!

SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY...

COALHOUSE!

**(CONKLIN and OTHERS cont.)**

STOP HIM!

SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY  
STANDING IN THE SHADOWS,

**COALHOUSE and HIS MEN**

WE'LL PLAY THEM THE MUSIC  
OF SOMETHING BEGINNING!

AN ERA EXPLODING, A CENTURY  
SPINNING!  
LISTEN TO THAT RAGTIME!

(THEY fire their guns. People react.)

MOTHER and YOUNGER BROTHER are sitting around a  
table. MOTHER has SARAH'S baby with her. FATHER  
stands with a pistol. THE LITTLE BOY watches.)

**FATHER**

We are suffering a tragedy that should not have been ours. What  
in God's name possessed you? You took that woman in without  
sufficient thought. And she brought Coalhouse into our lives.  
You have victimized us all with your foolish female  
sentimentality.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Are you going out to find him and shoot him?

**FATHER**

I'm protecting my home. If Mr. Walker makes the mistake of  
coming to my door I will deal with him.

(The baby begins to cry. SARAH'S FRIEND enters.)

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Why should he come here? We did not desecrate his car.

**FATHER**

I went to the police. I told them this murdering madman was a guest in my home. I told them we are keeping his bastard child. I told them everything I knew. They were very grateful.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Did you tell them he's the Negro maniac whose car they destroyed? The same black man who went to them for justice but whose every legal complaint they ignored? The same crazed Negro killer who followed the coffin of a woman they murdered? Were they grateful for the truth?

**FATHER**

I hope I misunderstand you. Would you defend this savage? Does he have anyone but himself to blame for Sarah's death? Anything but his damnable nigger pride? Nothing under heaven can excuse the killing of men and the destruction of property in this manner.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I did not hear such a eulogy at Sarah's funeral. I did not hear you say then that death and the destruction of property were inexcusable.

**FATHER**

Must I endure this?

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

You are a complacent man with no thought of history. You have traveled everywhere and learned nothing. I despise you.

(HE exits, slamming the door.)

**FATHER**

He'll be back.

**MOTHER**

I don't think so.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Why is uncle angry? Why is everyone so angry?

**MOTHER**

Ask your father.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

It's because of Coalhouse isn't it?

**MOTHER**

Why don't you explain this to your son. He is confused. Why don't you ever talk to him?

(There is a silence.)

**FATHER**

How would you like to see a game of baseball tomorrow?

**THE LITTLE BOY**

I think I would like that, sir.

**FATHER**

I've been neglecting you. The Giants are at the Polo Grounds. Mother, I'm taking the boy to see a game of baseball.

**MOTHER**

You fool.

**FATHER**

You'll like baseball. It's a civilized pastime.

**#25 - What a Game**

**FATHER**

IN A WORLD GONE MAD,  
THERE IS COMFORT TO BE HAD  
IN THE GAME FATHER PLAYED  
AT SCHOOL.  
MEN OF CLASS,  
COMPETING ON THE GRASS,  
WHERE SPORTSMANSHIP  
AND FELLOWSHIP  
AND COURTESY  
ARE THE RULE.

**UMPIRE**

Play ball!

(The Polo Grounds. A game is in progress. The stands are packed with FANS from all walks of life. FATHER and THE LITTLE BOY are conspicuous. So is FATHER's uneasiness in the noisy, sweaty, raucous



people around him. They are not FATHER's kind at all. In the excitement, one FAN even throws one arm around FATHER's shoulder.)

**A GROUP**

AIN'T THIS THE KIND O' WEATHER

**A GROUP**

FOR SMACKIN' LEATHER,

**A GROUP**

FOR PLAYIN' BASEBALL!

**ALL**

THE KIND O' WEATHER MAKES A MAN  
HIT LIKE HELL!  
(*HOCK, SPIT*)

**FAN 1**

LET'S GO, YOU SONS O'BITCHES!

**FAN 2**

LET'S SEE SOME PITCHES!

**ALL**

LET'S PLAY SOME BASEBALL!

**FAN 3**

THE KRAUT IS STRIKIN' OUT AGAIN!

**FAN 4**

SCHMIDT, YA SMELL!  
(*HOCK, SPIT*)

**A GROUP**

THE GIANTS HAVEN'T GOT A PRAY'R!

**ANOTHER GROUP**

AAH, YER UNDERWEAR!

**FIRST GROUP**

UP YER ALLEY!

**BOTH GROUPS**

GO BACK TO WHERE YER MOTHER ONCE CAME!

(ALL make some rude gestures.)

**ALL**

HIT THAT BALL!

**FAN 1**

RUN, YOU BASTARD!

**ALL**

HIT THAT BALL!

**FAN 2**

KILL THE KRAUT!

**ALL**

WHAT A GAME!

(*HOCK, SPIT*)

**FAN**

(calling to field)

Hey, Schnabel! Take your head out of your ass!

(to THE LITTLE BOY)

I guess that's telling him.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Hey, Schnabel! Take you head out of your-!

(FATHER firmly clamps his hand over THE LITTLE BOY's mouth.)

**FATHER**

AT HARVARD,  
WE WERE GENTLEMEN.  
MEN WERE GENTLEMEN.

**EVERYONE ELSE**

SO'S YER SISTER!

**FATHER**

WE CALLED EACH OTHER MISTER, AND...

**A GROUP**

DOYLE, YA SUCK!

**FATHER**

DON'T LISTEN!

**(FATHER cont.)**

OUR GAMES WERE VERY QUIET.  
WE'D NEVER RIOT, WE'D...

**A GROUP**

EAT THAT BASEBALL!!

**FATHER**

THE WORST WE EVER SAID WOULD BE...

**A GROUP**

(with a heavy accent)  
RUN, YA SCHMUCK!

**FATHER**

DON'T LISTEN!

NOW HERE'S THIS NOISY RABBLE.  
THIS FOREIGN BABBLE.  
WHO LET THIS HAPPEN?!  
THERE'S HARDLY ONE AMERICAN NAME!

**MAN FROM A GROUP**

(with a heavy accent)  
YAH, HERZOG!

**ALL**

HIT THAT BALL!

**FAN 1**

STUPID POLLACK!

**ALL**

HIT THAT BALL!

**FAN 2**

KILL THE KIKE!

**ALL**

WHAT A GAME!  
(*HOCK, SPIT*)

IT'S  
BRAVES AND GIANTS  
TWO TO TWO.  
THE

**(ALL cont.)**

PITCHER'S NAME IS  
HUB PERDUE.  
JACK MURRAY'S NOW  
UP AT BAT...  
(ball crack)

(THE LITTLE BOY stands up. He knows what will  
happen next. FATHER realizes with a start the  
ball is coming right at them. THE LITTLE BOY  
holds up his hand and catches it.)

**ALL**

MY GOD, WOULD SOMEBODY LOOK AT THAT!...

**ALL (IN STANDS)**

AIN'T THIS THE KIND O' WEATHER  
TO GET TOGETHER AND

**FAN 1**

BASH HIS TEETH IN!

**ALL**

THE KIND O' WEATHER MAKES A MAN  
HIT LIKE HELL!

(The FANS fight.)

A FINE, UPLIFTIN' ATMOSPHERE.  
BRING YOUR CHILDREN HERE.  
TEACH THEM BASEBALL.  
THE GAME ALL TRUE AMERICANS  
DO DAMN WELL.

IT'S LIKE THE CONSTITUTION,  
THE INSTITUTION  
OF DEAR OL' BASEBALL,  
WHERE EVERY MAN IS TREATED THE SAME!

**FAN 1**

KILL THAT MICK!

**FAN 2**

RUN, YOU POLLACK!

**FAN 3**

STRIKE THE KIKE!

**FAN 4**

KILL THE KRAUT!

**ALL**

WHAT A...

WHAT A...

WHAT A...

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Up yer alley!

**FATHER**

Sshh, Edgar!

**ALL**

GAME!

*(HOCK, SPIT)*

YEAH!

**#25a - Fire in the City**

(We hear gunfire, and see the headlines of COALHOUSE's latest act and his photograph. It seems as if the city is on fire. The GANG is setting firehouses ablaze. WILLIE CONKLIN leaves town in terror.)

**COALHOUSE**

Until my demands are met, I will continue to burn down firehouses. I will destroy the entire city if need be. Let the rules of war prevail. Coalhouse Walker, Jr., president of the provisional American government.

(The family is under siege. From outside the door of their home, we hear REPORTERS and see the flash of cameras.)

**REPORTER**

Can I get one picture?

**FATHER**

You're trampling the dahlias!

(FATHER slams the door on the REPORTERS. In the living room, a WELFARE OFFICIAL is reading the riot act to MOTHER.)

Every day now, I come home to a zoo!

**WELFARE OFFICIAL**

Will you explain to your wife that the child is illegitimate...

**MOTHER**

He is not illegitimate.

**WELFARE OFFICIAL**

...and must be given over to one of the excellent facilities that care for these unwanted infants.

**MOTHER**

And he is not unwanted.

**FATHER**

That's enough. Get out of my house.

(FATHER shows HER to the door. REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS try to come in.)

**FATHER**

All of you. Get off my property!

(FATHER slams the door.)

This is insufferable. Mr. Walker is one thing but his child's welfare is not our concern. There are limits to even the most limitless compassion. We've done enough for his child.

**MOTHER**

No one will ever do enough for this child.

*#26 - Atlantic City (Part 1)*

(EVELYN NESBIT appears, interrupting their argument.)

**EVELYN**

Whee!

LET'S RUN AWAY TO ATLANTIC CITY.

LET'S FEEL THE WIND IN OUR HAIR.

(EVELYN pantomimes her act.)

**FATHER**

Atlantic City is only a temporary answer, Mother, but I can't think of a better one. They can't take the child away from you if we're in residence down there and it's close enough for me to come and go as business dictates.

**EVELYN**

SHARING A GRAND AND ROMANTIC CITY,

(HARRY HOUDINI appears, wrapped in chains.)

**HOUDINI**

SEA AND SALTY AIR.

**FATHER**

Besides, the change of air will do everyone good. Did you pack my razor?

**MOTHER**

Yes.

**FATHER**

I hope you reserved us a parlor car?

**MOTHER**

I did.

**EVELYN**

TRAIN'S GONNA TAKE US TO THE SUNNIEST  
HIDEAWAY.

**HOUDINI**

TROUBLES WILL SLIDE AWAY,

**EVELYN and HOUDINI**

JUST A RIDE AWAY.

(GRANDFATHER and SARAH'S FRIEND exit. MOTHER,  
FATHER and THE LITTLE BOY remain.)

**FATHER**

It was clear to Father that the crisis was driving the spirit from their lives. He had always felt secretly that as a family they were touched by an extra light. He felt it going now.

(to MOTHER)

Mother. I.

(Sound of taxi horn.)

**MOTHER**

There's the cab.

(MOTHER exits.)

**FATHER**

WHERE HAVE I BEEN?  
HOW DID WE CHANGE,  
CAUGHT IN THE STRANGE NEW MUSIC?  
SAY, WAS I AWAY TOO LONG?  
SAY, WHEN DID THEY CHANGE THE SONG?

(FATHER exits. Atlantic City is now revealed. Through THE LITTLE BOY's eyes, we see elegant couples on the boardwalk, a strong contrast to the frightened city we have just left.)

**#26a - Atlantic City (Part 2)**

**VACATIONERS**

LET'S RUN AWAY TO ATLANTIC CITY.  
LET'S FEEL THE WIND IN OUR HAIR.  
SHARING A GRAND AND ROMANTIC CITY,  
SEA AND SALTY AIR.  
TRAIN'S GONNA TAKE US  
TO THE SUNNIEST HIDEAWAY.  
TROUBLES WILL SLIDE AWAY,

**HARLEM ENSEMBLE (offstage)**

LET'S FEEL THE WIND  
IN OUR HAIR  
SEA AND SALTY AIR.

**WOMEN VACATIONERS**

JUST A RIDE AWAY,

**VACATIONERS**

SO LET'S RUN AWAY TO ATLANTIC CITY.  
NO ONE WILL FIND US THERE.

(A RAGTIME BAND enters, dancing and playing.)



**VACATIONERS**

DOWN ON THE SAND  
THERE'S A RAGTIME BAND

**BAND MEMBERS**

WITH A BRAND NEW  
RAGTIME TUNE.

**ALL**

AND UP IN THE SKY  
THERE'S GRAND NEW  
JERSEY MOON!  
LET'S GO THERE SOON!

(The VACATIONERS exit, following the RAGTIME BAND, as the Million Dollar Pier appears with HARRY HOUDINI and EVELYN NESBIT. THE LITTLE BOY quietly observes.)

**#26b - Atlantic City (Part 3)****EVELYN**

Whee!!!

I WAS ONCE THE LADY FRIEND OF STANFORD WHITE.  
MADE ME A CELEBRITY OVERNIGHT!  
WELL, OVERNIGHT THINGS CHANGE, I GUESS.  
I'M IN NEW JERSEY... WEARING EVEN LESS!

LADIES, THERE'S A LESSON IN MY TAWDRY TALE.  
BEWARD THE PATH YOU CHOOSE.  
OH! OH! JUSTICE IS NEVER FAIR.  
BANG! BANG! THERE GOES YOUR MILLIONAIRE!  
BOO HOO! NO MONEY, NO RING  
AND YOU COULD END UP ON A SWING.

AND IT'S A CRIME...

**HOUDINI**

HARRY HOUDINI, MASTER ESCAPIST,  
BURIED AND CHAINED AND TIED...

**EVELYN**

OH, JUSTICE CAN BE SO UNFAIR!

**HOUDINI**

REACHING TOWARD DANGER,  
DARKER AND STRANGER,  
NOW THAT HIS MAMA'S DIED.

**EVELYN**

BANG! THERE GOES YOUR MILLIONAIRE!

**HOUDINI**

CONQUERING FEAR  
IN HOPES HE WILL HEAR  
A VOICE FROM THE OTHER SIDE...

**EVELYN**

WHEE!

**HOUDINI**

COME SEE HOUDINI'S DARING DISPLAY!

**EVELYN**

COME SEE MISS NESBIT DO FOUR SHOWS A DAY

**EVELYN and HOUDINI**

THRILLING THE CROWD AND MAKIN' 'EM SAY:

**EVELYN**

LET'S RUN AWAY...  
LET'S RUN AWAY...  
AWAY...

**HOUDINI**

LET'S RUN AWAY...  
LET'S RUN AWAY...  
AWAY...

**ALL**

LET'S RUN AWAY TO  
ATLANTIC CITY!  
LET'S RUN AWAY!  
MY HONEY,

**ALL**

LET'S RUN AWAY TO  
ATLANTIC CITY!  
MY HONEY,

(HOUDINI and EVELYN stay onstage, and continue to perform. HOUDINI does sleight-of-hand while EVELYN sings and dances. They are now both part of TATEH's movie.)

**EVELYN, HARRY and ALL**

WHY SHOULD WE STAY  
IN THE FRANTIC CITY,  
LADEN WITH WORRY AND CARE?  
OH, LET'S RUN AWAY

**(EVELYN, HARRY and ALL cont.)**

TO ATLANTIC CITY.

NO ONE WILL FIND US.

**EVELYN**

NO ONE WILL FIND US,

**ALL**

NO ONE WILL FIND  
US...

**EVELYN**

FIND  
US...

(THE BARON ASHKENAZY and THE LITTLE GIRL arrive on a camera dolly filming the scene. THE BARON wears jodhpurs and a white silk shirt. Around his neck on a chain, he wears a rectangular glass framed in metal. THE LITTLE GIRL has grown exquisitely beautiful.)

**BARON ASHKENAZY**

Cut! That was wonderful, Mr. Houdini. It is a dream come true to work with an artist of your magnitude. Danke.

**HOUDINI**

Danke, yourself Baron.

**BARON ASHKENAZY**

And it will be even more wonderful when Miss Nesbit stops looking at the camera.

**EVELYN**

I'm not an actress.

**BARON ASHKENAZY**

I am reeling with this revelation!

**EVELYN**

I'm a personality!

**BARON ASHKENAZY**

Take five, ladies and gentlemen, while your director has a nervous breakdown!

(HE turns out and we recognize the BARON as TATEH.)

**THE BARON'S ASSISTANT**

Baron. Here's the schedule for tomorrow. And your leading lady is unhappy with her lines.

**TATEH**

Tell our leading lady no one is going to hear her lines! This is a silent movie! Actors! Where is Mary Pickford when I need her?

*#26c - Nothing Like the City (Reprise)*

**TATEH**

GOOD DAY.

**MOTHER**

GOOD DAY, SIR.

(TATEH begins to frame her with the viewing lens he wears around his neck. FATHER and THE LITTLE BOY enter.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Father, that man-

**FATHER**

I see.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

What's he doing?

**FATHER**

It's damn impertinent, whatever it is.

**TATEH**

A million humble and abject apologies. The lovely lady had such a pensive expression I only wished to capture it for a moment in my viewing lens. I am the Baron Ashkenazy.

(HE bows deeply.)

I make moving pictures, sir, and this glass rectangle is a tool of the trade. I am always conjuring up new adventures, new faces, new thrills for my audience. If the lady were an actress, I would offer her a contract on the spot.

**FATHER**

My wife does not work.

**TATEH**

I meant it as a compliment, sir. No offense.

**MOTHER**

I took it as such, sir. No offense.

**TATEH**

I can see that my famous name has not preceded me. Have you seen "His First Mistake"? No? "A Daughter's Innocence"? No? Don't embarrass. They are my first two picture plays. One reelers. I made them for five hundred dollars and each has brought ten thousand dollars in receipts. Yes, it is true! But here, this is not impossible. Anyone can get lucky in America. I remind myself of this every day.

**#27 - Buffalo Nickel Photoplay, Inc.**

**TATEH**

THE FIRST NICKEL I EVER EARNED,  
I KEEP IN A LITTLE SILVER FRAME.  
IT'S HOW I GAVE MY COMPANY A NAME,  
REMINING ME HOW VERY FAR I CAME!

I WAS A  
MAKER OF THE SILHOUETTES  
WHO MADE A SMALL IMPROVEMENT:  
A LITTLE BOOK OF SILHOUETTES  
THAT SIMULATED MOVEMENT!  
WELL, PEOPLE SEEMED TO LIKE IT,  
SOON THE MONEY'S GOING "CLINK!"  
AND I'M BUFFALO NICKEL PHOTOPLAY, INC.!

I GO FROM SILHOUETTES TO PHOTOS.  
I INVENT A SMALL PROJECTOR.  
AND SOON I'M MAKING MOVIES  
AND THEY'RE CALLING ME DIRECTOR!  
AN INDUSTRY IS DAWNING  
AND I'M STANDING ON THE BRINK,  
MISTER BUFFALO NICKEL PHOTOPLAY, INC.!

LIFE SHINES FROM THE SHADOW SCREEN!  
COMICAL, YET INFINITELY TRUE.  
PEOPLE LOVE TO SEE WHAT PEOPLE DO,  
HERE WHERE EVERYONE IS SOMEONE NEW!...

SUCH TALES FROM THE SHADOW SCREEN!

**(TATEH cont.)**

LITTLE MEN WHO NEVER GET THE BREAKS,  
 FIGHTING ON TILL SOMETHING FIN'LLY TAKES...  
 WHAT A LOVELY MOVIE IT ALL MAKES!

WELL, BUS'NESS IS BOOMING,  
 I'M HAPPY TO SAY.  
 I JUST MADE A CONTRACT  
 TO FILM FOR PATHE,  
 A SERIES OF CHAPTERS  
 THAT END IN SUSPENSE...  
 EACH WEEK, SEE WHAT'S NEXT  
 FOR ANOTHER FIVE CENTS!

AND I AM  
 WAKING EV'RY MORNING  
 FILLED WITH SUCH ANTICIPATION!  
 I FRAME THE SEA!  
 I FRAME THE SKY!  
 AND THIS IS MY VACATION!  
 I SHAKE YOUR HAND!  
 I KISS YOUR HAND!  
 I BUY YOU ALL A DRINK!  
 AND MAYBE IF YOU CHANCE TO SEE  
 A MOVIE THAT WAS MADE BY ME,  
 REMEMBER WHEN MY NAME GOES BY  
 (THAT'S ASH-K-E-N-A-Z-Y!)  
 THE BARON, NOW AMERICAN,  
 WHO HAPPENED ONCE TO THINK  
 OF SILHOUETTE  
 AND FLICKER BOOK  
 AND MOVIES AS THEY'RE  
 MEANT TO LOOK  
 AND BUFFALO NICKEL,  
 BUFFALO NICKEL PHOTOPLAY, INC.!

*#27a - Buffalo Nickel Photoplay, Inc. (Playoff)*

**TATEH**

Action!

(THE BARON and THE LITTLE GIRL roll offstage on  
 the dolly, continuing to film the movie. THE  
 VACATIONERS enter to be "filmed," and MOTHER and  
 FATHER rush out of their way and exit. THE

LITTLE BOY remains onstage as the film cast exits in fast motion. HOUDINI enters.)

*#27b - Houdini and The Little Boy*

(THE LITTLE BOY runs up to HOUDINI.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Mr. Houdini! Can I have your autograph please?

**HOUDINI**

Not now, kinde. I'm catching a train. Here!

(HE "finds" a silver dollar behind THE LITTLE BOY's right ear.)

Treat yourself to a ride on the roller coaster. I'll send you a postcard from Sarajevo.

(THE LITTLE BOY turns his head suddenly, remembering.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Warn... the... Duke!

**HOUDINI**

What did you say?

**THE LITTLE BOY**

(to HOUDINI)

Warn the Duke!

(THE LITTLE BOY runs off.)

**HOUDINI**

(chasing him)

What Duke? I don't know any Dukes!

*#27c - A Day at the Beach*

**HOUDINI**

-I've seen you before somewhere. Who are you? Come back here!

(THE LITTLE BOY is gone. HOUDINI exits as the BARON and his SECRETARY enter on the boardwalk above.)

**TATEH**

So, the young woman, forced into a marriage she does not want, decides to elope with the butcher she loves. Nonsense! People don't spend good money to see young women elope with butchers.

(THE LITTLE GIRL and THE LITTLE BOY enter down on the beach.)

**MOTHER**

Good morning, Baron. I see our children are playing again. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt.

**TATEH**

Please. I need interruption. Always working, always working. It's a curse.

(A RAGTIME BAND playing a rag crosses the boardwalk. THE LITTLE GIRL runs off followed by THE LITTLE BOY.)

**TATEH**

I know what this is. It's call rag. I like this music. It makes me want to turn a cartwheel. But I won't. Not today. What's wrong?

**MOTHER**

I am thinking of someone I miss very badly. No, two men. My brother and a Negro man who played that kind of music on our piano in New Rochelle. We never know when our feelings will creep up on us and go "boo!" and startle us, do we?

**TATEH**

(looking right at her)

No. Never.

**MOTHER**

Well.

**THE BARON'S ASSISTANT**

Baron, you promised the studio...

**TATEH**

No rest for the wicked! I leave you with this question, madam: Would a woman leave her husband for a butcher?



**MOTHER**

If he were a kind butcher, a thoughtful man who wondered what she thought about, yes, she would.

**TATEH**

That's the title I've been searching for. "The Thoughtful Butcher." I am forever in your debt.

**MOTHER**

Well.

(There is an awkward moment for MOTHER. She is relieved to see the children on the beach below them.)

**MOTHER**

Look, down there on the beach. The children.

*#28 - Our Children*

**TATEH**

(calling to THE LITTLE GIRL)

Not too fast!

(then to MOTHER)

She doesn't hear me. No, she hears me but she doesn't listen.

**MOTHER**

All children are like that.

**TATEH**

What is their hurry?

**MOTHER**

I'm very glad our have become such friends.

HOW THEY PLAY,  
FINDING TREASURE IN THE SAND.  
THEY'RE FOREVER HAND IN HAND,  
OUR CHILDREN.

**TATEH**

HOW THEY LAUGH.  
SHE HAS NEVER LAUGHED LIKE THIS.

**MOTHER**

EV'RY WAKING MOMENT BLISS.

**BOTH**

OUR CHILDREN.

**TATEH**

SEE THEM RUNNING DOWN THE BEACH.  
CHILDREN RUN SO FAST...

**MOTHER**

TOWARD THE FUTURE.

**TATEH**

FROM THE PAST.

**MOTHER**

HOW THEY DANCE,  
UNEMBARRASSED AND ALONE,

**BOTH**

HEARING MUSIC OF THEIR OWN,  
OUR CHILDREN.

**TATEH**

ONE SO FAIR.

**MOTHER**

AND THE OTHER LITHE AND DARK.

**BOTH**

SOLEMN JOY AND SUDDEN SPARK,  
OUR CHILDREN.  
SEE THEM RUNNING DOWN THE BEACH.  
CHILDREN RUN SO FAST  
TOWARD THE FUTURE,  
FROM THE PAST...

THERE THEY STAND,  
MAKING FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND,  
AND FOREVER, HAND IN HAND,  
OUR CHILDREN.  
TWO SMALL LIVES,  
SILHOUETTED BY THE BLUE,  
ONE LIKE ME  
AND ONE LIKE YOU...  
OUR CHILDREN.  
OUR CHILDREN.

**#28a - Our Children (Scene)****MOTHER**

Well.

**TATEH**

You say that often. "Well."

**MOTHER**

It's because I don't know what to say, Baron.

**TATEH**

I'm not a baron, of course. I'm a poor immigrant, a Jew, who points a camera so that his child can dress as beautifully as a princess. I want to drive from her memory every tenement stench and filthy immigrant street. I will buy her light and sun and clean wind of the ocean for the rest of her life. Now you know me. Now you understand. I am no baron. I am Tateh.

**MOTHER**

Now I know even less what to say.

**TATEH**

Now it's my turn: Well.

**MOTHER**

Thank you for your confidence. I shall keep it here.

(MOTHER puts her hand to her heart.)

SHE goes. TATEH follows her with his eyes. He is smiling.

The music, lights and set segue to a street in Harlem, late at night.)

**#29 - Harlem Sequence (Part 1)****HARLEM WOMAN**

MMM...

**HARLEM MAN**

MMM...

(YOUNGER BROTHER arrives. Everything stops at the sight of him.)

**HARLEM MAN**

Here he comes again - that cracker who doesn't know he's a cracker. We should have kicked his ass the first time he came looking for Coalhouse.

**HARLEM WOMAN**

They must think we're fools.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Good evening. I would still very much like to talk to Mr. Coalhouse Walker, Jr.

**HARLEM WOMAN**

This is still Harlem and this is still the private thoroughfare, cracker.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I told you: I shall come here every evening until he is satisfied that it is safe to receive me.

**HARLEM MAN**

And that time will be never!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

But Mr. Walker knows me. I'm his friend.

**HARLEM WOMAN**

Try that pestilent pond where they sank his car.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I've been there.

**HARLEM WOMAN**

Try that cemetery where he buried his Sarah like a queen.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I've been there, too.

**HARLEM MAN**

Then try the Gates of Justice where they are deaf to his misery and anger.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I understand how you feel.

**#29a - Harlem Sequence (Part 2)**

(His remark is met with much hostility. YOUNGER BROTHER stands his ground. Finally, a well dressed young Negro approaches him. We will recognize him by his bowler hat as one of COALHOUSE'S MEN.)

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER**

You got a dime?

(YOUNGER BROTHER obliges.)

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER**

You seem to have a lot of change there. Could you manage a quarter?

(YOUNGER BROTHER obliges.)

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER**

What about a silver dollar?

(COALHOUSE FOLLOWER goes. YOUNGER BROTHER impulsively follows him.)

Transition. We hear the sounds of a rag piano coming out of a club. Carefree MEN come out onto the street. They are laughing dancing, ONE stays behind, joined by a YOUNG WOMAN.)

**#29b - Harlem Pas De Deux**

(A figure hiding in the shadows reveals himself as COALHOUSE. He watches the young couple dance a romantic pas de deux and go off into the warm night. After a moment, COALHOUSE'S thoughts come to life in the embodiment of SARAH. HE is remembering the night they first met.)

**#30 - Sarah Brown Eyes****COALHOUSE**

What's your name?

**SARAH**

Sarah.

**COALHOUSE**

I'm Coalhouse.

**SARAH**

I know.

**COALHOUSE**

THERE WAS NO MUSIC  
IN MY HEART TONIGHT.  
MELODIES KEPT REFUSIN' TO FLOW.  
ONE LOOK AT YOU,  
NOW EV'RY NOTE FEELS RIGHT,  
COMIN' OUT ALL SWEET AND SLOW.

**SARAH**

YOU TELL STORIES  
LIKE YOUR HANDS PLAY TUNES.

**COALHOUSE**

SWEETEST TUNE I KNOW  
IS SARAH BROWN EYES,  
DON'T BE SHY, NOW.  
SARAH BRON EYES,  
OUGHTA TAKE A CHANCE.  
THE STARS ARE  
SILVER NOTES  
ACROSS THAT SKY NOW.  
SARAH BROWN EYES,  
COME, LET'S DANCE.

**SARAH**

I NEVER HEARD NO MUSIC  
QUITE LIKE YOURS.  
WHERE'D YOU LEARN  
HOW TO PLAY IT THAT WAY?  
WAS I SMART,  
I'D WALK RIGHT OUT THOSE DOORS.

**COALHOUSE**

THEN I'VE GOT TO MAKE YOU STAY.

**BOTH**

NOTHIN' FOR IT BUT A RAGTIME TUNE  
ON THAT PIANO...

SARAH BROWN EYES,  
DON'T BE SHY, NOW.  
SARAH BROWN EYES,  
OUGHTA TAKE A CHANCE.  
THE STARS ARE SILVER NOTES  
ACROSS THAT SKY NOW.  
SARAH BROWN EYES,  
COME, LET'S DANCE.

(THEY dance without touching.)

SILVER NOTES  
ACROSS THAT SKY, NOW.  
SARAH BROWN EYES,  
COME LET'S

**SARAH**

DANCE.

---

**THE FOLLOWING SCENE REPRESENTS THE AUTHORS' PREFERENCE. AN  
ALTERNATE VERSION OF THIS SCENE FOLLOWS AND MAY BE PERFORMED  
INSTEAD.**

(SARAH disappears. The sound of the elevated train overhead. We are at COALHOUSE's hideout. COALHOUSE sits behind a table. With him are his MEN. Everyone is well-dressed in starched shirts with stick pins and ties. Silence. They all seem to be waiting for something. One of the FOLLOWERS begins to whistle.)

**COALHOUSE**

I said, no music.

(YOUNGER BROTHER is brought in, blindfolded.)

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER**

He's here.

**COALHOUSE**

What is it you want?

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I... I... I want to... I know that if...

**#30a - He Wanted to Say Scene**

(Lights come up suddenly on EMMA GOLDMAN.)

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

Younger Brother had prepared himself for this question. He had composed an impassioned statement about justice, civilization and the right of every human being to a dignified life.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I...what I mean is...

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

He wanted to decry Sarah's death, to shed tears for her. But all he said was:

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I know how to blow things up.

**#31 - He Wanted to Say (Vocal Tag)****EMMA GOLDMAN and MEN**

TWO MEN MEETING  
FOR A MOMENT  
IN THE DARKNESS.  
FOR A MOMENT  
IN THE DARKNESS.

(There is an enormous explosion, very present, very terrifying, visceral. The theatre should shake.)

.....



**THIS ALTERNATE VERSION OF "HE WANTED TO SAY" MAY BE PERFORMED IN PLACE OF THE SCENE LISTED ABOVE. IT IS NOTED IN THE MUSIC AS "ALT. 31".**

(SARAH disappears. The sound of the elevated train overhead. We are at COALHOUSE's hideout. COALHOUSE sits behind a table. With him are his MEN. Everyone is well-dressed in starched shirts with stick pins and ties. Silence. They all seem to be waiting for something. One of the FOLLOWERS begins to whistle.)

**COALHOUSE**

I said, no music.

(The FOLLOWER that YOUNGER BROTHER followed enters.)

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER**

He's here.

**COALHOUSE**

Bring him in.

(YOUNGER BROTHER is led in, blindfolded. The blindfold is removed.)

**COALHOUSE**

What is it you want?

*#31- He Wanted to Say (Alternate)*

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I... I... I want to... I know that if...

(Lights come up suddenly, magically on EMMA GOLDMAN at the side of the stage.)

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

HE WANTED TO SAY,  
 "I AM HERE BECAUSE I HAVE TO BE."  
 HE WANTED TO SAY,  
 "I AM HERE FOR WHAT IS RIGHT.  
 EV'RYDAY I WAKE UP KNOWING  
 WHAT YOU'VE LOST AND WHAT IS OWING.

**(EMMA GOLDMAN cont.)**

I WOULD SHED THIS SKIN IF I COULD  
TO STAND WITH YOU AND FIGHT."

HE WANTED TO SAY...

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I AM NOT WHAT I APPEAR TO BE.

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

HE WANTED TO SAY...

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

DO NOT BLAME ME FOR MY PAST.

**BOTH**

WE HAVE DIFFERENT LIVES AND FACES  
BUT OUR HEARTS HAVE COMMON PLACES.  
THIS WAS DEEP INSIDE ME  
AND YOU HELPED ME TO FIND IT AT LAST.

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

TWO MEN MEETING  
FOR A MOMENT IN THE DARKNESS...

**COALHOUSE**

ONE TURNING FROM

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

ONE WAKING TO

**ALL THREE**

AMERICA.  
TWO MEN FINDING  
FOR A MOMENT IN THE DARKNESS

**YOUNGER BROTHER and COALHOUSE**

THEY'RE THE SAME.

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

(overlapping)  
THEY'RE THE SAME.

**COALHOUSE'S MEN**

HE WANTED TO SAY...

**COALHOUSE**

"HOW I ENVY YOU YOUR INNOCENCE."

**EMMA GOLDMAN and COALHOUSE'S MEN**

HE WANTED TO SAY,

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

"BY YOUR SIDE, I COULD BE BRAVE.  
IF THERE'S SUCH A THING AS JUSTICE,  
LET ME HELP YOU FIND YOUR JUSTICE.  
THIS, I DO FOR YOU AND SARAH  
WHO LIES IN HER GRAVE."

**EMMA GOLDMAN and MEN**

BUT ALL HE SAID WAS:

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

I know how to blow things up.

**EMMA GOLDMAN and COALHOUSE'S MEN**

TWO MEN MEETING  
FOR A MOMENT  
IN THE DARKNESS,  
FOR A MOMENT  
IN THE DARKNESS!...

(There is an enormous explosion, very present,  
very terrifying, visceral. The theatre should  
shake.)

<b>END OF ALTERNATE SCENE</b>
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#31a - Explosion/Booker T.'s Second Speech

(Lights come up on BOOKER T. WASHINGTON.)

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

Coalhouse Walker's strategy of vengeance seemed to some the final proof of his insanity. Only a madman would shift the focus of his rage from Willie Conklin, a common bigot, to J.P. Morgan, the most uncommon and powerful man of his time.

(Thunder. We are back on the beach in Atlantic City. MOTHER is carrying the child. She is barefoot. Her hair is loose. THE LITTLE BOY is with her. FATHER enters hurriedly. He is dressed in traveling clothes.)

**MOTHER**

You missed the storm. It was thrilling! I thought the wind was going to pick us up and carry us away. What's wrong?

**FATHER**

I've been called to New York City. It seems that Mr. Walker and his followers have taken over the Morgan Library and are threatening to blow it and themselves up.

**MOTHER**

What does that have to do with you?

**FATHER**

Because I know him, they think I might be helpful as a negotiator or hostage.

**MOTHER**

Then you must go.

**FATHER**

Of course I must. I've reserved a place on this afternoon's Cannonball.

**MOTHER**

Are you afraid?

**FATHER**

A little.

**MOTHER**

Would you like me to come with you?

**FATHER**

There's no need. Mr. Walker has gone too far this time. They'll put an end to it now. He'll get what he deserves.

**MOTHER**

And what is that?

**FATHER**

(flaring)

I'm sure I don't know anymore! And must you always be holding that damn child of his? Every time I look at you! It's become an appendage.

(MOTHER gives the baby to SARAH'S FRIEND.)

**MOTHER**

I'll be right along.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Goodbye, Father.

**FATHER**

Goodbye.

(THE LITTLE BOY and SARAH'S FRIEND exit with the baby.)

I'm sorry. It's not you I'm angry with, Mother. When I return and this affair is forgotten, we will find a suitable place for the child and everything will be like it was.

**MOTHER**

Things will never be the same.

**FATHER**

I meant the same as before, when we were happy.

**MOTHER**

I will not give up the child to anyone except Mr. Walker.

(FATHER kisses her.)

**FATHER**

I love you.

**MOTHER**

Be safe.

**FATHER**

Everything will be fine, Mother.

**MOTHER**

THERE WAS A TIME  
 OUR HAPPINESS SEEMED NEVERENDING.  
 I WAS SO SURE  
 THAT WHERE WE WERE HEADING WAS RIGHT.  
 LIFE WAS A ROAD  
 SO CERTAIN AND STRAIGHT AND UNBENDING.  
 OUT LITTLE ROAD  
 WITH NEVER A CROSSROAD IN SIGHT.  
 BACK IN THE DAYS  
 WHEN WE SPOKE IN CIVILIZED VOICES,  
 WOMEN IN WHITE  
 AND STURDY YOUNG MEN AT THE OAR.  
 BACK IN THE DAYS  
 WHEN I LET YOU MAKE ALL MY CHOICES...  
 WE CAN NEVER GO BACK TO BEFORE.

THERE WAS A TIME  
 MY FEET WERE SO SOLIDLY PLANTED.  
 YOU'D SAIL AWAY  
 WHILE I TURNED MY BACK TO THE SEA.  
 I WAS CONTENT,  
 A PRINCESS ASLEEP AND ENCHANTED.  
 IF I HAD DREAMS,  
 THEN I LET YOU DREAM THEM FOR ME.  
 BACK IN THE DAYS  
 WHEN EVERYTHING SEEMED SO MUCH CLEARER.  
 WOMEN IN WHITE  
 WHO KNEW WHAT THEIR LIVES HELD IN STORE.  
 WHERE ARE THEY NOW,  
 THOSE WOMEN WHO STARED FROM THE MIRROR?  
 WE CAN NEVER GO BACK TO BEFORE.

**WOMEN**

(offstage)  
 AAAH...

**MOTHER**

THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE  
 UNAFRAID OF REVEALING  
 THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE A FEELING,  
 OR THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN WRONG.  
 THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE  
 UNAFRAID TO FEEL SORROW,  
 UNAFRAID OF TOMORROW,  
 UNAFRAID TO BE WEAK...

**(MOTHER cont.)**

UNAFRAID TO BE STRONG.

THERE WAS A TIME  
WHEN YOU WERE THE PERSON IN MOTION.  
I WAS YOUR WIFE.  
IT NEVER OCCURRED TO WANT MORE.  
YOU WERE MY SKY,  
MY MOON AND MY STARS AND MY OCEAN.  
WE CAN NEVER GO BACK TO BEFORE.  
WE CAN NEVER GO BACK TO BEFORE.

(We see a vigil of HARLEM WOMEN with candles.)

**#33 - Look What You've Done (Part 1)**

**WOMEN AT VIGIL**

A DAY OF PEACE,  
A DAY OF PRIDE.  
A DAY OF JUSTICE  
WE HAVE BEEN DENIED.  
LET THE NEW DAY DAWN,  
OH, LORD, I PRAY!

(We are outside the Morgan Library. It is an impressive facade. 36th and 37th Streets have been cordoned off from Madison Avenue to Park Avenue.

There is a cluster of POLICE and REPORTERS.

J.P. MORGAN is trying to impress a flustered DISTRICT ATTORNEY CHARLES S. WHITMAN of the gravity of the situation. Also present is a thoroughly wretched WILLIE CONKLIN who is being made to repair COALHOUSE WALKER's car and FATHER.)

**WHITMAN**

(Raises a megaphone)

Mr. Walker. This is District Attorney Charles S. Whitman. Do you hear me? I have Fire Chief Willie Conklin with me. He is restoring your car. Will you come out, sir?

**WILLIE CONKLIN**

You gonna let me be a martyr!

**WHITMAN**

Mr. Conklin will receive due process. You both will.

**MORGAN**

How much longer are you going to stand for this? Give him his car and then hang the savage!

**WHITMAN**

I'm doing my best, Mr. Morgan.

**CONKLIN**

This is a conspiracy of nigger lovers, that's all it is.

**FATHER**

Sir, if I might suggest.

**WHITMAN**

Who the hell are you?

**FATHER**

You sent for me. I know Mr. Walker and I believe there's one man he will listen to. Mr. Booker T. Washington.

**VIGIL WOMEN**

JUSTICE! AH!

(The focus now goes to WASHINGTON, as the people on the street move away. It should seem as if he has been admitted to the library, and is now addressing COALHOUSE directly.)

*#33a - Look What You've Done (Part 2)*

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

FOR THE SUM OF MY LIFE  
I HAVE LIVED IN HOPE  
WE MIGHT ALL BE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS.  
I HAVE WORKED TO PERSUADE  
EV'RY WHITE SKINNED MAN  
THAT HE NEED NOT FEAR OUR RACE.  
WHAT HAS YOUR SELFISH RECKLESSNESS  
COST US,  
WE WHO WORK SO HARD TO STILL  
THE WHITE MAN'S HATE?  
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

**VIGIL WOMEN**

DAY OF PEACE.  
DAY OF PRIDE.  
JUSTICE!  
JUSTICE!



(As the conversation continues, and escalates, the lights dim on the library and come up on the people outside. Over the following, the VIGIL WOMEN continue to hum.)

**WHITMAN**

You are surrounded by militia. They are cutting off your water even as I speak.

**J. P. MORGAN**

Four Shakespeare folios! A Gutenberg Bible on vellum. The treasures of civilization are at stake! You've got to do something.

**WILLIE CONKLIN**

White people should be grateful for what I done!

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

I deplore the taking of human life, but I applaud Mr. Walker's capture of the Morgan Library. His actions speak for all oppressed people. It is the cry of revolution.

**VIGIL WOMEN**

JUSTICE!

(Lights come up inside the library.)

*#33b - Look What You've Done (Part 3)*

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

With guns and dynamite, you are destroying everything I have fought for, sir.

**COALHOUSE**

Despite the respect I have for you Mr. Washington, you have come in vain.

**WASHINGTON**

Had you been ignorant of the tragic struggle of our people, I could have pitied you this adventure. But you are a trained musician, an educated man.

**COALHOUSE**

It is true, sir. But I hope this might suggest to you the solemn calculation of my mind. We are both men of color who insist on the truth of our manhood, and the respect it demands!

(Lights come up outside the library.)

**MEN and FATHER**

HOURS PASSING BY AND  
NOT A SIGN FROM COALHOUSE!  
HOURS PASSING BY,  
THE SITUATION HOPELESS!

HOURS PASSING BY!  
HOURS PASSING BY!

**WOMEN**

HOURS PASSING BY AND  
NOT A SIGN FOR COALHOUSE!  
HOURS PASSING BY,  
THE SITUATION HOPELESS!

HOURS PASSING BY!

(Lights dim on the chaos outside the library, and come up inside again. It is apparent that time has passed. They are tired. They are disheveled. The guns have been lowered.)

*#33c - Look What You've Done (Part 4)*

**WASHINGTON**

Your situation is hopeless. You will be responsible for the deaths of these young men.

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER #1**

Don't listen to him, Coalhouse.

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER #2**

They're using him to get to you.

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER #3**

We're not giving up.

**WASHINGTON**

AND YOU DARE TO TEACH YOUR LESSONS  
TO THESE WILD, UNTHINKING YOUTHS.  
YET YOUR OWN SON,  
YOU ABANDON  
TO BE RAISED ON WHITE MEN'S TRUTHS.  
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE.  
THINK OF YOUR SON.

(COALHOUSE reacts to this blow. All at once he hears SARAH's voice, humming "Your Daddy's Son.")

**SARAH**

OOOH...

**WASHINGTON**

Is this the legacy you would bestow on him? Are these the shoulders you would have him stand upon? Let him be the son of a man who had the courage to tell the truth in a court of law. Make your case, and if the verdict is death, go to it proudly knowing you have been heard. The truth is all. If you do this, you will have the thanks and respect of every decent man of color and all those children of our race whose way is hard and whose journey is long.

THINK OF YOUR SON.

**COALHOUSE**

I would need a hostage and safe passage for my men.

**WASHINGTON**

It is done.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

You can't change your demands. You are betraying us. You said we would all go free or we would all die!

**COALHOUSE**

And the promise of a fair trial.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

No!

**WASHINGTON**

You have my word. I am their mediator, sir, not their fool.

**COALHOUSE**

Then they will see me come out with my hands raised, and no further harm will come to any man from Coalhouse Walker, Jr.

**WASHINGTON**

God bless you, sir.

(WASHINGTON and COALHOUSE shake hands.  
WASHINGTON exits. The FOLLOWERS and YOUNGER  
BROTHER surround COALHOUSE in furious agitation.)

**#33d - Look What You've Done (Part 5)**

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER #1**

You said we'd fight to the finish.

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER #2**

You can go out there, man. We ain't.

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER #3**

We're all ready to die as Coalhouse.

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER #4**

Push the plunger! Blow it all up!

**COALHOUSE**

I will not trade your precious lives for anything in this world.

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Is a goddamn Model T your justice then?

**COALHOUSE**

Is your execution yours?

(We hear FATHER from outside the library.)

**FATHER**

Coalhouse. Mr. Coalhouse Walker, Jr. It is I, sir, the hostage  
you demanded.

(YOUNGER BROTHER recognizes the voice. YOUNGER  
BROTHER unbolts the door and admits FATHER.)

**FATHER**

Your car is ready, Mr. Walker. I think you will be satisfied.

(FATHER recognizes YOUNGER BROTHER.)

You!

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

Yes.

**FATHER**

I myself require nothing from you. But don't you feel your sister deserves an explanation?

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

You may tell my sister that she will always be in my thoughts.  
(with difficulty)  
You may tell her I have always loved and admired her.

**COALHOUSE**

Are you ready?

**COALHOUSE FOLLOWER**

We're not going. You've lost, Coalhouse. We've all lost.

**COALHOUSE**

I don't believe that.

**#34 - Make Them Hear You****COALHOUSE**

GO OUT AND TELL OUR STORY.  
LET IT ECHO FAR AND WIDE.  
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.  
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.  
HOW JUSTICE WAS OUR BATTLE  
AND HOW JUSTICE WAS DENIED.  
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.  
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.

AND SAY TO THOSE WHO BLAME US  
FOR THE WAY WE CHOSE TO FIGHT  
THAT SOMETIMES THERE ARE BATTLES  
THAT ARE MORE THAN BLACK OR WHITE.  
AND I COULD NOT PUT DOWN MY SWORD  
WHEN JUSTICE WAS MY RIGHT.  
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.

GO OUT AND TELL THE STORY  
TO YOUR DAUGHTERS AND YOUR SONS.  
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.  
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.  
AND TELL THEM, IN OUR STRUGGLE,  
WE WERE NOT THE ONLY ONES.  
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.  
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.

**(COALHOUSE cont.)**

YOUR SWORD CAN BE A SERMON  
 OR THE POWER OF THE PEN.  
 TEACH EV'RY CHILD TO RAISE HIS VOICE  
 AND THEN, MY BROTHERS, THEN  
 WILL JUSTICE BE DEMANDED  
 BY TEN MILLION RIGHTEOUS MEN.  
 MAKE THEM HEAR YOU.  
 WHEN THEY HEAR YOU,  
 I'LL BE NEAR YOU  
 AGAIN!

(The men embrace COALHOUSE and move toward the door.)

**#34a - Underscore: After "Make Them Hear You"**

(FATHER goes, too, but is stopped by COALHOUSE.)

**FATHER**

Am I not to go with them?

**COALHOUSE**

Here is our hostage. One white face looks just like another.

(COALHOUSE takes FATHER's hat and places it on YOUNGER BROTHER's head. YOUNGER BROTHER replaces FATHER as the "hostage" and they all exit. A silence.)

**COALHOUSE**

Tell me about my son.

**FATHER**

What do you want to know?

**COALHOUSE**

Is he walking? Has he said any words yet? Anything you can think of.

(A car sputters to a start and begins to drive off. Silence.)

**COALHOUSE**

Are they going to kill me?

**FATHER**

Of course not. They're decent men. I would not have come here if I did not believe that.

**WHITMAN**

(offstage)

Mr. Walker, your men have gone. Will you come out now?

(COALHOUSE has put on his bowler hat and houndstooth jacket. Impeccably dressed and grommed as usual, he is now ready to leave the library.)

**COALHOUSE**

Thank you for your kindness to my family.

**FATHER**

You're welcome. He's a fine boy.

(COALHOUSE and FATHER shake hands. COALHOUSE goes to the door, opens it and walks out into the glare of lights.)

At once we hear a volley of gun shots.)

**FATHER**

Nooo!

**#35 - Epilogue: Ragtime (Part 1)**

**CHORUS**

OOHH!!!

(We hear a slow rag begin. THE LITTLE BOY appears next to a small manual projector.)

**THE LITTLE BOY**

The era of Ragtime had run out, as if history were no more than a tune on a player piano. But we did not know that then.

(HE turns the projector as a slow parade begins: a ghostly march of time, people of the past, people of the future.)

**YOUNGER BROTHER**

After Coalhouse Walker's death, Younger Brother drove south to Mexico, where he joined the great peasant revolutionary, Emiliano Zapata.

(YOUNGER BROTHER rejoins the parade, and now, one by one, others step forth.)

**ALL**

LA LA LA LA LA...

**EMMA GOLDMAN**

The signs of the coming world war were everywhere. The anarchist Emma Goldman was arrested again, of course, but this time she would be deported, as well.

**ALL**

OOH OOH...

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute became, in time, the capital of black America. When he died, flags were flown at half-mast. President and Mrs. Wilson attended the funeral.

**ALL**

LA LA LA LA LA

**GRANDFATHER**

Grandfather resided now in a cemetery. At last, peace and quiet!

**EVELYN NESBIT**

The passionate and beautiful Evelyn Nesbit would lose her looks and fall into obscurity. Whee!

**HOUDINI**

Harry Houdini was hanging upside down high over Times Square when the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

Warn the Duke!

**HOUDINI**

A little boy's words suddenly rang clear to the great illusionist. It was the one genuine mystical experience of his life. But it was too late. The world was already at war.



**FATHER**

When the "Lusitania" was torpedoed by a U-boat off the Southwest coast of Ireland, twelve hundred men, women and children lost their lives and among them, Father.

(MOTHER enters.)

**MOTHER**

Mother wore black for a year. At the end of this time, Tateh proposed and she accepted.

*#35a - Epilogue (Part 2: Wheels of a Dream)*

**MOTHER**

She adored him.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

They moved to California.

**THE LITTLE GIRL**

They were now a family.

**THE LITTLE BOY**

They felt blessed.

**MOTHER**

Coalhouse!

(A very small black child runs into her arms. HE is COALHOUSE WALKER, III. The CHILDREN play.)

**TATEH**

One afternoon, watching his children play, Tateh had an idea for a movie: a bunch of children, white, black, Christian, Jew, rich, poor - all kinds - a gang, a crazy gang getting into trouble, getting out of trouble, but together despite their differences. He was sure it would make a wonderful movie - a dream of what this country could be. He would be first in line to see it.

(TATEH moves to MOTHER.)

COALHOUSE and SARAH enter upstage, on opposite sides of the stage.)

**COALHOUSE**

I SEE HIS FACE.

**SARAH**

I HEAR HIS HEARTBEAT.

**BOTH**

I LOOK IN THOSE EYES,  
HOW WISE THEY SEEM.

(TATEH picks up LITTLE COALHOUSE.)

**MOTHER, TATEH, COALHOUSE, SARAH and ALL (OFFSTAGE)**  
**(EXCEPT THE LITTLE BOY and THE LITTLE GIRL)**

WELL, WHEN HE IS OLD ENOUGH  
I WILL SHOW HIM AMERICA.  
AND HE WILL RIDE,  
OUR SON WILL RIDE  
ON THE WHEELS OF A DREAM.

(COALHOUSE and SARAH watch as the FAMILY walks  
off into the future.)

**END OF SHOW**

#36 - *Bows*

**CURTAIN**

#37 - *Exit Music*