

*HER SISTER*  
a play in two acts  
by Kendra Phillips

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*For Margot Betti Frank  
1926-1945*

*and all the  
forgotten victims*

## CHARACTERS:

*ACTRESS, currently playing Margot in The Diary of Anne Frank.  
Becomes 1.*

*BOYFRIEND, Margot's boyfriend, her age or a few years older.  
A Dutch Jew whose blond hair and blue eyes allow him to pass  
as Aryan. Margot's intellectual equal in every way, passionate  
and realistic.*

*MYSTERIOUS STAGE HAND (MSH), Boyfriend, inexplicably breaking  
the rules of time and space with a very specific mission.*

*MARGOT FRANK, a young Jewish-German woman living in Holland  
during the Holocaust, 15-19 and 4 years old.*

*She is played simultaneously by 4 actresses:*

- 1, the rememberer (played by Actress)*
- 2, Margot before hiding*
- 3, Margot in hiding*
- 4, Margot in the camps*

*They also play the various other characters that appear in the  
scenes. Full list in the appendix.*

*DIRECTOR, appears at the top. Use the actual director of the  
play.*

*STAGE MANAGER, appears at the top. Use the actual stage  
manager of the play.*

*STAGE HANDS (optional), clean up the stage at the beginning of  
the play. Use the actual stage hands working on the production.*

## SETTING:

## TIME:

1935 - 1945

## PLACE:

A cloud of memories. Primarily those from the hidden annex,  
Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen.

The set should be designed for the play "The Diary of Anne  
Frank." As much as possible, use props and locations that  
would only be found on "The Diary of Anne Frank" set.

## NOTES:

CURTAIN CALL: Because Margot and many like her were suddenly taken from this world and all but forgotten, the playwright suggests considering performing this without a curtain call, to avoid giving the audience a sense of closure and to allow them to digest what they've just seen. She would further suggest, if you must have a curtain call, to only include the Actress and Mystery Stage Hand, and leave the Margots in her diary. Just a thought.

## TEXT NOTES:

Each actor should follow their column to know which character they are playing (ie. 1 follows the first column, 2 is the second column, etc.) When there is no character listed, just a number, the actor is at this time Margot.

A / indicates the point where the next line should begin and overlap (p. 25).

Alternate lines and stage directions to accommodate Boyfriend not being blond and blue-eyed, or the need for fake candles are in brackets [ ]

Words/phrases in {} are the unspoken completion of a cut-off line.

... .. indicates to give the line weight and ample time for reflection.

The reader may notice a discrepancy in the name of God used in the prayers. The name of God, "Eloheinu," is to be used only in real prayer. To respect this, for performance, the substitution "Elokeinu" is used.

## SET NOTES:

At top of show, both diaries should be on the floor. Anne's diary should be in a prominent position. Margot's should be less prominent, and nowhere near Anne's diary.

The two Passover candles and memorial candle (examples in appendix) should be placed on one table together that is not fully integrated into the rest of the set.

*Further notes in appendix.*

*Stage starts in dark.*

STAGE MANAGER

Actors, make sure you've put your props where they belong.  
Call time tomorrow is six o'clock for a 7:30 go!

*(Lights up. A set is revealed: eight beds, a table, a kitchen, costumes and props strewn about: the chaotic aftermath of "The Diary of Anne Frank." A small table stands set apart, on one side of the stage. The iconic red, white and green checkered diary lies onstage. Away from it, a diary we don't recognize.)*

*(We can see the prop tables in the wings. STAGE HANDS enter, begin clearing the stage of everything not needed for this show. An ACTRESS is sitting on the edge of the stage, fiddling with a pair of glasses from her costume. She shoves a notebook into her over-the-shoulder bag, stands, starts walking toward a prop table. DIRECTOR enters.)*

DIRECTOR

Margot, one more note.

ACTRESS

*(stops, turns to the DIRECTOR)*  
Yeah?

DIRECTOR

You dropped your diary again.

ACTRESS

Crap, sorry.

DIRECTOR

You've got to get that into your bag.

ACTRESS

Right.

DIRECTOR

We can't have two diaries left out on stage. Messes up the closing image.

ACTRESS

Won't happen again.

DIRECTOR  
Pulls focus.

*(MYSTERIOUS STAGE HAND enters unobtrusively, sweeping the floor. HE listens to the conversation as he works.)*

ACTRESS  
Yeah, sorry.

DIRECTOR  
But Margot,

ACTRESS  
Huh?

DIRECTOR  
You're brilliant. You know that. You're a rock in our cast.

ACTRESS  
Thanks.

DIRECTOR  
*(exiting)*  
Just get that diary shoved into your bag tomorrow!

ACTRESS  
*(salutes toward DIRECTOR)*  
A rock in the cast. Nah, rocks have a lot more personality.  
*(holds up the glasses)* No offense, Margot.

*(MSH replaces Margot's prop diary with one that looks just a little bit special.)*

MSH  
You have family coming to preview?

ACTRESS  
They only come for starring roles.

MSH  
This isn't?

ACTRESS  
This is- Wait, I don't recognize you. You're on stage crew?

MSH

Sure.

ACTRESS

"Sure"?

MSH

This isn't a starring role?

ACTRESS

This is her sister.

MSH

It's a good role.

ACTRESS

Really? What's her name?

MSH

Well-

ACTRESS

See? You're working on the show, and even you can barely remember it.

MSH

Oh no, I've never forgotten it.

ACTRESS

What gets me is, all that was left of her, it got shoved into a bag, probably rotting somewhere with a mountain of shoes. *(gestures toward Anne's diary on the ground)* You drop it on the floor, you go down in history as a bundle of contradictions. *(picks up the not-prop diary)* Shove it into a bag, you're just a tangle of silence.

*(Notices the diary is different.)*

ACTRESS (Cont'd)

Wait, this isn't right. *(to MSH)* What'd you do with the-

MSH

This is more authentic.

ACTRESS

What, like her real diary? *(laughs)*

MSH

*(laughs with her)*

Of course not! That's impossible. *(stops laughing)* This one's better.

*(ACTRESS looks down at the diary. MSH exits.)*

ACTRESS

Better? What does that mean? *(looks up, sees he's gone)* Hello?

*(She looks around, then opens the journal.)*

4 *(v.o, sung)*

El malei rachamim

*(ACTRESS slams it shut, looks around again. Opens it a tad.)*

4 *(v.o, sung)*

shochein bamromim

*(ACTRESS slams it shut, looks around. Opens it again.)*

3 *(v.o)*

I asked, could I have my hands back?

*(ACTRESS closes it, looks around for MSH.)*

ACTRESS

Hey, um, random stage hand? Mystery props guy?

*(MHS enters from behind ACTRESS.)*

MSH

Yes?

ACTRESS

What the hell is this?

MSH

A book.



ACTRESS

Uh-uh. Either there's something weird going on with this, or I'm hallucinating. In Yiddish.

MSH

You mean Hebrew?

ACTRESS

What?

MSH

Dutch?

ACTRESS

No, it was-

MSH

isiXhosa.

ACTRESS

Bless you?

MSH

What's it saying, your hallucination?

ACTRESS

I don't know any Yiddish.

MSH

Mandarin.

ACTRESS

What? Stop that.

MSH

If it bothers you, you could just shove the diary into your bag. Or, listen a little better?

*(ACTRESS looks back at the diary. SHE puts the glasses in her bag. MSH slowly backs away. ACTRESS opens the diary.)*

4 (vo, sung)

El malei rachamim

2 (vo)

Today is-

4 (vo, sung)  
shochein bamromim

*(ACTRESS puts her things down, flips through the pages, getting more and more engrossed. Dialogue tempo picks up, nearly overlapping, as ACTRESS becomes more interested, flips pages faster and faster.)*

3 (vo)  
Ten thousand thoughts,  
4 (vo, sung)  
Hamtzei m'nucha n'chona

2 (vo)  
Today is-

3 (vo)  
Ten thousand people.  
4 (vo, sung)  
tachat

2 (vo)  
Today is-

4 (vo, sung)  
kanfei

3 (vo)  
I asked-

2 (vo)  
I dread-

3 (vo)  
Could I have my hands back?  
4 (vo, sung)  
kanfei

2 (vo)  
The terrifying world into which I am thrown  
when I close my eyes.

4 (vo, sung)  
kanfei

2 (vo)  
Today-

3 (vo)  
I prefer the fear of my reality-

2 (vo)  
Over the fear of my dreams.

4 (vo, sung)  
ha'Shechinah

2 (vo)  
Today-

3 (vo)  
It's odd how the times when your  
entire self is stripped away,

2 (vo)  
When you are reduced to a yellow star..

4 (vo, sung)  
El malei rachamim

3 (vo)  
Today-

2 (vo)  
It's odd how when you've become nothing..

3 (vo)  
You were sure there was so much  
of you...

4 (vo, sung)  
ha'Shechinah.

*(MSH kills the lights. Blackout.)*

ACTRESS

Hey, what the hell! ... Creepy prop guy, did you turn out the lights? *(she moves, bumps into something)* Ow, jeeze! Can we get some glow tape on that? ... Hey! I know you can hear me, broom dude! ...Turn on the lights!

*(A single candle appears hanging above the stage. It sways slightly. Slowly, we begin to hear the sound of a TRAIN CAR moving quickly along the tracks. A hand (4) reaches out from the past and plucks the candle from the air. It illuminates a face, pale and worn.)*

4  
Today is Sunday.

ACTRESS  
Margot?

4  
Today is Sunday,  
September third,  
nineteen forty-four.

*(4 gives the candle to the ACTRESS.)*

4

*September third.*

ACTRESS

I know that date.

4 (*part nazi,  
beginning to draw  
ACTRESS into Margot's  
world*)

Rechts.

ACTRESS

The train, to Auschwitz?

4

Links.

*(A second hand (3) takes the candle.  
It illuminates her face, pale  
and determined.)*

3

Today is Thursday,

ACTRESS

Margot?

*(Train sound stops.)*

3

December third. Nineteen-forty-two.

ACTRESS

Hanukkah. You and your sister got a brooch.

4

Today is April  
nineteenth,  
nineteen-forty-three.

ACTRESS

Um, um..

3

April nineteenth.

ACTRESS

I don't remember what-

4

*April nineteenth.*

ACTRESS

I, I don't know that one.

2

Passover.

*(TRAIN sounds stop. 2 takes the candle. It illuminates her face, pale and searching.)*

ACTRESS

I don't remember you having-

2

Today is July twenty-eighth, nineteen-forty-two.

ACTRESS

That one, they confiscated bicycles?

2

We have to walk everywhere now. But I don't think it's the bicycles the Nazis aimed to take. In Amsterdam, everyone rides a bicycle. To work, to school, to shop, to visit friends, just to be out, to know you can go where you want, to know you're free. And the Nazis know this, they know exactly what they are taking. But we do not let the Nazis come and take everything. I have not turned in my bicycle.

*(2 sets the candle on the small table. 3 takes a call-up notice out of ACTRESS' bag. 2 takes out an identical one, sits at the table reading it, nervously TAPPING HER FINGERS audibly on the table as she does so.)*

3

Today...

*(3 holds out the call-up notice for ACTRESS to read.)*

SS

Oproeping!

*(Lights up full. 4 assumes the persona of an SS officer.)*

SS *(Dutch)*

U wordt hiermede bevolen aan den onder politie toezicht staande werkverruiming in Duitschland

*(The ACTRESS reads and listens, caught somewhere between watching and remembrance.)*

ACTRESS  
Germany?

*(TRAIN sounds start again, very  
quietly, grow louder.)*

work...

police-supervised...

at Central station...

You may bring:

Suitcase or backpack

pair of workboots

pairs of socks

pairs of underpants

undershirts

work suit

wool blankets

bedding set

bowl

cup

spoon

pullover.

SS  
deel te nemen en heeft  
U zich dientengevolge  
op om half elf uur aan  
het Centraal Station,  
Amsterdam, te bevinden.

Als bagage mag  
medegenomen worden-

één

één

twee

twee

twee

één

twee

right

left

right

links

rechts

In opdracht,  
Deel te nemen  
Wörlein  
Hauptsturmführer.

3 (German)  
Raus!

4 (*German*)  
Raus! Schnell!

3  
Raus aus dem Zug!

2  
Rechts!

4  
Links!

ACTRESS (*reading*)  
I feel as though I've been lost.

2  
Rechts!

4  
Links!

ACTRESS (*reading*)  
I've been hidden in a thousand  
thoughts,

2  
Links!

4  
Links!

ACTRESS (*reading*)  
Buried in a thousand people,

2  
Links!

3 (*Dutch*)  
Duizend mensen.

4  
Links!

3 (*German*)  
Tausend Menschen.

2  
Links!

ACTRESS (*Latin*)  
Mille animas hominum.

4  
Rechts!

ACTRESS  
We bare one name,

2  
Links!

3  
We share one fate.

ACTRESS  
I feel

3 (Dutch)

Voelen

ACTRESS (German)

Ich fühlemich

2

Rechts

4

Links!

ACTRESS (reading)

I feel as though I'm-

*(2, 3, and 4 pull up their left sleeves, examine tattoos. THEY recite their numbers in quick succession like falling dominoes.)*

4

A-two-five-zero-seven-zero

3

A-four-five-seven-nine-one

2

A-seven-three-zero-seven-two

3

A-three-four-zero-five-three

4

A-nine-eight-four-one-four

3

A-five-one-seven-three-six

2

A-zero-five-seven-six-two.

*(ACTRESS pulls up her left sleeve. As Margot:)*

1

A-two-five-zero-seven-one.

*(Blackout, leaving the light of the candle. A moment of silence and burning. ACTRESS puts on the glasses.)*

ALL

I am one of the chosen people. But I will not fulfill my calling.



4  
Instead I will  
become invisible.

2  
An empty seat in the classroom,

3  
A vacant bedroom on  
Merwedeplein,

1  
As if I were never there.

*(3 extinguishes the candle.  
RAIN STORM begins quietly,  
grows. Lights up. 2 brings out a  
black bicycle.)*

2  
One call-up, plus one bike..

*(ACTRESS takes the handlebars of  
the bike and swings her leg  
over. 2, 3 and 4 gather around.  
THEY clump closely together. A  
moment of staring forward,  
resolute. A moment. Then THEY  
lean forward as one body just as  
THUNDER claps, and lights out.  
THEY look as if, if the lights  
stayed on second longer, we would  
see ACTRESS (now 1) start riding.*

1  
Today is...

3  
March...

4  
forty-five...

2  
No. Not yet. There's more before...

1  
Alright, today is Monday,

2  
Early morning,

1  
July sixth,

2  
A Jew on a bike,

4  
- an illegal bike -

2

Following a secretary,

1

Nineteen forty-two.

2

To a place to disappear.

*(Lights up. RAIN sound fades a bit but does not stop. 1 rides her bicycle onstage, circling slowly, looking carefully around, exploring her memory. 3 enters, wet, exhausted, but holding it together. Sound of a door closing behind her. She stands, frozen for a moment. She begins peeling off layers and layers of clothing. On the layer underneath her coat: the Star of David. Each layer she takes off is a bit of clothing needed for the Margots to assume their different characters. (SHE does not have to wear every costume piece that will be used.) The layers underneath her coat have no star. SHE sits, showing no emotion. 1 leaves the bicycle. SHE offers MARGOT'S diary to 3. 3 takes it, opens it. She shakes her head, lets it drop to the floor. SHE is too exhausted and emotional to even be comforted by her books. A copy of Schiller's Don Carlos. Lets it drop. Trigonometry textbook. Opens. Stares at the words. Then, the stress and loss is too much. She puts her head down in the book, and sobs. 1 takes a Barbara garment from the pile and drapes it on 3, comforting her. A moment of this, 3 goes silent, resting her head on the open textbook. 2 enters with her own textbook, two notebooks and pencils.)*

BARBARA *(head in book)*

I can't Margot, I can't.

1

Today is Wednesday,

4

October eighth,

BARBARA (*head out of the book*)  
nineteen-forty, with coming  
exams, after three days of fever,  
a persistent Margot with a book  
and pen saying-

2  
Today we study.

BARBARA  
Nooo, I can't do it. My  
head doesn't like the  
numbers.

(*2 gently throws one of  
the notebooks at her  
head. Direct hit.*)

BARBARA (*cont.*)  
Ow.

2  
Open it.

BARBARA (*opening the notebook*)  
I still don't feel good.

2  
Of course not.

BARBARA  
You're making a sick person study  
trigonometry. There has to be a law  
against that.

2  
Probably.

BARBARA (*dramatic*)  
I can't, Margot, I just, my head, my  
brain, I, I think I'm still  
feverish.

2  
I'll put you in an ice bath.

BARBARA  
I can't, Margot! I'm dying! I'm  
dying!

2  
You won't die that quickly.

(*BARBARA chucks the notebook*)

at 2's head. Another direct  
hit.)

2

Just for that, we're doing physics next!

BARBARA

Alright, then I'm teaching you  
ballet. All five positions,  
all seven motions...

2 (*fakes a cough*)

I can't, Barbara! I'm dying! I'm dying!

(*They laugh.*)

BARBARA

But no, I'm serious, Margot. I  
can't do this. I don't think my  
brain is set up for these things.

2

I'll help you. Don't I always help you?

BARBARA

No, I'm too stu{pid}-

2

You're not stupid.

BARBARA

Says the genius.

2

Stop with that. You're smart.

BARBARA

But not a genius.

2

Neither am I.

BARBARA

Says the genius.

2

I just work hard. You could, too. That's all it  
takes. Do the work, it turns out right. Of  
course it does make it hard when you're  
naturally distractible.

BARBARA

I'm glad we're friends,  
too, Margot.

2

But I prefer my friends to be distractible.  
Otherwise, studying would be awfully dull.

BARBARA

You're welcome.

2

Let's not make it too interesting, though. Grab your book.

BARBARA (*picking up the textbook*)  
I don't think I'm going to stay in school anyway.

2

Barbara, don't be dramatic. Of course you'll stay.

BARBARA  
And go to the Jewish lyceum?  
I don't like the idea of being separated.

2

It's not what we'd like, but it's, what is.

BARBARA  
No. I don't accept that.

2

What does your not accepting it change?

BARBARA  
Everything.

2

You'll still be in a Jewish school, no matter what you accept.

BARBARA  
I think I'm going to a ballet school. It's better for distractible students.

2

Of course. I should have guessed that one.

BARBARA  
Are you upset?

2

No. I'm worried.

BARBARA  
About what?

2

That you won't learn what you need. Is ballet school going to prepare you?

BARBARA  
Yes, to be who I want to be, absolutely yes. I want something big, and I can't get that from a textbook. Don't you want something big?

2

I want to learn big things.

BARBARA

I asked you a serious question,  
Margot.

2

Alright. I'm not sure. I know this (*textbook*) is what will get me there. But I don't know where that is. Yet. If it's somewhere big, then I want big. If it's somewhere small, then that will be big enough for me.

BARBARA

Modest Margot. It's just us here. Be honest. What do you really want? You want to be a, foreign language professor at university?

2 (*French*)

Peut-être. I am good with language.

BARBARA

You're brilliant with language. How many do you speak now? Oh! Or maybe, mathematician extraordinaire?

2

My head does like the numbers

BARBARA

Oo, how about the world's first woman brain surgeon?

2

Neurosurgeon.

BARBARA

See? You're an expert already.

2 (*laughing*)

Then it's decided. I'll be a neurosurgeon, but only if you'll be my ballerina nurse.

BARBARA

First, plié no harm. (*beat*) But what do you really want to do?

2

I want to do something that is big in one person's eyes, even if it isn't in the rest of the world's.

(*beat.*)

BARBARA (*Margot impression*)  
Then you know what we must  
do today?

2 BARBARA  
Today,  
we study! Today,  
we study!

(*THEY open their books.*)

2 (cont.)  
Trigonometry: the branch of mathematics dealing  
with the relations of the sides and angles of  
triangles and with the relevant functions of any  
angles.

3 (*looking up from her book*)  
The relations of the sides.

2 (*looking up from her book*)  
We are neutral. The Germans will not come to  
Holland.

3  
The Germans have honor.

1  
But if they do come,

2  
We will flood the streets,

3  
So there is no place-

4  
So there is no place-

(*Faint sound of PLANES APPROACHING  
begins.*)

2  
So there is no place for the Germans to drive  
their trucks. No room for their motorcycles,  
their bicycles-

(*Sound of AIR RAID SIRENS.*)

1  
Today is Friday, May tenth. Nineteen-forty.

(*AIR RAID sounds fade as sounds  
of SOLDIERS MARCHING begins. 1*)

*turns on a radio. Over the following,  
2 watches soldiers march past.)*

3 (radio announcer)

This is the BBC. It is day three of the German occupation of the Netherlands. Queen Wilhelmina has a RADIO ANNOUNCER (cont.) message for those who are now themselves under Hitler's rule.

4 (Queen Wilhelmina)

People of Holland, though the government and I are now exiled in England, though there are invaders in our land, you must not fear. There will be an invasion by allied forces soon. Of that you can be sure. Now there is a vulnerable group among you. I ask that you protect your Jewish brothers and sisters.

*(A few seconds of marching as 3 and 4 gather around the candles.)*

1 *(putting candle stands - not candles - on the small table)*

We need to save the candles.

3 *(in Passover scene)*

Why is tonight different than all other nights?

2 *(watching soldiers)*

There are so many soldiers.

4 *(in Passover scene)*

We are telling the story.

2 *(watching soldiers)*

There's no end.

1 *(in Passover scene)*

We can't let them burn all the way down.

2 *(watching soldiers)*

Adonai h'moshiah.

3 *(in Passover scene)*

Deliverance.

4 *(in Passover scene)*

Freedom.



1

Just ten minutes.

2 (*counting the soldiers in time with the marching, Hebrew*)

Achat, shtayim, shelosh, arbah, chamesh, shesh, shvah, shemoni, tehshah, esehr

(*1 mimes blowing out candles. Blackout. Beat.*)

(*DUTCH BIG BAND MUSIC plays. Lights up. We find 2 and BOYFRIEND dancing. BOYFRIEND has to work a bit to get 2 out of her shell, but she does come out of it. One gets the impression that 2 would never be silly or teenager-ish with anyone but him. The music stops, they take hands and sit down together.*)

BOYFRIEND

See? You can dance.

2

For the first and last time.

BOYFRIEND

But you'll cherish the memory forever.

2

Of course, daaaarling. Your soft caress, your ruby lips,

BOYFRIEND

Don't forget my beautiful, expressive dark eyes.

2

Your eyes are blue. [Careful, Narcissus, you keep staring at that river, you'll fall in.]

BOYFRIEND

Oh. Maybe I was thinking of yours. [Greek mythology comparison appreciated, but unmerited. I know my eyes are average at best. I must have been thinking of yours.]

2 (*amused at the sappiness*)

You're disgusting. Intelligent, handsome, wonderfully witty, but disgusting.

BOYFRIEND

Was there a compliment sandwiched in there?

2

No. I don't know what you thought I said, but there was certainly nothing complimentary.

BOYFRIEND

That's what I thought.

*(Beat. THEY squeeze each other's hands. A moment.)*

BOYFRIEND

One day soon, Margot, we will go out dancing.

2

If we must.

BOYFRIEND

We must.

2

Then we will.

*(beat.)*

2

Literature group's at our place tomorrow.

BOYFRIEND

That's right. Egmont this time.

2

Have you finished it?

BOYFRIEND

Twice. *(beat.)* Margot, have you heard of Zionism?

2

The movement to return to Palestine. Why?

BOYFRIEND

They have youth groups. With everything that's happening now, I, I thought maybe I might go.

2

Alright.

BOYFRIEND

And I thought you might go with me.

2

Wednesday nights are when I do my language work. I'm taking French now and it's harder than I thought it would be.

BOYFRIEND

Things are changing, Margot.

2

I know.

BOYFRIEND

I feel like I need to do something.

2

Then do it.

BOYFRIEND

I feel like we-

*(Beat. WESTERTOREN CHIMES.  
2 and BOYFRIEND stand.)*

BOYFRIEND (cont.)

I'll walk you home.

2

No, please. It's too late.

BOYFRIEND

It's too late for you to walk home alone.

2

I will be fine.

BOYFRIEND

I won't let you walk home-

2

Please. You'll miss the curfew.

BOYFRIEND

I'll walk quickly.

2

Enough people have disappeared.

*(Beat. BOYFRIEND squeezes 2's hand in both of his own.)*

BOYFRIEND

Travel safe, Margot.

*(We hear the faint sound of the TRAIN. 2 and BOYFRIEND separate. The train grows louder. They freeze, even as they speak, looking at each other. The TRAIN grows louder as they speak.)*

BOYFRIEND *(Hebrew)*

Yehi ratzon mile fanecha  
Adonai Eloheinu veilohe/ avoteinu  
shetolicheinu leshalom  
vetagi'einu limechoz cheftzeinu  
lechaim ulesimchah uleshalom,  
ve tachzereinu lebeiteinu leshalom

2

/May it be Your will, God, our God and the God of our fathers, that You should lead us in peace and direct our steps, and guide us, and support us, and cause us to reach our destination in life, joy and peace. *(beat)* And lead us home again in peace.

1

Baruch Atah Ado-nai shomei'ah tefilah.

*(Blackout.)*

4

Today is Monday,  
September fourth,

1

Nineteen-forty...

4

-four.

1

Now?

4

Now.

1

Auschwitz?

(AUSCHWITZ  
Lights up, blindingly bright.  
Margots stand huddled together,  
as if the stage is standing room  
only. Sound of CATTLE CAR DOORS  
sliding open.)

4  
Our endless ride is over.

2  
Leave the dark behind.

3  
Leave the dead behind.

4  
Frail hands help us off  
the train.

1  
Nothing but callouses stretched across bone.

4  
I try not to look at the  
faces.

3  
And then voices,

2  
German voices,

1  
Shouting from without,

4  
but I feel them within.

(They jostle forward, clinging  
to each other. They remain in  
character as Jews arriving at  
Auschwitz while barking SS lines  
in quick succession.)

1. (German)  
Raus aus dem zug!

3 (German)  
Raus! Schnell!

2 (German)  
Raus!

1  
Kinder und ältere Menschen,

2  
Raus! Männer hier!

1  
auf den Lastwagen!

3  
Schnell! Frauen dort!

*(They begin to separate.)*

2  
Rechts.

3  
Links.

4 *(overlapping 2 and 3)*  
another planet.

2  
Links

4  
they've taken us to  
another planet.

3  
Links

1  
they must have.

2  
Rechts

3  
Links

1  
look, out at the lights.

2  
Links

3  
Links

4  
there are two moons.

1  
and the smell,

2  
Rechts

3  
Links

4  
there is no air like  
this on earth.

2  
Links

3  
Links

1  
up there, from that chimney,  
2  
Rechts

3  
Links

2  
Links

4  
what kind of fire  
burns black?

3  
Links

1  
i can't hear you.  
2  
Links

4 (*louder*)  
what kind of fire-

3  
Links

1  
i can't see you.

3  
Links

4  
what kind of fire burns-

1 (*German*)  
Raus!  
2  
Rechts!

4 (*German*)  
Schnell!

3  
Links!

1  
Raus!  
2  
Rechts!

4  
Schnell!

3  
Links!

1  
Raus!

2  
Rechts!

4  
Schnell!

3  
Links!

ALL MARGOTS  
Arbeit macht frei!

*(Weighted beat and sudden stillness.)*

*(Margots reach out with their right arms as if trying to grab something. Return to the previous energy and pacing:)*

1  
leave your things.

2  
you'll get them later.

4  
this way.

3  
there is a shower for you.

4  
there are new dresses for you.

1  
you will be...

*(1 looks over at 2, notices her hair. Suspension of time. There are a thousand memories in the hair. Return to time, quick, chaos, a runaway merry-go-round.)*

4  
shaved

2  
stripped

3  
showered

1  
deloused



1  
counted

2  
counted

3  
counted

4  
numbered

*(Repeat above lines twice, or as many times as it takes for ACTRESS to become overwhelmed.)*

*(ACTRESS gasps as if coming up from under the water. 2, 3 and 4 freeze.)*

ACTRESS

What is this? I don't understand.

*(SHE picks up the diary and flips through it.)*

ACTRESS

*(re: Auschwitz scene)*

There's so much here, but there are no words here *(re: diary)*. Shouldn't there be words for this?

*(Beat. SHE takes off her glasses, runs to the bicycle, points it offstage and gets on. 2, 3 and 4 speak from frozen, but making eye contact with ACTRESS.)*

4

I asked, could I have my tongue back back. It said no.

ACTRESS *(turning the bike around)*

What said no?

3

I asked, could I have my eyes back. It said no.

ACTRESS (*riding around them, releasing them from their freeze and she passes by.*)

Who took your-

2

I asked, could I have my hands back.

ACTRESS

And?

(Sound of a heavy door closing. ACTRESS jumps.)

3

Margot!

(ACTRESS opens the diary as 2 moves the bicycle off to the side of the set. ACTRESS reads as 3 speaks.)

3

There is a bookcase now covering the door to our hiding place. A few hinges, it swings shut, and we are hidden from the world. A few hinges, it swings shut, and the world is hidden from us. We walk through it once the workers are gone. In the evening, the offices are ours. But we always return to behind the bookcase. With its books on the wrong side.

(ACTRESS puts the glasses back on over:)

4

That's an awful lot of trouble for an invisible girl.

2

One call-up, plus one bookcase, equals seven people disappear.

1

Today is nineteen-forty-one.

3

People start to disappear.

2

Into the city,

4

Into the country,

1

Others gather their families, turn on their gas and quietly slip away.

2

Some brave people save a man just down the street from the gas. he'd turned on in his own house. ... ..

*(beat.)*

1

Today is time to study!

*(1 gives 3 a correspondence course catalogue. 3 opens it and scans a page. 4 becomes MIEP.)*

2

Medicine!

1

Shorthand!

2

French!

1

Modern history!

3 *(looks up)*

Latin! *(to Miep, showing her the catalogue)* Miep, may I do this correspondence course?

4 (MIEP)

You can take any course you'd like, Margot.

*(4 (MEIP) takes the catalogue, looks at the course.)*

MIEP (cont.)

You'll be a linguist by the end of the war.

*(3 smiles back shyly. MIEP waits a moment for a response to her little joke. When none comes:)*

MIEP (cont.)

I'll sign you up today in  
Bep's name. Is there  
anything else I can do for  
you?

3

No.

MIEP

I have some projects set  
out for your sister and  
you on my desk.

3 *(a little perk-up)*

Filing?

MIEP

What else? *(beat.)* Margot,  
I know it's hard on you. I  
can't imagine how hard.

3

We have a safe place. I'm grateful.

MIEP

Yes. But Margot, if you  
ever need to talk to  
someone...

3 *(genuine, but not opening up)*

I know. Thank you, Miep.

*(MIEP nods, disappointed with the  
interaction.)*

MIEP *(holding up the course  
catalogue)*

Latin, then.

*(3 nods. MIEP exits with the  
catalogue. 1 gives 3 the Latin  
book. 3 opens it and reads as 1  
and 2 prepare a pot, a watering  
can, a trowel, and a bag of potting  
soil for the next scene in the attic.)*

3

"Lesson one: The value of Latin.  
Latin is a great help in  
everything you study. In botany,  
agriculture, and nearly all the  
sciences, most of the names come  
from the Latin."

*(3 closes the book and watches  
the next scene begin.)*

2

Gertrud, what is it today?

1 (GERTRUD)

Wind poppies.

*(GERTRUD gives 2 the trowel and potting soil. 2 starts filling the pot.)*

2

Anemone coronaria.

GERTRUD

Very good!

2

I checked out a book.

GERTRUD

I'd say you can't learn gardening from a book, but if anyone can, it's Margot Frank.

2

The flower petals face down first, but turn up when the poppies blossom.

GERTRUD

That's right. *(re: Margot's filling the pot)* Keep going, you want it a few centimeters from the top.

2

I wish books smelled like this.

GERTRUD

You can't get this from a book, that's for sure.

2

Unless you've dropped it in the dirt.

GERTRUD

You can read about holding a trowel and getting dirt on your knuckles, but you can't feel it. This. This is where life is. And with the right amount of dirt, a good amount of water, and lots of sunlight, we can turn that life into something even more beautiful.

*(a moment as 2 fills the pot.)*

2

They're native to Palestine.

GERTRUD

Right again. What else did your book tell you?

2

It had pictures of them growing in Palestine.  
Fields and fields, hills and hills of them.  
Stretching out, proud and regal, getting tossed  
about by the wind, then standing up as tall and  
still as if nothing had happened. ... .. Wouldn't  
it be something to stand on one of those hills?

GERTRUD

It would be a sight. *(beat)* You'll water the dirt before you  
sprinkle the seeds.

2

How much?

GERTRUD

Just a bit.

2

No, what's the amount?

GERTRUD

It's a feel.

2

I don't want to do it wrong.

GERTRUD

There is no wrong.

2

There's always a wrong.

GERTRUD

Margot, trust yourself.

*(GERTRUD turns away to get seeds  
and freezes. 2 puts down the  
watering can, reaches into the  
bag of potting soil. SHE pulls  
out a potato, studies it  
curiously. ANNE enters with a  
potato peeler in hand. SHE sits  
next to 2.)*

3 (ANNE)

Margot, what were you thinking  
about just now?

2

Hm?

*(ANNE takes a potato from the bag  
and starts peeling as she speaks.)*

ANNE

I was saying how I never realized what a lovely place it is, this attic, it's, this is where life is, where sunlight shines through the window, and the leaves outside on the chestnut tree twitch just a little bit in the breeze. And I said, "I can almost feel that breeze, can't you?", but you didn't answer. You must have been thinking about something else. What were you thinking of? You were making your "I'm-working-on-something-brilliant-so-don't-disturb-me-face." You know:  
(imitates Margot's thinking face)

2 (chuckles)

No. Nothing brilliant. I've a headache, that's all.

ANNE

I'm sorry. Headaches are horrible to have, especially here. Every time you feel bad, it is worse here.

2

The worst part is the panic from mother and Pim every time I so much as sigh. And the pity from everyone else. Every time I cough, every time I have an upset stomach. I've never been treated like such a helpless child.

ANNE

They do that, don't they? Treat us like children? Like, Mrs. van Pels. Do you know what she-

2

I know, I heard her this morning.

ANNE

Didn't it just make you livid?

2

Auguste van Pels is a silly woman. She says things like that all the time, just to hear herself talk, just to get a rise out of people. She knows exactly how to get a rise out of you, and she is not shy about doing it.

ANNE

I suppose you think I'm silly, too.

2

Why would I think that?

ANNE

Because I'm your ridiculous little sister who gets emotional about everything, and doesn't sit back and analyze life the way you do.

*(ANNE puts the soil bag on the other side of herself. 2 looks at her, on the verge of speaking. 4 (EDITH) enters the scene with a chisel.)*

4 (EDITH)

Margot, how is your hand?

*(THEY each take a battery out of the soil bag and go to work splitting them open, EDITH with a chisel, ANNE with a peeler, and 2 with a trowel. They cough as they work.)*

2

It's healing.

4

Let me see it.

2

Mother, I cut it two days ago.

4

Let me do your work today.

2

That's a good idea. I wonder which one of us the SS would hit harder.

ANNE

I've lost count of how many I've done.

2

Twenty-six.

ANNE

You've done twenty-six?

2

No, you have. I've done forty-five.

EDITH

Isn't that something.



2  
What?

EDITH  
I'm beating both of you  
girls.

2  
You're so sweet, Mother.

*(They have to stop talking for  
a moment because of their coughing.)*

ANNE  
You know what I was thinking about? Those  
buns you *(Edith)* used to make us after  
school. With the chocolate-

2  
And cream cheese?

ANNE  
Yes. Oh I miss those.

2  
You know what *I'd* like right now?

*(ANNE and EDITH cough.)*

2 (cont.)  
Stamppot.

EDITH  
Mmm

2  
Mashed potatoes...

ANNE  
Garlic...

2  
Rookworst...

ANNE  
I can taste it!

EDITH  
When we get home, we'll  
have a stampot feast.

2  
Ooh, a feast!

ANNE  
Do we have to have it with kale?

2  
No. No more kale. Ever! It will go the way of our  
Westerbork beets!

*(THEY laugh a moment, but it quickly devolves into coughing, all the while still working at the batteries.)*

ANNE  
Ow!

*(EDITH leaves with the batteries and chisel as 2 and ANNE return to the potatoes:)*

2  
Are you okay?

ANNE  
Ow.

2  
What happened?

ANNE  
I peeled my finger.

*(ANNE tries to keep peeling. It's painful. It's also painful to watch.)*

2 *(reaching for the potato)*  
Here.

ANNE  
I'm fine.

*(2 takes the potato and begins peeling with her spade.)*

ANNE  
Thank you.

*(A moment.)*

2 *(a continuation of their last conversation)*  
You know, sometimes I get so fed up with Mrs. van Pels' frivolous criticisms and self-absorbed nonsense, I want to shove a potato down her throat.

ANNE  
Why don't you?

2 (*slight smirk*)

Because if we waste our potatoes, all we'll have left to eat is kale.

*(A little giggling from the girls, then ANNE freezes, 2 picks up the watering can and waters the pot. GERTRUD unfreezes.)*

GERTRUD

See? You feel it, don't you.

*(2 sets the watering can down.)*

2

I'd rather have measurements.

GERTRUD

Measurements you forget. A feeling stays with you, becomes part of you. Wherever you are, you remember how to make things more beautiful. *(takes out a packet of seeds.)* Now hold out your hands.

*(2 holds out her hands, GERTRUD pours seeds into them. GERTRUD becomes 1 again.)*

2 (*looking at the seeds in her hands*)

Today is something more beautiful.

*(SHE scatters them over the next three lines.)*

1

Today is rowing,

3

Today is tennis,

1

Today is bicycling,

2

and skating on the frozen canals,

1

picnics in the back yard,

2

reading on the balcony,

3

signs in the park,

4

in store windows,

3 (*Dutch*)  
saying "Joden zijn hier  
nietgewenst"

4  
Jews are not welcome  
here.

(*beat.*)

3  
Today is...

(*THEY stand, suddenly quiet and  
still. 1 takes a deck of cards out  
of her bag and holds it up.*)

1  
Quinto!

2 (ANNE)  
Quinto! Pim brought Quinto!

(*All four assemble as a cozy  
family gathered for a pleasant  
after dinner game over:*)

1 (OTTO)  
It wouldn't be a vacation without it.

EDITH  
Otto...

OTTO  
Edith...

EDITH  
Yes, a vacation. With  
the whole family  
together. And it's,

OTTO  
Nice.

3  
Nice.

EDITH  
Nice.

OTTO  
I believe we've earned a break from the unpacking and arranging  
of our vacation home. What say you, girls? Edith?

ANNE

Margot and mine's room is done. I put my movie stars up on the wall. They make it feel like home. Margot filled up all her space with books.

3

They make it feel like home.

OTTO

How about this, Edith? Our girls making the best of things.

EDITH

They're really something.

*(THEY are settled in by now.)*

OTTO

A toast, I think, is in order. For our first night settled into this little-

ANNE

Annex.

OTTO

Annex. For your pleasure, I present to you four glasses of the finest water this Annex has to offer.

*(OTTO hands out glasses. THEY hold the glasses up in a toast.)*

OTTO (cont.)

To family, to safety, and a swift end to the war.

ANNE

Hear hear!

3

Cheers.

*(THEY clink and drink.)*

OTTO

Now who deals?

ANNE

I'll do it!

*(ANNE starts dealing the cards.)*

OTTO

Enjoy this time together now. In a couple of weeks the war will be over and you girls will be off on your bikes, playing hopscotch, making sandcastles just like you used to.

*(3 and ANNE laugh.)*

3  
Sandcastles?

ANNE  
Hopscotch?

3  
Maybe when I was eight!

OTTO  
How old are you now?

EDITH  
Otto, never ask a  
lady her age.

OTTO  
Aw, Edith, these are our little girls.

ANNE  
I'm not a little girl, Pim.

OTTO  
You'll always be my little girls, however big and smart and  
beautiful you may grow to be.

*(3 is staring at her cards.  
They are shaking in her hand.)*

OTTO  
How about "young ladies".

ANNE  
Yes, I suppose that's alright.

OTTO  
Well, my two young ladies and one- *(EDITH clears her throat)*  
other young lady: a few points of business before we begin  
tonight's festivities. First, absolutely no noise while the  
workers are here, which means no flushing the toilet, running  
water, and we'll have to take off our shoes.

*(HE notices 3's hand shaking.)*

OTTO (cont.)  
Margot?

*(HE reaches across the table, holds  
her shaking hand and calms it.)*

OTTO (cont.) *(gently)*  
Margot, you are safe. I promise, I will take care of my little  
girls.

4

Now.

3 (*still holding hands*)

Today is-

4 (*stands and gets in place  
for the next scene*)

Now,

2 (*stands and gets in  
place for the next scene*)

Now

3 (*stands and gets in  
place for the next scene and takes off  
-her shoes.*)

Now

1 (*stands and gets in  
place for the next scene*)

Auschwitz?

4

Birkenau.

(AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU.)

3 (*German*)

Steigt aus dem Zug  
aus.

2 (*German*)

Lasst eure Sachen.

4

frail hands off the train.

1

callouses

4

stretched over bone.

1

and voices

4

desperate voices

1

helping us survive.

4

i don't know the words,

1

but i understand.

4

Telling us-

*(The following is a chaotic overlap of Auschwitz prisoners trying to help the new arrivals. Each new line starts on the last word of the previous line.)*

3 *(Dutch)*

stap niet oude vrachtwagens

1 *(Polish)*

jesteś zdrowy, słyszysz?

4 *(French)*ayez l'air en bonne  
santé

3

Don't get on the trucks

2 *(Hungarian)*

mondjuk negyven éves vagy

1

you're healthy, you hear?

3 *(Dutch)*

zeg datje vijftien

4

look healthy

1 *(Polish)*

nie mów im, że jesteście w ciąży

2

say you're forty

4 *(Hungarian)*

dolgozhatsz

3

say you're fifteen

4 *(French)*n'abandonnez pas vos  
chaussures

1

don't tell them you're pregnant

2

you can work

4

don't give up your shoes.

*(Beat. 4 looks at 3's (EDITH) feet. They are bare. 2 (ANNE), 3 (EDITH) and 4 pick up rocks and carry them across the stage as they talk.)*



4  
where are your shoes.

EDITH  
don't you worry about it.

4  
you have to have shoes,  
mother. what happened  
to your shoes.

*(beat.)*

EDITH  
never you mind. keep walking.

4  
why don't you have  
your shoes.

EDITH  
she said you'll get extra food.

4  
who said?

EDITH  
the girl. the girl back there, she  
said she will give my girls extra  
food, that you will have soup, in  
exchange for my shoes.

4  
mother, you  
shouldn't have-

EDITH  
don't argue with me. it's  
done. you're going to have good  
food. everyday.

2 (ANNE)  
but your feet.

EDITH  
my daughters are going to  
have good food.

4  
who was this girl? do  
you know her name?

EDITH  
no

4  
does she know who we  
are? will she  
recognize us?

EDITH  
i don't know  
4  
did she say how she  
would give us this  
extra food?

EDITH  
margot listen to me. look at me.

*(EDITH takes 4's face in  
her hands.)*

EDITH (cont.)  
*i am your mother.*

*(beat.)*

4  
will she recognize us?

*(a long moment as they realize  
there will be no extra food.)*

1 *(SS, as if offstage, German)*  
Arbeiten!

*(EDITH grabs her daughters' hands.  
They freeze in a tableaux. 4 gives 1  
the silent command. 1 rides the  
bicycle around them and releases them  
from the scene as:)*

1  
Today is nineteen-forty-  
2  
-two,

1  
Nineteen-forty-

3  
-three,

1  
Nineteen-forty-

4  
-four.

*(The following is fast paced, a  
conglomeration of all the days and  
all the people in the annex.)*

3  
Early morning,

2  
Washing,

1  
A good scrub,

3  
For an hour,

2  
Exaggeration

4  
Blackout screens down.

1  
In the attic,

2 *(disapproving)*  
With the cat

3  
Lie awake.

4  
W.C.

1  
Make the beds

3  
Lie awake.

4  
Make breakfast

3  
Lie awake and remember the last  
book you read, the last time your  
dreams weren't barbed wire  
and bombs, and walls so tall  
even heaven's trapped inside.  
And breathe.

*(A moment as 3 takes a couple  
breaths in, preparing for her  
day. Beat. Pace resumes.)*

2  
Laundry

4  
Freshen up

1  
Brush the rug

3  
Peel potatoes

4  
Hang the clothes

1  
Do the dishes

2  
Find a book

1  
Shoes off,

3  
And wait.

4  
Don't move.

1  
Don't speak.

3  
Don't breathe.

*(They sit a moment, looking at each other in tense, total silence. 3 gingerly opens the Latin book.)*

3(cont.) *(quietly studying)*

"Lesson six. Expressions of place." *(turns the page)* "Lesson seven. Passive Voice." *(turns the page)* "Lesson eight. Comparison of adjectives."

*(1 stands, reads out of the diary. The following is an acting out of a typical dinner in the annex. Think child's play acting with teenage annoyance. (no costumes to become the characters.))*

1  
The eight of us eat dinner in the same place each night.

3 *(standing, moving toward table)*  
My place has been next to-

4 (*standing, moving toward table. Part Margot, part Hermann*)

-the honorable Mr. Hermann van Pels. With pompous righteousness, he pronounces his judgements on his dinner companions-

3

-with particular emphasis on myself.

4 (*part Hermann*)

And he does have a grand time passing judgment.

2 (*joining the table. Part Margot, part Auguste*)

The equally righteous and monumentally more petty Mrs. Auguste van Pels invites herself to the conversation.

3

I come out in the end a lazy, ungrateful snob-

1 (*joining the table, part Margot, part Fritz*)

-a pronouncement adamantly seconded by Mr. Fritz Pfeffer.

3

How this is my character at the dinner table, but away from it I am dutiful and obedient, is beyond me. I don't believe it would help my case to explain that I eat very little, because we have very little. And what little we do have? My stomach treats as a hostile invasive species. So I just tell myself-

2 (*moving to her next character*)

-be silent, Margot. You're obedient. You're smart.

4 *(moving to her next character)*  
Not smart enough to figure out how to digest kale.

*(beat.)*

1 *(moving to her next character)*  
Today is weighing day.

*(1 (OTTO) takes ANNE by the hand and leads her to a scale. A moment as he weighs her.)*

OTTO  
A healthy hundred and ten.

ANNE  
Boiled kale and rotten spinach

3  
With the occasional potato

ANNE  
Does the trick!  
*(OTTO leads ANNE off the scale and holds his hand out to EDITH.)*

OTTO  
Edith...

4 (EDITH)  
Otto, you'd best not be announcing this one.

OTTO  
Never.

*(A moment.)*

OTTO *(playful)*  
You've been eating well.

EDITH  
Otto!

OTTO *(playful)*  
You're healthy.

EDITH  
And we'll leave it at that!

OTTO

Of course. Margot?

*(OTTO leads EDITH off the scale and leads 3 on. A moment.)*

OTTO (cont.)

You've lost weight.

*(1 puts the Latin book in 3's hands. 3 opens it and reads as 1, 2 and 4 back away from the scene.)*

3

Lesson nine: "Genitive with Adjectives. With adjectives signifying desire, knowledge, memory, fullness, the genitive is used to limit the extent of their application."

*(BOYFRIEND enters.)*

BOYFRIEND

Hey. You're showing me up in there.

2

Oh?

BOYFRIEND

Outside reading for historical context? You disgust me, Margot. You truly disgust me.

2

Sounds like someone just didn't have the right book on his shelf.

BOYFRIEND

Absolutely right, because I lent it to you.

2

Did you want that back?

BOYFRIEND

No, it's too late to impress the teacher now.

2  
Always next week.

BOYFRIEND  
How about Wednesday? Zionist meeting?

(beat.)

2  
Maybe.

BOYFRIEND  
Margot, are you happy doing nothing?

2  
Excuse me?

BOYFRIEND  
As more and more is taken from us? As more and more we are told "Jew, you are not welcome here"? You'd rather steal books from me than go to the library?

2 (*interjection*)  
I asked you

BOYFRIEND  
You are happy letting it all happen to you, doing nothing about it?

2  
I *am* doing something. I am working hard. I am preparing for exams.

BOYFRIEND  
You think Hitler gives a damn about your exam scores?

2  
I care.

BOYFRIEND  
Tell the SS when you're rounded up onto a truck. You tell them you got top marks. They will laugh at your marks and stuff you on a train to the east.



2

My father says this will end soon. And then we will need to-

BOYFRIEND

Your father sees what he wants to see. Look, Margot. (*points to his yellow star*) Isn't this enough for you to understand what's going on? It doesn't matter how smart or studious you are, it's going to touch you.

2

I have seen what is happening, don't think I haven't. But what I can do, what is within my power right now, is study. And that's what I intend to do.

BOYFRIEND

(*a moment in Margot's mind*)

Arbeit macht frei.

2

What?

BOYFRIEND

I said you will study yourself into nothingness.

2

And what are you doing?

BOYFRIEND

I'm going to Zionist meetings.

2

You're going every week to talk of living in your "promised land". You're just dreaming. Wishing you could do something.

BOYFRIEND

It's *our* promised land, Margot.

2

But this is our *home*. Here.

BOYFRIEND

Our home doesn't want us anymore.

(*A moment*)

BOYFRIEND (cont.) *(gentle)*

You know that I'm right. ... You have faith, yes? You believe His promises?

*(2 nods.)*

BOYFRIEND (cont.)

Come on Wednesday. You will see. We are not dreaming. We are preparing. We are believing.

*(HE takes 2's hands, and squeezes them in his own. Lights fade on them as they exit. 3 sits in her bedroom, looks around, picks up a pencil. 1 opens the diary and reads as 3 speaks her diary entry to the audience.)*

3

Sometimes I feel my heart stop, its blood dried up, too crippled to beat.

4 (SS) *(off, German)*

Du hast Juden hier. Wo sind sie?

2 (KUGLER) *(off, German)*

Hier gibt es keine Juden.

3

It doesn't take long in a war for a person to start thinking about evil.

SS *(off, German)*

Was steckt hier dahinter?

KUGLER *(off)*

Lager.

3

It takes even less time when a person is literally marked for death.

4 *(off, German)*

Gib mir die Schlüssel.

KUGLER *(off, hushed, German)*

Bleib hier, Miep. Sag nichts.

*(Sound of a KEY RATTLING in the bookcase lock. 2 and 4 enter as residents of the annex, 1 closes*

*the diary and becomes a resident.  
THEY hear the lock noise, freeze,  
listening, frightened.)*

3  
Evil itself, I think I am beginning  
to understand.

*(Sound of the BOOKCASE  
swinging open, BOOTS climbing up  
stairs. The footsteps grow closer  
and louder over the following.  
1, 2 and 4 speak quickly, quietly  
and in desperation.)*

1 (Hebrew)  
h'moshiah

3  
Evil takes a crippled heart,

3  
a dying soul.

4  
h'moshiah

2  
h'moshiah

3  
But how does evil exist in a living  
soul,

4  
Adonai

3  
a beating heart?

1  
h'moshiah

4  
h'moshiah

2  
h'moshiah

3  
Then my own heart stops beating, and  
I wonder

4  
Adonai

3  
if I'm making a wrong assumption  
about who we are.

1  
h'moshiah

2  
h'moshiah

4  
Adonai

3  
Maybe our hearts are crippled,  
4  
Adonai

3  
our souls are dying,

1  
h'moshiah

3  
and all we really want is to  
destroy.

4  
h'moshiah

2  
h'moshiah

1  
h'moshiah

4  
h'moshiah

3  
Then the question is,

4  
h'moshiah

3  
how in the world are able to do any  
good?

1  
Adonai h'moshiah

3  
h'moshiah Adonai!

*(FOOTSTEPS STOP. ALL face the door  
(3 drops the pencil on the ground  
as she stands and turns), put their  
hands up. Beat.)*

ALL MARGOTS  
Today is Friday, August fourth, nineteen-forty-four.

*(THEY begin walking slowly toward the exit of the annex, hands up. Sound of TRAIN racing down the tracks. Suddenly, 1 stops, whirls around to face front, hands down. TRAIN instantly stops.)*

1 *(determined to escape the memory)*  
Today!

*(2, 3 and 4 turn downstage.)*

1  
is... *(can't think of anything)*

3 *(jumping in to help)*  
time to study!

*(Over the following, a flurry of nervous energy to change the subject: 1 runs to the bicycle, mounts it, rides in front of the others- a sort of half version of what she does after each camp scene. 3 runs to get the Latin book. 2 fetches 3 a notebook and pencil. 4 moves to become PETER.)*

1  
Yes!

ALL MARGOTS  
Today we study!

4  
Bookkeeping!

2  
Modern history!

1  
Medicine!

4  
Geography!

2  
Physics!

1  
Religion!

3

And Latin. *(she sits with her book and reads:)*

Lesson fourteen. "Gerund and gerundive uses."

*(4(PETER) slides into the chair next to 3.)*

3

"Cupidus pācem petendī."

4 (PETER)

What's that mean?

3

What? Oh. Peter. It means "Desirous of seeking peace."

PETER

You can read that?

3

It's translated in the book.

PETER *(looking in the book)*

What's a "gerund"?

3 *(patient but, doesn't want to be)*

A verbal noun.

PETER

And a gerundive?

3 *(slightly annoyed)*

Peter, did you want me to teach you Latin?

PETER

No. *(beat)* My mother says I should be more like you.

3

Better get on it, then. I can loan you my glasses if you want.

PETER

How do you not get tired of it?

3

I can't see without my glasses.

PETER

I mean, this Latin stuff you study all the time.

3

I like it. It has rules. It makes sense.

PETER  
Not to me.

*(beat.)*

3  
And how do you not get tired of  
spending your evenings in the attic  
with your cat?

PETER  
There's nothing else worth  
doing. And I have to be  
able to hold onto  
something from before.  
Even if it's a cat.

*(a moment. 3 grabs her notebook  
and writes, copying out of her  
book.)*

3  
Here, Peter. "Puer corpore parvus  
erat. Virtūte nōn superābātur."

*(She hands the paper to PETER.)*

PETER  
What's this?

3  
"The boy was small in body but he  
was not surpassed in courage."  
Something to hold on to. *(beat)* And  
tell Mrs. van Pels I'm not loaning  
you my glasses.

*(PETER smirks and exits the scene,  
becomes HILDE.)*

*3 (goes back to her book, muttering to  
herself)*

Today. Today we hold onto... what,  
today? *(reading the book, but not  
leaving the last thought)* "Word  
drill. Give the nominative,  
genitive, and gender of the Latin  
words for the following: death.  
god. hope. youth."

HILDE (4)  
Margot! We're ready!

*(Over the following, 1 takes two candles out of her bag. 3 and 4 become friends from far back in Margot's childhood. They are getting ready to play. 4 (HILDE), the oldest, puts on something a child might choose to simulate a Catholic priest's robes. 1 finds something that a child might choose for an altar boy and puts it on 2. HILDE and 3 ("DEACON") scurry to make what would be a Catholic church altar made by a child in her bedroom for play.)*

2

Today is Sunday,

3

Nineteen-thirty.

2

Coming, Hilde!

3 ("DEACON")

It's all set up!

HILDE (to "DEACON")

Where's the even-jello book?

"DEACON"

*(shows her the book)*

It's nursery rhymes. Is that okay?

HILDE

It's supposed to be bigger.

"DEACON"

Dad wouldn't let me take any of his books.

HILDE

That's 'cause you got chocolate icing on "Max Havelaar."<sup>1</sup> *(calling off)* Margot, do you have the candles?

*(1 gives two candles to 2.)*

2

Got 'em, got 'em!

---

<sup>1</sup> *Max Havelaar* by Multatuli, published 1860  
rev. 10/20/22



*(2 joins "DEACON" and HILDE as a seven-year-old Margot playing altar boy.)*

HILDE  
Okay. This is the altar. We have to start back here. I come in first, and then the deacon with the even-jello book. Then the altar boy comes with his candle. It's lit in real mass, but mom and dad said after last time no more lit candles in my bedroom.

2  
How about...

*(2 puts her hand up behind her candle and wiggles her fingers like flames.)*

HILDE  
Perfect. Now we have to sing.

"DEACON"  
What song?

2  
"Woolly Goslings"?

HILDE  
Alright. *(to imaginary congregants)* Church time, everyone! Church time!

*(They walk toward the "altar" as HILDE described, with their "lit" candles.)*

2, "DEACON", HILDE *(sung)*  
Hai-a pa-pai-a, what's rustling in the straw?  
Why, look! It's woolly goslings  
and they have no shoes.  
The cobbler just can't shape his leather for you.  
And that's why baby geese have no shoes.

*(THEY reach the "altar" and kneel. "DEACON" opens the book, holds it out to HILDE.)*

HILDE ("reading")  
*(atrociously  
pronounced Latin)*  
In nomy patry eat philly  
eat spear-us sang-key.

2  
Amen.

*("DEACON" drops the book.)*

HILDE  
Don't drop the Jello!  
You go to hell if you  
drop the Jello!

"DEACON" *(picking up the book)*  
I didn't drop it. You didn't see  
that!

2  
I saw it.

HILDE  
Joodikuh may, Day-  
us, eat diserny caus  
mean... um... um,

1 *(out of the scene, prayer-like) (Latin)*  
Júdica me, Deus, et discérne causam meam de gente non sancta:  
abhómine iníquo et dolóso érué me.

2 and "DEACON"  
Key-ah to es day-us-

1 *(out of the scene)*  
Quia tu es, Deus, fortitúdo mea: square me repulísti, et quart  
tristis incédo, dum afflígit me inimícus?

*(2 hears. SHE holds out her candle  
to 1.)*

2  
For Thou, O God, art my strength.

1 *(taking the candle)*  
Emitte lucem tuam.

*(3 offers her candle.)*



1  
darkness.

ANNE  
margot, say something so i can see you!

4  
i'm beside you.

1  
a barracks shut up, shut away

4  
for the lepers.

3 (*correcting*)  
scabies.

1  
the impure

4  
come to rot.

ANNE  
margot!

4  
i'm here! see?

3  
skin against skin replaces sight.

ANNE  
don't take your hand away.

4 (*shrieks*)

ANNE (*re: shriek*)  
what?

4 (*very shaken*)  
rat, over my leg.

(ANNE starts to cry.)

4  
do you remember the summer  
we spent gardening with  
gertrud?

ANNE  
That was ages ago.

4  
but you remember what she  
always said?

ANNE  
 with enough sun and dirt and water,  
 4  
 we can make something more  
 beautiful.

ANNE  
 but there's no sunlight here.  
 4  
 there are some plants,  
 remember? remember  
 that some, she told us,  
 that some grow when  
 light is scarce?

ANNE  
 which plants?  
 4  
 maranta leuconeura.

ANNE  
 margot, don't make me guess.  
 4  
 but don't you remember?

ANNE  
 no, i don't remember! stop expecting me to  
 remember things like this! we're not in school  
 anymore, margot, we don't have books, we don't  
 have anything! and i'm tired, and i just want to  
 go home and be with pim and mother and my  
 friends, so don't make me remember latin names  
 of plants from years ago!

*(a moment)*

4 *(soft)*  
 maranta leuconeura.prayer  
 plant.

*(a long moment. a tiny light  
 on one side of the stage,  
 coming from a small hole in the  
 wall. EDITH'S arm appears,  
 holding a small piece of bread.)*

EDITH  
 girls.  
 4  
 mother?

EDITH  
take this.

ANNE  
mother, is that yours?

EDITH  
just take it.

*(4 crosses to EDITH and takes the bread. EDITH touches 4's hand in the small bit of light. EDITH holds 4's hand a moment.)*

EDITH (cont.)  
how do you feel?

ANNE  
infested.

4  
but we're getting  
better.

ANNE  
that's right.

EDITH  
eat this. every crumb. tomorrow  
i'll bring you more. *(beat)* take  
care of each other.

ANNE  
we will.

4  
we will.

*(EDITH exits. 4 and ANNE eat their bread. 1, next to the candles, strikes a match. [1 tries to strike the match 10 times as she counts.]*

1 *(Hebrew)*  
achat, shtayim, shelosh, arbah, chamesh, shesh, shvah, shemoni,  
tehshah, esehr.

*(1 blows out the match. Lights up. ALL move into their spots and add costumes for the next scene over:)*

2  
Margot,

1  
Margot,

4  
Margot,

3  
Today is Wednesday,

ALL MARGOTS  
February sixteenth,

3  
nineteen-forty-four.

1, 2, 4  
Happy birthday!

1 (OTTO)  
Eighteen. You're turning into a woman.

4 (EDITH)  
Our little Margot, all  
grown.

OTTO  
And in here, of all places.

*(THEY are in their places by now.)*

EDITH  
This is not how a young  
woman should celebrate her  
eighteenth birthday. I was  
going to take you  
shopping, buy you  
everything you wanted.

3  
Everything I want is here, mother.

2 (MIEP)  
Happy birthday, Margot!

3  
Miep!

MIEP  
*(giving 3 a jar of yogurt with ribbon tied around it)*  
Bep and I put this together for you.

3  
How did you get yogurt?

OTTO  
Miep works in mysterious ways.

MIEP  
The ribbon is for your hair.

3  
Thank you, Miep. It's wonderful.

*(MIEP becomes ANNE.)*

EDITH  
Here, Margot.

*(Edith ties the ribbon in 3's hair.)*

OTTO  
Look at that. Edith, can you believe we've raised such a  
beautiful daughter?

EDITH  
We're blessed, no doubt.

*(ANNE clears her throat.)*

OTTO

Ah yes! And no Frank birthday is complete without a poem.

2 (ANNE)

Pim and I wrote it together.

OTTO

Will you help me read it?

ANNE *(reading)*

Margot is our quiet sun,

Her silent rays make gloomies run.

OTTO *(reading)*

She likes to learn and knit and cook,

She likes to sit and devour a book.

ANNE *(reading)*

We love her so, and when she frowns

Our gloomies flow back all around.

OTTO *(reading)*

So what could make our sun shine more

When it's hard to go out to a store?

ANNE *(reading)*

She's so still and oft' forgot,

So what about a little thought?

OTTO *(reading)*

A thought for your gentle, patient heart,

ANNE *(reading)*

A thought for your always humble book smarts.

OTTO *(reading)*

A thought for our rock in this crazy tizzy,

ANNE *(reading)*

A thought for how you keep yourself busy.

OTTO *(reading)*

We've lots more thoughts we'd like to put down,

But paper's short around this town.

ANNE *(reading)*

So let's just say, we love you most dear,

Our quiet sun, even on cloudy days appears.

*(3 and EDITH clap. ANNE takes a bow. OTTO hugs 3.)*

OTTO

You have no idea how proud I am of you.

3

Thank you, Pim.

*(1 retreats to the bicycle and rides it around the stage.)*

*ANNE hugs 3.)*

ANNE

Did you like the poem?



3  
Yes, dear sister, I loved the poem.

ANNE  
I came up with "crazy tizzy."

3  
That was my favorite part.

*(EDITH hugs 3.)*

EDITH  
I'm sorry.

3  
Mother, stop apologizing.

EDITH  
This isn't right.

3  
I said stop. Don't upset yourself  
over making me happy.

EDITH  
Next year, Margot. You'll  
have everything you want.

1  
Today is

*(Edith immediately becomes 4 and  
enters the next scene. 3 takes  
off her ribbon and retreats  
to her bed.)*

ALL MARGOTS  
February sixteenth.

1  
Nineteen-forty-five.

*(1 stops riding. 4 wanders slowly about  
the stage, looking down. SHE is  
wrung and almost incapable of  
emotion. 3 is asleep.)*

4  
One, two, three, four,  
five, six,

*(1 picks up the counting. SHE counts  
to twelve, then 2 enters and takes  
over. 1 and 2 switch off each counting  
six numbers up softly and slowly  
throughout the monologue. THEY move  
gradually toward the memorial candle.)*

4

The daily obstacle course.  
 I can't help but count  
 them as I walk by.  
 Living corpses fallen to  
 the ground. *(stopping at a  
 body)* Her eyes are still  
 open. No one to close  
 them. *(another body:)* She  
 is stretched out,  
 crucified, mummified. I  
 don't know where her  
 stomach is. *(another body:)*  
 Her mouth is open, in pain  
 even in death. The dead  
 are supposed to look  
 peaceful. Ours are  
 screaming. I try not to  
 look at faces. I don't  
 want to recognize anyone.  
*(back to wandering)* One,  
 two, three, four, five,  
 six-

*(Still counting, 1 picks up a match  
 (unlit) and prepares to light it. 3  
 wakes up with a start with a brief  
 but blood-curdling scream (1  
 startles, drops the match), breathing  
 hard. 1 scrambles to open the diary  
 as 3 speaks.)*

3 *(out, trying to calm herself)*  
 I haven't slept in three days.  
 The fear that underlies our waking  
 moments has begun to permeate my  
 dreams. I dread the terrifying  
 world into which I am thrown when  
 I close my eyes. I prefer the fear  
 of my reality over the fear of my  
 dreams: faces of Nazis, visions  
 of my family on trucks, the sounds  
 of air raid sirens, of bombs, of  
 Nazis crashing through the  
 bookcase. The fear empties me out,  
 and I don't know where my stomach  
 is. I much prefer dark of my  
 sleepless nights: the predictable  
 chiming of the Westertoren, the  
 faint humming of British planes

3 (cont.)

flying over the city... Every night  
in my waking hours I tell myself  
the sun will not rise again.

4

That comforts me.

2

Is that wrong?

*(All three look to 1. Beat.)*

1

Today is Sunday. Nineteen thirty-eight.

*(2, as a young teenager, begins  
preparing for instruction at  
the Synagogue.)*

2

Mother, have you seen my bobby pins?

4 (EDITH)

In the box there.

*(2 finds a box of bobby pins,  
and starts pinning back her hair.)*

EDITH

Goodness, you look nice.

2

And you don't look so ugly yourself.

EDITH

I meant you're looking  
nicer than usual to go  
to instruction.

3 (ANNE) *(invading the  
scene)*

It's for the new rabbi. All the  
girls have a crush on him.

2 *(sarcastic)*

Thank you.

*(ANNE exits.)*

2

It's not just the new rabbi. I mean, it's not for  
the new rabbi at all. I mean-

EDITH  
Margot. There's nothing  
wrong with a crush, so  
long as you are not  
going to the synagogue  
just to see and be seen  
by him.

2  
Of course not.

EDITH  
You go to instruction to  
learn how to honor God,  
the one God who  
delivered Israel.

2  
And who always delivers his people.

EDITH  
Do you believe that?

2  
It was a promise.

EDITH  
And do you believe that?

2  
He keeps his promises.

EDITH  
Do you believe that?

*(beat, as 3 sees the Latin book,  
moves toward it.)*

2  
Do you?

EDITH  
We go to synagogue.

2  
Pim doesn't always go.

EDITH  
He goes in his own way.

2  
What way is that?

*(3 picks up and opens the Latin  
book.)*

2  
Mother? What way?

3 (*reading from Latin book*)  
"Conditional sentences of doubt.  
In this class the conclusion  
states that something would take  
place if a certain condition  
should be fulfilled. This is the  
statement not of fact, as in the  
first class, but of an idea  
depending upon something about  
which there is a doubt." (*she  
closes the book.*) Today is  
Saturday, April eleventh,  
nineteen-forty-two.

(*On the other side of the bookcase,  
noises of someone in the building.  
2 (ANNE) grabs onto 1 (OTTO),  
afraid.*)

ANNE

Pim!

OTTO

Shh.

ANNE

What's happening?

OTTO

Quiet.

(*They listen. Noises stop.  
HERMANN enters.*)

OTTO

Hermann, where are they?

ANNE

Are they-?

HERMANN

In the warehouse.

OTTO

Did you see them?

HERMANN

Just a glimpse.

OTTO

Are they-

HERMANN

Just burglars.

OTTO

Did they see you? *(moment)* Hermann, did they see you?

HERMANN

...possibly.

ANNE

oh god.

3

Pim, the radio.

OTTO

Not now, Margot.

3

No, we left the radio on in the office. Playing the BBC.

ANNE

oh god.

HERMANN

shit.

OTTO

Don't worry. They may not have come up from the warehouse. Hermann, Peter, Fritz, we'll go down and assess the situation. Ladies, stay quiet.

*(OTTO and HERMANN leave the scene.)*

ANNE

Margot, what if-

*(MARGOT shushes her gently.)*

ANNE

Do you think-

*(MARGOT shushes her again, then wraps ANNE in her arms.)*

*(1 (AUGUSTE) and 4 (EDITH) enter the scene. THEY sit in silence. 3 coughs.)*

1 (AUGUSTE)

Hush.

ANNE

She can't help it.

AUGUSTE

She's not trying.

4 (EDITH)

Let her alone, Auguste.

*(They sit in silence again.  
3 coughs.)*

AUGUSTE

Her damn bronchitis is going to get us-

ANNE *(changing the subject)*  
Mr. Pfeffer snores.

EDITH  
Hush!

ANNE  
It's very loud. I can hardly sleep sometimes.  
Haven't you all heard it?

AUGUSTE

A child should never say such things about an adult.

ANNE  
I can't say such things about Margot or Peter. I  
don't share a room with them.

AUGUSTE

Don't you dare give me-

3 *(returning the favor visa vie the  
subject change)*

Yesterday I read Don Carlos.  
A love that can never be,  
all because of politics; so  
beautifully tragic.

AUGUSTE

The Germans are masters of tragedy.

3

Though I'd argue there's a  
morbid sort of deus ex machina at  
the end.

ANNE  
What's that?

3

When a god suddenly comes in  
and fixes everything.

*(AUGUSTE looks offstage.)*

AUGUSTE

What is taking so long?

*(A moment. MARGOT coughs. ANNE  
rubs 3's back, gently comforting  
her. They wait, silent,*

*frightened. 1 picks up the diary,  
opens it.)*

1  
I don't know if Pim is waiting on a Messiah. Mother used to,  
but I think she's getting tired of waiting.

3  
But I am waiting, I believe he is  
coming soon.

2  
Perhaps he is already here, a young boy waiting  
to deliver us.

4  
He will tear down the  
gates of the camps,

3  
break open the doors and  
the bookshelves,

2  
and we will breathe fresh air again.

3  
I am sure, it must be soon.

4  
If ever we needed  
the Messiah, it is  
now.

3  
While we wait, I have faith.

1  
God has always delivered his people.

*(Immediate sound of TRAIN racing  
down the track. MARGOTS jolt together  
as if on a train that just started  
moving. Over the dialogue, 3 and 4  
prepare for the next scene.)*

1 (to 4)  
Now?

4  
Today is-

1  
No.

4  
Today is Birk-



1

No more. I don't want-

3 (*with no Latin book, to 1*)  
 "Lesson nine: Clauses of Purpose.  
 In Latin prose, purpose is  
 expressed not by the infinitive,  
 but by the subjunctive. It is  
 introduced by 'ut' - that, in  
 order that - if the purpose is  
 positive. By 'nē' - that not, lest  
 - if it is negative. 'We fight  
 to overcome': 'Pugnāmus ut  
 superēmus.' 'We fight that we  
 may not be overcome': Pugnāmus ut  
 superēmur."

(4 shoves a rifle into 1's chest.)

4

Remember!

(As they all take their places,  
 overlapping the same as before  
 the shoe scene:)

2 (*Dutch*)

zier er zwak uit

3 (*Russian*)

ne teryay tarelku

2

don't look weak

4 (*Polish*)nie chodź do baraków dla  
chorych

3

don't lose your bowl

1 (*Dutch*)

zier er niet uit.

4

don't go to the hospital  
barracks

1

don't look weak.

*(BIRKENAU.*

*4 and EDITH walk together each carrying a rock. 4 stumbles, exhausted. She puts the rock down and sits.)*

3 (EDITH)

margot.

*(4 is silent.)*

EDITH

*margot...*

*(4 stares straight ahead. Shakes her head.)*

EDITH (cont.)

margot, what is today?

4

today is...

EDITH

margot, say it to me.

4

today is...

EDITH

what is the date? tell me, what is it?

4

today...

EDITH

remember. this is how we stay alive. we remember, there are days, they happen even here. there still are days, and we live them. we live the same ones that your aunts, your uncles, your cousins are living. we live the same ones your father- ...we call them by the same name and so live them together. let us stay sane, and remember. margot, what is today?

4  
today-

EDITH  
yes...

4  
today is-

*(SS enters the scene, the gun  
directing mother and  
daughter to keep working.)*

SS (German)  
Arbeiten!

EDITH  
margot, today.

1 (SS) *(directly to 4)*  
aufstehen!

*(4 is too weak to obey.)*

SS  
aufstehen!

*(4 does not attempt to obey.)*

SS (cont.)  
steh auf, jüdisches Schwein!

*(SS hits 4 with the butt of  
the gun.)*

EDITH (German)  
hör auf! hör auf!

*(EDITH shields 4 from any further  
blows.)*

EDITH  
sie ist müde. bitte. bitte.

*(A moment.)*

SS (calm)  
dreckiger Jude.

*(SS turns to violently attacking  
EDITH. Once SHE has been knocked*

*to the ground and is unmoving, a satisfied SS walks away from 4 and EDITH, as if watching other prisoners. 4 checks he is not watching, then kneels down beside EDITH.)*

4 *(to Edith, tender, present in the scene, not expositional)*  
today is saturday,  
october fourth,  
nineteen-forty-four.

*(They freeze. The ACTRESS falls away from the scene, gasps as if she were drowning. SHE looks at the gun in her hand. SHE gags. SHE puts the gun down, runs to a container on the set and throws up in it. 2, 3, and 4 turn their heads to watch her. When SHE is done:)*

ACTRESS

I don't know what happened to my stomach.

*(ACTRESS purges her mouth of the little bit of spittle that is always left after vomiting. SHE takes off her glasses. Not looking at other Margots (maybe not speaking to them either. Who knows. This multiple realities business is complicated):)*

ACTRESS *(cont.)*

Why are you making me do this?

*(Silence.)*

ACTRESS *(cont.)*

Why are you making me-

4  
It's odd, isn't it.

ACTRESS

I don't understand. I don't- *(definitely to the Margots:)* What happened to my stomach?

4  
There's nothing there?

2  
But everything

3  
All at once?

ACTRESS

I don't understand any of this.

2  
It's odd.

3  
When your entire self is  
stripped away,

4  
when the core of you  
becomes nothing.

3  
You were sure there was so  
much of you.

2  
You are sure there *is* so much.

4  
But you don't know  
where your stomach  
is.

2  
And then you're a rock.

3  
No, rocks have way more  
personality.

4  
No offense, Margot.

ACTRESS: I- I didn't mean- I didn't think-

4  
But isn't it odd?

3  
Isn't it odd?

2  
Isn't it odd?

*(ACTRESS opens the diary. SHE reads, crossing to the bike, slowly entering the story as a Margot again.)*

ACTRESS

It's odd how the times when your entire self is stripped away are the times that most define who you are.

*(1 puts her glasses back on, mounts the bicycle and rides around 2, 3 and 4 to release them from the scene as:)*

2

"Good student,"

3

"obedient daughter,"

4

"beautiful girl",

1 *(fully Margot, no longer needs the journal to express this thought)* names that were given to me from before. But what are they now? The Nazis have taken them, reduced me to a yellow star. Yet I am still here.

*(As 2, 3 and 4 take their places for the next moment: 2 and 3 gather around the radio. 1 joins them when she is finished riding:)*

2 (radio announcer)

Good evening, this is  
Radio Oranje.

4 (Queen Wilhelmina)

My fellow Dutch people. I speak to you again from England, but my heart and spirit are with you in Holland. The allies have bombed several strategic cities. The Russians are in a hard fought battle, but have sworn to fight to the last man. And the invasion will come. I can promise you this. In the meantime, keep hope, and keep fighting. Fight for your country, and fight for each other. Do not let the Germans take away what makes us who we are.

*(BOYFRIEND enter a scene with 2.)*

BOYFRIEND

Today is Wednesday.

2

You didn't tell me we sing at these meetings.

BOYFRIEND

It's just for initiating new members. We'll let you in after your solo.

2

What?!

BOYFRIEND

I'm kidding, Margot. Breathe. Relax. It's just a few songs.

2

My father still thinks this is ridiculous.

BOYFRIEND

Your father still thinks a Jew will get to be a German again one day.

2

We might.

BOYFRIEND

Even if that's so, I wouldn't take the offer. I want no part in a people that sees entire races as animals set for extinction.

2

You're sounding paranoid again.

BOYFRIEND

Margot, you've heard the rumors.

2

They are just that! Rumors.

BOYFRIEND

They are more than that. Some of the Zionists, they've started working with the resistance. They've told me- (*beat. he looks at his watch*) Five minutes. Are we going in?

2

...yes. One time.

BOYFRIEND

This month.

2

They only do this once a month.

## BOYFRIEND

Great, so one time next month, too!

*(2 hits BOYFRIEND playfully. Over the following, they walk hand in hand downstage. 1 and 4 meet them. MUSIC plays. 1 finds sheet music in her bag and places it in BOYFRIENDS'S and each MARGOT'S hands over:)*

3

Lesson ten: "Semi-deponents. Semi-deponents are verbs which have the present system in the active voice. Au'deō: dare. Gau'deō: rejoice. So'leō: be wont. Fidō: trust."

*(3 joins the others, and the united, longing Zionist choir sings. They hold the music up, look forward as if watching a conductor. As they sing, 2 starts by having a hard time following along, looking uncomfortable, unconvinced that this is something worth her while.*

*By the end of the song, she has blended in vocally, physically, and emotionally with the others.)*

ALL:<sup>2</sup>

THEY SAY THERE'S A LAND  
THERE'S A SUN-DRENCHED LAND  
WHERE IS THAT LAND?  
WHERE IS THAT SUN?  
THEY SAY THERE'S A LAND  
A LAND WITH SEVEN PILLARS  
SEVEN WANDERING STARS  
THERE ON EVERY HILLTOP

WHERE IS THAT LAND?  
AND THE STARS UP ON THE HILL?  
WHO SHALL WALK ME THROUGH?  
WHO WILL SHOW THE PATH TO ME?

<sup>2</sup> Accompanied. Chords for accompaniment provided in the appendix.  
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*(BOYFRIEND exits. [switches the electric memorial candle for a real one.] )*

ALL MARGOTS  
WE HAVE PASSED THROUGH DESERTS  
WE HAVE PASSED THROUGH OCEANS  
WE HAVE CROSSED THROUGH MANY  
AND OUR STRENGTH IS ALMOST  
GONE. HOW HAVE WE BECOME LOST?  
AND ARE NOT AT REST  
THAT THE LAND OF SUN,  
THAT THE LAND HAS NOT BEEN FOUND.

WHERE IT SHALL BE FULFILLED  
ALL THE HOPES OF MANKIND  
ALL WHO ENTER IN, THERE, APPROACHES AKIVA  
THEY SAY THERE'S A LAND  
THERE'S A SUNDRENCHED LAND  
WHERE IS THAT LAND  
WHERE IS THAT SUN?

*(Blackout. A candle sways above the stage. Sound of a TRAIN racing down the track. The sound stops. Lights up. 4 and ANNE stand alone, holding tightly onto each other, shivering violently.)*

1

Today is?

3

Now.

4

Bergen-Belsen.

*(BERGEN-BELSEN.*

*The sisters shuffle forward, caught in a crowd of tired, distressed and disoriented people.)*

*1(SS) and 3(SS) shout from the sides)*

SS

Raus aus dem Zug!

SS  
Schnell! Schnell!

SS  
Jetzt!

SS  
Schnell! Jetzt!

SS  
Gehen!

2 (ANNE)  
i don't have a mother.

4  
we have a mother.

ANNE  
we don't have a mother.

4  
she'll come on the next  
train.

ANNE  
she was selected.

4  
we don't know that.

ANNE  
she must have been.

4  
don't think about it.

ANNE  
she was our mother.

4  
*is.* and i *am* your sister,  
and i am here now. we are  
here now.

ANNE  
and pim, my darling pim.

4  
don't waste your time  
worrying. we'll see them  
after the war, you have to  
have faith. God always  
delivers...

*(4 sees just how upset ANNE is.  
SHE wipes away ANNE'S tears as 1  
crosses to the bike.)*

4 (cont.) (*gently*)  
what day is it today?  
Her Sister 2/11/21

*(THEY freeze. 1 rides the bike to release THEM from the scene as 3 opens the Latin book and reads.)*

3 *(reading Latin book)*  
"Ablative of Separation.  
Separation is expressed by the  
ablative either with or without a  
preposition."

*(1 parks the bike. 2 (ANNE) lays on the floor writing in her own diary. 4 (FRITZ) thrusts a pen and letter at 3. 3 takes them. SHE reads it through, correcting frequent mistakes.)*

FRITZ

Miep is on her way.

3 *(without looking up)*

Yes, Mr. Pfeffer.

FRITZ

You've got to have it  
done when she arrives.

3

I know, Mr. Pfeffer.

FRITZ

Then shouldn't you-

3

I will have your letter  
corrected by the time Miep  
arrives, Mr. Pfeffer.

*(1 (OTTO) enters the moment.)*

OTTO

Fritz, a word.

*(FRITZ crosses to OTTO.)*

OTTO (cont.)

About the letters..

FRITZ

They're all I have of her.

OTTO

It's too much risk.

FRTIZ

You have everyone you  
love, here, with you.

OTTO

We have all left people behind.

FRITZ

You don't understand.

OTTO

There's not a person here who doesn't understand. But they also understand what happens when a letter from a Jew who's supposed to have disappeared shows up in a secretary's purse.

FRITZ

Otto-

OTTO

Fritz, you're a reasonable man.

*(3 has a tiny "coughing" fit. ANNE catches her eye, suppresses laughter.)*

OTTO

*(re: letter)*

Is this worth your life?

FRITZ

What life will I have  
without it?

OTTO

Is it worth the lives of seven others?

*(Beat. FRITZ looks down, a gesture OTTO takes as "no." A comforting hand on FRITZ'S shoulder.)*

OTTO

After the war, Fritz. You won't need letters.

*(OTTO leaves the scene. 3 has stopped writing. FRITZ turns to her.)*

FRITZ

Charolette is brave. The way she handles everything, back in Germany and- when she finally joined me here, we could walk down the street together, hand in hand for the first time.

I remember when we decided to take a walk along the canals. It was a perfect, clear day. But somewhere along the way, clouds rolled in and it began to rain. I was going to offer her my jacket to protect her hair. She always takes such care in styling it. But instead, she threw back her head and opened her mouth. My dignified, poised woman was drinking the rain like a giddy little schoolgirl. Of course I followed suit. We must have looked ridiculous, two grown adults standing on the street with our mouths wide open to the sky. *(long moment)* The letters are all {we have}- What if {we are caught} and I don't {survive}-... What will she have?

*(3 gives the letter back to FRITZ.)*

3  
Memories.

*(1, 2 and 3 watch 4 cherish the letter as if it held every precious memory, both sweet and bitter.)*

*(3 breaks the moment by making a knocking sound. BOYFRIEND enters, standing outside the Franks' home.)*

2  
What are you doing? What are you doing here?  
What are you- get in here.

*(SHE pulls him inside.)*

2 (cont.)

Are you insane? Do you know what time it is?

BOYFRIEND

*(almost numb)*

My parents have been called up.

2

What?

BOYFRIEND

They leave tomorrow. We only just found out today, and they leave tomorrow.

2

Don't let them go.

BOYFRIEND

I'm trying to stop them. They say they can survive a couple months of work. I've tried to tell them they're not going to work. I've told them we can go underground.

2

They won't listen?

BOYFRIEND

They say it's only rumors, all the stories of concentration camps, starvation...

2

And they're going.

BOYFRIEND

Nothing I can do.

*(A moment.)*

2

What will you do? Will you go underground?

BOYFRIEND

I have no intention of hiding.

2

But couldn't you be called up soon?

BOYFRIEND

Trust me, they won't be able to find me.

2  
I don't understand.

BOYFRIEND  
I am going to disappear. At least, the Jew is.

2  
What {do you mean}- ...you're joining the  
resi{stance}-

*(BOYFRIEND shushes 2.)*

2  
Are you sure?

*(BOYFRIEND is silent and stone-faced.)*

2  
There are risks.

BOYFRIEND  
More than from just being a Jew?

*(beat.)*

2  
Do you have papers?

BOYFRIEND  
I have to meet some of the other Zionists in half an hour.

2  
Where are you going?

BOYFRIEND  
I can't say. But my work will take me outside of Amsterdam.  
I just had to come, to say-

2  
I know.

BOYFRIEND  
Margot. Come with me.

2  
What?

BOYFRIEND  
I'll get you papers. *[Cut to "I don't want to disappear"]*

2  
But I can't disappear like you.

BOYFRIEND

Trust me.

2  
I don't want to disappear like you. You're the one who reminds me always of who we are, we are God's chosen people.

BOYFRIEND

We are.

2  
But now you're denying it? [Now we're supposed to deny it?]

BOYFRIEND

You know that's not what I'm doing. [The papers don't change who you are. They only keep you safe so-] *[cut to 2: They say you're not a Jew]*

2  
You're hiding who you are behind blond hair and blue eyes.

BOYFRIEND

Margot, you know that's not what I'm doing. This isn't like you, you're not being reasonable.

2  
You're turning your back on God's people. [They say you're not a Jew.]

[BOYFRIEND]

[Margot, be reasonable. It's not about identity, it's about survival, you know that.]

[2]  
[But we're not supposed to-]

[BOYFRIEND]

[not supposed to *what*? Survive? Fight for God's people? Are you still clinging to your ordered world where following rules will save you? Because that world is gone, Margot. You can either step into the Jordan or die in the wilderness. But no more mere



dreaming of promised lands.] *[cut to 2: You said we were believing]*

BOYFRIEND

I am doing this *for* God's people! If we don't step into the Jordan now we'll die in the wilderness. No more mere dreaming of promised lands.

2

You said we were believing.

BOYFRIEND

Sometimes believing isn't enough. Moses' mother didn't just believe God would save her son. She put him in a basket and hid him in the reeds. I'm doing what will save our people, what will save my family, what will save you. Please. Leave with me tonight. Let me get you papers.

*(long moment)*

2

I need time to-

BOYFRIEND

I can't wait for you.

*(another moment)*

2

God always delivers his people.

BOYFRIEND

Margot...

*(Margot gives him an "I've made up my mind" look. Silence.)*

BOYFRIEND (cont.)

... ..After the war, we'll go out dancing.

2

If we must.

BOYFRIEND

We must.

2

Then we will.

*(They are silent for a long time,*  
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Her Sister 2/11/21

*neither knowing what to say, or  
wanting to end their time  
together. Finally:)*

2 (cont.)

Well. It's getting-

BOYFRIEND

Yes. I should-

2

You should probably-

BOYFRIEND

-be going.

2

Right.

*(BOYFRIEND takes 2's hands in  
his. They squeeze each other's  
hands, neither willing to let  
go. Westertoren chimes. BOYFRIEND  
lets go of 2's hands. HE looks as  
if he is going to kiss 2. HE  
settles on kissing her forehead.)*

BOYFRIEND

Be safe, Margot.

*(He turns and exits the scene  
before 2 can say anything. 2  
touches and considers the Star  
of David on her shirt and  
absent-mindedly hums the first  
two lines of "They Say There Is  
a Land.")*

*(1 turns on the radio. ALL brighten.  
They hear the news they have been  
waiting for. The following is bright  
and fast-paced.)*

1

Today!

4

is Tuesday-

3

-June sixth-

2  
-nineteen-forty-four!

ALL MARGOTS  
D Day!

2  
Allied forces

3  
Up onto the beach

1  
Normandy

4  
France

2  
How far away is that?

1  
Over six-hundred kilometers

4  
If only they had landed in  
Amsterdam!

3  
But they're coming

1  
They're coming

2  
They're coming

4  
They're breathing salty  
ocean air

3  
And so will we, with mist on our  
faces and sand between our toes

2  
In six-hundred kilometers

1  
A measly six-hundred!

3  
What should we do?

4  
Open the windows

1  
and shout to the city

2  
Scream and sing,

3  
But none of these things.

*(Sudden stillness)*

1  
Not for six-hundred kilometers.

*(beat. THEY begin transitioning  
to the next scene.)*

2  
Do we celebrate?

4  
A little bit.

3  
But no shouting yet. Not now. Not  
{today}-

1  
Today is December,

4  
nineteen-forty-four.

1  
Bergen-Belsen.

*(BERGEN-BELSEN.  
ALL wrap themselves in wool  
blankets, tighter and tighter in a  
futile effort to stay warm.  
1 and 3 become memories of friends.  
On their lines about food, they  
take the food out from under the  
table. They ALL shiver throughout  
the scene. 4 is very ill and weak.)*

3 (JANNIE)  
potato peelings,  
compliments of  
the hungarians.

*(She sets her offering on  
the ground.)*

REBEKKA  
wonderful, jannie.

2 (ANNE)  
what did you get, rebekka?

1 (REBEKKA)

i got sauerkraut, compliments of my superb singing and dancing skills.

*(SHE sets her food down with the peelings and sits, starting a semi-circle around the feast.)*

2 (ANNE)

i have a garlic clove.

JANNIE

compliments of?

ANNE

best you don't know.

REBEKKA

we also have, everyone's favorite...

JANNIE

a turnip?

REBEKKA

a beet!

ANNE

compliments of your dancing feet?

REBEKKA

Yes, it's a dancing feet beet!

4

ugh. feet beet?

JANNIE

it still makes me homesick for westerbork.

4

the strangest words ever spoken.

*(REBEKKA adds the beet to their feast.)*

ANNE

westerbork wouldn't have given us that fine christmas dinner.

JANNIE *(wistful)*

oh that cheese!

REBEKKA *(wistful)*

that rock hard cheese!

4

and marmalade!

ALL (*savoring, as if tasting the food a second time*)  
marmalade...

(*A moment as they  
blissfully remember.*)

REBEKKA

now with our bellies stuffed to bursting with the appetizer,  
let us proceed to the entree of our Bergen-Belsen christmas-  
hanukah-st. nicolas'-day feast.

(*THEY begin nibbling on the food.  
After a few moments,*)

4

Now we have to sing.

ANNE

What song?

(*a moment*)

JANNIE (*German*)

Hai-a pa-pai-a, was raschelt im  
Stroh?

Das sind die Wolle Gäschen,  
die hab'n keine Schuh.

Das Schuster hat Leder,  
keine Leisten dazu.

Da für hab'n die Wolle Gänschen  
keine Schuh.

2 and 3 (*singing*)(*maybe in German*)

Hai-a pa-pai-a, What's rustling in the straw?  
Why look! It's woolly goslings and they have no shoes.  
The cobbler just can't shape his leather for you.  
And that's why baby geese have no shoes.

All (*singing*)(*English*)

Hai-a pa-pai-a, What's rustling in the straw?  
Why look! It's woolly goslings and they have no shoes.  
The cobbler just can't shape his leather for you.  
And that's why baby geese have no shoes.

(*THEY repeat the verse several times,  
faster and faster until it falls*)

*apart. THEY laugh, probably more than  
merited. THEY nibble some more.)*

ANNE

i'm going to the ice cream parlor, first thing.

JANNIE

i'm going to the park. any park.

i don't care which one.

REBEKKA

i want to go to the dance hall. i'm going to stay all night.  
until they turn off the lights, or my feet fall off. whichever  
comes first.

ANNE

and we'll go shopping.

REBEKKA

oh yes, i need a whole new wardrobe.

4

i need all new books.  
there was a bookstore  
across the street from  
pim's office that had  
just opened. i'm going  
to spend hours in there.  
then i'm going to take  
my books home, and read  
them in a long, hot  
bath.

*(THEY sigh longingly at the  
thought of a bath.)*

4 (cont.)

but first, there are  
people I need to find.  
they'll want to know  
that i'm alive. i'll  
want to know that they  
lived, too. and once  
we know we all lived,  
then we can, i guess,  
start living again.

*(A moment, as they consider this.  
1 stands, mounts the bicycle. SHE  
rides to the candles, and becomes  
HERMANN.)*

ANNE

and when we start living, the food! oh the food we'll have! our first night back, we'll dine at the finest restaurant in amsterdam, and order, everything! with all our friends and family, we'll have a real feast! there'll be enough food, more than enough, to fill all of us up, ten times over! a never-ending supply!

1 (HERMANN)

We need to save the candles. We can't let them burn all the way down.

*(ANNE, 4(FRITZ), and 3  
gather around the candles.  
3 speaks as they move:)*

3

Lesson thirteen. "Periphrastic conjugations. The active periphrastic conjugation denotes impending action, or that which is about to happen. It is formed by combining the future active participle with forms of 'sum'."

HERMANN (cont.)

Just ten minutes.

4 (FRITZ)

But it's something.

ANNE

Why is this night different from all other nights?

3

This night is different from all other nights because of our unique celebration of freedom.

ANNE

Why, on this night, do we eat only matsah?

FRITZ

Matsah is the symbol of our affliction and our freedom.

ANNE

Why, on this night, do we eat only bitter herbs?



FRITZ

This root is to remind us of the time of our slavery. We force ourselves to taste pain so that we may more readily value pleasure.

ANNE

Why, on this night, do we dip our herbs twice?

FRITZ

The first time, the salty taste reminds us of the tears we cried when we were slaves.

3

The second time, we remember the sweetness of our hope for freedom.

*(HERMANN holds a flame ready to light the tapered candles.)*

HERMANN

Ten minutes.

*(HERMANN lights the candles as 2, 3 and 4 recite the prayer. [Candle action is mimed in this scene])*

2,3,4 *(sung)*

El malei rachamim

shochein bamromim

Hamtzei m'nucha n'chona-

HERMANN

No. We do not grieve with these candles. We are not mourning, we are remembering,

3

Deliverance.

ANNE

We are celebrating!

HERMANN

We are telling the story. Who are these six million you are grieving? *(beat)* Ten minutes. Then we'll snuff them out.

*(They stare at the candles.)*

1 (*Hebrew*)

achat, shtayim, shelosh, arbah, chamesh, shesh, shvah, shemoni, tehshah, esehr.

FRITZ

Next year in Jerusalem.

*(3 wets her fingers and snuffs out the tapered candles.*

*Blackout.*

*A moment.)*

*(Lights up. All eyes are on the candles. Then, ACTRESS steps out of the scene. SHE flips through the diary, searching.)*

ACTRESS

I don't remember you having a Passover. [But we didn't really light the candles.]

4 (*unfreezes, looks at ACTRESS*)

We didn't. [We didn't really have a Passover.]

*(ACTRESS flips to another page, reads, shifting back into 1 as she does so.)*

ACTRESS/1

Last night, I dreamt that there was death where we hid.

4

It sat in the corners  
and was warm and  
infinite.

1

I put my leg near,

3

and away went my foot.

1

I put my arm near,

2

away with my hand.

3  
 All eight of us walked around  
 losing parts of ourselves if we  
 walked too near the corners.  
 4  
 An elbow here,  
 3  
 a knee there,  
 2  
 eye,  
 3  
 teeth,  
 4  
 hair ... ..  
 1  
 So I sat down next to a corner,  
 2  
 having no feet,  
 3  
 no eyes,  
 4  
 no hands, and I asked  
 death questions,  
 3  
 all of which it answered in the most  
 profound ways.  
 2  
 Then I asked,  
 3  
 could I have my foot back.  
 4  
 It said "no."  
 2  
 Then I asked,  
 3  
 could I have my eyes back.  
 4  
 It said "no."  
 2  
 Then I asked,  
 3  
 could I have my hands back.  
 4  
 It said "yes,"  
 1  
 but only if I could tell it the Latin word for potato.

(beat.)

3

Lesson thirteen. 'Imperfect and future tenses. The future indicative is formed by the present stem plus the tense sign, bi, plus the personal endings. "Portābō," "I shall carry." "Portābimus," "we shall carry." "Portābitis," "you will carry".'

*(1 takes the Latin book, and 2 (ANNE) pulls 3 into a new scene. The sisters lie down on a bed, squashed together. They giggle a bit, as if we have joined them mid conversation.)*

3

You don't go around looking for someone to love you. You go looking for someone you want to pour into.

ANNE

But what if I'm empty?

3

That's the great part. It's not one way. The right man will fill you up too.

ANNE

That sounds so wonderfully romantic, Margot. I can't wait until I find someone like that.

3

You'll find him. Once the pool is a little bigger!

ANNE

You will, too, Margot.

3

I admit I get impatient at times. But then I think maybe it's not always a person. And maybe sometimes it's something that can't pour back into us the same way a person can.

ANNE

Like what?

3

I've been thinking about  
Palestine. And I've been thinking  
about nursing.

ANNE

Hm. ... Margot, have you ever kissed a boy?

3 (*nope*)

Um-

ANNE

Do you think I'm ugly?

3

What kind of question is that?

ANNE

It's a fine question. What do you think? Am I  
ugly?

3

No, my dear sweet insecure  
sister. I don't think  
you're ugly. I'd say you're  
quite cute.

ANNE

I wasn't hoping for cute. I want to be gorgeous,  
like the movie stars.

3

You're thirteen. Give yourself  
time. Boys will be falling all  
over you, and you'll be all the  
rage in Hollywood.

ANNE

Oh no, I don't want to be in Hollywood. I want to  
be a writer. I'm even working on my first book.

3 (*gossipy*)

Oo, well that's exciting. What  
is it about?

ANNE

Well, do you remember when Queen Wilhelmina  
said we need to save diaries and letters and  
things to have record of these times? I've  
decided I'm going to publish my diary.

3

Really? You want all  
those thoughts out there  
for people to read?

ANNE

I'll edit it of course. I've already started a bit. Cutting out some more personal sections, changing names. I can't see Mr. Pfeffer wanting to be remembered for some of the things I've written about him!

*(They giggle.)*

3

So, what's my name, in your book?

ANNE

Fanny Woofenhopper.

3

What?!

ANNE *(laughing)*

Kidding! Kidding! I thought of using your middle name. What do you think?

3

Betti. I like it. Though someone just got named Fanny Woofenhopper in my diary.

ANNE

You're not going to publish it.

3

I might.

ANNE

Oh come on, Margot. I know you. You would never let anyone else see you private thoughts. You'd be mortified to see your diary in a bookstore.

3

Only a little. ... Only a lot.

ANNE

Ha. I knew you were kidding.

*(beat.)*

3

Could I read your diary sometime? Since it's going to be published and all, I'd like to know how people are going to remember me.

ANNE

You can read parts. Can I read yours?

3  
Yes. Certain bits.

ANNE  
Margot?

3  
Yes?

ANNE  
I like having sister time like this.

3  
Me too.

ANNE  
After the war..

3  
We keep sister time.

*(1 sits, opens the diary. 3 sees,  
crosses to 1 and sits beside her.  
2 and 4 gradually cross to 1 and  
sit beside her as well. The picture  
is reminiscent of bicycle tableaux.)*

3  
I wonder how it is decided what we  
will remember.

2  
Will the mass of surviving humanity-

4  
-if we can return to  
a humanity-

2  
-rise up in one collective consciousness to  
determine what is worthy to remain  
in our memories?

1  
Will there be standards?

3  
A vetting process through which  
each recollection must pass before  
it is declared valuable and placed  
in the permanent archives of human  
history?

1  
Maybe there will be a committee.

2  
Of victims.

4

Probably victors.

1

They are tasked with pulling this and that from mankind's infinite mess, and telling us,

3

"This we must remember.

2

This is of no consequence.

4

This we must forget."

3

Those of us who still have our voices can plead our case to the committee,

2

implore them to install us in the archives.

1

But those with no more voices can only hope that the remaining collective consciousness will plead for them.

*(3 ceremoniously closes the diary in 1's lap. THEY rise as one body and turn toward the candles. 4 starts coughing. SHE falls away from the group in a violent coughing fit. THEY keep her from falling to the ground. 2 and 3 help 4, almost dance-like, to Margot's bed while 1 backs away from the group and is drawn toward the candles. 2 (ANNE) helps 4 settle in. 3 subtly (but not unseen) wheels the bicycle offstage over the following:)*

ANNE *(getting into the bed beside 4)*

we can lie here, the two of us. and we won't be bothered. we'll have some peace. and then, we'll be well again, and go back to our regular barracks. but for now, this is good. we can be together. sister time.

*(4 whispers something to ANNE. SHE can speak no louder than this.)*



ANNE

today? today is... today is... i've lost track.  
it's winter. i know that. and... i know the year.  
nineteen-forty-five. and... is it really so  
important that you know?

*(4 whispers to ANNE again. 1 slowly  
lights both tapered candles.) [1  
touches one of the tapered candles,  
curiously runs her down it, feels  
the smoothness of the wax.]*

ANNE

but you are here. i can see you. i can touch  
you. i can hear you, even though your voice is  
small now.

*(4 whispers once more.) [1 touches  
the other tapered candle.]*

ANNE

sleep, margot. so i can sleep. i'm tired.

*(ANNE closes her eyes. 4 remains  
awake. She makes eye contact with 1.  
[and takes out a match] The  
following should be rhythmic, with  
four clear beats of silence after  
"shesh". SHE blows out the candles  
on beat 11.)*

1 *(Hebrew)*

achat, shtayim, shelosh, arbah, chamesh, shesh, ... ..

*(She blows out the candles. [SHE  
tries to strike the match on beat  
11. It does not light.]  
Blackout.)*

*(Lights up. ACTRESS is alone  
onstage, holding the diary in  
reverence and a little fear. SHE  
looks around, shuts it. SHE  
takes off her glasses, sees the  
memorial candle. SHE is drawn to  
it. MYSTERY STAGE HAND enters.  
HE does not notice the ACTRESS  
in the corner - maybe. HE goes  
about cleaning up the stage,  
each prop, each costume a soul  
to be cherished, remembered. The  
ACTRESS watches. SHE lights the  
memorial candle as he sings.*

*[SHE takes out a match, goes to strike it, rethinks. SHE picks up the candle and blows gently across it. The candle lights. SHE puts it back on the table.]*)

BOYFRIEND (sung<sup>3</sup>)

El malei rachamim  
 shochein bamromim  
 Hamzei m'nucha n'chona  
 tachat kanfei ha'Shechinah  
 b'maalot k'doshim u't'horim  
 k'zohar harakia mazhirim  
 et nishmot shesh milyon  
 acheinu v'ach'yoteinu  
 shenehergu al kiddush haShem  
 Ba'al Ha'Rachamim yastireim  
 b'seter k'nafav l'olamim  
 v'yitzror bitzror hachayim et nishmatam  
 Adonai hu nachalatom  
 v'yanuch b'shalom  
 al mishkavam  
 V'nomar, amen.

*(HE exits out of the ACTRESS'S view. The ACTRESS puts the diary into her bag, starts to leave, but stops. Turns around. SHE approaches Anne's diary left on stage. SHE takes Margot's diary from her bag, drops it next to the other. SHE leaves.)*

*(A moment of the empty set save the diaries.)*

*(Lights fade to black.)*

*(The memorial candle still burns.)*

*(End of play.)*

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<sup>3</sup> a melody for this can be found at <https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/yom-hashoaah/songs-and-prayers-observing-yom-hashoaah-holocaust-remembrance-day>  
 Please give credit if used.  
 rev. 10/20/22

## - APPENDIX -

**115: Additional Notes****116: Secondary Characters****117: Character Breakdown by Actor, Historical Notes****118: Translations, Candle Examples****122: Sources****123: "They Say There is a Land" lead sheet**Notes:**LIVE FLAME:**

Make every effort to use live flame. The alternate lines in the case of the theatre not being able to use live flame are a last resort. The memorial candle that hangs from the ceiling and is carried by each actress in the beginning of the play may be electric (ideally on a dimmer), but should be swapped at some point for a real candle (suggested place is noted in the action of the script).

**PRE AND POST-SHOW MUSIC:**

Please focus on highlighting the theme of the play rather than the time period (ie, no big band music please) Traditional instrumental Jewish music would be preferable, especially for post-show. Consider a mellow instrumental version of "Jerusalem of Gold" or something like it.

**THEY SAY THERE IS A LAND:**

The song should be accompanied. Chords to guide an accompaniment are provided in this appendix. The accompaniment can use any instrumentation, be live or recorded. Actors may sing harmonies based on the provided chord progressions if desired.

**CURTAIN CALL:**

Because Margot and many like her were suddenly taken from this world and all but forgotten, the playwright suggests considering performing this without a curtain call, to avoid giving the audience a sense of closure, and leaving them to reflect on the loss rather than on rewarding actors' performances. She would further suggest, if you must have a curtain call, to only include the Actress and Mystery Stage Hand, and leave the Margots in her diary.

**ANNE:**

Whenever possible, the actress playing Anne should be carrying Anne's diary (except in the camps).

**COSTUMES:**

Resist the urge to over-costume.  
Do not use costumes specifically for the camps.  
Please use pictures of Margot Frank to determine the look of the actresses.

## SHOAH MEMORIAL PRAYER:

Consider printing the translation to the prayer in the program as it does not appear in the script.

## ANNE'S DIARY:

This play is not based on Anne Frank's diary. While you may use her diary for background research, please base characters and events on their portrayal in *this* script, not on Anne's book and point of view.

Secondary Characters:<sup>4</sup>

Barbara Lederman: Margot's school friend. She became part of a ballet ensemble that worked with the resistance to help Jews escape the Netherlands.

Edith Frank: Margot's mother

Otto Frank: Margot's father

Anne Frank: Margot's younger sister

Gertrud: A neighbor of the Frank family in the Netherlands.

Miep Gies: Otto Frank's secretary at Opekta (a pectin company), turned helper to the eight in hiding. She was married to Jan Gies, who worked in the resistance. The two of them also hid a young man in their home.

Auguste van Pels\*: Hermann's wife

Hermann van Pels\*: Otto's business partner

Peter van Pels\*: Hermann and Auguste's son

Fritz Pfeffer\*: a dentist, engaged to a Christian woman, Charolette Kaletta. Was taken into the hiding place when he asked Miep if she knew of anywhere to hide.

Hilde: Margot's Catholic friend from her first home in Germany

"Deacon": Margot's Catholic friend from her first home in Germany (not really a deacon)

Rebekka: Friend of the Franks, reunited with Margot and Anne in Bergen-Belsen

Jannie: Friend of the Franks, reunited with Margot and Anne in Bergen-Belsen

SS Officers

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<sup>4</sup> Anne changed the names of many people in her diary. The van Pels became the van Daans (Auguste became Petronella), and Fritz Pfeffer became Alfred Dussel. Since this play is not based off of Anne's diary, it uses the historical names of these people.

Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen prisoners: prisoners assigned to help new arrivals off trains often gave the new prisoners hurried advice on how to survive in the camps.

Character Breakdown by Actor:

1:	2:	3:	4:
Actress	Anne Frank	Edith Frank	Edith Frank
SS Officers	Miep Gies	Barbara	SS Officer
Otto Frank	Radio Announcer	Anne Frank	Peter van Pels
Gertrud		"Deacon"	Hilde
Hermann van Pels		Jannie	Fritz Pfeffer
Auguste van Pels			Anne Frank
Rebekka			Queen Wilhelmina
			Miep Gies

Historical Notes:

The Secret Annex: The rooms behind Otto's offices where the Franks, van Pels and Fritz Pfeffer hid. It was called different things by different people. The term "annex" was coined by Anne. The adults in the hiding place called it the "orphanage."

Jewish people could not be seen out with suitcases for obvious reasons. In order not to arouse suspicion while traveling to their hiding place, the Franks instead wore multiple layers of clothing to get part of their wardrobe to the annex. The goal was to blend in. Any costumes that would look conspicuous on 3 walking into the annex should already be preset on the stage (a fur coat, hats, etc.)

"The words, "Arbeit Macht Frei" (Work Will Set You Free) appeared on the metal archway leading into Auschwitz.

Upon arrival at Auschwitz, prisoners were subjected to "selection." Children 14 and under (Anne Frank had turned fifteen that year), the elderly, the disabled, the sick, pregnant women, mothers with babes in arms, and anyone deemed by the Nazis or Nazi doctors not fit to work were sent to the left and immediately taken to the gas chambers. The Nazis offered a truck ride to the camp for people too old or sick to walk. These trucks went straight to the gas chambers. The vast majority of prisoners were gassed the day they arrived at Auschwitz. Those fit to work (an average of 20%) were sent to the right and taken into the camp to die from overwork, starvation, disease, further selections, or the whims of the guards.

Translations:Page 13-14

**Call-up notice** (Dutch)

*Attention! You are hereby ordered to take part in the police-supervised expansion of work in Germany, and as a result, you must be at the Central Station, Amsterdam, at half past ten. You may take as luggage*

**Één** (Dutch) *One*

**Twee** (Dutch) *Two*

Page 14-16

**"Raus!"** (German) *Out*

**"Schnell!"** (German) *Fast!*

**"Raus aus dem Zug"** (German) *Get off the train*

**"Rechts"** (German) *Right*

**"Links"** (German) *Left*

**"Duizend mensen"** (Dutch) *A thousand people*

**"Tausend Menschen"** (German) *A thousand people*

**"Mille animas hominum"** (Latin) *A thousand souls*

**"Voelen"** (Dutch) *I feel*

**"Ich fühlemich"** (German) *I feel*

Page 22

**"Peut-être"** (French) *Maybe*

Page 24

**Adonai h'moshiah** (Hebrew) *God save us*

Page 25

**Achat, shtayim, shelosh, arbah, chamesh, shesh, shvah, shemoni, tehshah, esehr** (Hebrew) *numbers 1-10*

Page 28

**Traveler's Prayer** (Hebrew) *Translation in script*

**"Baruch Atah Adonai shomei'ah tefilah"** (Hebrew) *Praised are You, Adonai, who listens to prayer.*

Page 29-30

**"Kinder und ältere Menschen, auf den Lastwagen"** (German) *Children and elderly, on the trucks.*

**"Männer hier"** (German) *Men here*

**"Frauen dort"** (German) *Women there*

**"Arbeit macht frei"** (German) *Work will set you free*

Page 44

**"Joden zijn hier nietgewenst"** (Dutch) *Jews are not welcome here*

Page 47

**"Steigt aus dem Zug aus"** (German) *Get off the train.*

**"Lasst eure Sachen"** (German) *Leave your things.*

Page 48

**"Strap next oude vrachtwagens"** (Dutch) *Don't get on the trucks.*

**"Jesteś zdrowy, słyszysz"** (Polish) *You're healthy, you hear?*

**"Ayez l'air en bonne santé"** (French) *Look healthy.*

**"Dolgozhatsz"** (Hungarian) *You can work.*

**"Zeg datje vijftien"** (Dutch) *Say you're fifteen.*

**"Nie mów im, że jesteś w ciąży"** (Polish) *Don't tell them you're pregnant.*

**"Mondd, hogy negyven éves vagy"** (Hungarian) *Say you're forty.*

**"N'abandonnez pas vos chaussures"** (French) *Don't give up your shoes.*

Page 50

**"Arbeiten!"** (German) *Work!*

Page 57

**"Du hast Juden hier. Wo sind sie?"** (German) *You have Jews here. Where are they?*

**"Hier gibt es keine Juden."** (German) *We have no Jews here.*

**"Was steckt hier dahinter?"** (German) *What's behind here?*

**"Lager"** (German) *Storage.*

**"Gib mir die Schlüssel"** (German) *Give me the keys.*

**"Bleib hier, Miep. Sag nichts."** (German) *Stay here, Miep. Say nothing.*

Page 66

**"Judica me, Deus, et discerne causam meam de gente non sancta: abhominem iniquo et doloso erue me"** (Latin)

*Judge me, O God, and discern my cause from that of a nation not holy: rescue me from a man unjust and deceitful.*

**"Quia tu es, Deus, fortitudo mea: square me repulisti, et quart trusts incedo, dum afflicti me inimicus"** (Latin)

*For you are God, my strength. Why hast Thou cast me off? Why do I walk in sadness, while the adversary afflicts me?*

**"Emitte lucem tuam"** (Latin) *Send forth Thy light and Thy truth.*

Page 67

**"un duo tria quattuor quinque, sex, septum, otto, nove, decem"** (Latin) *Numbers 1-10*

Page 81

**"Zier er niet uit"** (Dutch) *Don't look weak*

**"Ne teryay tarelku"** (Russian) *Don't lose your bowl*

**"Nie chodź do chorych"** (Polish) *Don't go to the sick barracks*

Page 83



**"aufstehen"** (German) *Get up*

**"steh auf, jüdisches Schwein"** (German) *Get up, Jewish pig*

**"hör auf"** (German) *Stop it*

**"Sie ist müde. Bitte"** (German) *She is tired. Please.*

**"Dreckiger Jude"** (German) *Dirty Jew*

Page 90

**"Jetzt"** (German) *Now*

Page 114

**"El malei rachamim"** prayer (Hebrew):

Exalted, compassionate God, grant infinite rest in Your sheltering presence, among the holy and pure, to the souls of our six million brethren who perished in the Shoah - men, women, and children of the House of Israel who were slaughtered, suffocated, and burned to ashes. May their memory endure and inspire deeds of charity and goodness in our lives. May their souls thus be bound up in the bond of life. May they rest in peace. And let us say: Amen.

Examples of Passover and Yahrzeit memorial candles:



[sofyatamarkin.com](http://sofyatamarkin.com)



[reformjudaism.org](http://reformjudaism.org)

SOURCES:

Müller, Melissa. *Anne Frank, The Biography*, Metropolitan Books, New York, NY, 1998.

Gies, Miep. *Anne Frank Remembered*, Simon & Schuster Inc., New York, NY, 1987.

Frank, Anne. ed. Otto Frank, Mirjam Pressler. *The Diary of a Young Girl, The Definitive Edition*, Doubleday, 1995.

The Anne Frank House at [annefrank.org](http://annefrank.org)

The collections and interviews gathered by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Latin quotes taken from:

Smith, M.L. *Elementary Latin*, Allyn and Bacon, 1920.

**THEY SAY THERE IS LAND<sup>5</sup>**

C C/B a a/g  
 They say there's a land, there's a sun drenched land  
 d/f C d a - G/B - C

Where is that land, where is that sun?

C C/B a a/g  
 They say there's a land, a land with seven pillars,  
 d/f C d a e a  
 Seven wand'ring stars there on every hill - - top.

C e/g F G a  
 Where is that l-a-n-d, and the stars upon the hill?

C C e  
 Who will walk me through?

F G C  
 Who will show the path to me?

C C/B  
 We have passed through deserts,  
 a a/g

We have passed through oceans,  
 d/f C d a G/B C  
 We have crossed through many, and our strength is al - most gone.

C C/B a a/g  
 How have we become lost, and are not at rest,  
 d/f C d a e a  
 That the land of sun, that the land has not been found?

C e/g F G a  
 Where it shall be ful-filled: all the hopes of man - kind.

C C - e F G C  
 All who enter in, there, approaches A - ki - va

C C/B a a/g  
 They say there's a land, there's a sun drenched land  
 d/f C d a - d6 - a

Where is that land, where is that sun?

<sup>5</sup> Written by Shaul Tchernichovsky. Youtube example of this tune: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNdXqxoclXU&list=PLcFg-YQ4GGYQjymQSwwEQBZfmJfH3OuZ&index=2> (arrangement by Naomi Shemer)