

Railroad

A stageplay by

Bryan Reynolds

(European Polytheater)

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Characters

Jewish-Dutch Family:

JOEL MAYER (30)

His wife HANNAH MAYER (26)

Their son DANIEL MAYER (7)

His sister LIBI MAYER (3)

German-Nazis Family:

KLAUS REINHARD (30)

His wife MARIE REINHARD (26)

Their son JANNI REINHARD(7)

His sister SARAH REINHARD (3)

American Family:

HENRY (30)

His wife LAUREN(26)

Their son STEPHEN(7)

His sister LISA (3)

GERMAN SOLDIER (all appearances)

WOMAN HAWKER

KAREN ZUCKERMAN

Unless otherwise indicated with the word "actual," as in "actual GERMAN LUGER needed," there is no need for actual props -- they should be represented imaginatively. There should be no significant costume changes. The actors should never leave the stage.

1 PROLOGUE: IN NO PARTICULAR PLACE

1

(Libi spins her dreidel.)

DANIEL

(sings)

I have a little dreidel,
I made it out of clay,
And when it's dry and ready,
Then dreidel I shall play!

Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel
I made it out of clay,
And when it's dry and ready,
Then dreidel I shall play!

(Daniel spins his dreidel.)

LIBI

(sings)

Sivivon, sov, sov, sov
Sivivon, sov, sov, sov
Hanukkah, hu chag tov
Hanukkah, hu chag tov
Sivivon, sov, sov, sov!

(Libi spins her dreidel, and Daniel spins his again.)

DANIEL

(sings)

It has a lovely body,
With legs so short and thin,
And when my dreidel's tired,
It drops and then I win!

LIBI

(sings)

Sivivon, sov, sov, sov
Sivivon, sov, sov, sov
Hanukkah, hu chag tov
Hanukkah, hu chag tov
Sivivon, sov, sov, sov!

(They spin their dreidels again.)

DANIEL

(sings)

My dreidel's always playful,
It loves to dance and spin,
A happy game of dreidel,
Come play now, let's begin!

2 THE REINHARD'S APARTMENT - FRANKFURT - EARLY MORNING. 2

(Marie is in bed.

Klaus quietly enters. He lies down next to Marie, and begins kissing her, making love to her, as he moves on top of her.

Marie awakens blissfully.)

KLAUS
I love you.

MARIE
Hi. I love you, more.

KLAUS
And who am I?

MARIE
You -- you are Klausie, my one and only.

KLAUS
I am Major Klaus.

MARIE
Major Klaus! Good God, that's wonderful.

KLAUS
Yes, Himmler himself sent the letter of promotion.

MARIE
Wow. With his signature on it?

KLAUS
(taking the letter out of his pocket)
Of course. See, here it is...

MARIE
I'm so proud of you... My Klausie-Klaus...

(Marie grabs it, marvels at it, and hurriedly begins undressing Klaus, and he helps her, as they kiss and caress each other, making love a little too loudly, such that the children wake.

In runs Janni, followed by an equally excited Sarah.)

JANNI
Daddy, daddy, daddy... Daddy's
home. Yeah! Yeah!

SARAH
Daddy, daddy, daddy, daddy...

(They jump on their daddy, and he hugs and kisses them.)

MARIE
Not so rough. Gentle. Careful
Janni.

KLAUS
Janni and Sarah, I have missed you
so much...

MARIE
Daddy has some great news.

SARAH
Great news. Daddy's got news. News.

(Sarah looks around for the news.)

JANNI
Let me guess. Can I guess?

KLAUS
You can try. But first, I have a
gift for both of you.

SARAH
I want it. I want it. What is it?

(Klaus takes two chocolate bars out of his jacket pocket, and
hands them to the children.)

SARAH (cont'd)
Chocolate bars! Thank you daddy.

(She sits down and opens her bar.)

JANNI
My favorite. Thanks dad.

KLAUS
(to Marie)
I've one for you too.

(He hands Marie a bar.)

JANNI

But what's the big news?

KLAUS

It's big--

JANNI

The Führer spoke to you. He shook your hand. Did you meet the führer? What's he--

KLAUS

Not exactly. But the Führer did speak to me, indirectly -- on paper.

JANNI

A letter to you? He wrote you a letter. Can I see it?

MARIE

Your father got promoted. He's a major now.

SARAH

(toasting with chocolate)
Daddy's a major. Major daddy.

JANNI

That's so great. My daddy's a major. He kills lots of bad guys.

MARIE

No, he just makes them leave Germany.

JANNI

Are we going to celebrate?

SARAH

Can we go sleigh riding? I want to go sleigh riding.

(Marie throws Klaus an inquisitive, hopeful glance.)

KLAUS

Yes, yes, I am going to come home for Christmas.

MARIE

And New Year's, too?

KLAUS
Yes, the holidays are all ours!

3 THE KILL SONG - NO PARTICULAR PLACE 3

(The actors playing Lauren, Stephen, and Lisa play a Jewish mother and her children, the same ages as the Reinhard's.

They line up in a row, on their knees, hands behind their heads. They face the audience.

Klaus enters carrying his LUGER (actual GERMAN LUGER needed -- this prop must be used), and sings and dances throughout the scene.)

KLAUS
I will do anything, anything,
anything

For my Führer

Adolf, Adolf
Hitler, Hitler
Adolf Hitler
Adolf Hitler

(He pretends to shoot each of the Jews in the back of the head with his finger.)

KLAUS (cont'd)
Bang. Bang. Bang.

(After a few moments, they line up again, facing the audience.)

KLAUS (cont'd)
I will do anything, anything,
anything

For my Fatherland

Germany, Germany, Germany

(He shoots each of the Jews in the back of the head with his Luger. After a few moments, they line up again, facing the audience.

Klaus does the famous Nazis salute and march toward the audience.)

KLAUS (cont'd)
Heil Hitler!
Heil Hitler!
Heil Hitler!

(From behind he rapes the mother, as the children watch.)

KLAUS (cont'd)
I will do anything, anything,
anything

For my Führer

Adolf, Adolf
Hitler, Hitler
Adolf Hitler
Adolf Hitler

(He pushes the mother to the ground, steps on her, and shoots her.)

KLAUS (cont'd)
I will do anything, anything,
anything

For my Fatherland

Germany, Germany, Germany

(He rapes the boy from behind as his sister watches. When she screams uncontrollably, he shoots her. He then shoots the boy. He then dances around, only to do once more the famous Nazis salute and march toward the audience.)

KLAUS (cont'd)
Heil Hitler!
Heil Hitler!
Heil Hitler!

4 THE MAYER'S APARTMENT - ROTTERDAM - EVENING

4

(Hannah is reading a book to Daniel and Libi.)

HANNAH
...even though Peter did not do all
the things his mother and father
asked of him, and even though Peter
did not apologize for not having
done them, Peter's parents still--

(Joel enters.)

HANNAH (cont'd)

Joel.

(Libi jumps up and down.)

LIBI

Daddy's home! Daddy's home! Daddy!

(She runs into his arms and kisses him.)

HANNAH

Daddy's home!

(Joel gives Hannah a kiss on the lips, then Daniel a kiss on his forehead.)

DANIEL

What's the matter dad?

JOEL

Nothing. I have a surprise for you.

LIBI

A surprise. We get a surprise.
Surprise. (to Hannah) That's daddy,
and he's got a surprise.

HANNAH

I wonder what it is.

DANIEL

Dad, come on, what is it?

(Joel takes out two chocolate bars from his jacket pocket.)

HANNAH

Are those chocolate bars?

DANIEL

Chocolate bars!

(Joel hands a bar to each of the children.)

JOEL

Now, don't eat them all at once. Be
sure to save some.

LIBI

Happy Hanukkah daddy. Happy
Hanukkah.

(She runs to a spot, sits, peels open her bar, and eats.)

JOEL
Happy Hanukkah -- my sweet little
angel.

DANIEL
I can't believe it. Thanks dad.

(Daniel marvels at the bar. He then sits down next to Libi,
peels, and eats.)

HANNAH
You've made them very happy. But
where did you get them?

(Pause.)

HANNAH (cont'd)
How did you get them? What did you
do?

(Pause.)

JOEL
I used a little of our savings. I
didn't do anything. I wouldn't do
anything.

5 JOEL REMEMBERS: ROTTERDAM STREET - DAY

5

(Hannah observes, like any member of the audience the action
of the scene. She is not made privy to what actually
occurred.

Jewish WOMAN HAWKER is standing, waiting, discreetly.

A GERMAN SOLDIER walks by, not noticing her.

Joel passes the soldier, and walks up to the woman.)

JOEL
Hi. Here is the money.

(He gives her some bills, which she quickly puts away. She
gives him three chocolate bars.)

WOMAN HAWKER
Three of the very best -- Swiss.

JOEL
Thank you.

WOMAN HAWKER

Mozal tov.

(Joel turns and walks back the way he came. The German soldier turns around, as if he forgot something.)

GERMAN SOLDIER

Du da, Jude, bleib stehen. (You, Jew, stop, there, stop, you.)

JOEL

Me?

GERMAN SOLDIER

Ja Du. Was hast Du in Deinen Hosentaschen? Leer sie aus, schnell. (Yes, you. What do you have in your pockets? Empty your pockets, now!)

(Behind the soldier, the woman walks across the stage, trying to leave the scene.)

Joel removes the bars from his pocket. The soldier grabs them.)

GERMAN SOLDIER (cont'd)

I will Zigaretten. Wo zum Teufel hast Du die her, Du Drecksjude? (I wanted cigarettes. But where the fuck did you get these, you dirty, stinking Jew?)

(By accident, Joel glances at the woman leaving. Seeing this, the soldier snaps around. The woman starts to run. The soldier throws the bars to catch the woman by her hair. He flings her to the ground and kicks her.)

GERMAN SOLDIER (cont'd)

Du Judenhure. Wo hast Du die Schokolade her? (You cunt, Jew. Where did you get the chocolate?)

(Pause.)

He steps on her throat.)

GERMAN SOLDIER (cont'd)

Sag's mir. (Tell me.)

WOMAN

Never.

(He crushes her throat, suffocating her to death as she hopelessly struggles to free herself.)

Joel grabs two of the bars, but does not dare reach out for the third, which is closer to the soldier. He scurries off before the soldier notices him again.)

6 MAYER'S APARTMENT - ROTTERDAM

6

(Same scene as before Joel's flashback. Libi and Daniel are busy eating their chocolate.)

HANNAH

Something's wrong. What happened?

JOEL

It was terrible. Hannah.
Unspeakable.

HANNAH

Then don't speak it. That you are here is enough.

JOEL

Anything other than survival is beyond the scope of reason.

HANNAH

I'm not sure what you mean. There must be more to life.

JOEL

Yes, so, when is survival unreasonable? I mean, is the practical no longer practical without any promise of joy, when freedom has lost hope.

HANNAH

Freedom has not lost hope. (looking at the children) There is hope -- where there is faith.

JOEL

But every day is more terrible than the day before. God save us.

(They hug, and as they hug, the scene changes into the Reinhard's apartment.)

7 THE REINHARD'S APARTMENT - FRANKFURT

7

(Klaus and Marie are hugging. Janni and Sarah are sleeping in the background.)

MARIE

God save us -- if any thing happens to the Reich. What in the world would we do? It's just not possible.

KLAUS

I'm sorry I brought it up. It's just that I think about Janni and Sarah and--

MARIE

I just can't imagine them living in a world without our Führer.

KLAUS

But we lived without Hitler.

MARIE

Yes, but remember our lives then. Think of Germany under Hindenberg -- no soul, no joy. Can you imagine living like our parents did? Janni and Sarah wouldn't be able to adjust. And you -- you go back to work for my father--

KLAUS

Calm down, Marie. I just thought we should discuss it. There's been talk that we're over-extending ourselves and losing support. We are not a big country, and we don't have endless resources, and--

(Janni awakens and listens unnoticed.)

MARIE

But we have passion, and morals, and faith -- we have pride, the richest culture in the world, the strongest people -- we can never give up our struggle, for right is on our side--

(Janni comes forward.)

KLAUS

But goodness and justice do not
always prevail. The Führer is not
supported by everyone.

JANNI

Who are you talking about, daddy?
Only bad people -- the Jews and
Communists -- do not support the
fatherland. Our Führer is loved by
all good people.

KLAUS

That's true Janni. But you really
need to go back to bed now. Mommy
and I are talking. Please Janni --
back to bed.

JANNI

(obviously a recitation)

That is the greatest thing about
him,
That he is not only our leader and
a great hero,
But himself, upright, firm and
simple.
In him are the roots of our world.
And his soul touches the stars,
And yet he remains a man like you
and me.

(Sarah approaches.)

KLAUS

Yes, son, and when you become a
man, you will--

SARAH

(obviously a recitation)

Führer, my Führer, given me by God,
Protect and preserve my life for
long.
You rescued Germany from its
deepest need.
I thank you for my daily bread.
Stay for a long time with me, leave
me not.
Führer, my Führer, my faith, my
light.
Hail my Führer.

JANNI
Hail my Führer.

MARIE
Sarah, that was so good. You are
such a smart girl.

KLAUS
You too, Janni, you are such a
smart boy. You make us very proud.
Now, please, both of you, back to
bed.

MARIE
Come along you two.

(Marie leads them back to bed.)

SARAH
I want cookies. I want cookies.
Cookies.

MARIE
You can have cookies in the
morning. You must sleep now.

JANNI
Good night daddy. Night mommy.

SARAH
Good night. Night, night.

(Marie lays down with Sarah.

Klaus remains, thinking, for some time, then lays down to
sleep.)

8 MAYER'S APARTMENT - ROTTERDAM - NIGHT

8

(Everyone is sleeping. There is persistent pounding on the
front door. Joel gets up. Libi starts crying.)

HANNAH
(to Libi)
Don't worry darling. It's just
someone at the door.

(She continues to cry. Daniel gets up.)

DANIEL
Mom, who is it?

(Joel walks towards them.)

DANIEL (cont'd)
Dad, who is it?

(The pounding continues.)

JOEL
I'll go check.

HANNAH
Joel. Be careful.

LIBI
No! Daddy. Daddy, don't go!

HANNAH
He'll be right back, honey, don't
you worry.

DANIEL
I'm scared.

(Joel walks to the door. A German Soldier is at the door.)

JOEL
Hello. Who's there?

GERMAN SOLDIER
Mach die Tür auf! Auf Befehl des
Führers, mach sofort auf. (Open the
door! By order of the Führer, open
it at once!)

(Joel opens the door, and the soldier pushes his way in,
knocking Joel down.)

GERMAN SOLDIER (cont'd)
Steh auf. Wo ist Deine Familie.
Bring sie her. (Get up. Where is
your family? Get them in here.)

JOEL
Why?

(The soldier smacks him in the face.)

GERMAN SOLDIER
Hol sie, Jude, sonst tu ich es.
(Get them, Jew, or I will.)

(Hannah comes forward with Libi, who continues to cry.)

GERMAN SOLDIER (cont'd)
(looking at a clipboard,
reading aloud)
Familie Mayer, zwei Kinder, ein
Junge und ein Mädchen. Ihr habt
fünf Minuten, Eure Sachen
zusammenzupacken. (The Mayers, with
two children -- boy and girl. You
have five minutes to gather your
belongings together.)

JOEL
What are you talking about?

GERMAN SOLDIER
Ihr werdet umgesiedelt. Packt Euren
Kram zusammen. Jeder eine Tasche.
Nur eine. In fünf Minuten seid Ihr
draussen. Und wehe, Ihr braucht
länger. (You are being relocated.
Get your stuff together. One bag
each. That's all. You have five
minutes now to be out front. Do not
take longer.)

(The soldier exits. Joel and Hannah stare at each other for a
long moment.)

JOEL
Let's go. Everything is going to be
alright.

HANNAH
But what do we take?

JOEL
I'll get the valuables -- photos,
jewelry, papers, and my and
Daniel's clothes. You get Libi's
and yours. Libi, please stop
crying. (to Hannah) Be sure to grab
some food, raisins, cookies.

DANIEL
Where are we going?

JOEL
Just to a new location. Daniel, we
have no time to discuss it now. Be
a man, and pack your knapsack as if
we're going camping -- as quickly
as possible.

DANIEL
But dad, I don't--

JOEL
No buts.

(Daniel rushes off to do this. Joel pauses for a quick, silent prayer.)

9 RAILROAD STATION

9

(Sounds of steam engines and commotion fill the air.)

HANNAH
They just separated that family.
The mother didn't fit into the car.
How can they do that? What if we
all don't fit?

JOEL
Everyone stay close.

(Libi starts to walk away.)

JOEL (cont'd)
Libi, stay right here!

(She cries.)

LIBI
I don't want to go. No, no, no.

(She runs. Joel catches her.)

DANIEL
Dad, they're smushing everyone into
the cars. We're not going to be
able to breathe in there. They
can't even sit down. There is no
way they will be able to sit down.

HANNAH
(softly, to Joel)
There are well over a hundred
people in that car.

JOEL
I'm sure it's for only a short
distance.

LIBI

I don't want to go.

HANNAH

Nobody does, honey, but we are all going. We will be at our new home soon.

JOEL

There, I just heard the officer say not to worry. The trip is short. Probably an hour or so.

DANIEL

An hour, or so? Nobody can be in there for an hour. I'm not going.

HANNAH

Yes, you are! You are going. You don't have a choice.

DANIEL

They can't make me.

HANNAH

Look Daniel -- see them forcing that girl in.

DANIEL

They're beating her up -- and her dad. Why are they doing--

JOEL

Stop it. Quiet. Just everyone be calm--

(A gunshot goes off.)

DANIEL

They killed her. That soldier shot her.

HANNAH

My God!

(Daniel cries. Libi cries.)

LIBI

No, no, no, nooo.

JOEL

Here we go. They're motioning for us. Stay close. We're going to be okay.

10

KLAUS'S DREAM: THE WOODS

10

(The family walks along quietly, Klaus, followed by Marie, Janni, then Sarah dragging behind.)

KLAUS

Come on Sarah. We're almost there.

JANNI

Where dad? We're in the middle of nowhere.

SARAH

I'm cold.

MARIE

Come here darling. Take mommy's hand.

(Sarah takes her hand.)

SARAH

Where are we going?

MARIE

We'll be there soon.

SARAH

Why?

KLAUS

(quietly)

I was thinking of that meadow.

MARIE

I know, but it just seems so much further than I remembered.

JANNI

I can't walk anymore.

KLAUS

Yes, you can, you can for Germany.

JANNI

You don't care about Germany.

MARIE

How can you say that? Your father is an officer -- a major.

JANNI

But I heard him say we're losing the war. Last night I heard him. And that was not the first time. We can't lose.

MARIE

Your father knows that, Janni.

KLAUS

You misunderstood, son. In every war, you win and lose some battles. This is life. There is no doubt that we will win the war.

JANNI

That's right.

KLAUS

I think this spot will do.

(Marie and Klaus look intently at each other. Klaus puts down the picnic basket and steps back.)

MARIE

Come on kids. Help mommy get the picnic out.

JANNI

It's freezing here.

MARIE

Come, take the blanket.

(Discretely, Klaus takes out his luger. Marie notices.)

MARIE (cont'd)

Let's spread out the blanket. Come on. I, I love you both.

(As Janni and Sarah bend over to spread the blanket, Klaus points the gun at Janni. Marie sees him, and looks away.)

SARAH

I want the blanket. My blanket.

(Klaus shoots Janni in the back of the head, then quickly shoots at Sarah, but misses her. Sarah turns, facing him.)

SARAH (cont'd)

Daddy.

(He hesitates, then shoots Sarah in the face, killing her instantly. Marie leans over her children, but cannot touch them. She stands abruptly.)

MARIE

Do it now. Quickly. Now! Heil
Hitler! Heil Hitler! Heil--

(Klaus raises his gun and shoots her point-blank in the forehead. She drops. He begins to cry.

He puts the gun to his own head.)

KLAUS

(chanting, with increasing
intensity)

Adolf, Adolf
Hitler, Hitler
Adolf Hitler
Adolf Hitler

Adolf, Adolf
Hitler, Hitler
Adolf Hitler
Adolf Hitler

Heil Hitler!
Heil Hitler!
Heil Hitler!

(He lowers his gun, takes a moment, and walks away.)

11 THE REINHARD'S APARTMENT - FRANKFURT

11

(Klaus wakes up from the nightmare. The rest of the family is sleeping.)

KLAUS

(suddenly rising)

No! No, no, never.

MARIE

Klausie, what's the matter? Are you
alright?

KLAUS

The most horrible dream.

MARIE

What happened?

KLAUS

It was terrible. There was a meadow... Unspeakable.

MARIE

Then don't speak it. That you are here is enough. It's Christmas.

KLAUS

It sure is, and it's good to be here, with you. I love you.

(They kiss.)

Janni runs in, with Sarah following.)

SARAH

Here daddy, and mommy, we made you these cookies.

JANNI

Special Christmas cookies, with swastikas on them.

(Janni hands them each a cookie.)

KLAUS

(looking at the cookie)
Why, thank you -- when did you make these?

MARIE

(aside to Klaus)
A few days ago. (to the kids) Thank you dears. These are lovely.

JANNI

We want to sing for you.

(Janni pulls Sarah next to him, and they begin to sing. Sarah dances at some point.)

JANNI/SARAH

Stille Nacht! Heil'ge Nacht!
Wo sich heut alle Macht
Väterlicher Liebe ergoß
Und als Bruder Huldvoll umschloß
Jesus die Völker der Welt!
Jesus die Völker der Welt!

(MORE)

JANNI/SARAH (cont'd)

Stille Nacht! Heil'ge Nacht!
Lange schon uns bedacht,
Als der Herr vom Grimme befreyt,
In der Väter urgrauer Zeit

(Klaus and Marie join in.)

JANNI/SARAH/KLAUS/MARIE

Aller Welt Schonung verhieß!
Aller Welt Schonung verhieß!

Stille Nacht! Heil'ge Nacht!
Hirten erst kundgemacht
Durch der Engel "Hallelujah!",
Tönt es laut bey Ferne und Nah:
"Jesus der Retter ist da!"
"Jesus der Retter ist da!"

12 IN THE RAILROAD BOXCAR

12

(Joel, Hannah, Daniel, and Libi are standing, their bodies pressed uncomfortably against each other. After some silence, they sing "Rock of Ages," with recorded voice-over accompaniment by many voices.)

JOAL/HANNAH/DANIEL/LIBI

Ma'oz tzur y'shu'ati,
L'cha na'eh l'shabei'ach,
Tikon beit t'filati,
V'sham todah n'zabei'ach.
L'eit tachin matbei'ach,
Mitzar ham'nabei'ach,
Az egmor b'shir mizmor,
Chanukat hamizbei'ach.

Y'vanim nikb'tzu alai,
Azai bimey Chashmanim,
Ufartzu chomot migdalai,
V'tim'u kol hash'manim,
Uminotar kankanim,
Na'asah nes l'shoshanim,
B'ney vinah y'mey shmonah,
Kav'u shir urnanim.

(Libi starts crying hysterically.)

HANNAH

What is it, Libi, my darling?

LIBI
I'm hungry. I'm hungry. Hungry.

HANNAH
It will just be a little while longer.

LIBI
Why? I'm hungry. Hungry.

HANNAH
You must stop crying.

LIBI
Hungry!

JOEL
Please, Libi.

LIBI
Hungry! Hungry!

JOEL
Libi, there is no food.

LIBI
Hungry. I want water. Water!

JOEL
No water. I am sorry Libi, but we have no water.

LIBI
I want water.

HANNAH
It won't be long.

LIBI
Water. Water.

DANIEL
We have been stopped for hours. What makes you think we're ever going anywhere? The floor is full of pee, my pants are all wet, and I cannot stand the smell of Libi's poop any longer, of everyone's poop. This whole place stinks. I can't breathe any more.

HANNAH

Please calm down. Lower your voice.

(Daniel starts crying.)

DANIEL

Get us out of here!

JOEL

When the train stopped, Daniel, you remember they said there was a mechanical problem, and so they must fix it. These things take time.

DANIEL

There is no time, dad.

HANNAH

Daniel, please, you must control yourself.

DANIEL

We're dying in here.

(Pause.)

JOEL

If anyone has to pee, let me know.

DANIEL

Why?

JOEL

Because I want you to put it in this bottle.

DANIEL

That's disgusting. Why? I'm not doing that.

JOEL

You are -- you will.

LIBI

Daddy. Daddy.

JOEL

Yes, Libi.

LIBI

Can you pick me up? Up. Up.

JOEL

Yes, but only for a short while. My arms are very tired.

HANNAH

I can take her again soon.

LIBI

I don't want to be in poopies and pee pee. Nooo.

(She starts to cry. Joel picks her up.)

DANIEL

It's puke.

HANNAH

Daniel.

LIBI

What's "puke"?

DANIEL

What's all over your feet, on the floor, everywhere in here.

LIBI

There's poopies. Poopies.

DANIEL

No, puke. You were sleeping when people were puking. It's when you poop out your mouth. You've done it. (pointing) Those people were doing it. The girl with the doll, with yellow puke all over it.

JOEL

Stop it. Be quiet. Don't say anything for fifteen minutes.

(Several minutes pass.)

DANIEL

It's getting dark. Soon we will have no light in here at all. Then what? Do they expect us to sleep standing up? I want these people off me. I can't breathe. I want out.

HANNAH

Daniel, you must be quiet. Listen
to your father.

(Daniel starts crying. Libi begins crying again.)

DANIEL

Sorry mom, but I want to go home.

HANNAH

We all do. We will be at our new
home soon.

(Pause.)

HANNAH (cont'd)

Joel, can I have that bottle.

JOEL

Yes, here it is.

DANIEL

Mommy, you're not going to pee in
that bottle, are you?

HANNAH

Be quieter Daniel. Keep your voice
down. Yes, I am going to.

(She pees into the bottle.)

LIBI

I'm hungry. Hungry.

DANIEL

Me too.

JOEL

Please try to relax. We have only a
few cookies left, and I think we
should save them for later.

LIBI

Cookies. I want cookies. Cookies.
Cookies.

HANNAH

Libi, darling, you must be quiet,
and patient. You will have plenty
of food soon. We will have a big
dinner.

LIBI

Why?

HANNAH

Because we are all very hungry. So be patient, please.

LIBI

Why?

DANIEL

(to Hannah)

I can hardly see you any more. It's going to be pitch black in here. I'm scared. Someone else is puking. It's getting so loud in here.

HANNAH

Other people are scared too. That's normal. Please, be strong, and relax. This will all be over soon.

LIBI

Why?

HANNAH

Because it must, Libi. It will.

13

IN THE RAILROAD BOXCAR - MORNING

13

(Joel and Hannah are standing, half asleep. Libi is pressed between them, sleeping. Daniel is kneeling on the floor, against their legs. He wakes up, and starts crying.)

DANIEL

Mom, mom, mommy. Dad. Dad.

(Joel and Hannah both awake, not knowing where they are at first.)

HANNAH

Daniel? Daniel, stand up, up.

JOEL

Daniel, are you alright?

DANIEL

I'm all wet. I'm all pee pee and puke, and poo. I need water. I'm so thirsty. I want these people off me. It smells so bad in here.

(He starts to vomit, but nothing comes out. Libi wakes up, and starts crying.)

LIBI
Mommy, mommy. (to Daniel) Daniel,
Dan, Dan, no, no, nooo.

HANNAH
Libi, please calm down. Shhhhh...
Honey, please. Calm, calm.

JOEL
Daniel, we have this.

(He takes out the bottle of urine.)

JOEL (cont'd)
Take a sip of this.

DANIEL
That's pee. I can't drink pee.

JOEL
That's all we have.

(Daniel grabs the bottle and drinks.)

JOEL (cont'd)
Good boy. You are very strong.
Libi, you need to sip this.

LIBI
No, nooo, nope.

(He puts the bottle to her mouth.)

LIBI (cont'd)
I don't want to. No.

(Sound of vehicles arriving.)

HANNAH
You hear that? They're here,
outside the car.

DANIEL
Here, now, and I just drank pee.

JOEL
And you're a better man for it.

HANNAH

Can you hold Libi?

(Suddenly the door to the car opens, and a German soldier appears.)

GERMAN SOLDIER

Alle aufgepasst! Juden aufgepasst!
Seid still. Der Zug ist repariert
und gleich geht's weiter. Keiner
darf aussteigen, nur die, deren
Namen ich ausrufe. In einer Stunde
sind wir am Ziel, bis dahin müsst
Ihr durchhalten. Rauskommen sollen
Isaac Hirsch und Joel Mayer. Bringt
Eure Pässe mit und die Eurer
Familienmitglieder. (Attention
everyone! Attention Jews! Stop
talking. We will be moving along in
a few minutes. The train has been
repaired. No one may get out at
this time, except the names I call.
Our destination is just one hour
away, so you will need to hold on
until then. Isaac Hirsch and Joel
Mayer come out now. Bring the
passports of all four members of
your family with you.)

HANNAH

What do you think he wants?

JOEL

I don't know.

(He takes their PASSPORTS out of his jacket pocket.)

HANNAH

And with our passports?

GERMAN SOLDIER

Mayer, wo bist Du? Komm raus.
(Mayer, where are you? Come out
immediately.)

JOEL

Excuse me. Can you let me through.
Excuse me.

(Joel cannot move anywhere. The car is packed with people.)

JOEL (cont'd)
There's no way through these
people. (to the soldier) I'm here!
All the way back here! But I can't
get out! Can you help me to get
out!

GERMAN SOLDIER
Gib Deinen Pass nach vorne durch.
(Just pass your passports forward!)

JOEL
I'd rather come out! If you just
let people out for a minute!

GERMAN SOLDIER
Gib mir einfach Deinen Pass, und
zwar sofort. (Pass the passports to
me, immediately!)

JOEL
(to other people in the
car)
Here.

(Joel passes their passports forward. The door to the car
shuts.)

HANNAH
Hirsch is still outside.

JOEL
Are you sure? We need our passports
back.

(A gunshot goes off.)

DANIEL
They shot him. I know it, they just
shot him.

HANNAH
Why would they?

(Sound of vehicles leaving.)

DANIEL
They're leaving. The train's not
moving. Dad?

JOEL

I'm sure it will, son. Any minute,
and we'll be moving. Don't worry.

14 NETHERLANDS/GERMAN BORDER

14

(The Reinhardts are approaching the check point at the border.)

KLAUS

Don't worry about anything. We will
get through easily. The Reich is
depending on us, Janni, on you, so
we need to keep moving.

MARIE

(to Janni, but then
looking at Klaus to
confirm that she is in on
the lie he is telling the
children)

That's right.

JANNI

I'm too tired. Sarah gets to be
carried. I need to rest.

MARIE

The Führer is depending on us. We
have special orders, and you need
to be a strong German and support
the Fatherland. This is a time of
great honor for us, for our nation.

KLAUS

Remember, only say what I told you,
and do not use each other's real
names under any circumstances.
Today we are the Schneiders; good
Germans. But once in Amsterdam, we
are the Mayers. You will like
Amsterdam. There are many boats
there, and waterways, and a big
park. Here we go.

(The family walks deliberately, then pauses.)

KLAUS (cont'd)

(to a German soldier)

I am Wilhelm Schneider, and this is
my family.

(Pause.)

KLAUS (cont'd)
Thank you. Come on everyone. Follow
me.

(Marie, holding Sarah's hand, and Janni walk right up to
Klaus, all of them pressing into each other.)

15 IN THE RAILROAD BOXCAR

15

(The Mayer family is pressed up against each other.)

JOEL
If we do not like our new home,
we'll leave. No problem. We will
not stay anywhere we don't like.

DANIEL
Where will we go?

JOEL
Well, we will go as far or as near
as we need to in order to find a
place where we will be happy.

DANIEL
Can we go to America, like the
Rosenberg's did?

JOEL
I suppose we could.

DANIEL
Why did they go there?

JOEL
They had family there. But we could
go anyway. We could go to see them.

DANIEL
I hate Germans.

HANNAH
No you don't. These are just bad
times. Every country, like all
people, have bad and good times.

DANIEL
Why do they?

HANNAH

Because what is considered good or bad can be as different as people are.

DANIEL

That's not what Rabbi Levi says.

HANNAH

I said "considered" by people, and not what is. That's for God to decide.

DANIEL

How will we get to America?

JOEL

Well, if the time comes, we will first go to Amsterdam. There are people there who will help us.

DANIEL

How can they help us?

JOEL

They hide Jews so that the Nazis can't find us, and when the time is right, they will help us get a boat to America.

DANIEL

It's getting dark again. Everyone is so quiet now. I can't even feel my legs. How does Libi sleep? Don't let me fall to the floor again, please. Can I drink more? Just a sip?

JOEL

You may, but just a sip, and drink slowly. We need to save some for Libi.

HANNAH

(quietly to Joel)

I heard someone say that their grandma is dead.

JOEL

(quietly)

I will get on my knees, and you three take turns sitting on top of me. It is the only way to save our strength, and stay off the floor.

(He kneels down in front of Daniel.)

16

AN APARTMENT IN AMSTERDAM

16

(Klaus is kneeled down in front of Janni. He undoes Janni's pants. Marie hugs Janni from behind. Sarah is sleeping.)

MARIE

This will take just a second, and there will be a little pain, but it will pass quickly. I promise.

KLAUS

I will rub this powder in. Then I will snip with the scissors. And then I will put more of this powder on the wound. You won't feel much.

(Klaus rubs the powder on Janni's penis.)

JANNI

Just like when mommy did it to you?

KLAUS

Yes, just like when mommy did it to me.

JANNI

But I saw you. Your whole face crumbled up, and you couldn't walk right for days. I know it hurt a lot.

MARIE

Oh Klausie, did your little mohel hurt you? Take some of your manhood?

(Klaus rolls his eyes at Marie.)

MARIE (cont'd)

Just trying to lighten things up.

KLAUS

And you're doing a good job. Janni, this is not about you, or me, or mommy. This is for the Führer, and the Fatherland, remember. You will be a hero.

JANNI

Go ahead. I can do this. Heil Hitler!

(Marie puts her hand in Janni's mouth. Klaus cuts off his foreskin with the scissors, and applies the powder to the wound. Janni tightens up, but does not yell or cry.)

KLAUS

You did great. Now breathe. Let the pain go. I know, what's the Yiddish for "Don't bother me!"

JANNI

I can -- Draï mir nit kain kop!

KLAUS

Good. Good. Now say, "He talks nonsense."

JANNI

Er bolbet narishkeiten.

KLAUS

Excellent.

MARIE

You have become a strong man, Janni. I am very proud of you.

KLAUS

(to Marie)

"He's just like his father."

MARIE

"Der tate oysn oyg."

JANNI

Great mom. We can be Jews. They would never know. Right dad?

KLAUS

They'll never know. Say, "It's none of your business."

JANNI

"Es iz nit dayn gesheft."

KLAUS

Excellent. (to Hannah) "Gai feifen
ahfen yam!" (Go peddle your fish
somewhere else!)

(Sarah wakes up.)

MARIE

(laughing)

"Gai tren zich!" (Go fuck
yourself!) I'm no Yiddish fish
peddler.

(Janni and Klaus join in laughing. Sarah joins in.)

SARAH

"Genug iz genug." (Enough is
enough.)

(They all laugh louder and hug.)

SARAH (cont'd)

Enough is enough.

17

IN THE RAILROAD BOXCAR

17

LIBI

(softly)

"Genug iz genug."

HANNAH

Yes, Libi, my little darling, we've
had enough. Let's try to nap some
more. We need to be as calm as
possible. Ich hob dir lieb. (I love
you.)

DANIEL

(breathing deeply)

I can hardly breathe. I'm itching
all over.

LIBI

(with sudden panic)

Mommy. Daddy. Mommy. Daddy.

JOEL

Yes Libi. We're right here.

LIBI
(trying to breathe,
hyperventilating)
Mommy. Mommy. Daddy, daddy,
daddy...

HANNAH
Libi, darling, what's wrong? You've
got to calm down. Breathe slowly.

(She begins to lose consciousness.)

DANIEL
Dad, do something. She can't
breathe. Help her. Please. Mom!

(Joel pulls Libi's arms above her head.)

JOEL
Breathe Libi. Please breathe. Slow.
Wake up!

(He leans her head back, pulling her up.)

JOEL (cont'd)
Taker her arms.

HANNAH
My God, Joel, help her. Please!
Please help her! Libi, hold on!
You're going to be alright.

DANIEL
Libi! Libi! Don't die. Please,
Libi. Pleeease!

(Daniel starts crying, then gasping for breath, starting to
hyperventilate.)

Joel continues with the mouth-to-mouth, pushing her chest,
counting.)

JOEL
Please ... God help her! ...
Libi... Libi...

(Libi goes limp, dead.)

HANNAH
Oh, oh, noooooooo. Dear God,
noooooooo!

(Hannah takes Libi deep into her arms, hugging her, rocking, trying to animate her, crying, gasping for breath.)

JOEL

Oh Libi, I am so sorry. Hannah,
Hannah. I am sorry. Libi...

(Daniel hugs his mother and Libi, and Joel hugs them all.

Long silence. Only sobs can be heard.)

JOEL (cont'd)

I'm sorry.

DANIEL

Where is Libi? I don't want to die.
I want Libi back.

HANNAH

(to Joel)

It's not your fault. None of this
is. We must be stronger now. For
Libi, we must be stronger. Daniel,
you are going to have to be calm.
You are not going to die. Libi was
very small and young. You are a
big, strong boy, with the
determination of a man. You carry
our family name. Our future is
through you. We will be together.
Libi will stay with us. For Libi,
for you, for us, for our people, we
will survive.

DANIEL

I love you, mom. I love you, dad.
We can make it.

JOEL

Yes, we can -- we will.

(They all hug, around Libi, again, each kissing her head.
Long pause.)

(Coming out of a family hug.)

JANNI

I just can't believe we made it here. No one thought anything about us.

KLAUS

Like I said, a little Yiddish goes a long way.

MARIE

We didn't make any friends, either.

JANNI

I told everyone, no matter what they asked, that it was none of their business.

(They all laugh.)

KLAUS

You did great, son. The Führer will be proud.

JANNI

Where do we go now? What do we do?

KLAUS

We go wherever the Americans tell us to go, and we wait for orders. It may take a few weeks until we hear.

SARAH

I'm hungry. Hungry.

MARIE

You sure can eat for such a little one. Good thing I put some of the bread, cheese, and fruit in my bag. Once we go through customs, we can have a picnic outside on the island, Ellis Island--

KLAUS

With New York City before our eyes, wasn't it spectacular as we came in?

JANNI

The buildings were like I never dreamed of -- so high in the sky.

KLAUS
Remember your new names. Sarah,
what's yours?

SARAH
My name is Libi.

MARIE
That's right, and from now on we
must all call you Libi, like we did
when around people on the boat.
This can't change.

JANNI
Even when we're together, just us?

KLAUS
Yes, always. What's your last name?

JANNI
I'm Daniel Mayer.

KLAUS
Yes, exactly.

MARIE
I would've preferred Hirsch.

KLAUS
Me too, but we would've had to cut
off your legs to make you short
enough.

MARIE
I don't like the name Hannah,
either.

KLAUS
It got us here, and that's what
matters.

SARAH
I want those.

(She points.)

JANNI
Candy apples.

(Sarah walks quickly toward them. After a moment, Klaus notices, and heads after her.)

KLAUS
Hey, hey, come back here.

(Sarah stops and turns.)

SARAH
I'm Libi Mayer, and I'm three and a
half years old.

KLAUS
You certainly are. Well done.

(The actor playing Marie plays a Jewish woman who just
overheard Sarah.)

KAREN ZUCKERMAN
Libi Mayer?

(Pause.)

SARAH
Yep. Es iz nit dayn gesheft.

KAREN ZUCKERMAN
Is that so? You were just a baby,
last I saw you. (to Klaus) I'm
sorry. I'm Karen Zuckerman. You
must be Joel's brother.

(She glances around.)

KLAUS
Yes, why yes, I am.

WOMAN
I don't recall meeting--

KLAUS
Can I talk with you for a moment --
privately?

(Klaus pulls her aside.)

KLAUS (cont'd)
You see, my brother was killed--

SARAH
Mommy! Mommy, come here!

KAREN ZUCKERMAN
(looking at Marie)
Who is that? I don't understand
what's or who--

KLAUS
That's what I'm trying to tell you.

(He guides her further away.)

KLAUS (cont'd)
My brother and her mother died, and
so we took her. Come in here.

KAREN ZUCKERMAN
That's a closet -- the janitor's.
We talk right here--

(He pushes her in, flings her in a half-Nelson, and chokes
her to death.)

KAREN ZUCKERMAN (cont'd)
Hey, hey, help...

(He drops her.)

KLAUS
You good-for-nothing Jew.

(He walks back to his family.)

JANNI
What was that about? Who is that
woman?

KLAUS
An old friend. Everything is fine.

SARAH
I want apples.

KLAUS
Later Libi. Let's get moving.

(His family gathers around him.)

MARIE
(softly to Klaus)
It's really wonderful to be here.
Thank you, Klausie -- Joel.

(She kisses Klaus.)

It feels as though we left nothing
behind, and have only the future
before us -- a new life.

(He kisses her back.)

19 IN THE RAILROAD BOXCAR

19

(The Mayer's are huddled together. The train begins to move.
It is very loud. Joel wakes up.)

JOEL

What? The train's moving. We're
moving. The train's moving!

(Neither Hannah nor Daniel respond. They are both dead. Joel
tries to stir them.)

JOEL (cont'd)

Hannah?! Hannah! Daniel?! Daniel!
... No, my God, noooo!

(He examines their faces, and cries. He is able to breathe.)

JOEL (cont'd)

It can't be. All gone.

(He notices his ability to breathe, and looks around.)

JOEL (cont'd)

We're moving! Everyone, we're
moving! Wake up! Wake up!

(Pause. He studies his surroundings.)

JOEL (cont'd)

Is anyone alive?! Please, answer
me! Is anyone still alive?! ...
Answer meeee!

(Pause. Joel rests his head in his hands.)

20 EPILOGUE: BATTERY PARK, JULY 4, 2005: A GRASSY KNOLL

20

(HENRY MAYER stands alone for a moment, gazing. Then his son
STEPHEN approaches, catching up to him. Henry and Stephen are
wearing KIPPAS -- (actual kippas needed)).

HENRY

Stevie.

STEPHEN

Dad, you did it again. This spot is awesome. The fireworks should start any minute.

HENRY

I can imagine your grandfather, how happy he was, when he landed on that island, or when he first laid his eyes on that great, glorious three-hundred foot Lady Liberty. To come from such horror, to this.

STEPHEN

I know dad. He told us the story a thousand times, and you say this every year. Actually, Aunt Libi tells it best, since she only remembers biting into that candy apple.

HENRY

Your great grandpa Joel told that story best. He could recall every nuance of Libi's delight. The apple's sweetness filling her whole expression.

(The fireworks begin to light up the sky.)

STEPHEN

Way cool.

HENRY

You know, Stephen, the stories of our family, of our history, of the Jewish people, cannot be told enough times.

STEPHEN

I know dad.

(Henry's wife, LAUREN, and daughter, LISA, walk up to them holding hands. Lisa carries a little AMERICAN FLAG (actual flag needed) in her free hand.)

LISA

(waving her flag in the air)

(MORE)

LISA (cont'd)

Wow, mommy, lights! Colors! See,
colors!

LAUREN

Yes, Lisa, it sure is beautiful.

HENRY

It sure is.

(Henry puts his arm around Lauren.)

HENRY (cont'd)

God bless America.

(The End.)