

1996 MOSS HART YOUTH DIVISION AWARD-WINNING “ELLIS ISLAND” by Cheryl E. Kemeny, SCRIPT SAMPLE:

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1. SONGS & SCENES

ACT 1

SONG “Standing at the Edge of Time”

Scene 1 “Europe” Naples, Italy...Queenstown, Ireland...Hamburg, Germany
(Immigrants arrive to purchase “Steerage” tickets to America)

SONG “One Way Ticket to America” (Ludmilla, Nicolai, Guisepppe, Signora Fontana,
Kate, Timothy, Daniel, & Company)

Scene 2 “Onboard Ship...The “Bel Italia”, the “Deutschland” & the “King James”

SONG “Neptune’s Furies” (Company)

SONG “Island of Hope” (Ludmilla, Jutka, Kate & Company)

SONG “We Enter Into the Communion”

Scene 3 “ Ellis Island...preparing for the examinations”

SONG “9 AM to 7 PM” (Commissioner Watchorn, American Workers & Immigrants)

INTERMISSION

ACT 2

SONG “A Picture’s Worth A Thousand Words” (Commissioner Watchorn, American
Ladies)

Scene 4 “Registry & Medical Examinations”

SONG “*You Can’t Change the World*” (Brigitte Anderson)

Scene 5 “Detention”

SONG “*Home/Under the Boot of The Tsar*” (Nicolai Goldovsky & Immigrants)

SONG “*Another Island*” (Sylvia Bonet)

Scene 6 “The Sting”

Scene 7 “The Hospital”

SONG “*End Of A Dream*” (Jutka Haraszti)

Scene 8 “The Audition”

SONG “*A Woman’s Place*” (Mrs. MacArthur, Brigitte, Mrs. Sutton, Mrs. Elsworth)

Scene 9 “The Special Inquiry”

SONG “*The American Dream*” (Nicolai & Immigrant Soloists)

Scene 10 “The Kissing Post”

SONG “FINALE”

2. Ellis Island...the story

“Ellis Island/the American Dream” follows the lives of immigrants travelling to the United States during the year 1907. We begin in Naples, Italy, Hamburg, Germany and Queenstown, Ireland simultaneously. People from all over Europe are purchasing “one-way tickets” to the “land o’ the free” - America. The immigrants board their respective ships...the “Bel Italia”, the “Deutschland” and the “King James”. They are then faced with a terrible storm and “Neptune Furies”. “Don’t turn back! Keep on course! This North Atlantic storm will put us to the test!”

With the end of the storm comes the first sighting of “Ellis Island” and the prayer, “Island of Hope”. “Island of hope, save me from a life of fear. Take me in now that I’m here. Give me a new beginning and we’ll both be winning, you’ll see.” The immigrants pin on their landing tags and board the ferries. Meanwhile, the Ellis Island staff is preparing for another busy day. The inspections begin with “Nine AM to Seven PM”. “The River never stops till it gets to the sea, a never-ending stream of humanity!” The immigrants plead, “Take a chance on me! If you send me back, a broken soul is what I’ll be!” Sammy Tate, the crooked baggage handler, expounds his philosophy...“with a little bit of smarts, a man can get ahead; ‘long as you’re American, born and bred!”

After Intermission, Act II opens with Commissioner Watchorn taking photos of immigrants for posterity... “A Picture’s Worth Thousands Words!” Then, it’s back to the inspections, with many immigrants being sent to detention for further examinations or to wait for their relatives. Commissioner Watchorn tells Miss Anderson, a reformer, that “You Can’t Change the World,” when she makes suggestions for improvements at Ellis Island. The immigrants left in detention are suffering from homesickness until Nicolai, the Russian anarchist, reminds them of the pogroms and life “under the boot of the Tsar.”

Sylvia Bonet, a woman of color from Guadeloupe, also longs for her Island home after suffering indignities at the hands of the authorities in her song, "Another Island".

Inspector Winston, meanwhile, has set up a trap for the unscrupulous Sammy Tate, who has been stealing money from the baggage of the unsuspecting "greenhorns". With the help of Miss Buckley and Inspector Washington the criminal is caught in the act of exchanging Italian lire for dollars.

In the hospital, Jutka Haraszti is given the bad news that her daughter, Ildiko, who has scarlet fever, might not make it through the night. She sings of the "End of a Dream". "No new beginning for us, no happy endings for us. To America, she's one of many, to a mother, she's all I have. They won't miss her in this land of plenty. To America...what's one more child?"

In an empty room, Mrs. Elsworth and Brigitte Anderson have set up a private audition for the ballerina, Ludmilla, with Mr. Gorky of the Metropolitan Opera Ballet. The bossy Mrs. MacArthur discovers them and reminds them of "A Woman's Place".

At the Special Inquiry hearings Nicolai Goldovsky and some of the immigrants express their disappointment with the "American Dream". "So, this it? I've traveled half way across the world, I've gone to extremes. 'Cause I believed in a vision I had in my mind of a land that I heard of where life could be kind to a man with the will to succeed with the sweat of his brow! Where he didn't have to bow to no one or nothing, unless he chose to of his own free will!"

In the final moments of the play, we learn who is accepted and who is rejected. The immigrants sing "Let us belong! We'll make you strong!" Give us the American Dream! It's not too late, we'll carry our weight! Give us the American Dream!"

3. CAST OF CHARACTERS

Immigrants:

**note: most immigrant solos can be divided and assigned any way. They aren't dependent on character, accept where noted after the character description.*

- Italians:** Orphanage Owner (*speaking part, in 1st scene only*)
Constanza/Violetta (*assistant to Orphanage Owner then change to Giuseppe DiScala's sister*)
Giuseppe DiScala (*Italian winemaker*)
Susanah DiScala (*his worrier sister*)
Signora Fontana (*Italian earth-mother, comic*)
Paolo & Carolina Fontana (*her 2 children*)
Anna Christina del Amante di Borghese (*10 year old orphan travelling to America alone to meet her aunt & uncle*)
Mr. & Mrs. Borghese (*her aunt and uncle, speaking part in last scene only*)
- Irish:** Kate Sullivan (*fiery Irish lass looking for a rich husband, 19, **belt singer***)
Colleen Sullivan (*her more conservative sister, 17*)
Timothy O'Reilly (*reluctant former Irish revolutionary, short solo or duet with Daniel in "One-Way-Ticket"*)
Daniel Murphy (*his nervous friend. They end up marrying Kate & Colleen at the "kissing post" on Ellis island to help them enter the U.S.*)

English: Winifred Godfrey (*stuffy ex-postal worker who recognizes Timothy & Daniel from a wanted poster and reports them to the E.I. authorities.*)

Magyars (Hungarians):

Jutka Haraszti (*mother of Zsuzsi & Ildiko, alto, big solo*)

Eva Szabo (*her best friend, speaking role*)

Irenka Szabo (*her daughter*)

Ildiko Haraszti (*Jutka's younger daughter, almost dies on Ellis Island*)

Zsuzsi Haraszti (*Jutka's older daughter*)

Swedes: Per Svensson (*65 year old family patriarch, widower, gets sent back*)

Helga Svensson (*his anxious daughter-in-law*)

Brunnhilde Svensson (*her daughter*)

Kelsey Nordlund (*Helga's niece*)

Denmark: Ulrika Jacobsen (*loud, bossy*)

Hans Jacobsen (*her henpecked husband, comic relief*)

Russian Hebrews:

Nicolai Goldovsky (*former anarchist, 2 solos, alto or tenor voice*)

Ludmilla Antonovich (*16 year-old ballerina, orphan, short belt solo, solo dance in Act II.*)

Mr. Gorky (*speaking part, Act II, Ballet master for whom Ludmilla dances*)

Anushka Abelson (*woman escaping Russia with her niece*)

Ester Abelson (*her young, inquisitive niece*)

Adele (*girl in detention*)

Sady (*young girl in detention*)

West Indian: Sylvia Bonet (*black or indian woman who is taken out of first class and brought to Ellis Island because her daughter walks with a crutch and because her story is deemed "unlikely". Big solo, Act II*)

Bonet daughters (*2 little girls, walk-on part, no lines*)

Doctor Bonet (*Sylvia's surgeon husband, speaking, last scene only*)

Immigrant Ensemble (*As many as desired.*)

Americans:

Commissioner Watchorn (*Historical leader of Ellis Island in 1907, responsible for many archival photographs of immigrants. Big solo, alto or tenor. Doubles as a TICKETSELLER & SHIP CAPTAIN in earlier scenes*)

Inspector Winston (*proud, distracted, frazzled head inspector at E.I., speaking role, doubles as TICKETSELLER & SHIP CAPTAIN*)

Inspector George Washington (*inspector who immigrants continually ask whether he's the "real George Washington". Doubles as TICKETSELLER & SHIP CAPTAIN*)

Dr. Schmidt (*Ellis island doctor*)

Nurse Martin (*efficient, nice E.I. nurse*)

Nurse Jackson (*older nurse jealous of Nurse Martin*)

Miss Buckley (*secretary to Comm. Watchorn, confused by Inspector Winston with Miss Ward.*)

Miss Ward (*Inspector Winstons' secreatry*)

Sammy Tate (*unscrupulous baggage-handler, later arrested for stealing Giuseppe DiScala's money, alto or baritone range solo*)

Miss Brigitte Anderson (*young reformer appointed by President Roosevelt to write a report on Ellis Island and suggest reforms. **Big solo, soprano/belt***)

The 3 “Matrons

Mrs. Wilhemina MacArthur (*Bossy, 50-ish volunteer, sings*)

Mrs. Sutton (*ditsy, southern-belle matron, volunteer, sings*)

Mrs. Mary Elsworth (*refined, sincere woman, blossoming into her own sense of worth and independence. Sings*)

***note the “matrons” sing a quartette with Brigitte called ‘A Woman’s Place’)*

American/first-class passenger ensemble (*can include additional Ellis Island workers*)

4. SETS and COSTUMES

SET REQUIREMENTS “Ellis Island can be performed on a bare stage or 3 tall, rectangular boxes built with 2 x 4’s without walls can be used. At the top of each, signs are attached with the names of the cities to represent ticket booths. Turn ¼ and have signs with the ships’ names on top. Turn another quarter and have “baggage”, “Telegrams” and “Exchange” signs. We used a podium as an “inspection” site and a table with chairs for the “Special Inquiry” scene. For the hospital we used a cot and for “detention” simple benches. We also added freestanding 4x8’ windows to “detention”.

COSTUMES Thrift shops are loaded with potential clothing. For immigrants, we used skirts, blouses, shawls and head scarves. For men, dark pants, white long-sleeved shirts and vests. Change the collars to match the period (1907). The American women wore long, a-line dark solid-colored skirts and high-necked blouses and suit-jackets. For first-class passengers, make sure woman have hats and gloves to differentiate them from the immigrants. The nurses added white aprons to their outfits. Watchorn is in “tails” and a bowler. The inspectors should look like they are in a uniform.

5. SCRIPT EXAMPLES

Scene 1, “Standing On The Edge of Time”

[Three staging areas: Queenstown, Ireland (Stage Right), Hamburg, Germany (Center Stage), Naples, Italy (Stage Left).]

(Lights come up slowly on the hustle and bustle of people arriving, buying tickets, purchasing food for the journey, carrying suitcases and bundles. The “Captains” of the ships act as ticket sellers in this scene.)

(Naples) ENTER STAGE LEFT, ORPHANAGE OWNER, ANNA & MATRON (CONSTANZA), who is holding ANNA by the hand.)

SONG “STANDING ON THE EDGE OF TIME” (FULL CAST)

ALL: Standing On The Edge Of Time,
A slow-motion pantomime.
I feel like I'm moving in a dream.
A leaf on the river floating downstream.
Walking the tightrope of "here and now",
My soul repeats a sacred vow.
Forward ever, backward never!
All ties with the past I must sever.
What lies ahead is a mystery.
What went before is now history! (*bass-line continues, dialogue
proceeds over music. LIGHTS UP ON STAGE LEFT, "ITALY", DOWN LOW ON REST
OF STAGE*)

O. Owner

Constanza, you wait here with the child while I exchange this ticket for one that is more suitable. To waste good money on a first class ticket for such a girl would be a sin. Steerage is good enough for her.

Constanza

Yes, Signora. (*to ANNA*) You're so lucky to be traveling to America. I wish I could go.

Anna

Don't worry, Constanza. My aunt and uncle are rich, and someday I will be, too. Then, I'll bring you to America to live with me.

O. Owner

(*to TICKET SELLER*) I wish to exchange this first class ticket for steerage.

Ticket Seller

Are you sure that's what you want, ma'am?

O. Owner

Young man, I know what I want. Now, give me the ticket and my change!

Ticket Seller

Va bene One third class ticket to New York onboard the Bel Italia and here's your change. By the way, signora, I know you know what you want, but you'd better buy some food to take on the trip with you. Steerage is a big come-down from first class.

O. Owner

Thank you, for your concern, but, the ticket is not for me.

Ticket Seller

You're not (*looking at his manifest*) . . . Anna Christina del Amante di Borghese?

O. Owner

No.. She is. (*pointing to ANNA*)

Ticket Seller

She's traveling by herself?

O. Owner

That is correct. Her aunt and uncle from America will be meeting her in New York.

Ticket Seller

Then, you'd better pin this tag to her coat, and tell her not to take it off or she might get lost in the crowds. (*hands her a tag*)

O. Owner

Very well! (*takes tag from him haughtily and walks to CONSTANZA. She hands tag to CONSTANZA*) Here. Pin this to her coat and (*turning to ANNA*), listen to me, girl! You'd better not lose this tag or you may never see your rich aunt and uncle from America. (*to CONSTANZA*) Take this money and buy her some food for the trip.

Constanza

(*looking at money SHE has taken*) But, Signora, this is only enough for one day's worth of food?....

Owner

Children eat less than adults! Oh...very well. (*handing her some more*) But, this is all she gets. We need this money at the orphanage more than she does. She'll have plenty of food where she's going.

Anna

Signora? Is that the ship I'll be sailing on? (*pointing to Bel Italia*)

O. Owner

Si. . .si.

Anna

Will I'll be bringing any of my clothes with me?

O. Owner

What does a rich American girl need with Italian clothes? No, no, selfish girl! Your rich aunt and uncle will buy you new ones, I'm sure. Besides, you should be thanking me now for everything I've done for you. If it wasn't for me, your aunt and uncle would never have sent for you.

Anna

Thank you for everything, Signora! (*ANNA tries to hug her. O. OWNER pushes her away slightly disdainfully*)

O. Owner

I suggest you tell your aunt and uncle all I've done for you. Then, perhaps they will send me a suitable reward. *(to CONSTANZA)* Now, hurry up with the shopping and see to it she gets onboard. *(SHE turns her back on ANNA without so much as a "goodbye".*

ANNA & CONSTANZA look after her. CONSTANZA shrugs her shoulders, takes ANNA's hand and proceeds to shop for food.)

(LIGHTS UP ON FULL STAGE as song continues. . .)

ALL: Walking the tightrope of here and now
My soul repeats a sacred vow. . .
Forward ever, backward never!
All ties with the past I must sever!

*(bass-line continues, dialogue over music. LIGHTS UP, STAGERIGHT, IRELAND.)
(Action shifts to Queenstown, STAGE RIGHT. TIMOTHY O'REILLY & DANIEL MURPHY move way DOWNSTAGE RIGHT, away from other people. They are speaking secretly.)*

Daniel

Do you see any police?

Timothy

Donovan said he'll be creating a diversion elsewhere to keep 'em busy. I think we'd better buy our tickets now.

Daniel

What if the ticket seller has seen the "Wanted" poster?

Timothy

That's a chance we'll have to take. Now, let's get to it.

(TIMOTHY and DANIEL get in line to buy a ticket. They are standing behind KATE and COLLEEN SULLIVAN, 2 young and pretty sisters.)

Kate

We'd like to purchase 2 tickets to the Land o' the Free, steerage, if you please.

Ticket Seller

(sarcastically) Land o' the Free? And where might that be, miss?

Kate

Why, America, of course! Where else?

Ticket Seller

Who are you traveling with?

Kate

M'e sister, the lovely Colleen Sullivan.

Ticket Seller

Well, Miss Sullivan, I can't be sellin' any single women no tickets to America, unless they be accompanied by a male member of the family or unless a male relative comes to pick them up at Ellis Island.

Kate

Ellis Island? What's that?

Ticket Seller

That's where all you steerage passengers go to be processed to see if America will take you in. They don't want any riff-raff or any women of low, moral character.

Kate

(COLLEEN gives KATE a worried look) Well. Mister "whatever your name is," I'll have you know our uncle will be meeting us at... Ellis Island, so you can just sell us the tickets and we'll be on our way.

Ticket Seller

Very well. Name?

Kate

Kate Sullivan and Colleen Sullivan.

Ticket Seller

Age?

Kate: I'm nineteen and my sister's seventeen.

Ticket Seller

Destination? *(KATE is puzzled for a moment)* Where do you intend to live?

Kate

In New York City, of course.

Ticket Seller

With your uncle, I presume.

Kate

You presume correctly.

Ticket Seller

Uncle's name? *(Kate hesitates)* Uncle's name?

Kate

....Harry Sullivan.

Ticket Seller

Address? (*KATE is confused. COLLEEN jumps in*)

Colleen

125 Broadway, in New York City!

Ticket Seller

(*looking up suspiciously*)

Kate

Yes, that's it. 125 Broadway.

Ticket Seller

Very well. You're all set. Here are your tickets. (*handing them tags*) Have a pleasant journey onboard the King James, ladies. And I hope you have no trouble locating your uncle on Broadway.

Kate

Don't worry about us. (*taking tickets*) We'll be just fine. (*KATE turns and bumps into TIMOTHY. He steps back, bows, and picks up the package she has dropped.*)

Timothy

Allow me, miss? (*handing her a package*)

Kate

(*takes package from him hastily*) Thank you. But, if you hadn't been breathing down me neck, I wouldn't have dropped it in the first place. (*KATE hustles by him. TIM shrugs his shoulders and looks after her.*)

Colleen

(*to TIM* Excuse my sister, sir. She didn't mean to be rude. (*to KATE*) What's the matter with you? **You** bumped into him. He was only bein' polite.

Kate

Now, Colleen Sullivan! Don't let your head be turned by any poor Irishman! I know a lot more about men than you and I 'm not settlin' for a poor farmer. It'll be a rich American for me! (*COLLEEN looks back at DANIEL who has been staring at her. KATE sees this*) And for you, too, miss! (*KATE grabs COLLEEN's hand and pulls her away. THEY go about preparations for the trip.*)

Ticket Seller

May I help you, sir? (*TIM has been looking at the girls and doesn't hear.*) Sir.....?

Timothy

Oh, right. Two tickets for the land o' the free! Steerage.

Ticket Seller

(*sarcastically, again*) And where might that be?

Timothy

Didn't you hear the you the young lady? America is where we're headin'.

(*TIMOTHY & DANIEL proceed to go through the ticket buying process in pantomime. DANIEL keeps looking about nervously for the police.*)

(LIGHTS UP ON FULL STAGE as SONG CONTINUES)

ALL: We enter into the communion of unity of purpose.
Each of us a wand'ring soul;
Each one with a common goal.
Seeking the ideal, not knowing if it's real.

(LIGHTS UP, CENTERSTAGE as the action shifts to *Hamburg, Germany.*)

Ulrika J (*A Danish woman*)

(*calling loudly & imperiously*) Hans! Hans! Come here this instant. (*HANS runs up to her out of breath*) What can you be thinking, leaving me here alone with all these bundles?!

Hans (*ULRIKA's henpecked husband*)

I

Ulrika

Anyone could have robbed me and then we would have lost everything and it would have been all your fault! You foolish man! Sometimes I wonder why I married you!

Hans

(*under his breath*) Sometimes I wish

Ulrika

What was that?

Hans

Oh, nothing. We'd better buy our tickets, now.

Ulrika

Help me with these bags. (*HANS & ULRIKA pick up their belongings and go to purchase tickets.*)

(*HELGA SVENSSON, a strongly-built, Swedish woman of 36, moves DOWNSTAGE CENTER, reading a paper SHE is holding in her hand and looking around.*)

Helga

Ja. This is the place. (*Calling over her shoulder*) Come along, now, and help Papa! (*the entire SVENSSON FAMILY ENTERS, carrying all kinds of bags and bundles. They are laughing and singing. There is much commotion. BRUNNHILDE is pulling PER along by the hand.*)

Brunnhilde

Over here, Grandpa! Mama's found where we're supposed to be!

Per

Slow down, little one. Not so fast! I'm not as young as I used to be. (*INGRID, ERIC, KIRSTEN, RONA and BRUNNHILDE are snaking through all the adults while holding hands with each other and singing "We're going to America! We're going to America!" The last one grabs onto BRUNNHILDE's hand, and she joins in with their playing.*)

Per

Helga! Should we get the family together, now?

Helga

I think we'd better. The ship is scheduled to leave in four hours. That seems to be the ticket line, over there. (*pointing to where HANS & ULRIKA are buying their tickets.*)

Helga

(*to Per*) Papa, are you all right?

Per

(*a hearty voice, but a frail body*) I'm fine, I'm fine. Brunnhilde is with me.

Brunnhilde

We're getting in line, now, Papa. We need to move over there. (*pointing, looking around & noticing one of the girls is missing*) Mama? Kelsey is missing!

Helga

(*loudly worried*) What do you mean? What happened to her?

Brunnhilde

I think she went shopping.

Helga

(getting close to hysterical) I knew it! I knew it! We've lost her and we have less than four hours to find her! What are we going to do?

Per

Calm down, Helga. She can't be far away.

Helga

Hamburg's a big city. A pretty young girl.....someone could have kidnapped her! What will her father and mother say when we tell them we've lost their daughter in Hamburg!?

Brunnhilde

I'll look for her while you stand in line for the tickets. *(BRUNNHILDE is interrupted by the breathless arrival of KELSEY, who is carrying oranges in her hands.)*

Kelsey

Look, grandfather! I bought you oranges from Italy!

Helga

Are you crazy!? We thought you were kidnapped! Lost! Dead! And spending the little money you have on extravagances! Oranges!

Per

Helga! The girl meant well. There's no harm done.

Kelsey

And oranges are healthy, Aunt Helga. I read in a book at home that sailors brought them with them to keep from getting sick on long voyages and I didn't want grandfather getting sick because, after all, we're going on a long voyage and

Per

So, you see, it's all my fault.

Brunnhilde

We'd better get in line or the boat will sail without us! *(The SVENSSON FAMILY get in line and continues the ticket buying process in pantomime, while LIGHTS UP ON FULLSTAGE as SONG continues. . .)*

ALL: Hand to mouth, nothing to be or to become;
Here, our lives go south to the beating of their powerful drum.
Rigid bureaucracy, old aristocracy! Keeping us under their thumb!

(LIGHTS DOWN ON 2/3'S STAGE, LIGHTS UP ON ITALY, STAGE LEFT. The scene shifts to Naples, STAGE LEFT)

(SIGNORA FONTANA, CAROLINA & PAOLO have ENTERED from STAGELEFT during the previous scene. THEY have purchased their tickets in pantomime. THEY move DOWNSTAGE to speak.)

Signora Fontana

Carolina, I want you to watch your brother while I buy some fresh bread and sausage for the trip.

Carolina

But, Mama, he never listens to me

Signora Fontana

Paolo, you pay attention to what your sister tells you, or your father will hear about it when we get to America.

Paolo

But, Mama, she doesn't let me

Signora Fontana

Enough! Do not leave our baggage unattended. This is not the village, anymore.

Carolina

But, Mama, what could we do to stop a robber?

Signora Fontana

You scream-a for me as loud as you can. I'll be right over there. If I hear you screaming, I'll come running and then we'll see who wants to rob the wife of Antonio Fontana!
*(SIGNORA FONTANA EXITS STAGE LEFT with the shake of a finger at the children.)
(CAROLINA & PAOLO give each other an annoyed look and sit down on the luggage, back to back.)*

(ENTER STAGE LEFT, JUTKA HARASZTI & EVA SZABO, followed by their children, who are holding hands.)

Jutka

Eva, why don't you stay with the children, while I get the tickets?

Eva

I want to get some fresh bread for the trip. My husband said the food on the ship is terrible.

Jutka

We haven't got much time.

Eva

Let me give you the money. (*SHE goes through an elaborate process of undoing her clothing to get at the money which she has secreted away in a little purse.*)

Jutka

Children, put the bags down here and sit on them till we return.

Eva

(*Taking the money out and handing it to JUTKA*) Here you are. Enough for three tickets. I can see a food store from here. Children! Wait here and don't talk to anyone!

(*ZSUZSI, ILDIKO, and IRENKA drag all their baggage near where CAROLINA & PAOLO are sitting, and sit down on it. EVA EXITS & JUTKA moves UPSTAGE to purchase tickets. As soon as THEY are gone, ILDIKO pulls a kitten out of her shawl and starts to pet it. The girls look around anxiously.*)

Zsuzsi

Be careful, Ildiko. ("ill-dee-koh") What if anyu ("un-you") comes back and catches you with her?

Ildiko

But she needs some air.

Zsuzsi

Maybe she's thirsty?

Irenka

I think she's hungry.

Ildiko

So do I. I wish I had some food to give her. (*PAOLO has been watching them with intense curiosity from his seat on top of his luggage. HE has been eating sausage which he has been cutting with a knife. The GIRLS notice HIM looking at them and see that HE has food.*)

Irenka

Maybe that boy would give us a piece of his sausage? Why don't we ask him?

Zsuzsi

Anyu said "no talking to strangers."

Irenka

But, he's only a little boy.

Ildiko

How can we ask him, anyway? He probably doesn't speak Hungarian.

Zsuzsi

He keeps looking over here. *(The GIRLS look at PAOLO, who is watching them with great interest. ILDIKO holds up the kitten and THEY all pantomime eating. PAOLO looks at his sausage, cuts a piece and holds it out to them. IRENKA jumps up and takes it from him and brings it to the cat. At that moment, EVA returns with the bread. She sees the cat and becomes indignant.)*

Eva

Shoo! Shoo! *(The cat jumps out of ILDIKO's arms. PAOLO runs after it.)* What are you children doing with that animal?

Ildiko

(upset) But, he's hungry!

Eva

No more! Your mother's waiting for us. Let's go or we'll miss the boat. *(The girls sadly look back for the cat, but EVA hurries them along to meet JUTKA.) (PAOLO catches the cat and puts it in his satchel. CAROLINA calls after him.)*

Carolina

Paolo! Get back over here!

Paolo

All right! All right! I'm coming. *(PAOLO returns to his seat with the cat hidden in his satchel.)*

(SIGNORA FONTANA returns with food in a satchel from STAGELEFT)

Signora Fontana

Time to go children! Gather the baggage! *(the Fontana Family gathers their things and prepares to board the Bel Italia.)*

(LIGHTS UP ON FULL STAGE as song continues. . .)

ALL: One way out, and I'm gonna take it!
There's no doubt, I'm gonna make it!
Whatever I have to do,
Whatever I have to go through!
I'm tired of living hand to mouth
Nothing to be or to become!
Watching my dreams and my life heading south,
I won't stay and be treated like scum!

(LIGHTS STAY UP, CENTERSTAGE, DOWN ON SIDES.)

(The action returns to Hamburg, CENTERSTAGE. There is a line UPSTAGE at the Ticket Sellers Booth. NICOLAI, HELGA followed by LUDMILLA. ANUSHKA moves DOWNSTAGE with ESTER.)

Anushka

Here are our tickets. *(She passes them out.)*

Ester

I can't believe we're really going to America. I'm so excited.

Anushka

Keep your voice down, Ester. I won't feel sure until we are onboard and there is water between us and the shore.

Ester

Anushka, you're such a worrier.

Anushka

And with good reason. Do you still have the candlesticks?

Ester

(exasperated) Yes, for the hundredth time, yes. They're right here.
(patting a satchel she is carrying)

Anushka

They belonged to my Moishe's ("*Moh-sheez*") mother and he.....

Ester

.....would never speak to me again if I were to lose them. *(SHE finishes ANUSHKA's sentence)*

Anushka

I suppose you think you're very funny. *(ESTER looks at her and smiles. They continue speaking in pantomime and move so as not to block LUDMILLA who is now at the head of the line, purchasing her ticket.)*

Ticket Seller

Name?

Ludmilla

Ludmilla Antonovich

Ticket Seller

Age?

Ludmilla

Sixteen.

Ticket Seller

Occupation?

Ludmilla

Ballerina.

Ticket Seller

(looking up) What?

Ludmilla

Ballerina.

Ticket Seller

(looking at her suspiciously) Are you traveling alone?

Ludmilla

Yes.

Ticket Seller

I cannot sell a ticket to any unaccompanied woman, Fraulein. Unless, that is, you are being met by a male relative at Ellis Island?

Ludmilla

(panicking & thinking fast) Oh. As a matter of fact, my uncle will be meeting me there. He lives in New York.

Ticket Seller

What is his name and address?

Ludmilla

Jakob Antonovich. He lives onFifth Avenue.

Ticket Seller

(writing it down) ...Fifth Avenue. Here is your ticket. Don't go too far away. We'll be boarding shortly. (LUDMILLA grabs her ticket and jumps for joy as "One Way Ticket to America" introduction begins.)

Song: One Way Ticket To America!

Ludmilla, Solo 1: I got my ticket; I'm gonna sail away.

Chorus: One Way Ticket To America

Solo 1: Into the unknown, I'm gonna make my way!

Chorus: One Way Ticket To America

Solo 1: So many people have gone before;

Maybe to you I am just one more.

But I got my ticket straight to the U.S.A.

Chorus: One Way Ticket To America

Solo 2: No more oppression they won't keep me down anymore!

Chorus: One Way Ticket To America

Solo 2: No more depression when I reach that golden shore!

Chorus: One Way Ticket To America

Solo 2: American freedom will be my banner!

I'll change my walk, my talk, my manner!

'Cause I got my ticket straight to the U.S.A.

Chorus: One Way Ticket To America

Gone Are the Old Days!

Gone Are the Old Ways!

Welcome the New me,

I'm gonna be free!

Master of my fate: Life in a new state,

Life in the U.S.A.

Solo 3: My wife and family are back in the old country.

I'm gonna work hard and soon you'll see,

Someday, I'll bring them out with me.

To America!

Chorus: America!

Solo 3: I'll find my way in America!

Chorus: America!

Solo 3: America! That's where I'll be, land of the free,

Chorus: Land of Opportunity!

Solo 4: They say in America, the money it grows on trees!
I'll plant me a few and live in ease
Off my harvest of silver dollar leaves.
In America!

Chorus: America!

Solo 4: I'll find my way in America.

Chorus: America!

Solo 4: America.
That's where I'll be, Land of the free,

Chorus: Land of Opportunity!
America, Open your arms to a poor wand'ring soul
(Open your arms to me!)
I have traveled so long, still I'm only half way to my goal.
(Open you arms to me!)
I have a vision of what life could be
In that magical place, where all people live free!

1st class: Oh, aren't those peasants charming; from here they look so sweet.

Captains: But, don't get any closer or the stench of garlic, will knock you off your feet.

Katie: When I get to America the men will fall in line.
I'll look them over one by one,
And make the best one mine.
So ladies don't get in my way, you'd better step aside;
'Cause when I get to America.....
I'll be a rich man's bride.

Tim: When I get to America, won't have to scrape and bow.
There'll be no lords or ladies there to whom I must kowtow.
Then I will only lift my hat to those who earn my trust.
And thumb my nose to anyone..... who tells me that I must.

1st Class: Oh, sailing to America will be a merry lark;
I simply cannot wait until this steamship will embark.
The sea air is like perfume.
But the chill can make one swoon.
I pray our trip's a smooth one,
And that we'll be there soon.

Chorus: In America, America! I'll find my way in America.
America! America! That's where I'll be, Land of the Free,
Land of Opportunity.

America open your arms to a poor wand'ring soul.
Open your arms to me.
I have traveled so long, still I'm only half way to my goal.
Open your arms to me.
I have a vision of what life could be.....
In that magical place where all people live free!

Chorus 2: One Way Ticket to America!
Chorus 1: America!
2: One Way Ticket to America!
1: America!
2: One Way Ticket to America!
1: America!
2: One Way Ticket to.....
All: I got my fare, soon I'll be there.....
In AME....RI.....CA.....YAH!

(Song Over)

Act I, Scene 2 "All Aboard!"

(LIGHTS UP, STAGE LEFT, ITALY. LIGHTS LOW ON REST OF STAGE)

Violetta

(calling loudly, as soon as applause has died down a bit)

Giuseppe! Giuseppe! Help us with these bags.

Susannah

The ship is boarding. Hurry! Hurry!

Giuseppi

(imitating them) Hurry! Hurry! You girls are always in a hurry.

Violetta

Us? Who was the one who was in such a hurry to sell our family farm and move to America!

Susannah

Enough of this arguing! The decision has been made. We are going to America, and that's that!

Giuseppe

Let's hurry and get our tickets so we can find us a good spot. You girls want to be together on the ship, don't you?

Violetta

I'd rather not be going on the ship, at all!

Susannah

(with warning in her voice) Violetta! Where will you be Giuseppe?

Giuseppi

I have to stay with the men. Don't worry. We'll meet you on deck.
Now, where are the vines?

Susannah

Right here, in this bag. I'm taking good care of them.

Giuseppi

Those vines are our fortune, Susannah.

Susannah

No one knows better than I do, Giuseppi. I'll guard them with my life.

Giuseppi

(elated) I can see it now. Discala Wineries! Someday we'll be rich!
Someday we'll be exporting **our** wine to Italy.

Violetta

You're crazy, Giuseppi! You're crazy!

Giuseppi

(picking her up and spinning her around) Crazy with joy!

Violetta

Put me down!

Susannah

Let's get on the ship already, or it will be leaving without us. *(They gather up their belongings and board the Bel Italia.)*

Bel Italia Captain

All Ashore who's goin' ashore!

King James Captain

All Ashore who's goin' ashore!

Deutschland Captain

All Ashore, who's goin' ashore!

Signora Fontana

Carolina! Paolo! The ship's leaving!

Carolina & Paolo

We're coming, mother! *(running breathlessly up to their mother.)*

(LIGHTS UP ON CENTERSTAGE, DOWN ON STAGELEFT & RIGHT)

(Action shifts to Hamburg, Germany)

Ester

(speaks as if continuing a conversation already started)....but, Anushka, why can't we go up there? *(pointing to the first class deck.)* It looks much nicer up there, and we'll have a better view.

Anushka

(a little bit exaggerated) I'm sure it is much nicer up there, but, Ester it's for first class passengers, only.

Ester

First Class? But, you told me that everyone in America was equal.... you said there was no upper class.....

Anushka

(cutting her off) I **said** that there was no Royalty in America. Besides, this isn't America, yet.

Ester

So, when we go to America, there will only be one class, yes?

Anushka

Ester, first class means they paid more for their tickets, therefore they stay in a better place. When I said that all Americans are equal, I meant that they received equal treatment under the law.

Nicolai

You should be weeping for joy, little one. You will soon be free of tyranny of the czar and his Cossacks. The evil and injustices caused by that man.....

Anushka

Sssshhhh! (*interrupting him*) Not so loud. We are not free yet.

Nicolai

A true anarchist does not whisper his accusations in dark corners but, shouts out the call for freedom from the rooftops. (*everyone at this point is looking at NICOLAI, who has started to shout.*)

Anushka

(*running over to him*) Keep your voice down! (*under her breath*) “Call for freedom,” indeed! If it weren’t for people like you, we would not be forced to run from our homeland!

Nicolai

If it weren’t for people like me, you would continue to live like cowering dogs, whimpering at the feet of your czarist masters! You should be cursing the czar and his Cossacks for the pogroms, not the freedom fighters!

Anushka

“Freedom Fighters,” indeed! You’re nothing but a common rabblouser!
(*turning her back on him and stalking away.*)

Ludmilla

(*To Nicolai.*) Quiet down, sir. At least wait until we are at sea before you speak your mind. The czar has many friends in Germany. (*NICOLAI calms down and moves off by himself.*)

Ester

(*to Anushka*) Why were you so rude to that man? He’s so dashing! How could you speak to him like that?

Anushka

“Dashing?” He’s a reckless revolutionary!

Rachel

But, you said yourself that the czar was an evil man!

Anushka

Ssshhh! What I say in the privacy of my own home is my business! I don’t go throwing bombs and causing other people misery.

Ester

(infatuated) Do you really think he actually threw a bomb?

Anushka

I don't know, and I don't want to know. Now, no more talk of that man.

(FOGHORN IS HEARD, SIGNALLING THE SHIPS' DEPARTURES)

Kelsey

The ship is moving! We're on our way!

Brunnhilde

Hooray! We're off to America! Auf wiedersehen, Deutschland!

*(LIGHTS UP ON FULL STAGE, as PASSENGERS shout and wave "good-bye"
OVER INTRO TO SONG REPRISE)*

(SONG)

ALL: Standing On The Edge of Time,
A slow-motion pantomime.
I feel like I'm moving in a dream.
A leaf on the river, floating downstream.
Walking the tightrope of "here and now";
My soul repeats a sacred vow. . .
"Forward ever, backward never!"
All ties with the past I must sever.
What lies ahead is a mystery,
What went before is now history!

*(LIGHTS DOWN ON FULL-STAGE, LIGHTS UP, STAGE RIGHT as Action
shifts to Queenstown, Ireland: Aboard the "King James")*

(TIMOTHY O. & DANIEL M. shake hands with each other.)

Timothy

Well, Daniel, me boy, we're on our way!

Daniel

Off to a new life! I'll miss the old sod.

Timothy

As long as the Irish must live like slaves in their own land, I won't be missing it for a moment. A curse on all the English lords and their like!

Daniel

Not so loud, Timothy!

Timothy

We're free now. No more hiding out in cellars for us! The valiant soldiers of Ireland will fight on without our help, now. We did what we could.

Daniel

We did what we could and I'd just as soon forget about it now. And hope that the authorities will forget about us!

Timothy

The "authorities" have plenty to worry about without chasing down a couple of bank robbers!

Daniel

Timothy! You must swear to me that you'll never speak of this to anyone, and I'll do the same. (*THEY clasp right hands.*)

Timothy

I swear on my mother's soul!

Daniel

I swear on my mother's soul!

Timothy

(changing the mood) But, you know, I'm gettin' rather hungry after all this excitement. Let's see what they've got for us to eat. (*TIM & DAN go to get some food. Other people have sat down to eat their picnics on all the ships.*)

(LIGHTS DOWN, STAGERIGHT. LIGHTS UP, STAGELEFT. The action shifts to the Bel Italia)

Jutka

You children sit while Eva and I get some water. (*ZSUZSI, ILDIKO & IRENKE sit down. They are still dejected about the loss of their kitten.*)

Ildiko

She's probably hungry.

Zsuzsi

She could be dead by now.

Irenke

Zsuzsi! (*zhoo-zhsee*) What an awful thing to say! Cats are smart. She'll survive.

Ildiko:

But, she was only a baby!

Paolo

Psssst! Psssst!

(the GIRLS look at PAOLO, who is whispering to them.)

Zsuzsi:

It's the boy who gave us the sausage!

Irenka

What do you think he wants?

Paolo

(looking around secretively, PAOLO sneaks over to the GIRLS, then pulls the kitten out of his bag and hands it to ILDIKO.)

Ildiko

Matzi! (*muht-zee*) You saved our kitten! (*The GIRLS surround the kitten and ZSUZSI pats PAOLO on the back.*) "Thank You!" (*is spoken repeatedly by the GIRLS.*)

Paolo

(tipping his hat to the girls and backing away, he backs into ANNA. Turning to face her, HE says) Scusa me!

Anna

No harm done.

Paolo

You're Italian?

Anna

Si. I'm going to America to live with my aunt and uncle. And you?

Paolo

I'm going to meet my father.

Anna

By yourself?

Paolo

No, no! I'm with my mother and sister. The name's Paolo. (*HE extends his hand to shake hands with her.*)

Anna

(curtseying) Anna Christina del Amante di Borghese.

Paolo

(impressed) That sounds like a rich person's name!

Anna

(explaining) My parents were rich, but they died of Typhoid.

Paolo

Oh. I'm so sorry.

Anna

Grazie. (grah-tsee-ay). *(There is an awkward silence. PAOLO stares at his feet. They speak at the same time.....who are you/are you by. . .?)* You first, please.

Paolo

No, no! You first.

Anna

Where do we go to eat on this ship? The matron from the orphanage only gave me this.
(SHE holds out her small bag of food.)

Paolo

That's not very much for a whole week.

Signora Fontana

(calling from UPSTAGE as she moves DOWNSTAGE) Paolo! Paolo! Here you are! It's time to eat now.

Paolo

Mama, meet my new friend. This is Anna Christina.....

Anna

del Amante di Borghese. *(finishing for him.)*

Signora Fontana

Such a big name for such a little girl! And I am Signora Fontana.

Anna

I'm so very pleased to meet you, Signora Fontana. You have a very charming son.

Signora Fontana

And **sooo** polite! What a lovely girl!

Paolo

Mama, Anna is an orphan and she's going to live with her aunt and uncle in New York!

Signora Fontana

I see. And who are you traveling with, my dear?

Anna

I'm by myself.

Signora Fontana

What are you saying? How can that be?

Anna

The mistress from the orphanage said I would be fine.

Signora Fontana

But, you're only a baby! How could they send you alone on such a voyage!? You **must** stay with us! I will look out for you until your aunt and uncle pick you up in New York. Imagine that! Sending a child alone to New York! (*SHE bustles the children to a place where they sit down and eat a meal.*)

(LIGHTS DOWN ON STAGELEFT, LIGHTS UP ON STAGE RIGHT. Action shifts to the "King James")

(COLLEEN & KATE are eating a picnic meal Downstage Right. DANIEL & TIMOTHY are walking slowly Downstage, carrying a tinplate each. THEY sit down near the GIRLS and start picking at their "food.")

Timothy

Daniel, me boy, it looks like we're goin' to have a little problem.

Daniel

This food isn't fit for a dog! (*HE puts down his plate in disgust. - Be Careful: Please, don't bang plates....it's distracting to the audience.*)

Timothy

Like it or not, we got to try it. (*he takes a bite and laboriously tries to swallow it. Then he groans and puts the plate down.*)

Colleen

(COLLEEN has been watching them.) It appears that your meal is not to your liking, gentleman.

Daniel

It's not what we were expecting, and that's the truth.

Kate

(noticing them for the first time; she gives COLLEEN a disapproving look.)

You mean to say, you two hooligans brought no food with you?

Timothy

Circumstances placed us in an extreme hurry to leave.

Daniel

What he means is, in our excitement about going to America, we forgot to buy supplies.

Kate

A foolish mistake, sir. I don't suppose lack of money had anything to do with it?

Timothy

Certainly not! But, we didn't want to be wasting our money on anything so frivolous as food.

Kate

You too won't be much use to America half-starved and weak as kittens.

Daniel

We plan to keep our minds off hunger by tellin' each other the story of our lives.

Kate

"Tis' a very good story, indeed, that fills the belly!"

Timothy

Now don't be spoutin' proverbs to me, girl. You're beginning to sound like me old mother. (*laughingly nudges DANIEL.*)

Kate

(*raising a fist to him*) You'd better not be gettin' fresh with me or I'll begin to feel like your old mother, as well. (*KATE moves to slap him; TIM ducks and COLLEEN grabs her arm*)

Colleen

Kate! What are you doin'? The least we can do is offer our two countrymen a meal.

Kate

(*under her breath, to COLLEEN*) Are You crazy? We hardly have enough for ourselves!

Colleen

Shame on you, Kate Sullivan! I can't believe me ears! Mother would roll over in her grave if she could hear you speak!

Daniel

Please, ladies! We don't want to see two pretty sisters arguing on our account.

Kate

(*swiftly turning on him*) On **your** account?!

Colleen

(*warningly*) Kate.....?

Kate

(looking at COLLEEN, taking a deep breath and composing herself.) We aren't arguing
....we're discussin'. And I won't have the good Lord cursin' me for failin' to save a
fellow Irishman from starvin'. Lord knows too many of us have died that way already!

Colleen

(cheerfully) So, like it or not you'll have to accept our hospitality!

Timothy

Well, if you insist.....?

Kate & Colleen

We insist. *(TIM, DANIEL, COLLEEN & KATE sit down to eat.)*

(The action shifts to the "Bel Italia" Stageleft.)

Eva

(the SZABO & HARASZTI families are just finishing their meal on deck.) All right,
children, let's clean up. *(they shake out towels, wipe off plates, put things in baskets
while the girls still hide the kitten in a bag.)* Where is the rest of that sausage? I know
there was another piece left.

Ildiko

I don't know. *(shrugging her shoulders)* Are you sure Zsuzsi didn't eat it?

Zsuzsi

I ate a lot of it. Maybe it rolled away somewhere.

Eva

Well, it certainly didn't grow legs and walk! *(looking at them suspiciously)*
What are you children up to? I can tell when you are lying. Out with it!

Girls

Nothing. We're not up to anything. What makes you think that? Etc....

Eva

Jutka! *(Yoot-kuh)* You must speak to these children.

Jutka

All right, children. It's not right to tease Mrs, Szabo. *(suh-boh)* Return the sausage, now.
We need every bit of food for the trip.

Ildiko

But, mama, we don't have it anymore, honest. *(just then, a loud "meowing" is heard.)*

Jutka

What was that?

Ildiko

What was that?

Eva

It sounded like a cat. Uh-oh. I don't believe it! Where is it? (*EVA starts to look through their bags. She finds the cat and holds it up.*) See what these foolish children have done now?

Jutka

Where on earth did they find a cat?

Eva

I caught them playing with it in Naples, but, I thought I shooed it away.

Ildiko

Don't hurt Matzsi! Please!?

Jutka

Cats carry germs. You don't know where this one has been?

Ildiko

But, it's little. How could it have a disease already? And look how pretty she is.

Jutka

Well, it is a pretty cat. What's done is done, but I'm going to have to think of a punishment for you girls. We have a difficult journey ahead of us, and carrying a kitten is not going to make it easier.

Ildiko

Oh, thank you, thank you! (*all the girls jump for joy. EVA throws up her hands in exasperation.*)

Eva

What next?

Capt. of Bel Italia (Ticket Seller)

Batten down the hatches! Everyone go below! There's a storm comin' up.

Capt. of Deutschland (Ticket Seller)

Everyone below! Storm's brewin'! Secure the hatches! It looks like a bad one!

Capt. of King James (Ticket Seller)

Down below with ye! There's a storm comin' up! It's gonna be a rough one! Secure the hatches!

(all the immigrants are in great confusion, calling out loudly to their children, etc., telling them to gather their things and go below. All actors take their places for "Neptune's Furies" - the "Storm Ballet")

Song: "Neptune's Furies"