

# act one: scene one

*Pipe Music.*

*Dusty storage room filled with crates, bags, boxes and some old furniture. EVA, dressed in clothes of the late thirties is sitting on the floor, reading. The book is a large, hard-bound children's storybook entitled "Der Rattenfänger." HELGA enters. She is well turned out in clothes of the late thirties. She is holding a coat, a button, a needle and some thread.*

EVA: What's an abyss, Mutti?

HELGA: *Sitting down and ushering EVA to sit next to her, An abyss is a deep and terrible chasm.*

EVA: What's a chasm?

HELGA: A huge gash in the rocks.

EVA: What's a ...

*EVA puts down the book. Pipe music stops.*

HELGA: Eva, sew on your buttons now. Show me that you can do it.

EVA: I can't get the thread through the needle. It's too thick. You do it.

HELGA: Lick the thread.

EVA: Do I have to?

HELGA: Yes. Lick the thread.

EVA: I don't want to sew.

HELGA: How else will the buttons get onto the coat?

EVA: The coat's too big for me.

HELGA: It's to last next winter too.

EVA: Please.

HELGA: No

EVA: Why won't you help me?

HELGA: You have to be able to manage on your own.

EVA: Why?

HELGA: Because you do. Now, lick the thread.

*EVA licks the thread.*

HELGA: That should flatten it... and hold the needle firmly and place the end of the thread between your fingers... not too near... that's it... now try to push it through.

*EVA concentrates on the needle and thread HELGA watches closely.*

HELGA: See. You don't need me. It's good.

EVA: I don't mind having my coat open a bit. Really. I've got enough buttons.

HELGA: You'll miss it when the wind blows.

EVA: Can't I do it later?

HELGA: There's no "later" left, Eva.

EVA: After the packing, after my story...

HELGA: Now.

*EVA gives in and sews. Footsteps. The key jangles in the door lock. It unlocks.*

*The door opens. EVELYN and FAITH enter. EVELYN is carrying a tea towel. They are not aware of EVA and HELGA's presence. EVA and HELGA are not aware of theirs. EVELYN looks through the boxes.*

EVELYN: Most of it's junk.

FAITH: You don't keep junk.

EVELYN: Do you want anything in particular?

FAITH: Not really.

EVELYN: *Opening a box, Pans?*

FAITH: All those?

EVELYN: Are you intending to cook or eat raw?

FAITH: I was thinking of take-out ...

EVELYN: Have them.

*EVELYN hands the box over to FAITH who receives it.*

EVELYN: What else? Pans, lights, crockery, cutlery? I've got a television somewhere...

FAITH: You sound like a shop assistant trying to make a sale.

EVELYN: Just don't be a difficult customer.

FAITH: I wasn't going to be.

EVELYN: Good. I told Mum we wouldn't be long.

*EVELYN opens a box and takes out a teacup.*

EVELYN: Would cups and saucers be of any use?

FAITH: I prefer mugs.

EVELYN: What about for visitors?

FAITH: They can have mugs too.

EVELYN: I'll give you this set of cups and saucers just in case.

FAITH: Mum, I ...

EVELYN: Here's a spare teapot too.

FAITH: I don't really want two teapots.

EVELYN: One might break.

FAITH: *Handing the spare one back,* Just keep it.

EVELYN: Must you be so ungrateful?

FAITH: You don't have to do this.

EVELYN: Who else is going to?

FAITH: Dad sent me another check.

EVELYN: Would you use a strainer?

FAITH: Not really.

EVELYN: I'm sure his money will come in very useful if you save it.

FAITH: I really wouldn't mind buying my own stuff.

EVELYN: You usually approve of my taste.

FAITH: It's not that.

EVELYN: I'm glad to hear it.

FAITH: *Inspecting the crockery,* You should keep your things.

EVELYN: I don't think I need them as much as you do, darling.

FAITH: You might one day.  
EVELYN: They shouldn't be left to molder in a box when they can be used.

*EVELYN opens a box and takes out a glass. She polishes it.*

EVELYN: Glasses?  
FAITH: Those must be worth a fortune.  
EVELYN: Nothing is too good for my daughter.  
FAITH: Might be too good for the flat.  
EVELYN: You said you were very pleased with this one.  
FAITH: The rent's so high for what it is.  
EVELYN: *Polishing,* You said it was worth it.  
FAITH: Maybe you should have come to see it.  
EVELYN: You're quite capable of choosing a flat without my help. You have your friends to advise you.  
FAITH: I think they want different things from me.  
EVELYN: Isn't it a little late to realize that?  
FAITH: Maybe it's not such a good idea to move.

*EVELYN concentrates on polishing and replacing glasses.*

FAITH: I don't feel right about it.

*EVELYN continues to polish. Pause.*

EVELYN: *Scrutinizing a glass,* This is chipped.  
FAITH: What do you think about waiting till I can afford to buy somewhere?

EVELYN: I think that if you say you're going, you should go.  
FAITH: I can get the deposit back.  
EVELYN: Like you got the deposit back last time?  
FAITH: That was different.  
EVELYN: It sounds remarkably similar to me.  
FAITH: I'm not sure I like it at all, really.  
EVELYN: Oh Faith, for heavens' sake, you're impossible.  
FAITH: I wish you'd come and see it.  
EVELYN: *Polishing madly,* How on earth did that glass get damaged. I put in enough paper.  
FAITH: Are you angry with me?  
EVELYN: Absolutely not.  
FAITH: Are we still friends?  
EVELYN: Of course. *She polishes.*  
FAITH: I don't want to go.  
EVELYN: *Still polishing,* Will eleven glasses be enough?  
FAITH: You can forget about the glasses.  
EVELYN: You'll need something to drink from in your new home.

*EVELYN continues to polish. FAITH, helpless, watches.*

EVA: *Sewing,* Why aren't Carla and Heinrich going on one of the trains?

HELGA: Their parents couldn't get them places.

EVA: Carla said it's because they didn't want to send them away.

HELGA: Carla says a lot of silly things.

EVA: Why's that silly?

HELGA: Of course they would send them away if they had places. Any good parent would do that.

EVA: Why?

HELGA: Because any good parent would want to protect their child.

EVA: Can't you and Vati protect me?

HELGA: Only by sending you away.

EVA: Why will I be safer with strangers?

HELGA: Your English family will be kind.

EVA: But they don't know me.

HELGA: Eva. This is for the best.

EVA: Will you miss me?

HELGA: Of course, I will.

EVA: Will you write to me?

HELGA: I've told you. I will do more than miss you and write to you. Vati and I will come. We will not let you leave us behind for very long. Do you think we would really let you go if we thought that we would never see you again?

EVA: How long will it be before you come?

HELGA: Only a month or two. When the silly permits are ready.

EVA: Silly permits.

HELGA: Silly, silly permits.

EVA: The needle's stuck.

*HELGA, with difficulty, pulls the needle through.*

EVA: Finish it off for me.

HELGA: *Handing the sewing back to EVA, No.*

*EVA takes it and carries on sewing. EVELYN is still polishing glasses. FAITH is still watching her.*

FAITH: Mum, please stop doing that.

EVELYN: *Holding up the glass, They really need washing.*

FAITH: I'm not doing this to muck you around.

EVELYN: You can't stay here forever.

FAITH: Do you really want me to go?

EVELYN: What I want is irrelevant. It is your life, Faith.

FAITH: It affects you too.

EVELYN: You've made a commitment to moving into that place. Stick by it.

FAITH: It feels all wrong

EVELYN: It seems perfectly straightforward to me.

FAITH: What do you want?

EVELYN: I want you to make a mature and reliable decision. An adult decision. This continual vacillation is not helpful to either of us.

FAITH: I don't want to move out yet.

*EVELYN stops polishing.*

EVELYN: Yet?

FAITH: For a while.

EVELYN: What does that mean?

FAITH: Until after I've finished college.

EVELYN: Are you absolutely sure about this?

FAITH: Yes. I definitely won't move out.

EVELYN: So, I don't need to sell the house.

FAITH: No.

EVELYN: I can phone the estate agent?

FAITH: Yes.

EVELYN: And say no?

FAITH: Yes.

EVELYN: You won't change your mind again?

FAITH: I don't understand why you have to sell the house if I leave.

EVELYN: Will you or will you not change your mind?

FAITH: No.

EVELYN: Song and dance finally over?

FAITH: Yes.

*EVELYN puts back the glass and closes the box.*

EVELYN: I expect you to keep to your word. *She picks up the chipped glass.*

FAITH: Why are you taking that?

EVELYN: A chipped glass is ruined forever.

*EVELYN exits. FAITH retreats back into the attic.*

HELGA: Try to meet other Jews in England.

EVA: I will.

HELGA: They don't mind Jews there. It's like it was here when I was younger. It'll be good.

EVA: When you come, will Vati get his proper job back like he used to have?

HELGA: I'm sure he will.

EVA: *Finishes sewing, Finished.*

HELGA: Now let me check the case.

EVA: I packed what you said. It's very full.

*HELGA picks up a case hidden among the boxes and opens and checks through it. EVA watches her. FAITH finds a trunk. She is tempted to look inside. She hesitates. She takes courage and tentatively opens it.*

HELGA: *Pulling out a dress,* This suits you so well.

EVA: I'll only wear it for best. Promise.

HELGA: *Refolding the dress,* Someone will have to press out the creases when you get there.

FAITH: *Pulling out a toy train,* Runaway train?

EVA: Did I fold it wrongly?

HELGA: No. The case is far too small.

*FAITH makes the sound of a train whistle as she pulls pieces of train track out of the box. She starts to lay them out on the floor.*

FAITH: Runaway train went down the track  
And she blew, she blew  
Runaway train went down the track  
And she blew, she blew  
Runaway train went down the track  
And blah de blah, she won't come back  
And she blew, blew, blew, blew  
Blew!

*FAITH continues to lay the track. HELGA pulls a mouth organ out of the case.*

HELGA: What's this doing in here?

EVA: That's my mouth organ.

HELGA: You're not allowed to take anything other than clothes.

EVA: But it was my last birthday present and I'm just beginning to get the tunes right.

HELGA: The border guards will send you back to us if they find you with this. Then where will you be?

EVA: I'm sorry.

*HELGA gives the mouth organ to EVA and sets to reorganizing the case contents. FAITH looks into another box. She turns it upside down. A load of dolls falls onto the floor. None of them has any clothes on. FAITH picks up a doll.*

FAITH: Lucy? *She gently sits Lucy by the train set. She picks out another doll. Gloria. She gently sits Gloria next to Lucy and then does the same with each of the other dolls.*

HELGA: There's no room for anything else. Where are your shoes?

*EVA reaches over to right by FAITH's feet and gets a pair of shoes.*

FAITH: *Laying out another doll, Barbara. She continues to lay out the dolls.*

EVA: Here.

HELGA: Put the heel of the right shoe to your ear.

EVA: Why?

HELGA: Do it.

*EVA puts the heel to her ear.*

HELGA: What can you hear?

EVA: It sounds like ...

HELGA: Yes?

EVA: Ticking.

HELGA: My gold watch is in there.

EVA: How?

HELGA: The cobbler did it.

EVA: I'll look after it for you.

HELGA: And in the other heel are two gold rings, a chain with the Star of David and a charm bracelet for you. All made of gold.

EVA: For me?

HELGA: From my jewelry box. A traveling gift.

EVA: Thank you.

HELGA: My grandfather used to wear a black hat and coat. "You are my children. You are my jewels," he told me. "We old ones invest our future in you."

*EVA hugs HELGA. LIL enters.*

LIL: You two have the quietest arguments.

FAITH: Is she not pleased?

LIL: So so.

FAITH: You think it's better if I stay, don't you?

LIL: I'm keeping out of it.

FAITH: Sorry, Gran.

LIL: What for?

FAITH: Spoiling the start of your visit.

LIL: I've seen worse.

FAITH: Where is she now?

LIL: Cleaning the windows.

FAITH: I said I'd definitely stay.

LIL: She's begun in the sitting room.

FAITH: The cleaner came in yesterday.

LIL: She's even got the stepladder out.

FAITH: What about the pink overall?

LIL: Oh yes.

FAITH: Oh God.

LIL: She'll sparkle the glass and then it'll be done.

FAITH: It wasn't that bad.

LIL: Leave her to it.

FAITH: She's not talking either is she?

LIL: Lock jaw's set in.

FAITH: Don't you just love it?

LIL: Coming down?

FAITH: *Looking at the toys*, I found some of my old things. I'd no idea she'd kept them.

LIL: You've made a mess, haven't you?

FAITH: Just laying them out.

LIL: You'll make your mum even worse.

FAITH: What's wrong with looking at my old toys?

LIL: Is she cleaning her guts out downstairs for you to wreak havoc in her precious attic?

FAITH: Gran, there's no harm meant.

LIL: There's harm caused.

FAITH: I'll pack them up before she comes in here again.

LIL: You're trying to set her off on purpose, aren't you?

FAITH: No.

LIL: Well, stop being soft and put them away now.

FAITH: Why is it that I can't do a simple, ordinary thing without getting it in the neck?

LIL: Since when have you done things simply where she's concerned?

FAITH: Believe me, I hate it when she gets like this.

LIL: You could do a much better job of keeping her sweet then.

FAITH: Story of my life.

LIL: Just get this lot boxed and neaten up the room. I'll do tea.



LIL exits. FAITH reluctantly starts to put the dolls back into the box. HELGA and EVA break their embrace.

EVA: Listen.

HELGA: What?

EVA: I've nearly got it right.

EVA starts to play a tune on the mouth organ. She plays well. EVA finishes playing. HELGA applauds. FAITH pulls out a small box. She opens it and looks inside.

HELGA: Now it's time for bed.

EVA: Not yet. Let me stay up. It's my last night.

HELGA: We will carry on as we always do. Bedtime is bedtime.

EVA: Moaning, Mutti.

HELGA: Which story do you want?

HELGA turns and picks up EVA's Rattenfänger book. EVA quickly sneaks her mouth organ into the case and closes it.

EVA: The Ratcatcher

FAITH pulls out a hard-backed children's storybook identical to the one HELGA is holding. Pipe music.

FAITH: Der Rattenfänger.

HELGA: Not that one Eva.

EVA: You said I could choose.

HELGA: Choose something else.

EVA: I don't want anything else.

HELGA opens the book and turns its pages. EVA draws away from her, puts on her coat and hat and picks up the case.

FAITH: The Ratcatcher?

EVA: What did you say an abyss was, Mutti?

HELGA: I hope you won't ask questions like this when you're in England.

EVA: Why not?

HELGA: Listen.

FAITH opens the book and flicks through it. She finds an inscription in the front of the book. EVA sits close to HELGA.

HELGA: "Beware little children. Take heed and learn the lesson of Hamlyn where one bad soul brought tragedy upon the whole town."

FAITH: "Hamburg. 1939."

HELGA: "Happy Hamlyn after the rats had been led away ...

FAITH carefully looks at the first page.

HELGA: ... A town teeming with life. Full to overflowing. And every day, the good people counted their blessings. Every single one." ... Eva?

EVA: I'm listening.

FAITH: Looking at a picture, Counting their blessings for being so lucky..

HELGA: "They all knew how fortunate they were. All except for one very wicked soul who was ungrateful and did not count."

FAITH: Looking at another picture, Mr. Ingratitude. Jesus

HELGA: "We are forgotten. We are lost..."

EVA: "... We are destroyed..."



HELGA: "...cried out all the uncounted blessings."  
FAITH: "The cloud..."  
HELGA: "Then a cloud appeared in the clear, blue sky casting a shadow down below."  
EVA: "Who is not counting?"  
HELGA: "Whispered the shadow."  
EVA: "Who has forgotten their blessings?"  
HELGA: "It hissed."  
EVA: "I will find you."  
HELGA: "It spat."  
EVA: "I will search you out whoever, wherever you are."  
FAITH: *Turning onto another page, My God, and the shadow growing legs...*  
HELGA: ...and strong arms and spiky nails...  
EVA: And eyes sharp as razors.  
FAITH: The Ratcatcher.  
*The shadow of the RATCATCHER hovers. A train whistle blows. Sounds of a busy railway station. HELGA remains stuck in bedtime story mode. EVA puts on her coat and hat and label with her number on it—3362.*  
HELGA: The Ratcatcher searched for the ungrateful one. He searched and searched but all in vain.  
RATCATCHER: Who is to pay for the lost blessings?  
HELGA: He raged.  
RATCATCHER: If not the one guilty soul, then all.

HELGA: And he raised an enchanted pipe to his snarling lip, making a cruel promise to all the people of Hamlyn.  
RATCATCHER: I will take the heart of your happiness away.  
*The RATCATCHER plays his music. The sounds of the railway station become louder and louder. Another train whistle.*  
EVA: Mutti! Vati! Hello! Hello! See. I did get into the carriage. I said I would. See, I'm not crying. I said I wouldn't. I can't open the window! It's sealed tight! Why've you taken your gloves off? You're knocking too hard. Your knuckles are going red! What? I can't hear you!  
*Sound of long, shrill train whistle.*  
EVA: Louder! Louder! What? I can't hear! I can't ... See you in England.  
*Sounds of train starting to move. EVA sits.*  
EVA: I mustn't stare at that cross-eyed boy.  
*Train whistle blows.*  
EVA: What if he talks to me?  
*Sounds of children chattering. Suddenly a young child cries and cries.*  
EVA: You mustn't cry. There's no point.  
*The crying continues.*  
EVA: Stop it.  
*The crying continues.*  
EVA: We'll all see our muttis and vatis soon enough.  
*The crying calms slightly.*

EVA: And don't look at the cross-eyed boy.

*The crying continues.*

EVA: Hoppe, hoppe reiter  
Wenn er felkt dann schreit er  
Fellt er in den graben  
Fressen ihn die raben  
Fellt er in den sumpf  
Macht der reiter plumpf.  
{*Translation: Hop hop hop hop rider  
Do not fall beside her  
If into the ditch you fall  
The Ratman gets you all  
And don't have the desire  
To fall into the mire.*}

*The crying calms. Sounds of children laughing.*

EVA: *Announcing to all around her, Did any of you know?  
In England all the men have pipes and look like  
Sherlock Holmes and everyone has a dog.*

*Enter a Nazi border OFFICER. He approaches EVA. FAITH watches.*

OFFICER: No councillor in here?

EVA: She's in the next carriage.

OFFICER: *Picking up EVA's case, Whose case is this?*

EVA: Mine

OFFICER: Stand up straight.

*EVA stands.*

OFFICER: Turn your label around then. It's gone the wrong way. Can't see your number.

EVA: *Turning the label round. Quietly, Sorry.*

OFFICER: Speak up.

EVA: Sorry.

OFFICER: Sir! Sorry, sir.

EVA: Sorry, Sir.

OFFICER: No one will know what to do with you if they can't see your number.

*Silence.*

OFFICER: Will they?

EVA: No, Sir.

OFFICER: Might have to remove you from the train.

*Silence.*

OFFICER: Mightn't we?

EVA: Yes, Sir.

OFFICER: D'you know it at least?

EVA: Pardon, Sir?

OFFICER: Know your number. If you don't know it you might forget who you are.

EVA: 3362, Sir.

OFFICER: *Taking out a pen, Don't want you to forget who you are now, do we?*

EVA: No, Sir.

OFFICER: Let me remind you.

*He draws a huge Star of David on the label.*

OFFICER: There. That should tell 'em wherever it is you're going. Best to keep them informed, eh?

EVA: Terrified, Yes, Sir.

OFFICER opens and searches the case, throwing everything onto the floor. He finds the mouth organ.

OFFICER: You can't take valuables out of the country.  
Can't take anything for gain.

EVA: I wouldn't sell it, Sir.

OFFICER: What's it for then?

EVA: For music, Sir. I play it, Sir.

OFFICER: You any good?

EVA: I suppose so.

OFFICER: Go on then. Prove it's not just to make money.

EVA takes it and plays nervously, badly.

OFFICER: You need more practice. Better keep it. *He body-searches EVA. What money have you got? He digs into EVA's pockets and takes out a few coins, which he takes and pockets. Better clear up this mess.*

EVA starts to clear up. OFFICER feels in a pocket and produces a toffee.

OFFICER: Giving the toffee to EVA, Here kiddie. A sweetie for you.

OFFICER ruffles EVA's hair and exits. EVA grips the toffee tightly and tidies up the clothes into the case. (Sounds of a train speeding along. Children's excited chatter. In German, "The border, the border, the border.")

EVA: It is the border! The border! Can't get us now! We're out! Out! Stuff your stupid Hitler. Stuff your stupid toffees! *She throws down the toffee.* Keep them! Hope your eyes fall out and you die the worst death on earth! Hope you all rot in hell forever and ever! Hope no one buries you! Hope

the rats come and eat up all your remains until there's nothing left!

*Sounds of a train stopping. Sounds of a buzzing, busy, happy crowd at a railway station. A voice saying in Dutch, "Have as many sweets and as much lemonade as you want."*

EVA: *Greedily eating and drinking,* You know what? That Dutch lady said we can have as many cakes as we want. And sweets. And lemonade. I'm going to stuff my pockets for later. Who says it's naughty? They all want us to be happy, don't they? Well, that's what I'm doing. Making myself happy.

*Sound of a ship's horn and the lapping of waves. Tired, muted children's chatter.*

EVA: You know what? If you lick your lips you'll taste the salt. Sea salt. What d'you mean, Hook of Holland? It can't be. It's nothing like one. It isn't. Look at it. How's that a hook? *Coughing,* Excuse me...*About to vomit...*it won't come...No, I'm fine...Really...It's just nothing...Nothing will come out of me.

*Sound of a ship's horn.*

EVA: This is Harwich, you know. It really is England.

*Sounds of disembarkation. Children's chatter and adult English voices, "Come along now," "Keep moving," "Move to the right, please."*

EVA: Can you just go through like that? Don't they search you?

EVA stops and bends down suddenly.

EVA: *picking up one penny,* A penny. They have big money here. It must be a sign of good luck.

EVA pockets the penny. RATCATCHER's music.

HELGA: In the piper's wake they skipped. All the children up the mountain, on and on till ... crash. With a

HELGA: *cont'd*  
roar the rock opened, the music stopped, and the children disappeared into the abyss.

FAITH: *Reading in German, "Drumless street"*

HELGA: And the weeping people renamed the street where the children had last been seen, "Drumless street." A hollow highway where music was forbidden. Then chisel and hammer battered into the walls of Hamlyn the tragic tale of the lost kinder who left in the summer of 1284 and were never seen thereafter.

*FAITH starts to play a discordant tune on the mouth organ.*

*Blackout.*

*END SCENE.*

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# act one: scene two

*HELGA has gone. FAITH has settled down to read a letter from the box. EVA has taken off her coat. Her case is by her feet. She has a tin mug of tea in one hand and a piece of bread in the other. Railway station sounds. A train announcement in English.*

EVA: *Trying to put on a brave face, I am very lucky. I appreciate all of this, really I do, Mutti. She takes a bite out of the bread.*

FAITH: *Reading, March 6th, 1941.*

EVA: *I'm glad to be eating the bread of freedom even if it does taste like sponge buttered with greasy salt. She sips the tea.*

FAITH: *"Dearest Eva, little Eva who must now be so big."*

EVA: *How good it is to sip the tea of England even if it does taste like dishwater. I am so fortunate not to be at home with you and Vati. How good it is to have escaped.*

FAITH: *See, I write you in English for sure am I that it now is your best language.*

EVA: *If I could, if it wasn't ungrateful, I'd wish that they hadn't made this "stuff" for me so I had to drink and eat it; wish that the houses I saw on the way here weren't all the same, red-brick squares so I could look forward to living somewhere like our house, elegant; wish they all spoke German. She sighs and takes another sip.*

FAITH: *Täntchen Marianne sends her love. She is not too well at present as her chest is very bad. It does not*

*help that we have poor heating here in the small flat that Vati and me now share with her.*

EVA: *Mind you, Mutti, it was wonderful going on the red bus. We went right through London. I sat on the top. I could see everything. Upstairs on a bus. It's unbelievable!*

FAITH: *Are you keeping up your good studies at school and working as hard and well as always you did? Also we hope that you be a good girl for the Mr. and Mrs. Miller. Vati wants me to tell you that he is well and his spirits are up. Life is not so bad. We are happy enough.*

*An English ORGANIZER enters.*

EVA: *Standing up and bowing. Very carefully pronouncing, Goodbye to you.*

ORGANIZER: *What you on about?*

EVA: *About?*

ORGANIZER: *Never mind. Is your name Eva, pauses to work out the pronunciation, Schlesinger?*

*EVA looks uncertain.*

ORGANIZER: *How d'you say it? Eevaa Shshlezzinnjerr?*

EVA: *Different pronunciation, Ava Schlesinger?*

ORGANIZER: *Yes. Points at her. You?*

EVA: *Schlesinger Eva.*

ORGANIZER: *You are she?*

EVA: *Me?*

ORGANIZER: *Eva?*

EVA: Yes, sir.

ORGANIZER: It appears that your English family have been delayed.

EVA: Das verstehe ich nicht. [Translation: I don't understand, sir.]

ORGANIZER: *Miming with hands and talking very slowly,* Your ... English mother ... Mutter?

EVA: Mutter.

ORGANIZER: *Miming graphically,* Not coming yet!

EVA: Keiner kommt mich abholen? [Translation: No one's coming to meet me?]

ORGANIZER: *Nodding,* That's right.

EVA: Gar keiner? [Translation: No one at all?]

ORGANIZER: *Nodding,* That's right.

EVA: Meine Mutter hat aber gesagt, dass hier eine Familie für mich ist. Sie hat gesagt, das ist alles besprochen. [Translation: But my mother said that I had a family here. She said it had been arranged.] She starts crying.

ORGANIZER: What is it about me that gets them all crying?

EVA: Ich will meine Eltern haben. [Translation: I want my parents.]

ORGANIZER: I'm sorry, love. I can't understand a word you're saying.

EVA: Und wer wird kümmern sich um mich? [Translation: Who will look after me?]

ORGANIZER: She'll be here soon.

EVA: Wo, soll ich denn hin? [Translation: Where will I go?]

ORGANIZER: You've just got to wait.

EVA: Bitte, schicken Sie mich nicht zurück nach Deutschland. [Translation: Please don't send me back to Germany.]

ORGANIZER: It's not the end of the world.

EVA *Sniffs.*

ORGANIZER: *Taking a hankie out of his pocket,* Here.

EVA *hesitates.*

ORGANIZER: I've not used it.

EVA *takes it, wipes her eyes and blows her nose.*

ORGANIZER: I should really leave you to use your sleeve like most of the others are doing.

EVA: *Holding out the hankie to return it,* Entschuldigung, ich habe es ein bisschen schmutzig gemacht. [Translation: I'm sorry. I've made it a bit dirty.]

ORGANIZER: *Taking the hankie,* I just can't stand it when you all start crying.

EVA: Kummern Sie sich um mich? [Translation: Will you look after me?]

ORGANIZER: At least you've stopped now. Right. I'd better go and do that lot over there.

ORGANIZER *makes to exit.* EVA *makes to follow him.*

ORGANIZER: No. No. You stay where you are.

EVA *looks perplexed.*

ORGANIZER: *Barking at her as if to a dog,* Sit!



EVA looks at the chair and returns to it.

ORGANIZER: Stay!

ORGANIZER exits.

FAITH: Still reading, Remember that we always love and think of you. Always. No matter what. Mutti. She starts to play the mouth organ.

EVA: Listening to the heel of her shoe, Yes. It is. It's ticking. She tries to twist the heel. I need to know the time. Come on. She twists again with much more effort. Nothing shifts. She holds the heel to her ear and shakes it. My gold rings. I want to try on my new rings. She takes off the other shoe. My chain. I can wear it now. For the first time I can wear it out on top of my clothes. She thwacks the heels against the side of the chair. Mutti, you were right about Herr Reichman. He is a very reliable cobbler who doesn't know how to make a faulty shoe. He's locked in my keepsakes, the gold presents from you and Vati. I'll never get them now. Putting the shoe back on. They'll just be there in my shoes, jangling and ticking away, with me walking on them forever and ever. What good's a watch when you can't see its face.

LIL enters.

FAITH: I will put the things away ...

LIL: You said that before.

FAITH: I'm just about to.

LIL: What about tea?

FAITH: I don't want any.

EVA: Standing up, Goodbye to you.

LIL: To EVA, Poor lamb. You must be exhausted. Scared

as well probably. Last thing you need is me being late. Never trust a train. I really am sorry.

EVA stands and bows.

EVA: Goodbye to you.

LIL: Goodbye?

EVA: Goodbye.

LIL: Who taught you English? German teacher was it? Holds out her hand. Hello.

EVA holds out her hand.

LIL: Shaking EVA's hand, Hello.

EVA: Carefully, Hello.

LIL: Speaking slowly, My name is Mrs. Miller. Lil Miller.

EVA: Sehr erfreut. [Translation: I'm pleased to meet you.]

LIL: I'm sorry, love. Don't speak German. You'll have to learn English. Points to EVA's case and gestures "out." Set to go then?

EVA picks up her case, puts on her coat and stands ready.

LIL: Pointing at the label with the number and Star of David on it., What's this?

EVA: Ach, das ist blöd. [Translation: I hate it.]

LIL: Why don't we get rid of it?

EVA hesitates.

LIL: You don't need it on now I've come.

EVA: Und wenn ich meine Nummer vergesse?  
[Translation: What if I forget my number?]



LIL takes the label off.

LIL: All gone. *She puts the label on the chair.*

EVA: *Hesitating, Ist das denn wirklich erlaubt? [Translation: Are you sure that you can do that?]*

LIL: *Gesturing, Over. Finished. Done. Goodbye. Yes. That's the word. Goodbye.*

EVA: Ach so. *[Translation: I understand.]*

LIL takes her hand.

LIL: I like you. Come on. D'you like singing? *She sings a swatch of "Runaway Train." Train to Manchester. Our carriage is reserved. Sit down there. And don't put your feet on the seats. Doing all right? She takes out a packet of cigarettes and starts to light up. EVA looks horrified.*

EVA: Weshalb, rauchen Sie denn? Sowas tut man doch nicht. *[Translation: You can't smoke. It's a dirty habit.]*

LIL: Don't you like smoking?

EVA: Nur primitive Menschen rauchen. *[Translation: Only common people smoke.]*

LIL: You'll just have to get used to it.

EVA: Davon werden die Finger gelb, wie 'ne Totenhand. *[Translation: It makes your fingers go yellow and boney.]*

LIL: What you on about? Look. *She takes out a cigarette. This is a cigarette. I light it. She lights it. I smoke it. She takes a drag. Oh, that's good. And I enjoy it. You'll have to learn to go down the shops and get my twenty Players for me... That can be the first English you learn.*

EVA: *Miming, Kann ich mal probieren? [Translation: Can*

*I have a go?]*

LIL: Didn't your mum ever tell you that it's bad for children to smoke?

EVA: *Pleading, Ach, bitte! [Translation: Please.]*

LIL: You're a naughty girl, you.

EVA: *Pleading, Nur ein einziges Mal! [Translation: Just one try?]*

LIL: *Holding the cigarette out to her, A quickie then.*

*EVA draws on the cigarette and coughs.*

LIL: Away from home, out in the world two minutes and already you're smoking like a chimney.

EVA: I have hunger.

LIL: Should have said before. *She looks at her watch. Five minutes. All right. Wait there! She rushes off.*

EVA: Frau Lil! Frau Lil! Lassen Sie mich nich allein! Womoglich fährt der Zug ab! Ich habe nicht mal eine Fahrkarte! Bitte Bleiben Sie hier! Wo sind Sie denn! Ich weiss ja nicht, wie ich mit jemandem reden soll. Was soll ich denn machen! *[Translation: Frau Lil! Frau Lil! Don't leave me! The train might go! I don't even have my ticket! Please come back!]* Looks. *{Where are you! I don't know how to talk to anyone. What'll I do!}*

*The whistle blows.*

EVA: Hilfe! Hilfe! Keiner kümmert sich um mich! *[Translation: Help! Help! No one's looking after me!]*

*LIL rushes in holding large piece of cake.*

LIL: Stop fretting and eat your Madeira cake.

*She gives the cake to EVA, who eats it hungrily.*

FAITH: I don't want any tea.

LIL: Don't make me have it on my own.

FAITH: What about Mum?

LIL: She's polishing furniture.

FAITH: Has she had the vacuum out yet?

LIL: Stop it.

FAITH: I'm sorry. I'm not hungry.

LIL: *Signaling at the mess, Get on with it, Faith.*

FAITH: Gran...

LIL: Now.

FAITH: If you don't mind, I'm just looking...

LIL: *Bending down to pick things up, Time to come out and face the music, Princess Hideaway.*

FAITH: Don't call me that.

LIL: Don't do it then.

FAITH: Look what I've found, *she pulls out the Der Rattenfänger book.*

LIL: Stop poking around, will you.

FAITH: It's the Ratcatcher story. I didn't know we had a copy.

LIL: What Ratcatcher story?

FAITH: You know, "The Ratcatcher ever-ready in

the shadows."

LIL: Don't recall it.

FAITH: Yes you do. All the parents say, "If you're not good the Ratcatcher will come and get you." But the children don't listen. And he comes out of the dark night and tempts them with sweets. And they're so naughty that they follow him into the abyss.

LIL: Why d'you think I know it?

FAITH: Mum used to tell me. She said she was told it when she was little.

LIL: She must have read it herself.

FAITH: She can't have done. Not from this book. It's in German.

LIL: Let me see. *She takes the book and opens it. Where did this come from?*

FAITH: That box.

*LIL looks in the box at the letters and photos.*

FAITH: I guess it belonged to the little Jewish girl you had staying with you during the war.

LIL: What d'you mean?

*FAITH picks up a photo and shows it to LIL.*

FAITH: Eva something. I read some stuff.

LIL: What have you read?

FAITH: Letters from her parents, bits from her diary...

LIL: You should leave things alone.

FAITH: I'm surprised you've never mentioned her...

LIL: A million things happened during the war.

FAITH: D'you know why Mum's got all her belongings?

LIL: No idea.

FAITH: Were you close to her?

LIL: She wasn't with us for long.

FAITH: It must have been for at least two years...

LIL: Was it?

FAITH: Why are you being so cagey?

LIL: I'm hungry for my tea.

FAITH: *Joking*, Did you kill her and try to hide the evidence?

LIL: Don't be so bloody stupid!

FAITH: Gran?

LIL: I didn't think that your mother had kept anything from that time.

FAITH: It's upset you, hasn't it?

LIL: I don't know why.

FAITH: Did something bad happen to her?

LIL: To who?

FAITH: *Holding up the photo*, Little Eva.

LIL: No. No. She's all right.

FAITH: D'you know where she----

LIL: Stop going on at me will you.

FAITH: It's OK. Sorry. Don't worry. I'll ask Mum.

LIL: No. Don't. Don't you dare.

FAITH: Why not?

LIL: Just leave it.

FAITH: Why?

*LIL is silent.*

FAITH: What?

*LIL holds out her hand for the photo. FAITH pulls back and looks at the photo closely.*

LIL: Those are your mother's private possessions, Faith.

*LIL holds out her hand for the photo again. FAITH keeps hold.*

FAITH: No they're not. They really belong to that Eva.

*LIL keeps holding out her hand.*

LIL: Your mother's things.

FAITH: Who is this little girl?

LIL: Faith.

FAITH: Who?

*LIL looks down.*

FAITH: Is she Mum?

LIL: Faith.

FAITH: Is she?

LIL: You shouldn't have looked at them.

FAITH: Shit.

LIL: Put them away now.

FAITH: You told me she was three days old when she came to you.

LIL: She was nine when she came.

FAITH: And she was called Eva?

LIL: I'm not going to lie.

FAITH: And she spoke German and wore a yellow star?

LIL: There was no yellow star.

FAITH: But she was Jewish?

LIL: It was a long time ago.

FAITH: This is unbelievable.

LIL: You really shouldn't have looked.

FAITH: I've asked you both so many times about her real family.

LIL: Aren't I real now?

FAITH: I mean the flesh and blood ones. Why make a secret out of it?

LIL: She just wanted to put the past behind her. It was for the best.

FAITH: Whose best?

LIL: Hers.

FAITH: What about mine?

LIL: Don't be so bloody selfish.

FAITH: Did you ever meet her parents?

LIL: No.

FAITH: What happened to them?

LIL: They died.

FAITH: Don't you think that this affects me?

LIL: It affects her more.

FAITH: I know nothing about her.

LIL: She's still your mum, Faith. Don't make a big deal out of something that was over and done with before you were born.

FAITH: What was the point in having me if she was going to cut herself off?

*EVA, pen and paper in hand, sits on the other side of LIL.*

EVA: *Showing the letter to LIL, My letter is finished.*

LIL: Is it now?

EVA: At the hour of lunch I did it. I have help from teacher. She said it to be in mine words. She put some English in.

LIL: Show me.

*EVA gives the letter to LIL.*

LIL: *Reading the letter out loud, "Sirs, I am nine years old and now have come to live my days in Manchester with a very kind lady and her family by the name of Miller."*

EVA: *Taking over the reading*, "My Mother and Father, Helga and Werner Schlesinger, are not come with me because they would be illegal to do so. But I am much sad that they must to be in Hamburg in Germany because there are dangers in that place for them in that they are Jewish people. It is in your powers to give them permit that they come into England. Please will you give it to them. Job will be here for them I make sure of it. I remain yours faithfully, Eva Schlesinger."

LIL: This is good. You write English better than our Nora and she's been speaking it all her life.

EVA: I did all the lunchtime.

LIL: What about your sandwiches? When did you eat them if you were writing all lunchtime?

EVA: Sandwiches got ham in. I not to eat ham. It from pig.

LIL: But I asked you and you said yes.

EVA: Then I think good to eat it looked.

LIL: It is good. Special treat for us all.

EVA: But Mutti I think see me and not be pleased. So not eat. God not like. This is law of Jews.

LIL: Look, love, if it's God you're worried about, the Lord Jesus said that we needn't keep to the old laws anymore. They had their day years ago.

EVA: Did they?

LIL: Course they did. Made for olden times. New things have come to put in their place.

EVA: For all persons? Even Jews?

LIL: Especially for Jews.

EVA: Why not all Jews think that?

LIL: Hanging on to the past, I suppose. Now, listen you. Always make time to eat. Always. It matters. There's enough starving children in the world without adding to their number.

EVA: Sorry.

LIL: Well, what will you do tomorrow?

EVA: I eat lunch.

LIL: Else we'll have to call you Skin and Bones.

EVA: Please. You do letter.

LIL: Got a lot to do before I can do that. Need to find them jobs. Sort out sponsors. We'll put an ad in the paper. (Picking up a newspaper.) Here's the sort of thing. *Reading*, "Married couple, still in Vienna; speak excellent English; want position. Wife perfect cook; husband experienced driver. Write to etc...." Got to word it right.

EVA: Vati is in bank. We write he to be in bank.

LIL: Can't do that, love.

EVA: But he do that. He master in bank. Nazis stop him. Here he do again. No Nazis here.

LIL: The only jobs they'll let them do is as servants. I checked. What about gardener?

EVA: Father? No. At home, Herr Kuttel gardener.

LIL: Well, what about cook then?

EVA: Mutti know to cook, I think.

LIL: Cook. Good. And we'll say she can clean. Plus their English is fluent. What about your Dad as

LIL: *cont'd*  
a butler?

EVA: They not servant!

LIL: Do you want them here as servants or over there?

EVA: If not do servant, they not come?

LIL: No. Simple as that.

EVA: All right. Father could do butler.

LIL: Used to be a bank manager, didn't he? Stand the same way do butlers and bank managers.

EVA: Stand same way?

LIL: Like this.

*She stands in formal, stiff, straight-backed pose.*

LIL: Butler. *She poses.* Bank manager. *She poses.* Same thing.

EVA: Not in Germany.

LIL: Different sense of humor too.

EVA: Sense...

LIL: Jokes, lovie. Just jokes.

EVA: We call you Laugh A Minute.

LIL: *Chuffed and taken aback,* Where d'you learn that?

EVA: Please do ad now.

LIL: *Reading paper,* "Married couple. Non-Aryan. Very cultured." We'll copy this.

*EVA takes paper off her and pores over it.*

FAITH: *Looking at a photo,* She must have changed a lot.

LIL: She had to cope with a lot.

FAITH: What exactly?

LIL: Losing her parents like that.

FAITH: Like what?

LIL: Coming over on her own...

FAITH: Why on her own?

LIL: They only took children on those trains.

FAITH: Why did you take her?

LIL: I wanted to help.

FAITH: But when...?

LIL: You mustn't tell your mother I told you...

FAITH: When exactly did she come?

LIL: She arrived on January 7th, 1939.

FAITH: On her birthday.

LIL: It wasn't her birthday then.

FAITH: What d'you mean?

LIL: She changed her birthday. When she was sixteen. She changed it to the day I first picked her up from the station. Promise me you won't tell her, Faith.

FAITH: When's her real birthday?

LIL: Can't recall.



FAITH: But January 7th is on her passport. How could she get away with that?

LIL: She made sure it went onto all the naturalization papers. She said they'd made a mistake on the papers she came in on.

FAITH: Is that when she changed her name too?

LIL: Yes.

FAITH: Why?

LIL: She just wanted to make a fresh start.

FAITH: So what else did she change?

*EVA sneaks in front of them, trying not to be seen by LIL.*

LIL: *Angry*, You're in then. At last. Good. We have to have a talk, young lady.

*EVA goes very quiet. Her head droops.*

LIL: You talk first.

EVA: About what?

LIL: Lying.

EVA: I not know ...

LIL: Yes you do. Where have you been?

EVA: Alles hängt nur von mir ab. Ich muss einfach.  
[Translation: It's all up to me. I have to.]

LIL: Not the German, Eva.

EVA: Ich muss sie befreien. Ausser mir...ist keiner... da. [Translation: I have to get them out. There's no one else.]

LIL: Don't hide behind the German. It won't protect you and you know it.

EVA: Sie dürfen mich aber nicht daran hindern.  
[Translation: You mustn't try to stop me.]

LIL: In English! English!

EVA: Nicht Englisch! Deutsch! Ich bin Deutsche!  
[Translation: Not English! German! I'm German!]

LIL: I've had enough of this, you little snake! Bloody stop it!

EVA: *Sobbing*, No good. No good.

LIL: Cut out the snivels! Now! I want facts from you! True ones! Where've you been!

EVA: English lesson.

LIL: How long for?

EVA: Two hours.

LIL: It's half past six now.

EVA: Walk home slow.

LIL: You're not learning English.

EVA: You not like...

LIL: If there's one thing I cannot stand, it's a little liar! Where've you been!

EVA: Please...

LIL: Now! Before I chick you out and never let you back in!

EVA: I can't.



LIL: You bloody well better had!

EVA: Promise not stop me.

LIL: No promises. Truth.

EVA: Please...

LIL: Now!

EVA: Out walking.

LIL: Where?

EVA: Streets. Knocking on doors.

LIL: What doors?

EVA: Big houses. Rich people.

LIL: Eva!

EVA: I say about, *pronouncing very carefully*, butler and housekeeper and chauffeur and gardener.

LIL: And what do they say?

EVA: "We have already got." Or some want to give tea and be sorry. Gentleman gave money at me.

LIL: The shame of it. What on earth d'you think we put an ad in for! To pass the time and have a laugh?

EVA: Sorry.

LIL: Don't you trust me! What good is it if you don't bloody trust me.

EVA: Sorry.

LIL: I took you in didn't I! Said I'd look after you! Why d'you throw it back in my face! Walking the

streets like some begging little orphan!

EVA: Do not throw me out. Please.

LIL: Of course I'm not going to throw you out!

EVA: Please. No where else to go.

LIL: *Gentler*, Of course, I'm not going to throw you out.

EVA: Even if I'm naughty.

LIL: Not even if you're naughty.

*LIL hugs EVA.*

EVA: Want to be with them.

LIL: You can't be. Not now.

EVA: When?

LIL: Sooner or later.

EVA: I have to get permits.

LIL: Just be glad you're safe.

EVA: What good me to be safe?

LIL: Better than no one being safe, isn't it?

EVA: I must to help...

LIL: You are doing.

EVA: But jobs...

LIL: ...are being found for them.

*EVA drops her head.*

LIL: Be a bit patient won't you?

EVA shrugs.

LIL: Cheer up and give them out there good reason to be happy. Else what've they got to smile for?

EVA shrugs.

LIL: Well. What've they got?

EVA: Quietly, Nichts.

LIL: What's that?

EVA: Louder, Nichts. Nothing.

LIL: That's right, little getaway. Nothing.

*The door opens. EVELYN enters.*

EVELYN: There's a beautifully laid table with a cold pot of tea on it in the kitchen.

LIL: We got waylaid.

EVELYN: Why are you both still in here? Come on out and I'll lock the door.

*FAITH does not move.*

LIL: *To EVELYN,* You go down. I'm just getting something sorted.

EVELYN: Can't you do that elsewhere? Come downstairs.

*EVELYN starts to tidy up.*

FAITH: *To LIL,* Are you going to tell her, Gran, or should I?

LIL: Let's boil up a fresh kettle.

FAITH: I'm not going to lie or pretend that nothing has happened.

LIL: Faith.

EVELYN: Darling, you really do not need to get so distressed about everything.

FAITH: I'm not as good at putting on an act as you are.

LIL: Watch yourself.

FAITH: I found a box of letters and photographs.

EVELYN: I've always asked you not to pry into my things.

FAITH: I found this book too.

EVELYN: What book?

*FAITH holds out Der Rattenfänger book to show EVELYN.*

FAITH: You remember. The story of the Ratcatcher. This must be your book. It's not at all like I imagined. It's in German.

LIL: No more, Faith.

EVELYN: Will you please put that back where you found it.

FAITH: Mum, tell me about Eva Schlesinger.

EVELYN: *To LIL,* Why can't she respect my privacy?

LIL: *To EVELYN,* Don't look at me.

FAITH: Talk to me.

EVELYN: There is nothing worth talking about.

FAITH: I need you to tell me the truth.

EVELYN: *Turning to LIL,* Mum?

LIL: *To FAITH,* You shouldn't have brought it up.

FAITH: I can't un-know it.

EVELYN: You shouldn't have looked.

LIL: To FAITH, I told you.

FAITH: Are you saying that I should pretend along with you?

LIL: To EVELYN, Why did you hold on to all that?

EVELYN: They need sifting. I never could....there's some documents in there...I have to keep those...the rest needed throwing away years ago.

FAITH: You mustn't throw them away. Let me have them.

EVELYN: To FAITH, I don't want you getting involved with all that. No. To LIL, She mustn't, Lil. It's got nothing to do with her.

FAITH: It has got something to do with me.

EVELYN: It has got nothing to do with you at all.

FAITH: I just want to know about you.

EVELYN: You do know about me.

FAITH: And my grandparents.

LIL: To EVELYN, You'll have to talk to her.

EVELYN: I think, Faith, that this conversation must come to a close.

FAITH: Don't do this, Mother. You always do this. It only makes things worse.

EVELYN: We cannot continue to discuss the subject profitably.

*EVELYN starts to exit.*

LIL: You can't leave it like this, Evelyn.

*FAITH leaps in front of her and bars the door.*

FAITH: I'm not letting it go.

EVELYN: What is wrong with you?

FAITH: Do you have any idea what it's like having a mother who walks out on you the moment you begin to disagree with her? Who polishes and cleans like a maniac?

EVELYN: Pull yourself together.

FAITH: Pull myself together? You're so paranoid you go stiff and sharp at every speck of dust or object out of place in your precious home...

EVELYN: I care about where I live. I know what it's worth.

FAITH: You can't go on a train without hyperventilating. You cross the road if you see a policeman or traffic warden.

EVELYN: How ridiculous.

FAITH: I've watched your panic attacks. All that shaking and gulping like you're going to die. But always it's me who's getting things out of proportion because I get scared by them. "So silly and neurotic, Faith."

EVELYN: Look at you now.

FAITH: I have never been a good enough daughter.

EVELYN: What are you going on about?

FAITH: I've always thought it was my fault that you were so unhappy.

EVELYN: I am not unhappy. Heaven knows why you are.

FAITH: Nothing I do or say ever gets through to you...

EVELYN: Don't talk such nonsense.

FAITH: You are always pushing me away...as far away as you can...

EVELYN: How can you say that?

FAITH: All you've given me is a pack of lies.

LIL: Watch what you say, Faith.

EVELYN: I have never lied to you.

FAITH: Don't try making out I'm making this up. I've got proof. Look. Evidence. That's the truth. And you don't ever tell it to me. Not any of it.

EVELYN: Are you ready to let me out yet?

*EVELYN tries to leave again. FAITH continues to block her way.*

FAITH: Jesus. How could I possibly not be a bad child with such a terrible mother!

LIL: That's enough.

FAITH: A fucking awful, lying cow of a mother.

EVELYN: How dare you!

LIL: You don't know the half of it, madam. Give your mother some consideration.

FAITH: I someone would let me in on the whole of it, I might bloody well be able to!

EVELYN: Have you finished?

FAITH: Why did you never explain about yourself?

EVELYN: Have you quite finished?

FAITH: I could kill you.

LIL: *Going for FAITH, I'll bloody kill you first.*

*FAITH runs away. LIL follows her. The shadow of the RATCATCHER looms.*

EVA: He's coming.

EVELYN: Stop.

EVE: He'll be here any minute.

EVELYN: Don't

EVA: He'll cut off my fingers.

EVELYN: He's not coming!

EVA: He'll pull out my hair one piece at a time.

EVELYN: You've not done anything wrong.

EVA: He'll hang me by my ears out of the window.

EVELYN: You're a good girl.

EVA: Don't let him come. Please!

EVELYN: *Speaking desperately as if saying it will make it true, I won't let him come! I'll use all my force to stop him. I promise. You're with me now. Do you understand? Me. You're being looked after. I'll make it all go away. I won't let him hurt you ever again.*

END SCENE.

# act two: scene one

*The room is dim. The air is stale and smoke-filled. HELGA is sitting with the Der Rattenfänger book. EVELYN and EVA are curled up beside her. EVELYN's clothes and hair are unkempt. Beside her is an ashtray containing a large number of cigarette stubs.*

HELGA: Did you understand what I meant about your being my jewels?

EVA: That's not in the story.

HELGA: Did you understand?

EVA: Sort of.

HELGA: We all die one day, but jewels never fade or perish. Through our children we live. That's how we cheat death. Otherwise we're really finished.

EVA: You're not going to die are you?

HELGA: Not yet.

EVA: Not for a long time.

HELGA: I hope not.

EVA: Promise me.

HELGA: Promise me you'll be a good girl in England.

EVA: I promise.

*The handle turns. The door does not open. A tap on the door. Pause. Another tap, louder. Pause.*

FAITH:

*Off. Mum.*

*Pause.*

FAITH:

*Off. Louder. Mum! The door's still locked.*

*Pause.*

FAITH:

*Off. Please let me in.*

*Pause.*

FAITH:

*Off. Please, Mum.*

EVELYN:

I am not coming out.

FAITH:

*Off. You can't just stay in there.*

EVELYN:

Can I not?

FAITH:

*Off. What about dinner?*

EVELYN:

Eat without me.

FAITH:

*Off. What about tonight?*

EVELYN:

Leave me alone.

FAITH:

*Off. This is crazy.*

*Pause.*

FAITH:

*Off. I'm sorry about what I said.*

*Pause.*

FAITH:

*Off. Mum? Can you still hear me?*

EVELYN:

Go away.

FAITH:

*Off. I'm worried about you.*

EVELYN:

It's too late.

Pause.

FAITH: Off. Mum.

EVELYN: I'm going to stop talking to you now.

FAITH: Off. Shit!

Silence.

EVELYN: I didn't bring you up to talk as if your mouth were filled with sewage.

*EVELYN stubs out one cigarette and lights another. A man's voice repeating "Sieg Heil" is heard. The POSTMAN enters. He is goose-stepping, making a Hitler moustache on his upper lip with his index finger of one hand and doing the Nazi salute with the other.*

POSTMAN: Sieg Heil! Seig Heil! Sieg Heil! Seig Heil! *He takes out a parcel. German parcel delivered in ze German style. He clicks his heels together, stands to attention and holds out the parcel. Pretty convincing, eh?*

EVA: German peoples not do like the.. *Mimes the moustache.*

POSTMAN: But the moustache is the most important thing about him.

EVA: You do fun. German people not do fun.

POSTMAN: No. They wouldn't. *He marches without the moustache. What about the marching?*

EVA: I not know how do marching.

POSTMAN: I thought everyone in Boche Land learnt to march. Children 'n all.

EVA: Only some. Hitler Jugend.

POSTMAN: What's that?

EVA: Children army. I not in it.

POSTMAN: They must've taught you to "Sieg Heil"?

EVA: In school. Do this. *She stands to attention and salutes. "Heil Hitler!"*

POSTMAN: Have to do that a lot, did you?

EVA: Too much.

POSTMAN: Not very fond of Hitler are you?

EVA: He not a good man.

POSTMAN: Thought he'd done wonderful things for your country.

EVA: Not for my family.

POSTMAN: Did you ever see him though?

EVA: See Hitler?

POSTMAN: Did you?

EVA: One time.

POSTMAN: Went to one of them rallies was it?

EVA: Not rally. In Hamburg city. He in car. Me on street. Lots people. They shout very loud.

POSTMAN: Did he smell?

EVA: Smell?

POSTMAN: Everyone knows he smells. All Germans smell. Well known fact.

EVA: Not me.

POSTMAN: That's coz you've been here a bit. It's started



POSTMAN: *cont'd*  
to fade.

EVA: *Smelling herself*, Girls in school in Hamburg say  
I smell.

POSTMAN: That's not very nice of them.

EVA: Which smells more, German or Jew?

POSTMAN: Same difference, love.

EVA: Thank you for the parcel.

POSTMAN: Thank you for the lesson in saluting. *He salutes.*  
Heil Hitler!

*EVA watches.*

POSTMAN: Do it back. Heil Hitler!

EVA: Heil Hitler!

*POSTMAN exits. EVA excitedly takes the parcel and carefully unwraps it.*

HELGA: To the very best daughter any parents could wish  
for. The jobs. The permits. Thank you.

EVA: It wasn't all me.

HELGA: You have opened the door to a new and hopeful  
life.

EVA: Mrs. Miller did as much as I did.

HELGA: Not long now. And then all of us together again.  
As I promised.

*EVA takes out of the parcel the Der Rattenfänger book, a letter and a Haggadah for  
Passover.*

HELGA: Your storybook. I know how much you like it.

*EVA opens the letter.*

HELGA: I also enclose your Haggadah for Passover.

EVA: When is Passover?

HELGA: I hear that there are lots of Jews in Manchester.

EVA: Is it before or after Easter?

HELGA: It will be easy to celebrate seder night with some  
of them.

EVA: Maybe it's happened already.

HELGA: We will be having a small seder. Not like the big  
ones we used to have.

EVA: I can't ask Mrs. Miller to do a seder.

HELGA: "Why is this night different from all other  
nights?" What will we do without you to sing  
the questions for us? What is a seder without  
the presence of the youngest child?

EVA: She'd think it was silly.

HELGA: We may not be a very religious family, Eva. But  
this has to do with more than religion.

EVA: Next year when they're here. I'll do it then.

HELGA: The Passover story has special meaning for us.

EVA: Maybe I could just read the Haggadah to myself.  
Would that count?

HELGA: Remember how the Israelites had to endure hard  
labor.

EVA: Some of it's quite boring though.

HELGA: How every son was thrown into the Nile.

EVA: The ten plagues upon the Egyptians is good.



HELGA: And Moses led the Israelites out of slavery and the waves of the Red Sea parted to let them through.

EVA: And then all the Egyptians follow into the path between the waves and get drowned. They deserved it.

HELGA: We must tell the story not as if it was experienced only by our ancestors but as if it happened to us. Not legend but truth. "This is what happened to me when I came out of Egypt." This is how we survived and this is how we survive.

EVA: When did there stop being miracles?

HELGA: And remember the four sons: the wise son, the bad son, the stupid son and the son who doesn't even know what to ask.

EVA: Why don't things like that happen anymore?

HELGA: Try to be like the wise son, Eva.

EVA: What if I can't be wise?

HELGA: The weather here is lovely at the moment. The garden is looking beautiful. I wish I could bring it all with me over to England.

EVA: Will I get led like the Egyptians into the sea and drown forever?

HELGA: I am so looking forward to seeing you again and meeting your lovely English family. All my love. Mutti.

*HELGA exits.*

*Banging on the door.*

LIL: *Off.* Let me in, Evelyn. I won't go away until you do.

EVELYN: Let me be.

LIL: *Off.* You've had far too much time to be. That's enough.

EVELYN: Please go away, Mum.

LIL: *Off.* I'll call the fire brigade if I have to. I'll say that the door's jammed...

EVELYN: No!

LIL: *Off.* I Will!

EVELYN: Go away.

LIL: *Off.* I'll go and phone them now if you like.

*EVELYN goes up to the door and unlocks it. LIL enters.*

LIL: I gave her hell.

*EVELYN is silent.*

LIL: It's disgusting in here.

*EVELYN closes the door and locks it behind LIL.*

LIL: What are you doing?

EVELYN: I don't want anyone coming in.

LIL: There's no point locking the safe after the robber's been and gone.

EVELYN: I have to work out what to do.

LIL: How about airing this room?

*EVELYN lights up a cigarette. She offers one to LIL.*

LIL: I'm not meant to.

EVELYN: Just one. Keep me company.

LIL: I thought you'd given up.

EVELYN: I have.

LIL: You're as bad as a walking ashtray, you...

EVELYN: Like mother like daughter.

*LIL takes one and EVELYN lights it up.*

LIL: She didn't mean what she said. It's probably leftovers from her dad going. You're here to blame.

EVELYN: She meant it.

*Pause.*

LIL: She's always been hypersensitive.

*Pause. EVELYN inhales deeply.*

LIL: I don't understand you.

EVELYN: Thought you knew me better than I know myself.

LIL: Not when you behave like this, I don't.

EVELYN: You think I'm paranoid too, do you?

LIL: I do at the moment.

EVELYN: Do you think I'm "stiff and sharp" as well?

LIL: You can be.

EVELYN: A terrible mother?

LIL: Not usually.

EVELYN: In what way am I being a terrible mother?

LIL: Locking her out when you should look her in the eye.

EVELYN: Maybe I don't like what I see reflected.

LIL: Now you're being hypersensitive.

EVELYN: She hates me.

LIL: Why should she hate you? She's your daughter.

EVELYN: That's why she hates me.

LIL: Stuff and nonsense.

EVELYN: You heard the abuse she threw at me.

LIL: She was upset.

EVELYN: She'll never understand.

LIL: Let her get used to the idea. She'll adjust.

EVELYN: She'll always blame me.

LIL: You've not done anything wrong.

EVELYN: We've all done something wrong.

LIL: Speak for yourself.

EVELYN: You told her.

LIL: She found those letters and photos and God knows what else. It didn't take a genius to put two and two together.

EVELYN: Who confirmed it?

LIL: What was I meant to do? Lie?

EVELYN: Why not?

LIL: You shouldn't have kept them.

EVELYN: You should have made up a story.

LIL: To be honest, Evelyn, I don't think it's such a big deal.

EVELYN: My daughter hates me and it's not a big deal?

LIL: You're the one who's making her hate you.

EVELYN: The whitewash has been stripped away and underneath is pure filth.

LIL: Now, you're making no sense at all.

EVELYN: The more she knows, the worse it gets.

LIL: It was a long time ago. It doesn't matter anymore.

EVELYN: Oh, it matters.

LIL: You'll put yourself over the edge again.

EVELYN: Where else is there to go?

*Sounds of children's chatter and train noises. EVA very reluctantly puts a gas mask box on a string round her neck and picks up her small suitcase.*

EVA: Will you visit me?

LIL: I said, didn't I?

EVA: And you tell Mutti and Vati how to find me when they come?

LIL: What did I say, Eva. Don't you trust me?

EVA: I have to be sure.

LIL: Have you got everything?

EVA: Teacher's already checked me.

LIL: Let me check you again.

EVA: Why?

LIL: Why'd you think? To be sure. What you got?

EVA: Bag.

LIL: Just one?

EVA: Yes.

LIL: Gas mask?

EVA: Yes.

LIL: Sandwiches?

EVA: Yes.

LIL: You're not wearing that jewelry are you?

EVA: I have to.

LIL: Anything could happen to it.

EVA: I'm not taking it off.

LIL: Give it me. I'll take it home.

EVA: I'm not taking it off.

LIL: Keep it on then. I haven't got the energy for a fight.

*Train whistle blows.*

LIL: Better get a move on.

*LIL takes out a label.*

EVA: Why do I have to go now? There's no war.

LIL: It could start any time. All the children's being evacuated. We can tie it to your buttonhole.

EVA: Mummy Miller.

LIL: Where shall we put it then?

EVA: I saw someone on the platform.

LIL: Who?

EVA: He's coming to get me.

LIL: Who is?

EVA: He's waiting in the shadows.

LIL: There's no one there.

EVA: Don't make me go.

LIL: Nora and Margaret's going with their classes aren't they? You'll all be a heck of a lot safer out of the city. Keep still now. I can't get a grip.

EVA: *Looking around,* Let me go tomorrow.

LIL: I said, there could be war any day. D'you want to be bombed to bits, gassed till you choke?

EVA: I might never come back.

LIL: It's my job to care about what happens to you, even if you don't.

EVA: But---

LIL: No buts. I want you safe and out of it.

EVA: But what about you and Uncle Jack?

LIL: Don't you worry about us.

EVA: But I do.

LIL: You'll thank me one day. *Finishing the label,* It's on! Right bye bye, lovie.

*They hug. EVA clings on.*

LIL: Let go now.

EVA: Don't want to.

*LIL pulls herself away from EVA.*

LIL: It's for your own good.

EVA: I'd rather get bombed.

LIL: I'll visit you at the weekend.

*EVA looks very miserable and starts to wave. Whistle blows again. Sounds of train about to start to move.*

EVA: *Trying to move through the crowds,* We've got to stop! He'll take us over the edge. Got to get away from him. *She starts to choke and cough.*

*Sounds of train moving.*

EVA: This can't happen! It mustn't happen! Help! Leave me alone! Leave me alone! Help!

*EVA leaps and lands with a roll, then lies still.*

LIL: *Off.* Eva! Eva Schlesinger!

*EVA raises her head. She is dazed.*

EVA: Am I in, the abyss?

LIL: You're with me.

EVA: Did I getaway?

LIL: And how.

EVA: Has the Ratcatcher gone?

LIL: There's no Ratcatcher here.

EVA: Are you sure?

LIL: He's a long way away.

EVA: He didn't get me.

LIL: Have you broken anything?

EVA: *Sitting up slowly, Don't think so.*

LIL: You didn't hit your head.

EVA: Are you cross?

LIL: Cross! *Realizing she isn't. No. She pauses.* I'm sorry.

EVA: You're sorry?

LIL: Should've realized. Shouldn't have made you go.

EVA: The ground was moving.

LIL: It isn't what you need most.

EVA: Couldn't keep my balance.

LIL: I didn't want you to go. More than Margaret and Nora. Don't know why.

EVA: You didn't say.

LIL: Didn't want to upset you. If I'd clung, you would've done. Can you get up?

EVA: Have I been very bad?

LIL: No, Eva, I'm the one who got it wrong.

*LIL helps EVA up and into a sitting position.*

EVELYN: What shall I do with the papers?

LIL: You should've known she'd find them one day.

EVELYN: She's never searched in here in her life.

LIL: Burying's not enough, love. You have to destroy.

EVELYN: How could I destroy them? There are documents in there that prove I have a right to be here. Papers that will stop them from sending me away.

LIL: Who'd want to send you away?

EVELYN: Someone, Anyone. You can never tell. Who knows what they may be thinking.

LIL: Who for God's sake!

EVELYN: The authorities.

LIL: Your passport's not in there is it?

EVELYN: Not my current one.

LIL: And your naturalization papers?

EVELYN: The first entry permit is. There might be other documents.

LIL: Dig them out then.

EVELYN: I don't want to touch those letters and pictures.

LIL: I'll help.

*EVELYN pulls back.*

LIL: Don't you trust me?

EVELYN: Yes.

LIL: I'll sort them out with you.

*LIL brings the box of papers over and takes out a letter. She holds it out to EVELYN.*

LIL: Do you want to keep this?

EVELYN looks at the letter. It's personal, not official.

EVELYN: No.

LIL: What shall I do with it?

EVELYN: *Taking it, I'll rip it up.*

*EVELYN holds it.*

LIL: If you're going to do it, do it.

*EVELYN is still.*

LIL: What're you waiting for? Get tearing.

*EVELYN looks at the paper.*

LIL: Go on.

EVELYN: Why are you so keen for me to destroy everything?

LIL: I thought you wanted shut of it.

EVELYN: I do...I just...

LIL: Here love, let me.

EVELYN: No. It's mine, not yours.

LIL: If you can't, I will.

EVELYN: It's mine, not yours.

LIL: Don't be so daft.

EVELYN: You've always done too much.

LIL: How could I ever do enough?

EVELYN: You took too much.

LIL: How did I take?

EVELYN: Too much of me. You took me away.

LIL: What d'you mean by that?

EVELYN: I wasn't your child.

LIL: As good as...

EVELYN: You made me betray her.

LIL: I got you through it. Never forget that, Evelyn.

EVELYN: You made me betray them all.

LIL: I was with you and I put up with you and I stuck by you. That's what mothering's all about. Being there when it counts. No one else was there, were they? And good or bad, I'm still here. Who else have you got?

EVELYN: No one.

LIL: That's right, Evelyn, no one.

EVELYN: And isn't that what you always wanted?

LIL: Did I start the war? Am I Hitler?

EVELYN: You might as well have been.

LIL: What have I done to you that wasn't done in love?

EVELYN: What are you? Some saint?

LIL: I didn't have to take you in...

EVELYN: Some savior to all the world's poor little orphans?

LIL: I could've starved you or worked you...

EVELYN: And what do I have to pay?

LIL: I could've hit you...

EVELYN: What's your price?

LIL: I saved you.

EVELYN: Part of me is dead because of you.

LIL: Nothing you say will make me walk out that door.

EVELYN: Murderer.

LIL: I kept you alive. More than alive.

EVELYN: Child-stealer.

LIL: Go on then. Bare your grudges at me. What else do you want to blame me for? What other ills in your life are all down to me?

EVELYN: Shut up.

LIL: I'm waiting.

EVELYN: I don't want to blame you.

LIL: What do you want?

EVELYN: I want it never to have happened.

LIL: Well it did.

*Pause.*

LIL: Now what?

EVELYN: Enough.

*EVELYN tears up the letter into small pieces. She and LIL proceed to destroy each item in the box. STATION GUARD enters.*

GUARD: To EVA, Can I help you, love?

EVA: What?

GUARD: You waiting for someone?

EVA: Two people.

GUARD: What do they look like, love?

*EVA takes out a photo and shows it.*

GUARD: Well-heeled.

EVA: Mother knows a good cobbler.

GUARD: Right. Is that them?

EVA: No.

GUARD: They your parents are they?

EVA: Yes.

*They look.*

GUARD: *Pointing,* What about those two?

EVA: No.

GUARD: You're not here on your own to meet them are you?

EVA: Mrs. Miller has just gone to cloakroom.

GUARD: Who's that then?

EVA: She looks after me.

GUARD: She knows where to find you?

EVA: Oh yes.

GUARD: What about that woman there?



EVA: No.

GUARD: Live in Manchester do you?

EVA: Yes.

GUARD: Not been evacuated then?

EVA: No.

*They look.*

GUARD: Well, I'm afraid they don't seem to be here, your mam and dad.

EVA: They will come.

GUARD: You sure they were on this train?

EVA: They write that they come to me on September 9th.

GUARD: But it's September 11th today.

EVA: They must to come soon.

GUARD: Look. Are you certain they were traveling from London?

EVA: Yes... it must be...I got here from there.

GUARD: You see, there's no more trains today from London.

EVA: Are you sure?

GUARD: 'Course I am.

EVA: It can't be.

GUARD: *Suspicious,* Where are you from?

EVA: 72 Mulberry Road.

GUARD: No. I mean, what's your nationality?

EVA: My?

GUARD: What country you from?

EVA: *Worried,* I don't live there anymore.

GUARD: Where don't you live anymore?

EVA: It does not matter so much.

GUARD: And where's this lady who's looking after you? She's left you a long time on your own hasn't she?

EVA: I don't know.

GUARD: *Taking her by the arm,* I think that you'd better come with me young lady.

*LIL runs up to EVA.*

LIL: Eva! Eva! Where the hell did you go!

GUARD: Are you supposed to be looking after her?

LIL: I just went to the cloakroom.

GUARD: You should take better care of her. Can't leave a girl of her age on her own. 'Specially nowadays. Could be an air-raid warning any minute.

LIL: She ran off. *To EVA.* What d'you do that for? You had me frantic. D'you think I like pacing platforms looking for you!

GUARD: And what's this about her being a foreigner?

LIL: *To EVA,* The last train's been and gone, love.

EVA: We cannot to give up yet.

LIL: We've been here three days on the trot.

EVA: Please can we come back tomorrow.

LIL: I don't think they're coming. *To GUARD.* I'll take her now.

GUARD: I asked you about her being a foreigner?

LIL: *To GUARD,* Don't worry yourself about it.

GUARD: Got to look out for spies we have.

LIL: She's not a spy. She's ten years old.

GUARD: What about them parents she's waiting for?

LIL: Her parents are still in Germany.

EVA: No, they're not!

GUARD: Are they indeed?

LIL: Just leave it to me, will you. *To EVA,* I did warn you that this would happen.

GUARD: What's she doing here then? She should be in Germany with them.

EVA: Maybe they're in London.

LIL: Eva. They're not coming.

EVA: They keep their promises. Always.

LIL: Wars break promises.

EVA: They must be coming some different way. They have their visas got by now...they have written to us that they come this week...

LIL: They wrote that before the war started. If it'd broke out a fortnight later...

EVA: I want them to come. I got permits!

LIL: Believe me, Eva love, I want them to come too.

GUARD: Well, I don't.

EVA: You are wrong! You are wrong! They will come!

LIL: There's no way through.

EVA: There is!

LIL: There isn't.

GUARD: If they put one foot into this country, they'll be interned straight off. Got to protect ourselves.

EVA: No!

LIL: Oh Eva.

EVA: No. No! No! No! No!

LIL: I know. I know.

EVA: No.

*EVA shakes with distress.*

GUARD: *Exiting,* Should've stayed where she belongs.

LIL: We can go to church and pray for them.

EVA: I don't know how to pray in a church.

LIL: It's a lot easier to learn than English.

EVA: I'll never see them again, will I?

LIL: They've got as much chance of surviving as we have. And I'm not dying and neither are you.

*EVA takes off two rings, a charm bracelet, a watch and a chain with a Star of David on it.*

LIL: What're you doing?  
EVA: I don't want to wear these anymore.  
LIL: Why not?  
EVA: I don't like them.  
LIL: We'll put them away safe at home.  
EVA: How much longer can I stay with you?  
LIL: Don't ask stupid questions.

*LIL takes EVA's arm. EVA slowly moves with her. EVA exits.*

*EVELYN is still tearing papers. LIL picks up the Der Rattenfänger book and starts to tear out the first page.*

EVELYN: No. Not that.  
LIL: It's in German. Horrible pictures.  
EVELYN: You can't damage a book. I'll give it to a second-hand shop.  
LIL: *Picking up the Haggadah, What about this?*  
EVELYN: That too.

*EVELYN puts the books to the side. They tear. EVELYN picks up the mouth organ. She doesn't recognize it. She puts it with the books.*

EVELYN: You were right. This unpleasantness could have been avoided. I should have sifted through all these years ago. It's only paper.  
LIL: Now there's nothing left to come back at you.  
EVELYN: Life goes on, doesn't it, Mum?  
LIL: Either that or you, give up.

EVELYN: I absolutely refuse to give up.  
LIL: You're a survivor.  
EVELYN: No matter what happens, no matter what anyone anywhere does. No matter how the skies may blaze and the earth tremble: life continues. Mundane, ordinary life. Most people don't begin to know the value of it.  
LIL: You will get over this.  
EVELYN: Of course I will.  
LIL: You've got over worse.  
EVELYN: I've made a good life. All can do is live it and count my blessings.  
LIL: And make up with your daughter.  
EVELYN: I wish I could see as straight as you.  
LIL: You always have to make an effort with your children. No matter what.  
EVELYN: All our children leave us. And one day they never come back. I can't stop her.  
LIL: You and I are still close.  
EVELYN: You and I are different.  
LIL: She's more like you than you think.  
EVELYN: I don't want her to be like me.  
LIL: She's herself too. Every child's their own person.  
EVELYN: Was I?  
LIL: And how.

EVELYN: Not anymore. The older I get the less of myself I become.

LIL: The things you come out with.

EVELYN: I always knew she'd go. Didn't the German woman realize that too?

LIL: You mean your first mother?

EVELYN: She wanted me to be hers forever.

LIL: I thought you'd forgotten her.

EVELYN: It doesn't matter. I have.

*EVELYN continues to tear. Soundtrack of the newsreel about the liberation of Belsen. LIL and EVA, now fifteen, watch. Suddenly LIL throws a handkerchief over EVA's face and bundles her away.*

LIL: They should have a warning about what's in them reels. No children should see such pictures.

EVA: *Taking the Handkerchief off her face, I'm not a child. I'm fifteen.*

LIL: Especially not you. No matter how old you are.

EVA: It can't be kept from me forever.

LIL: D'you want to go back in then?

*Pause.*

EVA: No.

LIL: What you don't see can't come back to haunt you.

EVA: Everything went blank.

LIL: Thank God for handkerchiefs.

EVA: The soldiers had them over their noses and mouths.

LIL: Don't think of it.

EVA: Can a handkerchief keep out the smell of all those bodies?

LIL: It couldn't hold all the tears that want crying.

*Pause.*

EVA: I don't want to cry.

LIL: Far too shocking.

EVA: Should I want to cry? Is it callous of me?

LIL: You react as you react.

EVA: We can still go in to see the main feature, can't we?

LIL: Do you want to?

EVA: Yes. Is that wrong?

LIL: It was our treat.

EVA: There's no reason why we should miss our treat is there? I mean, it wouldn't make any difference to anything else would it?

LIL: Sure you're in the mood?

EVA: I have been looking forward to it.

LIL: I don't know if I'm in the mood now.

EVA: You've already paid for the tickets and we won't have another chance before it finishes.

LIL: All right.

*Knocking on the door.*

FAITH: *Off.* Gran? Mum?

*EVELYN shakes her head.*

LIL: Go on down, Faith, love.

FAITH: *Off.* What are you doing?

LIL: Let me sort it out.

FAITH: *Off.* Let me in.

LIL: We'll be out soon. Promise.

FAITH: *Off.* How soon?

LIL: Not long.

FAITH: *Off.* I'll wait here.

*EVELYN tears more papers. EVA stands on a box. LIL starts to fix her skirt hem.*

EVA: Thank you for helping.

LIL: *To EVA,* You can do your own hem next time.

EVA: You know I'm no good at sewing.

LIL: You'll have to learn sooner or later.

*Pause.*

EVA: *Taking the gold watch and jewelry out of her pocket,*  
How much d'you think they're worth?

LIL: What's worth?

EVA: Two rings. A charm bracelet. Gold. A chain with  
a Star of David. A watch. All gold.

LIL: Don't ask me. I'm not a jeweler.

EVA: It'd be quite a lot, wouldn't it?

LIL: Depends on the carat

EVA: How'd you tell?

LIL: The hallmark.

*EVA peers at the jewelry.*

LIL: Why'd you want to know?

EVA: I was thinking of selling them.

LIL: What'd you want to sell them for?

EVA: I never wear them.

LIL: But they're beautiful, those. No one ever gave  
me jewelry like that.

EVA: I never will wear them, either.

LIL: You should do.

EVA: I'm fed up of hiding the watch under my socks  
to stop hearing the ticking at night.

LIL: Those are priceless.

EVA: I'd rather have the money.

LIL: Money's nothing. You purse it, you spend it.  
Those are more. Family heirlooms. You want to  
be handing them down to your children.

EVA: I'd rather hand down things I feel happy about.

LIL: It's bad luck to sell a keepsake.

EVA: If they're mine, I can do what I want with them.

LIL: Are they yours?

EVA: My mother from Germany gave them to me.

LIL: To look after for her or have for yourself?

EVA: Same difference now.

LIL: We're still trying to track them down, aren't we? Still writing all those letters. Why are you so keen to give up?

EVA: It was all over a long time ago.

LIL: It isn't over till you know for sure.

EVA: I do know for sure.

LIL: Miracles can happen.

EVA: I don't believe in miracles.

LIL: It sounds to me like you don't want to.

EVA: I will sell them, Mum. There's better things the money could be spent on.

LIL: Like what?

EVA: To pay for my school uniform and books and everything. To help you out. Nora's earning now. I'm not.

LIL: Don't do it for me. I've never expected a penny off you. I had enough of that when I was a kid. Mum putting us out to work the minute she could, taking bed and board. I don't want your money.

EVA: I want to pay my way for myself as much as I can.

LIL: And I want to keep you. Like no one ever kept me. I don't care if it's hard. I'll do right by you. Somebody has to in this godforsaken world.

EVA: You've already done more than all right by me.

LIL: I've not finished yet.

EVA: D'you mind if I go now?

LIL: Just make sure no one cheats you.

*EVA exits.*

*EVELYN and LIL have finished tearing. Knocking on the door.*

FAITH: Off. Let me in. Please, let me in.

*EVELYN nods. LIL opens the door. FAITH enters.*

FAITH: Smelling the air, I thought you'd both given up smoking.

EVELYN: We're going to clean this room up now.

FAITH: I didn't mean to shout at you like that.

EVELYN: It's over and done with.

FAITH: I'm sorry.

EVELYN: It's forgotten.

*LIL tidies around the box of torn papers.*

FAITH: What have you done?

EVELYN: I've put an end to the trouble.

FAITH: You've torn up those letters and photos...

EVELYN: It's the only way forward.

FAITH: To LIL, How could you let her do this?

LIL: It's what we both think is best.

*FAITH kneels down and stares at the pieces. She tries to gather and fit them together.*



EVELYN: Don't get yourself all worked up now, darling.

FAITH: Weren't these family documents...I mean...more than that...historical documents?

EVELYN: I know what they were.

LIL: *To FAITH, You're not doing a very good job of making up, Faith.*

FAITH: *Picking up scraps of paper from the floor, Look at these remains. Where's the body for these feet? The hand for these fingers?*

LIL: *To EVELYN, No one's accusing you, love.*

FAITH: But...weren't these things...sort of...entrusted to you? Why didn't you look after them?

*EVELYN is silent.*

FAITH: Why didn't you pass them on to me?

EVELYN: I can do what I want with my own property.

FAITH: But how do I know what went before without them? How does anyone know? What proof is there? I could all be make-believe, couldn't it?

EVELYN: You know, Faith, there are hundreds of books on the subject. Read some of those if you must have a morbid interest in past events.

FAITH: Now they're just numbers lost in the millions. Who's going to be able to take care of their memory?

EVELYN: Are you going to go on at me about this for the rest of our lives?

FAITH: Did they die for you to forget?

EVELYN: Why are you being so cruel?

FAITH: Destroying these was crueler.

EVELYN: Do you think I don't know that?

FAITH: Why did you do it then?

EVELYN: Because and I don't expect you to begin to understand this it helps me. It gives me something I can do in the face of it all.

FAITH: It can't change what happened though, can it?

EVELYN: Do you want to draw blood?

FAITH: Not blood.

EVELYN: Well, blood is all I have left. Gallons and gallons of the freezing stuff stuck in my veins. One prick, Faith and I might bleed forever.

FAITH: Mother, don't ...

EVELYN: Do you still want to know about my childhood, about my origins, about my parents?

FAITH: Yes.

EVELYN: Well, let me tell you. Let me tell you what little remains in my brain. And if I do, will you leave me alone afterwards? Will you please leave me alone?

FAITH: If that's what you want...

EVELYN: My father was called Werner Schlesinger. My mother was called Helga. They lived in Hamburg. They were Jews. I was an only child. I think I must have loved them a lot at one time. One forgets what these things feel like. Other feelings displace the original ones. I remember a huge cone of sweets that I had on my first day at school. There were a lot of toffees.

Pause. EVELYN goes blank for a moment.

EVELYN: I remember lots of books. Rows and rows. I imagine a whole house built of books and some of them were mine. A storybook filled with terrifying pictures: children's fingers being cut off; children being burnt in attic rooms and no one hearing them scream; children whose teeth fall out and choke them while they're asleep; children being taken away by a great ghoulish shadow with hooded eyebrows and a long hooked nose... I can remember nothing else apart from a boy with a squint on the train I came away on. I kept trying not to look at him. Please believe me, Faith, there is nothing else in my memory from that time. It honestly is blank.

Pause.

FAITH: Did your parents die in a concentration camp?

EVELYN: Yes.

FAITH: Do you know which one?

EVELYN: Auschwitz.

LIL: When did you find that out?

FAITH: When did they die?

EVELYN: My father died in 1943. He was gassed soon after arrival.

FAITH: What about your mother?

EVELYN: My mother...she was...she was not gassed.

FAITH: What happened to her?

HELGA enters. She is utterly transformed-thin, wizened, old looking. Her hair is thin and short. EVELYN, LIL and FAITH all see her. EVA enters.

HELGA: Ist das Eva? [Translation: Is it Eva?]

EVA is Speechless.

HELGA: Eva, bist du's wirklich? [Translation: Is that you, Eva?]

EVA: Mother?

HELGA approaches EVA and hugs her. EVA tries to hug back but is clearly very uncomfortable.

HELGA: Wie du dich verndert hast! [Translation: How much you have changed!]

EVA: I'm sorry. I don't quite understand.

HELGA: English, How much you have changed.

EVA: So have you.

HELGA: You are sixteen now.

EVA: Seventeen.

HELGA: Blue is suiting to you.

EVA: Thank you.

HELGA: You are very pretty.

EVA: This is a nice hotel.

Pause.

EVA: I can't believe you're here.

HELGA: I promised I would come, Eva.

EVA: I'm called Evelyn now.

HELGA: What is Evelyn?

EVA: I changed my name.

HELGA: Why?

EVA: I wanted an English name.

HELGA: Eva was the name of your great grandmother.

EVA: I didn't mean any disrespect.

HELGA: No. Of course not.

EVA: I'm sorry.

HELGA: Nothing is the same anymore.

EVA: It's just that I've settled down now.

HELGA: These are the pieces of my life.

EVA: There were no letters for all those years and then I saw the newsreels and newspapers.

HELGA: I am putting them all back together again.

EVA: I thought the worst.

HELGA: I always promised that I would come and get you.

EVA: I was a little girl then.

HELGA: I am sorry that there has been such a delay. It was not of my making. *Pause.* I am your Mutti, Eva.

EVA: Evelyn.

HELGA: Eva. Now I am here, you have back your proper name.

EVA: Evelyn is on my naturalization papers.

HELGA: Naturalized as English?

EVA: And adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Miller.

HELGA: How can you be adopted when your own mother is alive for you?

EVA: I thought that you were not alive.

HELGA: Never mind it. We have all done bad things in the last years that we regret. That is how we survive.

EVA: What did you do?

HELGA: I was right to send you here, yes? It is good to survive. Is it not, Eva?

EVA: Please call me Evelyn.

HELGA: Now we must put our lives right again. We will go to New York where your Onkel Klaus will help us to make a beginning.

EVA: All the way to New York?

HELGA: Who is her for us? No one. The remains of our family is in America.

EVA: I have a family here.

HELGA: These people were just a help to you in bad times. You can to leave them now behind. The bad times are finished. I know it.

EVA: I like it here.

HELGA: You will like it better in America.

EVA: Do I have to go away with you?

HELGA: That is what I came for.

RATCATCHER music.

END SCENE.

# act two: scene two

*The room is cleared up. It is empty of rubbish. HELGA, holding a suitcase, stands in a corner. EVELYN has opened the box of glasses. She rubs one with a tea towel. FAITH watches.*

EVELYN: *Holding up a glass,* Will these be of any use?

FAITH: Aren't they a bit precious?

EVELYN: You can have them if you want them.

FAITH: If you're sure.

EVELYN: Yes or no?

FAITH: Yes.

EVELYN: Good. That's glasses done.

*FAITH picks up the box and puts it by the door. EVELYN moves on to another box. LIL enters dressed in a coat.*

LIL: I'm off now.

EVELYN: Will you be back for dinner?

LIL: Yes.

FAITH: Do you want me to give you a lift to the station tomorrow?

EVELYN: I said that I would.

FAITH: You hate driving into town.

LIL: *To FAITH,* I told her she didn't have to.

EVELYN:

*To LIL,* I want to take you to the station.

LIL:

You don't need to make anything up to me. I told you. It's all right.

EVELYN:

Maybe I feel less all right about it than you do.

LIL:

Don't be silly.

EVELYN:

Just let me take you.

LIL:

All right, take me.

EVELYN:

I'll find out about departure times.

LIL:

I've already got a timetable.

EVELYN:

Fine.

LIL:

See you later then.

EVELYN:

See you later.

FAITH:

Bye.

*LIL exits. FAITH starts to search through some boxes.*

EVELYN:

Don't you do a thing. You'll only cause a muddle. *Opening a box,* Do you need cutlery?

FAITH:

What sort?

EVELYN:

*Pushing the box to her,* Look at it and decide.

FAITH:

This is silver.

EVELYN:

I don't like it.

FAITH:

Why not?

EVELYN:

The design's far too fussy.

FAITH:

I like it.

EVELYN: Take it.

FAITH: Thanks.

EVELYN: Not at all.

*FAITH puts the box by the door. EVELYN continues to check boxes.*

FAITH: Gran didn't know that your mother survived did she?

EVELYN: If she had known, she would have made me go with her.

FAITH: To New York?

EVELYN: She would have handed me back like a borrowed package.

FAITH: Did you see her afterwards?

EVELYN: No.

FAITH: Was she still alive when I was born?

EVELYN: Yes.

FAITH: When did she die?

EVELYN: In 1969.

FAITH: She lived a long time.

EVELYN: She was a very strong woman.

FAITH: Didn't you ever want to be with her?

EVELYN: We didn't get on.

FAITH: You stopped her from knowing me.

EVELYN: I have tried to do my best for you. Please believe that.

FAITH: You stopped her from knowing me.

EVELYN: I wish it could have been simpler. But it wasn't.

FAITH: I just feel that I've lost out on so much.

EVELYN: Don't hanker after the past. It's done.

FAITH: It's still a part of our lives.

EVELYN: It is an abyss.

FAITH: Before, all I knew was a blank space. Now, it's beginning to fill up. I have a background, a context.

EVELYN: All you have now is a pile of ashes.

FAITH: There's far more than ashes, Mum.

EVELYN: *Opening out two boxes, Crockery?*

FAITH: *Looking at it, It's beautiful.*

EVELYN: A collection.

FAITH: Why don't you use it?

EVELYN: I prefer the Royal Crescent set downstairs. That's an old fancy. I've outgrown it.

FAITH: I'll probably break it all.

EVELYN: I hope you won't.

FAITH: I was joking.

EVELYN: You will take care of this home of yours, won't you?

FAITH: Of course, I will.

EVELYN: Do you have enough storage space?



FAITH: There's lots of empty cupboards.

*Pause.*

FAITH: I'm Jewish, aren't I?

EVELYN: You've been baptized.

FAITH: The Nazis would have said I was Jewish.

EVELYN: You can't let people who hate you tell you what you are.

FAITH: I want to know what being Jewish means.

EVELYN: I'm afraid that I can't help.

FAITH: Don't you feel at all Jewish?

EVELYN: I was baptized when I was eighteen. I was cleansed that day. Purified.

FAITH: How can you say that?

EVELYN: I have truly been a great deal happier for it.

FAITH: What about being German?

EVELYN: Germany spat me out. England took me in. I love this place: the language, the food, the countryside, the buildings. I danced and sang when I got my first British passport. I was so proud of it. My certificate of belonging. You can't imagine what it was like.

FAITH: It's hard starting from scratch.

EVELYN: You don't have to. You can carry on from where you are.

FAITH: Where I am has changed a lot in the last week.

*Pause.*

EVELYN: There's a portable television somewhere.

FAITH: This is what you're best at.

EVELYN: What is?

FAITH: Providing for me.

EVELYN: You're hardly able to do it all for yourself yet.

FAITH: I think I'll manage.

EVELYN: Not in the manner to which you have always been accustomed. *Pulling out a desk lamp.* What about a desk lamp?

FAITH: Does it work?

EVELYN: There's no bulb.

FAITH: That's no problem. *Turning to pick up a box.* I'll start taking it all down.

*EVELYN pulls out the Haggadah and the Der Rattenfänger book.*

EVELYN: *Holding them out to FAITH,* There are these too.

FAITH: *Putting down the box,* You said everything had been destroyed.

EVELYN: They're just books. You might not want them...

FAITH: *Taking the books,* Of course I want them.

EVELYN: One is a storybook and the other is for some Jewish festival.

FAITH: Thank you.

*EVELYN picks up the mouth organ.*

EVELYN: And this. I must have brought it with me.



*FAITH takes the mouth organ.*

EVELYN: You'd better take the stuff down.

*FAITH picks up some stuff.*

EVELYN: Leave it to the left of the door in the hallway, not the right.

*FAITH picks up a box and exits. EVELYN carefully sorts through boxes. Sounds of a quayside. A boat is about to leave. HELGA is waiting. EVA, very agitated, approaches her.*

HELGA: Where have you been?

EVA: I said, in the lavatory.

HELGA: For half an hour in the lavatory?

EVA: I was being sick.

HELGA: Sick?

EVA: I'm all right now.

HELGA: Are you sure?

EVA: Yes.

HELGA: You should change your mind and come with me.

EVA: I haven't got a case.

HELGA: You could have your things sent on.

EVA: You said it was all right to come later.

HELGA: I said I would prefer you to come now. There is enough money from Onkel Klaus for a ticket.

EVA: I can't just leave.

HELGA: Why do you not want to be with your mother, Eva?

EVA: Evelyn. My name is Evelyn.

HELGA: Why are you so cold to me?

EVA: I don't mean to be cold.

HELGA: We have been together a week and you are still years away.

EVA: I can't help it.

*Boat's hooter sounds.*

HELGA: Boats do not wait for people.

EVA: I hope you have a safe trip.

HELGA: When is "later" when you are coming?

EVA: In a month or two.

HELGA: Just get on the boat with me. Do it now.

EVA: I'm not ready yet. Not at all.

HELGA: You're making a mistake.

EVA: You're making me---

HELGA: What am I making you do? I am your mother. I love you. We must be together.

EVA: We've not been together for too long.

HELGA: That is why it is even more important now.

EVA: I can't leave home yet.

HELGA: Home is inside you. Inside me and you. It is not a place.

EVA: I don't understand what you mean.

HELGA: You are wasting a chance hardly anyone else has been given.

EVA: I will come.

HELGA: Will you?

EVA: If you want me to.

HELGA: If I want you to?

EVA: Just not yet.

HELGA: Do you want to come to make a new life with me?

EVA: You keep asking me that.

HELGA: Do you?

EVA: It's hard for me.

HELGA: I lost your father. He was sick and they put him in line for the showers. I saw it. You know what I say to you. I lost him. But I did not lose myself. Nearly a million times over, right on the edge of life, but I held on with my bones rattling inside me. Why have you lost yourself, Eva?

*Ship's horn sounds out.*

HELGA: I am going to start again. I want my daughter Eva with me. If you find her, Evelyn, by any chance, send her over to find me.

*HELGA embraces EVA who stands stock still. HELGA picks up her case and starts to walk away. EVA stands shaking silently.*

EVELYN: Quietly, There are four types of daughters: wise, bad stupid and the ones who do not know what to ask.

HELGA: *Turning round,* Which are you?

EVELYN: I wish you had died.

HELGA: I wish you had lived.

EVELYN: I did my best.

HELGA: Hitler started the job and you finished it.

EVELYN: Why does it have to be my fault?

HELGA: You cut off my fingers and pulled out my hair one strand at a time.

EVELYN: You were the Ratcatcher. You had his face.

HELGA: You hung me out of the window by my ears and broke by soul into shreds.

EVELYN: You threw me into the sea with all your baggage on my shoulders.

HELGA: You can never excuse yourself.

EVELYN: How could I swim ashore with so much heaviness on me? I was drowning in leagues and leagues of salty water.

HELGA: I have bled oceans out of my eyes.

EVELYN: I had to let go to float.

HELGA: Snake! Slithering out of yourself like it was an unwanted skin. Skinless snake! Worm!

EVELYN: What right have you got to accuse me? What right did you have to claim me back and hate me when I wouldn't come?

HELGA: My suffering is monumental. Yours is personal. Mine is a mountain. Yours is a tiny mound.

EVA exits.

EVELYN: What about what you did to me! *She starts to lose control*, You should have hung on to me and never let me go. Why did you send me away when you were in danger? No one made you! You chose to do it. Didn't it ever occur to you that I might have wanted to die with you? Because I did. I never wanted to live without you and you made me! What is more cruel than that? Except for coming back from the dead and punishing me for surviving on my own.

EVELYN sobs. FAITH enters.

FAITH: To EVELYN, Are your crying?

FAITH tries to get close to EVELYN. EVELYN does not turn to face FAITH.

FAITH: What can I do for you? Please tell me what I can do to help?

EVELYN: Stay my little girl forever.

FAITH: I can't

EVELYN: Then there's nothing you can do.

FAITH: I'm going to find out everything I can. Get in touch with my relatives. I want to meet them.

EVELYN: You'll find them very different.

FAITH: I'm sure they'd have to see you too.

EVELYN: I have nothing in common with them and neither do you.

FAITH: I want to put that right.

EVELYN: I don't want you to bring trouble onto yourself.

FAITH: There won't be any trouble.

EVELYN: You don't know..

FAITH: We can do this together. It would make us closer to each other.

EVELYN: I'd rather die than go back.

FAITH: You might change your mind.

EVELYN: I can't.

HELGA exits.

FAITH: *Going to another box*, Can I have my toys?

EVELYN: Surely you can leave those here.

FAITH: I want to take them with me.

EVELYN: I'd like to keep something from when you were little.

FAITH: They mean a lot to me.

EVELYN: Take them.

FAITH picks up the box of toys.

EVELYN: We're all done in here then.

FAITH: Yes we are.

FAITH exits. The shadow of the RATCATCHER covers the stage.

END PLAY