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SF PERUSALS

The Orphan Train

An Original Musical in One Act

Book
Susan Nanus & Sasha Nanus

Lyrics
Susan Nanus

Music
Barbara Anselmi

A Samuel French Acting Edition



SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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THE ORPHAN TRAIN was originally produced at The Jewish Community Center in Manhattan in association with the Anti Defamation League, a New York Jewish Teen Theatre production. The Musical Director was Barbara Anselmi, with Choreography by David Beris, Costumes by Rebecca Rosenstreich, Art work by Allison Fox, Set Construction by Frank Uvino, Hilda Valencia, Basil Latore and David Vazquez. The Postcard designer was David Billotti and the Design Staff was Nancy Hartner and Shin Horikawa. The production was directed by Sasha Nanus with the following cast:

RACHEL . . . . . Rachel Mann
JESSIE/JESSICA . . . . . Lucy Batterman
JOHNNY . . . . . Johnny Fernandez
YUSI . . . . . Yusi Ramirez
ANNI . . . . . Wei Ying Zeng
CARLOS . . . . . David Pereira
KATHY . . . . . Eliana Lane
MARY . . . . . Jennifer Wachs
ANGELA . . . . . Annie Siegel
JACK . . . . . Ray Sultan
RAY . . . . . Ethan Stanislawski
LAURA . . . . . Maren Silberstein
MOLLY . . . . . Natasha Thompson
MATT . . . . . Jonathan Katz

CHARACTERS

Rachel

Jessie/Jessica

Harlem Gang

Johnny

Annie

Yusi

Carlos

Maria

Hell's Kitchen Gang

Jack

Mary

Ray

Kathy

Angela

Conductor

Rich Kids

Isabel

Charlotte

Louisa

Matt

Molly

Laura

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Scene 1 - Rachel's Bedroom
1 *My Life* . . . . . Rachel & Jessica

Scene 2 - Union Station, New York City
2 *The Name of The Game* . . . . . Orphans

Scene 2A - Train to Kansas
3 *Orphan Train* . . . . . Orphans & Rachel
4 *No Different* . . . . . Rachel & Orphans

Scene 3 - A Town Square
5 *In This Town* . . . . . Kansas Kids
6 *In This Town (Reprise)* . . . . . Orphans

Scene 4 - Various Homes
7 *Things Aren't Always What They Seem* . . . . . Cast

Scene 5 - Jessie's House
8 *Jessie's Song* . . . . . Jessie & Rachel

Scene 6 - Jessie's House, Another Day

Scene 7 - The Barn
9 *Hoe Down* . . . . . Cast
10 *New York City Beat* . . . . . Cast

Scene 8 - Train Station

Scene Change
11 *My Life* . . . . . Instrumental

Scene 9 - Rachel's Bedroom
12 *Things Aren't Always What They Seem (Reprise)* . . . . . Cast

Bows
13 *Orphan Train* . . . . . Cast

Scene 1- Rachel's Bedroom

(Lights up on **RACHEL**, *alone in her room working on homework.)*

RACHEL. Oh forget it! I'm sick of this!

JESSICA. *(as she walks into the room)* I downloaded a bunch of movies on my iPad. I've really gotten into oldies lately. Have you ever seen *Casablanca*?

(She realizes that **RACHEL** *is in a bad mood.)*

What's the matter?

RACHEL. Nothing.

JESSICA. Yes, there is. What's going on?

RACHEL. Forget it. You wouldn't understand.

JESSICA. Did I do something? Are you mad at me?

RACHEL. Why would I be mad at you?

JESSICA. Well, who are you mad at?

RACHEL. Myself. For being born into the wrong family.

JESSICA. What?

RACHEL. I'm not like the rest of them. By the way, did you bring your math homework?

JESSICA. Yeah.

RACHEL. Hand it over. I need to copy it.

JESSICA. Rachel…

RACHEL. What?

JESSICA. You know I don't like to give out my homework. I did a lot of work on it and it doesn't seem fair that you should just copy it.

RACHEL. Oh. I see. In other words, you're as selfish as my parents. If I were as smart as you are, I'd be happy to give you my homework. Unfortunately, I'm stupid, and

not that you care, but if I bring home a bad report card again, I'll be grounded for the rest of the year.

JESSICA. You're not stupid. You don't even try. I bet you could get A's and B's if you'd just work at it a little…

RACHEL. *A little?* My brother is at Harvard and my sister is at Yale. There is no "little" in this family. Either you're outstanding or you're nothing. And guess which one I am.

JESSICA. That's not true.

RACHEL. Everyone expects me to follow in their footsteps, but I'm not like them.

(SONG - "My Life")

(sings)

FROM THE MOMENT I WAKE UP
TILL I GO TO BED AT NIGHT
I FEEL ALL THIS PRESSURE
TO DO EVERYTHING RIGHT
GET PERFECT GRADES
WIN EVERY PRIZE
STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD
NO MATTER THE SIZE.

I HATE MY LIFE
IT NEVER FEELS RIGHT
I FEEL SO LONELY INSIDE

DON'T HAVE ANY GOALS
NO SPECIAL DREAM.
IF ONE MORE PERSON ASKS ME
I THINK I'M GONNA SCREAM.

DON'T KNOW WHO I AM
OR WHERE I MIGHT FIT
I FEEL LESS LIKE A PERSON
AND MORE LIKE AN "IT."

I HATE MY LIFE
IT NEVER FEELS RIGHT
I FEEL SO LONELY INSIDE.

JESSICA.

I'M REALLY SORRY, RACHEL
IF THAT'S HOW YOU FEEL.

RACHEL.

NOTHING HAS MEANING
NOTHING IS REAL.

JESSICA.

I THINK YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE
MAYBE A SHRINK?

RACHEL.

I'VE BEEN TO FIFTEEN,
AND BELIEVE ME, THEY STINK!
I FEEL SO LONELY INSIDE

JESSICA.

FEEL SO LONELY INSIDE

RACHEL.

I FEEL SO USELESS INSIDE

JESSICA.

SO USELESS INSIDE

RACHEL.

LIKE A FAILURE INSIDE

JESSICA.

LIKE A FAILURE INSIDE

RACHEL.

I HATE MY LIFE. IT NEVER FEELS RIGHT.

JESSICA. Wow, I'm sorry, Rachel. I had no idea. But there's got to be a solution, right? There has to be something you can do.

RACHEL. There is.

JESSICA. You're going to talk to your parents? Tell them how you feel? Or maybe you should write a letter. Sometimes when they see it in writing, it really sinks in.

RACHEL. You're right. I should write a note before I leave.

JESSICA. Leave?

RACHEL. I'm getting out of here, Jess.

JESSICA. What are you talking about?

RACHEL. I've got some money saved up. Tomorrow morning, I'm going to get on a train and see where it takes me.

JESSICA. Are you crazy? You're only fifteen! You can't just take off.

RACHEL. Lots of kids do it.

JESSICA. Yeah, and bad things happen to them!

RACHEL. I'm suffocating here, Jess. I have to figure out who the real me is, and where I belong and what I'm supposed to be doing.

JESSICA. Rachel, think about this…

RACHEL. I have, and my mind is made up.

JESSICA. Your parents are going to be so upset.

RACHEL. Actually, I think they'll be relieved.

(She pulls down a suitcase from the top shelf. It falls and bumps her on the head.)

JESSICA. Oh my God! Are you all right?

RACHEL. Huh? What? I'm fine.

(She rubs her head but starts packing.)

JESSICA. You see? It's too dangerous!

RACHEL. I can take care of myself.

JESSICA. You don't know that. You've never really been on your own.

RACHEL. Tell you what. I'll call you in a couple of days. And let you know how I'm doing.

JESSICA. A couple of days! That's insane! You have to call me the second you get off the train!

RACHEL. Fine, I will! And if things aren't going well, you can tell my parents where I am; otherwise, you have to promise to keep quiet.

JESSICA. Rachel…

RACHEL. Please, Jess. I have to do this. I'll be all right.

JESSICA. *(reluctantly)* Okay, but swear you'll call me.

RACHEL. Swear.

(They hug and as they break apart, **RACHEL** *swoons a bit.)*

Wow, I better sit down for a second. My head really hurts.

JESSICA. Rachel! You can't go. You can barely stand.

RACHEL. I'm fine. Just give me a minute.

(She sits as lights fade.)

Scene 2 - Union Station

CONDUCTOR. *(shouts)* The Cannonball Express leaving for Chicago, St. Louis, Topeka, and Los Angeles leaves on Track 99 in fifteen minutes. All aboard!

*(***JOHNNY***,* **CARLOS***,* **YUSI***,* **ANNIE***, and* **MARIA***, all teenagers, all dressed in ragged clothes from the 1920's, enter.)*

YUSI. Why can't we live on our own. They gonna put us on a stupid farm.

MARIA. Why can't we stay by ourselves.

JOHNNY. What are you talking about? You had the influenza last winter you almost croaked.

MARIA. I wish my momma was still around.

ANNIE. What happened to her again?

MARIA. Working in that factory all her life. Her lungs gave out.

JOHNNY. All right you guys, stop your cry babying. We're looking to the future now and everything is gonna be ok.

ANNIE. Where do you think they're sending us, Johnny?

YUSI. How should he know? Is he a mind reader?

CARLOS. They gonna give us any food on this trip?

YUSI. It don't matter if they do. You'll still be hungry. You're always hungry.

CARLOS. Can I help it if I'm a growing boy?

MARIA. *(pulls out a baguette from her bag)* Look what I stole!

(Everyone starts grabbing for it and ad lib that they want a piece.)

JOHNNY. Quit grabbing! There's enough for everyone!

(They all huddle in the corner sharing the bread.)

*(***IRISH KIDS – JACK***,* **MARY***,* **RAY***,* **KATHY***,* **ANGELA** *– enter.)*

JACK. Now remember, everybody watch out for each other. Don't go talkin' to no strangers. You never know who you can trust.

MARY. I'm scared, Jack. Why are they sending us away? I don't want to go. What if nobody wants us?

RAY. You worry too much.

KATHY. Don't you worry, Mary. They wouldn't be sending us to Kansas if they didn't have no homes for us, would they?

ANGELA. I lit a candle in church yesterday asking my folks in heaven to watch over us.

JACK. That's nice, Angela. Next time, say a prayer for me.

ANGELA. Yeah, but what if they're mean? What if they beat us?

KATHY. You both have great imaginations. It's going to be good. Anything's better than having no family at all, ain't it?

ANGELA. I guess so…

RAY. *(sees the other kids)* Oh oh.

MARY. What's the matter?

RAY. *(points)* Look.

(They all look over at the others.)

JACK. Don't tell me they're on our train!

*(***CARLOS** *and the others turn and notice them.)*

JOHNNY. Well, well, look who's here. Irish Jack.

JACK. You're a long way from Harlem, Johnny.

CARLOS. You guys must be lost. This ain't Hell's Kitchen.

JOHNNY. Every neighborhood is hell when those Micks are around.

(The **HARLEM KIDS** *laugh.)*

ANNIE. Hey, Mary.

MARY. Hi, Annie.

ANGELA. Don't talk to her!

MARY. Why not? She's nice. I've seen her around on the streets.

ANGELA. Nobody from Harlem is nice.

YUSI. Well that goes double for anybody from Hell's Kitchen.

KATHY. Oh, yeah? Well, that goes triple for anybody from Harlem!

(SONG - "The Name of Game")

(sings)

I LOOK IN THE MIRROR AND WHAT DO I SEE?
A REAL IRISH FACE LOOKIN' RIGHT BACK AT ME.
I LOOK AT MY FRIENDS
AND THEY LOOK THE SAME.
DON'T MIX WITH STRANGERS IS THE NAME OF THE GAME!

YUSI.

MY FRIENDS AND MY FOLKS, WE DO WHAT WE MUST
TO KEEP AWAY FROM OUTSIDERS
WHO YOU CAN'T EVER TRUST.
STICK TO YOUR OWN KIND,
THAT'S WHAT WE CLAIM.
DON'T MIX WITH STRANGERS IS THE NAME OF THE GAME.

IRISH KIDS.

YOUR FOODS AND YOUR CUSTOMS
ARE ALL VERY ODD
WE PREFER TO BE LIKE PEAS IN A POD.

HARLEM KIDS.

YOUR MUSIC SOUNDS WEIRD
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO DANCE.
WHY SHOULD WE BOTHER GIVING STRANGERS A CHANCE?

CARLOS & JOHNNY.

WHEN I WALK AROUND IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD,
I SEE PEOPLE LIKE ME
AND THAT FEELS REAL GOOD.
OUR HERITAGE AND HISTORY
PUTS YOURS TO SHAME.

HARLEM KIDS.

DON'T MIX WITH STRANGERS.

IRISH KIDS.

DON'T MIX WITH STRANGERS.

(Dance Challenge:

Some of the Harlem kids dance while the rest of their group cheers them on.

Now some of the Irish Kids dance as a challenge! The rest of their group cheers them on!)

ALL.

SO YOU STICK TO YOUR KIND, I'LL STICK TO MINE,
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE
AND WE'LL ALL BE FINE.
WE'LL KEEP TO OURSELVES AND YOU DO THE SAME.

HARLEM KIDS.

DON'T MIX WITH

IRISH KIDS.

DON'T MIX WITH

ALL.

DON'T TALK OR TOLERATE

HARLEM KIDS.

DON'T MIX WITH

IRISH KIDS.

DON'T MIX WITH

ALL.

DON'T TALK OR TOLERATE
DON'T MIX WITH STRANGERS
IS THE NAME OF THE GAME!

CONDUCTOR. Last call for the Cannonball Express! All aboard! Hey! What are you kids doing on the platform? Get on the train! We're leaving in two minutes.

KATHY. We still got two minutes. Keep your shirt on. You don't have to be so pushy.

CONDUCTOR. I'll be any way I want to, you little street beggar. Get going!

(The kids start to step through the door of the train.)

RAY. Hey, This is a boxcar! Where are we supposed to sit?

CONDUCTOR. On the floor and don't give me none of your lip. You should be thankful for anything you get!

(Kids continue to go into train as **JOHNNY** *and* **KATHY** *bump into each other.)*

KATHY. Why don't you watch where you're going!

JOHNNY. Sorry, Kathy, I didn't mean to bump into you.

KATHY. How do you know my name?

JOHNNY. I seen you around and I asked about you. I'm Johnny.

KATHY. Really.

JOHNNY. Whenever somethin' interests me, I like to get more information.

KATHY. Oh yeah? And what information did you get?

JOHNNY. That you're fourteen, that you've been living on the streets for two years, and you take care of yourself.

KATHY. Well, aren't you a regular detective.

*(***JACK** *steps out of the train with* **MARY** *trailing behind him.)*

JACK. Hey! What are you doing with my sister?

JOHNNY. Irish Jack is your brother?

JACK. You better believe it, and she don't want nothin' to do with you. C'mon.

KATHY. I have a right to talk to whoever I want to!

JACK. No you don't. Now let's go!

(They start to enter the boxcar.)

MARY. C'mon, sit with me.

(At that moment, **RACHEL** *enters with her suitcase.)*

RACHEL. Excuse me, I'm looking for the Cannonball Express.

CONDUCTOR. Where did you come from?

RACHEL. The ticket booth. I want to go to…

CONDUCTOR. I know where you're goin'. Get in there with the rest of them kids!

RACHEL. Actually, I paid for a sleeper car.

CONDUCTOR. Did you now? You'll sleep just fine in there.

RACHEL. It was a private sleeper car.

CONDUCTOR. Did you hear what I said, missy? Move!

(Intimidated, **RACHEL** *enters the boxcar and sees all the other kids.)*

RACHEL. Wait a minute! This is a mistake!

(The **CONDUCTOR** *closes the door and locks it.)*

What are you doing? This is not a sleeper car! Let me out of here!

(We hear the sound of a train whistle. Everyone mimes being lurched by the train and then bounces up and down very slightly as if the train is moving.)

RACHEL. *(yells)* You are in big trouble, mister! I'm going to report you to the manager! *(She turns and looks around.)* I don't believe this! Where are the seats?

CARLOS. Orphans don't get no seats.

RACHEL. Excuse me?

KATHY. When you're poor and you ain't got no parents, everybody treats you like dirt. So we gotta sit on the floor.

RACHEL. There must be some mistake. I'm not poor and I am definitely not an orphan.

YUSI. Yeah, I used to play that game, too. I'd pretend I was a princess and my mama and daddy were the king and queen.

RACHEL. I don't have to pretend anything. I'm telling the truth.

KATHY. Then why are you on the Orphan Train?

RACHEL. The what?

(SONG - "Orphan Train")

KATHY. *(sings)*

IF YOU'RE A KID AND YOU LIVE ON THE STREET,
YOUR PARENTS ARE DEAD,
YOU GOT NOTHIN' TO EAT,
YOU STEAL FOR A LIVING
YOU DON'T GO TO SCHOOL.
THE COPS AND THE JUDGES CAME UP WITH THIS RULE:

JACK.

THEY PUT YOU ON THE ORPHAN TRAIN.
AND SEND YOU OUT WEST.
DON'T BOTHER TO COMPLAIN,
BECAUSE THEY THINK THEY KNOW BEST.
THEY DON'T EVEN ASK YOU
JUST MAKE AN ARREST
AND DRAG YOU TO THE STATION AND PUT YOU ON THE ORPHAN TRAIN.

RACHEL. Out West? Where?

ANGELA. Some place in Kansas.

RACHEL. *(horrified)* Kansas! I bought a ticket to Los Angeles!

RAY.

IF YOU'RE A KID AND YOU AIN'T GOT A BUCK,
DON'T MATTER WHAT YOU WANT,
YOU'RE PLUMB OUT OF LUCK.
YOU AIN'T GOT NO RIGHTS AND
YOU DON'T HAVE NO SAY
THE PEOPLE WITH POWER DON'T WANT YOU TO STAY.

MARY.

SO THEY PUT YOU ON THE ORPHAN TRAIN
AND SEND YOU OUT WEST.
DON'T BOTHER TO COMPLAIN,
BECAUSE THEY THINK THEY KNOW BEST.
THEY DON'T EVEN ASK
THE JUST MAKE AN ARREST
AND DRAG YOU TO THE STATION AND PUT YOU ON THE ORPHAN TRAIN.

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