

THE NIGHT OF THE FALLING STARS

By Claudia Haas

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CHARACTERS

SPIRIT BALL BEINGS

LIGHTBEAM	suspicious spirit
MOONGLOW	watchful, self-contained spirit
ALENKA	leader spirit
AURORA	spirit of the North
ARIEL	spirit of the West
KATSINA	spirit of the South
DRAGOON	spirit of the East

SECRET STONE CHILDREN

CARRINE	age 14 to 15, Irish, SEAN's sister
SEAN	age 12 to 13, Irish, CARRINE's brother
SASHA	age 13 to 14, male, Russian
ANJA	age 12 to 15, female, Norwegian, wide-eyed and trusting
NOVA	age 12 to 15, female, Native American

OTHER CHILDREN (all ages 12 to 15)

UNA	NOVA's great granddaughter
PEGEEN	friend of CARRINE
BILLY	friend of SEAN
LIV	friend of SASHA
MISHA	friend of SASHA
JACOB	friend of SASHA
IRINA	friend of SASHA
ELIZABETH	friend of JANE, terrorizes NOVA
JANE	friend of ELIZABETH, terrorizes NOVA

CHILDREN IN THE PLAY-WITHIN-A-PLAY (all ages 12 to 15)

MADISON	costumer
JENNA	costumer
EMMA	costumer
ELYSSA	actor playing ANJA
CAITLIN	actor playing LIV
KRISTINA	narrator
KELLY	narrator
MELANIE	actor playing NOVA
MARYBETH	actor playing CARRINE
MIRANDA	actor playing KATSINA
LUKE	scenery
ALEXANDER	narrator
ELI	director
MICHAEL	actor playing SASHA
JOSEPH	scenery
EVAN	actor playing DRAGOON

PROPS

PAST

Small telescope or binoculars
Five stones
Blanket
Pillow
Chalk (optional)
Slingshot

PRESENT

Posters announcing closing of park
Up to 17 "scripts" of *Night of the Falling Stars* (play-within-play)
Publicity posters announcing *Night of the Falling Stars*
Pieces of bizarre fabric
Four sheets

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The play has two main settings but can be used on one. The basic set is a children's urban park. There can be a swing, park benches, a sport court of some sort, a slide and a merry-go-round. The opening and end scene takes place in the "Celestial Center" For those scenes, it is sufficient to cover whatever park equipment you decided to use with black cloth that is etched with sparkling stars. For the brief scenes in the middle of the play that take place in the Celestial Center, the actors just need to be blocked from the sides, in the audience or above as if they are looking down on earth.

Do Not Copy

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ACT I

SCENE 1

At Rise: A flash of light in the Celestial Center. A murmuring of angry buzzing is heard. It is voices from earth. The buzzing sounds grow louder and louder. Actors can be placed around the theatre with lines such as "You talk funny;" "I don't like you," "You look different, go away." The actors can make up their own lines. Four beings (Light Rays) from the Celestial Center (AURORA, ARIEL, KATSINA and DRAGOON) rush on from different directions. As if they were a spit on a barbecue, they come together with their backs together and slowly circle around, frightened of the noise. Suddenly we hear a large crack and the four Light Rays jump apart. The noise from earth abruptly stops. LIGHTBEAM, a frenetic Light Ray, enters as does MOONGLOW, a self-possessed, decidedly not-excitable Light Ray.

LIGHTBEAM: Those earthly beings! They've finally done it! They cracked the Celestial Center.

MOONGLOW: **(SHE may have extraordinary glasses or some sort of telescope to watch earth, adopts a "thinking" pose whenever SHE makes a pronouncement)** It is so. The noise from earth has cracked our home. Pieces of our Center have fallen to earth.

AURORA: I felt it. We are doomed! Our home will fall to pieces!

MOONGLOW: I will acknowledge that our Center has been chipped and a few small pieces have fallen to earth.

AURORA: What happens now?

ARIEL: **(perpetually optimistic)** We will have to save our world, of course. It will be very exciting. We will probably be sent to earth!

KATSINA: This needs to be discussed with Alenka. Aurora, find our esteemed leader and bring her forth.

AURORA: Right away. Oh, dear! Oh, my! **(rushes off perhaps bumping into someone or something on the way)**

MOONGLOW: Lightbeam, go and assess the damage.

LIGHTBEAM: I don't have to. I know what happened. The earthly beings were fighting and their ugly noises ruptured our Center.

ALENKA: **(rushed on by AURORA)** Calm down, Aurora. Calm down! We will devise a plan.

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AURORA: A plan! A PLAN! How can we sit idly by and PLAN when our world is splitting apart?

ALENKA : Moonglow, have you assessed the situation?

MOONGLOW: I am trying to locate the missing pieces that fell to earth. We must retrieve the four large stones that fell from our Center. They contain the energy that keeps us alive. **(looks through her telescope)** One is in a very green place - I believe the humans call it Ireland. Why, look, Alenka! It is being picked up by a young girl as we speak. Another fell into a small street in a vast place known as Russia. I can't see what happened to it. And another is sitting very prettily on the Fjord Anja in Norway.

ALENKA: Is that all of them?

MOONGLOW: I think so.

AURORA: Think so! Don't think! You must know! We need to find them all.

MOONGLOW: I know that, Aurora. Let me concentrate.

LIGHTBEAM: Look! That? What's that?

MOONGLOW: Why that's the desert in a new place called America.

LIGHTBEAM: But what's that rock sparkling with energy?

MOONGLOW: I believe you've found another one of our celestial stones, Lightbeam. Yes, that is definitely a piece of our Center.

DRAGOON: Oh, no! I know what's coming!

ALENKA: Dragoon, Aurora, Katsina and Ariel: You must go down to earth.

DRAGOON: I knew it! Why us?

ALENKA: You are the rays that walk on the wind. In other words, you travel well. It is right and proper that you go.

ARIEL: I am so happy to have been chosen. Of course I will be sad to leave you. Till we meet again, Lightbeam. **(goes to hug LIGHTBEAM)**

LIGHTBEAM: Now, none of that emotional stuff.

ARIEL: And Dragoon, how I shall miss that grumpy face.

DRAGOON: I'm going with you!

AURORA: Yes! There's no time to waste. Onward to earth!

(ARIEL and AURORA start to exit.)

MOONGLOW: **(stops them)** Do you know what you are going to do? **(ARIEL and AURORA look at each other and shrug their shoulders.)** Then I suggest you stay and pay attention. Let us think.

(Again a murmur is heard from the earthly beings. The buzz gets louder and louder until we hear another crack. Then all is silent.)

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LIGHTBEAM: (*after a moment*) Those horrible sounds again. Humans should think before they act.

DRAGOON: Stop worrying about the humans. What about us?

ALENKA: The fallen stones from our Center must be brought together. You four must retrieve all the missing pieces. When the stones from our Center are together, they will release their light. It is that light that will heal our world.

DRAGOON: You do know the stones have fallen in four different directions.

ALENKA: Yes.

DRAGOON: You do know that we cannot touch them.

ALENKA: Yes.

LIGHTBEAM: Why can't they touch our stones?

MOONGLOW: It is our energy field. We are created out of the same light that holds the Celestial Center together. If we touch the fallen pieces, they will explode into dust. We need the humans to bring the stones together. Once that happens, the stones will send a brilliant light to heal our Center and carry our friends back home.

LIGHTBEAM: Do you mean that if the stones aren't brought together Aurora and Ariel and Katsina can't come home?

DRAGOON: And don't forget about me! I can't come home either!

LIGHTBEAM: So, is that a loss?

MOONGLOW: Quiet yourselves before we start sounding like the humans. It is settled.

ALENKA: Ariel, you will blow into western Ireland and find the missing stone. A young girl named Carinne is playing with it. Aurora, you will go north to the Anja Fjord and find the stone that has fallen there. It is near the property of the Karlsen family.

AURORA: (*murmurs the instructions over and over to herself; as SHE starts to exit*) Anja... Karlsen... Anja... Karlsen...

ALENKA: Aurora! Are you listening!

AURORA: Yes.

ALENKA: What did I say?

AURORA: Find the Anja family on the Karlsen Fjord.

ALENKA: No! The Karlsen family on the Anja Fjord!

AURORA: That's what I said.

ALENKA: Please pay attention. Dragoon you are to go east to Russia.

DRAGOON: I knew you would send me there! How can I find one measly stone in that enormous expanse of land?

ALENKA: The light from the stones will guide you. Look for their rays. Katsina, you will go the desert of Arizona. I see that a wise leader has picked up the stone. You will seek the stone there.

LIGHTBEAM: How can they bring the stones together if they can't touch them?

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DRAGOON: A touchy situation, I'll grant you.

ALENKA: It is a new century on earth. The twentieth century has begun!

Many are going to America. The stones will gather there. Be ready.

That is our only chance. And remember! Earth time is not our time!

KATSINA: We meet again in America!

AURORA, ARIEL and DRAGOON: America!

(The four exit.)

LIGHTBEAM: Alenka? What happens if they cannot bring the stones together?

ALENKA: They Celestial Center will crumble and we will disappear.

(Blackout.)

SCENE 2

At Rise: A young girl sits at the edge of a cliff fingering a stone. SHE is YOUNG CARINNE, age 14 and lives in Donegal, Ireland. YOUNG SEAN, age 12 is watching his sister from behind. And in the far background, we can spy ARIEL, carefully listening.

YOUNG CARINNE: ***(to the stone)*** Where did you come from? I saw you fall from the sky? Could you be a star?

YOUNG SEAN: Ah! There's me daft sister talking to a stone.

YOUNG CARINNE: Be off with you Sean, before I throw you over the cliffs to live with the fishes. It is not the mood I am in for pesky brothers!

YOUNG SEAN: What's the matter, Carinne? You don't want anyone finding out you talk to stones?

YOUNG CARINNE: I talk to meself, Sean! All the O'Shaughnessy's talk to themselves! ***(ARIEL makes her presence known. YOUNG CARINNE sees her but YOUNG SEAN cannot.)*** What would you be? A leprechaun?

YOUNG SEAN and ARIEL: I'm not a leprechaun! Leprechauns are not real!

YOUNG CARINNE: Not you? You! Who are you?

YOUNG SEAN: You don't know me? Your own flesh and blood?

ARIEL: Please send your brother away. I need to speak with you.

YOUNG CARINNE: He can't see you. Why can't he see you?

ARIEL: I choose who sees me. I don't need him right now. Please, shoo him away.

YOUNG CARINNE: You try shooing him away. He doesn't listen to me.

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YOUNG SEAN: Carinne? Are you talking to yourself again?

ARIEL: Very well. But I hate to do this. You humans get spooked so easily. (*goes over and lightly touches YOUNG SEAN's arm*)

YOUNG SEAN: Carinne! Don't! You know that I am ticklish.

YOUNG CARINNE: I'm not doing anything. I'm by my lonesome over here.

YOUNG SEAN: (*ARIEL touches YOUNG SEAN's other arm. HE quickly moves away.*) Carinne! Something is not right here!

YOUNG CARINNE: (*Innocently*) What, Sean?

YOUNG SEAN: (*ARIEL musses his hair.*) Whoaaaa... (*jumps up*) It's a witch you are, Carinne! A witch! (*ARIEL trips YOUNG SEAN as HE starts to leave. HE gets very spooked.*) I'm going to tell... Mama! Mama!

YOUNG CARINNE: You know that wasn't very nice.

ARIEL: Yes, I know. I'm sorry. But I have something to discuss with you.

YOUNG CARINNE: You are very odd, you know. You mustn't be from around here.

ARIEL: No, actually I'm not.

YOUNG CARINNE: Are you English?

ARIEL: English? Of course not. Why would you think that?

YOUNG CARINNE: My mother says that the English are very odd. And you're odd - so I just thought...

ARIEL: (*trying to be helpful*) You know, if you humans would just see how alike all of you are instead of deciding that "other people" are odd, well you wouldn't be cracking the Celestial Center.

YOUNG CARINNE: Celestial Center? What would you be talking about?

ARIEL: I'm talking about the stone in your hand.

YOUNG CARINNE: It fell from the sky. Isn't it lovely? (*SHE hands the stone out to ARIEL who quickly jumps away and screams.*)

ARIEL: No! You mustn't hand it to me!

YOUNG CARINNE: (*throws the stone out of her hand and also jumps away*) Why? What's wrong with it?

ARIEL: Nothing. Truly. Retrieve it please. Before it is lost to the sea.

YOUNG CARINNE: (*gets the stone*) Why can't you touch it?

ARIEL: It is part of the Celestial Center just as I am. I can't release its light yet. We need to bring all the stones together.

YOUNG CARINNE: What are you talking about?

ARIEL: I am here on a mission. I need to get the stone to America. Perhaps you can take it.

YOUNG CARINNE: America? I'm never going to America. Ireland is my home.

ARIEL: (*looking up*) What do I do now? She is never going to America. Maybe I should just take the stone myself...

(The beings from the Celestial Center appear in various places in the audience when they speak to earth.)

ALENKA: No! Do not touch it! Tell her your story. Her aura is bright. She is one who will listen.

ARIEL: Are you sure?

ALENKA: No.

ARIEL: Carinne, can I tell you about my mission here?

YOUNG CARINNE: Of course. You can tell me anything. Except that I am going to America.

(ARIEL and YOUNG CARINNE exit as YOUNG SASHA enters with a blanket and pillow. YOUNG SASHA is about 13 years old.)

YOUNG SASHA: You can make me go to my room but you can't make me go to sleep! So there! ***(YOUNG SASHA angrily throws his pillow down. HE then sits on it and throws the blanket over his head. DRAGOON enters and trips over him.)*** GO AWAY, IRINA! Mother sent me to my room to be by myself!

DRAGOON: Excuse me...

YOUNG SASHA: IRINA! ***(all is quiet)*** Irina? ***(peeks out of his blanket)*** You're not Irina.

DRAGOON: I know.

YOUNG SASHA: Well, if you are not Irina than you are a stranger. Oh no! A stranger! HELP! HELP!

DRAGOON: Please don't do that. It hurts my ears. I've come to help.

YOUNG SASHA: Help? HELP! HELP!

DRAGOON: Now, young man, that is very annoying. I have come from very far to help you.

YOUNG SASHA: Help me? What are you going to do for me? Are you going to make me rich?

DRAGOON: Of course not. I have no use for riches.

YOUNG SASHA: Well, I care A LOT for riches. If you want to really help me, you can make me rich.

DRAGOON: Well, I guess I don't really want to help you then. I thought you might care about things like "peace among people," "helping your fellow man."

YOUNG SASHA: Not really. I just want money. I am tired of being poor.

DRAGOON: Look - I don't want to spend a lot of time with you. I'm not sure I like humans.

YOUNG SASHA: And you are strange and I don't even know who you are - so get out of here before I scream again. One... I'm warning you ... two ...

DRAGOON: Oh don't start that screaming stuff again. Just tell me what you did with the stone.

YOUNG SASHA: Stone?

DRAGOON: You know, the stone that fell from the sky.

YOUNG SASHA: It fell from the sky?

DRAGOON: Yes. What did you do with it? I know you have it.

YOUNG SASHA: How do you know that? You are starting to frighten me. And I don't scare easily!

DRAGOON: Look, I saw you pick it up. Or rather, Alenka did. Or Moonglow. I'm not sure.

YOUNG SASHA: Alenka? Moonglow? Now, you are scaring me! Get out of here, now! The stone is mine!

DRAGOON: I'm not going to take it! I am not even allowed to touch it! I just want to know where it is and if you will keep it safe.

YOUNG SASHA: Of course it is safe. It looks like a gem stone. I intend to sell it and become rich.

DRAGOON: You cannot do that! It must make its way to America.

YOUNG SASHA: America? Well, I'm not going to America and that stone stays in my possession until it makes me rich! Is that clear?

DRAGOON: Listen, that stone is very important. Will you let me tell you about it?

YOUNG SASHA: No. Leave!

DRAGOON: You don't understand. That stone has to go to America or I can never go home.

YOUNG SASHA: You make no sense. That stone is never going to America. Never! Ever! Ever!

DRAGOON: *(looks up)* Now what?

(YOUNG SASHA gets up and retrieves the stone from the pillowcase. HE looks at it and looks at DRAGOON and suddenly runs off taking his pillow and blanket with him.)

ALENKA: Follow him! He is going to hide the stone. Don't lose sight of the stone!

(DRAGOON listens to ALENKA and enormously frustrated runs off, frustrated, following YOUNG SASHA. Meanwhile, YOUNG ANJA enters with a stone. AURORA is seemingly blown in and knocks YOUNG ANJA over. YOUNG ANJA is a wide-eyed, trusting sort.)

AURORA: Oh, pardon. I am so sorry. I must stop doing that! I haven't gotten the feel of my earthly feet. ***(AURORA gazes at YOUNG ANJA who begins to pinch herself, exclaiming "ouch" with every pinch.)*** What are you doing?

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YOUNG ANJA: Pinching myself. What does it look like I am doing?

AURORA: Oh. You are correct. You are certainly pinching yourself.
(pause) Why?

YOUNG ANJA: I must have fallen asleep. Or else why would you be here? You are a dream creature, aren't you? A bit strange. What is your name?

AURORA: Aurora. I've come looking for... I am looking for... who am I looking for again?

YOUNG ANJA: I'm Anja. I live near the fjord.

AURORA: You! I am looking for you! The Anja Fjord!

YOUNG ANJA: I'm not a fjord. There is an Anja fjord.

AURORA: Anja, listen... do not want to waste time. I've come about the stone you found today.

YOUNG ANJA: I find lots of stones. They come from the ocean.

AURORA: What have you done with it?

YOUNG ANJA: Well, it came from the ocean, so I threw it back into the ocean.

AURORA: Oh no! You didn't! Did you?

YOUNG ANJA: I did. The ocean always reclaims its own. One must have respect for it.

AURORA: Do you think you could find it?

YOUNG ANJA: **(astounded)** In the ocean?

AURORA: That's it, then. My mission is doomed. I will never return home and the Celestial Center will crumble to bits.

YOUNG ANJA: Celestial Center?

AURORA: If you must know, I am Aurora. I live - how do I explain it? Elsewhere. Pieces of my home have dropped to earth and I must retrieve them or my home will disappear.

YOUNG ANJA: That's so sad. I'm so sorry.

AURORA: So am I.

YOUNG ANJA: **(begins to weep)** And you can never go home again?

AURORA: **(also begins to weep)** Never!

YOUNG ANJA: I, too, will never be home again.

AURORA: Why?

YOUNG ANJA: **(sobbing)** We are sailing to America tomorrow. I am leaving my beloved home behind!

AURORA: **(sobbing)** I am sorry!

YOUNG ANJA: Thank-you.

AURORA: **(brightly)** You are going to America?

YOUNG ANJA: **(sobbing even more)** Yes!

AURORA: That is wonderful!

YOUNG ANJA: What?

AURORA: Where did you throw the rock? Exactly where?

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YOUNG ANJA: Well, you know. Down. Down the fjord and into the water. Why?

AURORA: I am going to retrieve it.

ALENKA'S VOICE: No! You mustn't touch it.

AURORA: YOU are going to retrieve it.

YOUNG ANJA: What?

AURORA: Can you swim?

YOUNG ANJA: No.

AURORA: If I hold you over the water, do you think you could scoop the stone up into your hands.

YOUNG ANJA: I'm not sure.

AURORA: Just look down. Tell me if you see it. The stone I'm looking for shimmers.

YOUNG ANJA: **(peers over the edge)** I see it! I see it! I think.

AURORA: Good. Now I will take hold of your ankles and lower you down. **(lowers ANJA down by the edge of the stage)** How are you doing?

ANJA: It's slippery. It's hard to grab in the water. Wait! I have it! Lift me up!

AURORA: Lift you up?

(AURORA makes a great try at getting YOUNG ANJA up and slowly, YOUNG ANJA emerges back on the stage.)

AURORA: Anja, please listen. I need you to take this stone to America.

ALENKA: The missing stone is on the Fjord Anja! You want the Fjord Anja! Not the girl-Anja!

AURORA: **(to ALENKA)** Shh! I'm making progress here. This is Anja!

ALENKA: You're not looking for a girl named Anja! You're looking for a fjord named Anja!

AURORA: Would you stop interrupting?

YOUNG ANJA: Who are you talking to?

AURORA: Someone who likes to... **(very loud now)** NAG ME! Come along, Anja. Let me tell you about my mission and why the stone is so important.

(YOUNG ANJA and AURORA exit as YOUNG NOVA comes storming on.)

YOUNG NOVA: **(throws a stone on the ground)** I don't want it! Leave me!

KATSINA: **(follows)** Didn't you mother tell you I would be here?

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YOUNG NOVA: You mean, did she tell me that a Katsina - a messenger would be visiting me?

KATSINA: Yes.

YOUNG NOVA: And did she tell me that the stone was important?

KATSINA: Yes.

YOUNG NOVA: And did she tell me that I would have to do what you said?

KATSINA: Yes.

YOUNG NOVA: No. She didn't say a word.

KATSINA: Nova...

YOUNG NOVA: All right she told me. But I don't want anything to do with it.

KATSINA: It's part of the Celestial Center, Nova. The Center is cracked. This stone is needed to heal it. It could also help your world, Nova. The Celestial Center brings hope. It's light rays heal. It may even help bridge your culture with the white culture.

YOUNG NOVA: I don't want to be a bridge! Let me stay here and help preserve my world. Find someone else to venture out in the world with your precious stone. I do not wish to be a stone keeper!

KATSINA: You can teach others your ways. All who come in contact with the Celestial Center learn the ways of peace.

YOUNG NOVA: Don't make me leave the reservation. Let me learn the prayer sticks. My home is here in Arizona on the Hopi Reservation! I do not wish to go to New York City!

KATSINA: Please, Nova! I am begging you. The other stones will be in New York soon. I receive messages on the wind. Once all the stones are together, a great light will shine forth. It will heal our Center and send us home.

YOUNG NOVA: I am sorry. I am not the right person for your mission.

KATSINA: That is not what your tribe thinks. They think you are the perfect person. They believe you have a gift. A gift to heal.

YOUNG NOVA: Then let me use my gifts at home. To help my people.

KATSINA: Nova, once the stones are brought together, a great healing light will cover the earth. All will see each other anew. This light is very powerful. It can heal tensions between all people. Won't you be a part of it?

YOUNG NOVA: It appears that I have no choice. I must follow you. When do we leave?

KATSINA: Soon. The other stones will be arriving in America very soon.

(YOUNG NOVA and KATSINA remain in place frozen. YOUNG CARINNE enters with YOUNG SEAN. The following can be underscored with music. A hymn or "American" song would fit nicely here.)

YOUNG CARINNE: I don't believe it! America?

YOUNG SEAN: It's true. Ask Father. The farm was sold today.

(YOUNG SEAN and YOUNG CARINNE freeze as YOUNG SASHA enters followed by DRAGOON.)

YOUNG SASHA: This is all very sudden. Did you have something to do with this?

DRAGOON: There is work in America. A chance for a new life. More money.

YOUNG SASHA: Money. I like that.

YOUNG ANJA: ***(enters with AURORA)*** So I am to take the stone to America when we move there. Is that right?

(ARIEL, DRAGOON, KATSINA and NOVA are now onstage.)

YOUNG ANJA, YOUNG SASHA and YOUNG CARINNE: To America!

YOUNG NOVA: To the city!

ARIEL, DRAGOON, KATSINA and AURORA: To home!

(Blackout.)

SCENE 3

At Rise: The beings on the Spirit Ball are scattered about the audience. LIGHTBEAM, MOONGLOW and ALENKA are all present.

LIGHTBEAM: What is happening now?

MOONGLOW: Not enough. The stones have been in America for three years!

LIGHTBEAM: Three years! How has the Celestial Center lasted? It is crumbling as we speak.

ALENKA: You are forgetting that earth time is not our time. It is still early in the 20th century.

LIGHTBEAM: How long do we have?

ALENKA: I'm not sure. It may be one hundred years in earth time. But for us - it is less than an hour.

LIGHTBEAM: Surely they can accomplish their mission in one hundred years.

ALENKA: It depends. Aurora has not found her stone yet.

LIGHTBEAM: What?

ALENKA: She is following the wrong girl!

(The lights come up onstage. We are in an urban park. AURORA, KATSINA, DRAGOON and ARIEL are present. It is early morning in 1906.)

AURORA: I am beginning to lose patience with this assignment.

DRAGOON: We have no choice. If we want to go home the mission must be a success.

AURORA: I can't think anymore. I hear voices in my head. All I hear is "wrong girl," "wrong girl" over and over again. Why do I keep hearing that?

DRAGOON: Because you must have the wrong girl!

AURORA: No! Not possible! The girl is Anja! I got it right!

(CARINNE and PEGEEN stroll in. CARRINE is now 15 as is PEGEEN. SHE is followed by her brother SEAN, now about 14 and his friend BILLY.)

CARINNE: Sean! Billy! Would you for heaven's sake stop being attached to us like a couple of leeches!

(SEAN and BILLY move elsewhere. Meanwhile, SASHA, LIV, JACOB and IRINA enter the park. SASHA, LIV and MISHA are 15 years old. IRINA is 12.)

SASHA: Three years in America and my family is still not rich!

LIV: What did you expect, Sasha? That the streets would be paved with gold?

SASHA: I certainly expected more than the tenement we currently call home. Did you live like this in Norway?

LIV: Ahh! We lived near the Anja Fjord. It is a beautiful, magical place. But our lives were not so good. The land yielded no harvest and we were forced to leave.

SASHA: So, we come here and work like slaves. That is not the life for me!

MISHA: You look for the easy way out. You dream rather than work.

SASHA: I do not intend to clean up after rich Americans. I intend to be a rich American.

IRINA: Mother cleans houses, Sasha. Do you mean it is good enough for mother, but not for you?

LIV: Sasha has always thought that he is better than us. One day, he will wake up and find out the road to riches is paved with hard work.

MISHA: Come on, Irina. Let's be very American and find a game to play. I am not in the mood to be with your brother today.

(MISHA and IRINA walk over to where SEAN and BILLY are playing. ANJA enters with her stone. SHE makes a great show of polishing it till it gleans.)

KATSINA: I don't understand it. The stones have come together many times since they have arrived in America. Why hasn't the light come?

AURORA: It's that girl you follow with the stone, Katsina. She isn't very sociable.

KATSINA: Nova is shy. But she strolls in the park every morning. The stone's light rays should have come together by now.

(Meanwhile, arguments erupt in the park.)

SEAN: Get lost, you two. Only Irish allowed on this side of the park!

MISHA: The park is for everyone. What's the big deal?

IRINA: Yeah. You can't make us leave!

BILLY: He said - get - out - of - here! NOW!

(MISHA and IRINA move away.)

IRINA: Watch, Misha! I learned an American game. ***(does a hopscotch)***
"Step on a crack, break your mother's back!" "Step on a line, break your mother's spine!"

MISHA: Irina! You stepped on a line!

IRINA: Did not!

BILLY: He's right, you know. You stepped on a line!

SEAN: What a horrible shame! You've broken your mother's spine, you have. Better run to confession!

BILLY: Come on, Sean. Don't linger with the likes of them. They're always breaking their mother's backs and spines. They're terrible people Sean, terrible.

DRAGOON: These children give me a headache.

ARIEL: They certainly could use the healing light of our stones.

(SEAN and BILLY go off to spy again on CARINNE and PEGEEN as MISHA and IRINA return to SASHA and LIV.)

SASHA: Weren't you two told to leave us alone?

LIV: Leave them be, Sasha. They have nothing to do.

MISHA: I have something you might like. ***(produces a sling shot)*** Made it yesterday.

SASHA: Don't aim it at me!

(MISHA steps away and motions for IRINA to follow and, occasionally aims it at SASHA.)

CARINNE: Can I show you something, Pegeen?

(SEAN and BILLY come closer to CARINNE and PEGEEN.)

SEAN: **(whispers)** She's going to show the rock, mark my word!

CARINNE: Now, you must swear never, ever are you to breathe a word of any of this. Swear!

PEGEEN: Oh Carinne, you're not going to show me your stone, are you?

CARINNE: Pegeen!

PEGEEN: What?

CARINNE: How do you know about me stone?

PEGEEN: Everyone knows about your stone. You're famous for your stone, you are. Daft Carinne, who can't go anywhere without a great, big rock in her pocket!

ARIEL: I did my job. See! She still carries the stone!

SASHA: Come on, Liv. Let's get out of here. This is boring. Liv! Come on!

LIV: Sasha! Would you kindly stop ordering me about all the time? You always think you are so much grander than I. I don't understand why you even bother talking to me!

SASHA: Because your smart Liv and someday you may be rich. It's all who-you-know in this country, Liv. It is good that we know each other.

LIV: Well, stop acting so high and mighty. At present, we are nothing more than poor immigrants from other lands.

SASHA: But, I am from a much big country than you. Russia is much larger than your tiny homeland, Norway.

LIV: Bigger isn't always better, Sasha.

SASHA: Of course, it is. Especially when it comes to money. Then more is lots, and lots is better. Besides, I am special. I have a stone that will one day make me very rich.

LIV: A stone doesn't make you special or rich. I have stones, also.

SASHA: **(takes the stone out)** Yes, but is it like this?

DRAGOON: And my charming fellow also has the stone.

LIV: **(astounded)** Well, yes. Actually one of my stones is very much like this.

SASHA: And were you followed by a strange creature? Who told you it had magical powers that would make you rich?

KATSINA: Dragoon! Did you tell her that?

DRAGOON: No! He just believes what he wants to believe.

LIV: Well, of course not. A strange creature? What a silly notion!

IRINA: Anja, may I borrow your stone? I want to show Misha how to play hopscotch.

AURORA: And Anja still has her stone. That just leaves you, Katsina.

KATSINA: Nova will come by. She always walks through the park in the mornings.

ANJA: I suppose you can use it. If you're very careful.

MISHA: What's the big deal? It's just a rock!

(IRINA shows MISHA the game of hopscotch. ANJA watches her stone intently.)

CARINNE: Pegeen! What do you know about me stone?

PEGEEN: Well, your brother says you're a witch who stole it from some leprechaun.

ARIEL: Leprechaun! I'm no leprechaun!

SEAN: ***(whispers to BILLY)*** See. I told you she was daft.

CARINNE: ***(whips herself around)*** Sean Patrick O'Shaughnessy!

SEAN: Caught by her-Majesty-the-Stone-Keeper!

CARINNE: Stay away from me and Pegeen and if I see you crawling by again, I'll set a spell on you and the bees will swarm and drive you into the river! Is that clear?

(SEAN and BILLY back away.)

BILLY: I wouldn't let my sister talk to me like that.

SEAN: You would if your sister was a witch!

(SEAN and BILLY move toward IRINA and MISHA.)

MISHA: What are you staring at?

SEAN: The little Russian can't even play an American game properly. Look it landed on the line!

IRINA: It's just fine.

SEAN: Let me show you. ***(picks up the rock and throws it harshly down)***

ANJA: Oh no! My stone! You've cracked it!

SEAN: What's the big deal? It's just a rock! The park is full of them.

AURORA: What's that? She cracked her stone?

DRAGOON: It's all over. It's energy will now drain out of it.

KATSINA: I don't know. Look at it. Nothing's happening.

ANJA: My stone! My beautiful stone!

AURORA: Why isn't anything happening?

KATSINA, ARIEL and DRAGOON: Because you have the wrong girl!

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LIV: I'll show you, Sasha! You'll see. My stone is just as wonderful as yours!

(LIV exits in a huff. All the children begin fighting among themselves.)

MISHA: I TOLD you, get out of here before I throw this stone at you!

ANJA: No! Not my stone!

BILLY: We have rights. This is America. We can stay in the park same as you!

DRAGOON: Do they have to be so loud?

(Suddenly, NOVA runs in, chased by two children, ELIZABETH and JANE.)

ELIZABETH: Get outta here, red-face!

JANE: Go back to your tribe!

NOVA: Leave me, please!

KATSINA: Oh no! My poor Nova!

ARIEL: Do something!

ELIZABETH: We're happy to leave you! As soon as you leave us!

MISHA: Hey! Leave her alone!

JANE: I thought Indians had to stay on the reservation. I didn't think they were allowed in our park! It's bad enough they let the Irish in!

DRAGOON: I don't like this!

KATSINA: All will be all right if she has the stone.

ELIZABETH: What's in her hand? Look she has a rock. She's going to throw it at us! Get it, Jane!

KATSINA: She has it! She has the stone!

ARIEL: All the stones are here.

DRAGOON: Then, why isn't anything happening?

NOVA: Stay away. This park is for everyone. Besides, my people were here first.

ELIZABETH: Who cares if you were here first? It's who that is here *now* that matters. Look around you. See any friends?

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