

WHAT A DAY THIS IS

A Musical Play in Three Acts

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Book, Music, and Lyrics

by

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ACT I - SCENE I

STAGE SETTING:

A typical city of the 1910's and 1920's - downtown Salt Lake City or any other American town; shop fronts, lamp post with street sign "300 West 200 South", bench, etc.

There are people walking around and window shopping. They are talking and there are the usual street sounds; horn honking, bike bells ringing, etc.

After a few seconds of movement by the people the music starts. People keep moving around while the orchestra plays the introduction to:

SONG - "WHAT A DAY!"

- All on stage sing and dance -

As the song ends (orchestra plays softly) three young men walk in looking around as if they are trying to find an address. They are dressed in clothes too large, holding tattered suitcases that are bound with rope or ribbon, they have tags tied around their necks.

- Music ends -

Costa: "Niko, where are we? Look at the numbers on the buildings like Sakis said to do."

Niko: (Pulls a crumpled paper from his pocket) "It's Suite 714, Hotel Utah, South Temple."

Costa: "We've walked around and around since we left the train station. Niko, I'm tired and hungry."

Vasili: "Me, too, Niko. I'm going to sit down here and rest."
(points to bench).

Costa: "Me, too." (both sit)

Niko: (Walks over to the street sign and looks to see what it says. He looks at his paper and tries to match the two. He can't make out anything. He scratches his head and walks over to Costa and Vasili) "Well boys, it's happened again. No money, no Sakis - what now?"

Vasili: "Wait for Costa to find another good looking lady to take whatever we have left."

Costa: "What money? You gave it away at Ellis Island. But we must find Sakis or we won't know where the streets are that are full of gold!"

Niko: "Do you still believe that story about gold in the streets? Do you? Look around, what do you see?"

(A good looking girl passes by. Costa smiles and stands up.)

Costa: "Hooray for America. She is the gold - golden honey, sweet to the lips...."

Vasili: (Stops Costa by putting his hand on his mouth) "Stop before you give away our clothes."

Costa: "If that's all I have, she can have them."

(They sit.)

Vasili: "It that all you think about? Girls?"

Costa: "No. I also think of women." (Big smile)

Niko: (Goes up to a man on the street.) "Excuse me, sir. Can you tell me...(he unfolds paper)...where to find this place?"

Cid: (Takes paper from Niko) "Yes, sir! That's right down that way." (Points off stage right)

Niko: "What do you mean, 'Out that way?'"

Cid: "You're on 3rd West and 2nd South. You want to go east and north."

Niko: (Shrugs his shoulder.) "East? North?"

Cid: "You must be new around here."

Niko: "Yes, me and my friends just came from Greece. We came to get work. We were told there is gold in the streets of America."

Cid: "Let me see that paper again."

Niko: "Here." (Hands the paper to Cid)

Cid: "Sakis! Of course. I know that name. Did he bring you out here with the promise of work?"

Niko: "Yes, he paid our way and promised good wages for a good day's work."

Cid: "That's the bunk."

Niko: "Bunk?"

Cid: "Yes. A lie."

Niko: "I was afraid of that. We are a laughing stock."

Cid: "We all are. We all came for a promise of good pay and good working conditions and found both not to exist."

Niko: "My friends depend on me. I must find Mr. Sakis so we can do something. We have no money."

Cid: "I'm waiting for some people. When we finish our business I'll take you to where you want to go. By the way, my name is Cid Barnes. What's your's?"

Niko: "I'm Niko Apostolakis. Thank you, Mr. Barnes. You are a good man to help strangers." (Niko turns and goes toward Costa and Vasili. As he is walking to them some strange men go over to Cid. They seem to be in a private/secret meeting. They exchange some papers.)

Niko: "That man over there will take us to Sakis in a little while."

Costa: "Come and eat, Niko."

Vasili: (Opens his suitcase and takes out some cheese, bread and a knife. He hands the bread to Costa and wipes the knife blade in his arm pit. Then he begins to cut a piece of cheese. Costa breaks off a piece of bread and hands it to Niko who is about to sit on the bench with them. They pass cheese and bread between them and start to eat.)

Vasili: "Now is time to eat, my friends. We will need our strength to kill Sakis.:

(Costa belches)

Costa: "Ah, what a beautiful feeling to relieve the stomach. Do we have any onions left?"

Vasili: (Looks in the suitcase. Moves some clothes around and pulls out an onion. He hands it to Costa. Costa takes the knife and cuts a large piece for his bread.)

Vasili: "What do you think, Niko?"

Niko: "Huh?"

Vasili: "What do you think is going to happen to us?"

Niko: "Don't worry, Vasili. We'll be just fine. Somehow with God's help we'll be just fine."

Costa: (Picks up knife again. Waves it around. Niko and Vasili duck.) "Come to me, Mr. Sakis, you Turk. Come, and I'll show you the quickness of a Greek blade."

(Meanwhile a policeman has entered and sees Costa waving the knife. He stops and looks.)

Vasili: (Grabs knife from Costa) "No, I'll do it."

Niko: "If you two don't stop that everyone in this town will think we are crazy."

(They start eating again. Vasili reaches into the suitcase and pulls out a bottle of wine.)

Vasili: (Raises the bottle into the air.) "Our last taste of home, boys. We shall wash down our dinner with our country's wine for the last time." (Takes a drink and passes bottle to Costa. All during this time the policeman and people on the street notice the boys and have made funny gestures. The policeman walks up to the boys.)

Cop: "What's going on here?"

Vasili: (Looks up) "What did you say?"

Cop: "I said, what's going on here?"

Vasili: "You blind? We eat."

Cop: "You can't eat like that."

Vasili: "What's wrong? I don't chew good American?"

Cop: "Are you some kind of wise guy?"

Costa: "He's the wisest man in the world."

Cop: "Sure...and you're one, too."

Costa: "Who are you?"

Cop: "I'm the law around here. The police."

Costa: (Jumps up to attention and salutes. Vasili and Niko follow.)
"Here, sir, have a drink on us."

Cop: (Grabs the bottle and takes a whiff.) "This is wine."

Costa: "Of course. We brought it with us from the Old County.
Our families made it."

Cop: "I'm going to run you in if you don't get rid of this stuff."

Niko: "Put us in jail for eating our dinner?"

Cop: "You can't loiter, carouse, panhandle, eat, drink, or spit
on the streets of Salt Lake City."

Niko: "We can't loiter, carouse, panhandle, eat, drink, or spit
on the streets of Salt Lake City?"

Costa: (bows) "We're sorry."

Vasili: (bows) "We're sorry."

Niko: (bows) "We're sorry."

MUSIC

Cop: (Takes bottle from Costa) "I guess I should make sure this
evidence is what I think it is before I take you down to the
station." (Takes a drink)

SONG - "WADDA YA DO?"

Niko: "Mr. Policeman..."

Cop: "Jim."

Niko: "No, I'm Niko."

Cop: "I'm Jim."

Niko: "Oh! You're name is Jim."

Cop: "Yes."

Niko: "Boys, (turns to Costa and Vasili) meet my friend, Jim."

Boys: "Hello, Jim."

Niko: "Jim, I hope you're not mad at us. We were just hungry and wanted something to eat."

Jim: "And drink." (holds up bottle)

Niko: "Yes...and drink."

Jim: (Takes another drink from bottle) "Why that's pure, glorious grape juice. Who would think this could harm anyone?"

Niko: "Have another."

Jim: "Don't mind if I do."

Costa: "Jim, say, do you know a Mr. Sakis?"

Jim: "Yes. He is a very powerful man. He has a contract with the railroads and the mines to get laborers (pause) Oh, No! You three?"

Costa: "Yes. We came because Mr. Sakis told us there was gold in the streets and we'd get paid big money to work in the mines."

Jim: "Well, don't that beat all? He brought you here to work in the mines. Well, let me tell you something, my boys. The mine bosses control everything around here and they use people like this Sakis to get workers to work cheap. But that's the way of life here. You want to work, you do as they say. You don't, and as they say - YOU'RE OUT!

(Enter Cid)

Cid: "Hello, boys. Are you ready to go to Sakis' office?" (Looks at Jim.) "Hi, Jim."

Jim: "Cid. What are you doing with these boys?"

Cid: "They asked for help to get to Sakis' office. Why?"

Jim: "Don't give them any of your Socialist propoganda talk about unions! Let them be before they get in as deep as you are."

Cid: "When they get to know their own way around they'll make up their own minds."

Jim: "Can't you and your boys leave well enough alone? Why start trouble and get innocent people drawn into it?"

Cid: ✓ "We deserve better, Jim. You know that. They pay us pennies and expect us to spend what little we have at the company store. We never have enough to get out of the rat race and that's where they want to keep us."

Jim: "Be careful, Cid. Someone is going to get hurt." (Turns and walks off.)

Cid: "Come on, boys. I'll take you to your destination."
(They start to walk out)

CURTAIN