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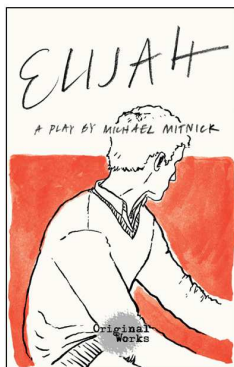
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PAST/FUTURE/PRESENT

A TRILOGY

by Michael Mitnick



I. PAST - ELIJAH

4M/5W

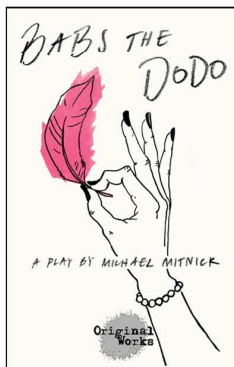
1922: Elijah, a broke student from Brooklyn, arrives in Paris and becomes an accidental Don Juan overnight. While hunting his idol, a reclusive composer of ballets, Elijah is swept into a life changing summer of sex, opium, and blackmail.



II. FUTURE - ED, DOWNLOADED

1M/2W

Set in a future where one can purchase immortality and spend an afterlife in a digital heaven of one's favorite memories, technological advancements bring infinite possibilities. Half live action play and half film, *Ed, Downloaded* is a sci-fi love story for high-tech dreamers.



III. PRESENT - BABS THE DODO

2M/2W

Despite a heart of 14k gold, Babs is over-the-hill and facing extinction as a top On-Air personality at the Home Shopping Network. Love appears from unexpected places as Babs fights to survive. This deliciously dark comedy sets Babs in the sale of her life as she grasps for love, happiness and sparkle.

elijah

by Michael Mitnick

SAMPLE ONLY

INTRODUCTION

elijah is in parts a seductive, elegant nocturne for the stage, and in parts a taut, comedy of menace in the vein of Patricia Highsmith.

Since I first produced the play at Yale in New Haven, I have been under the spell of the young American fleeing the curse of his charm, claiming talent which is not his, and yet blundering into the lives of strangers at pivotal moments.

A virgin son who carries all of his rabbi father's hopes and savings to Europe, Elijah becomes a lover, a liar, an innocent and a deceiver in Michael Mitnick's bittersweet theatrical bildungsroman.

Paula Vogel

Providence, Rhode Island

elijah was first performed as part of the Carlotta Festival of New Plays at the Yale School of Drama in New Haven, CT, May 7-15, 2010. The cast and crew were as follows:

Directed by Christopher Mirto
Produced by Paula Vogel
Lights by Laura Eckelman
Set by Po-Lin Li
Sound by Scott L. Nielsen
Costumes by Aaron Mastin
Stage Manager – Karen Hashley
Dramaturgy – Anne Seiwerath

Father/Georges Duruet – William DeMeritt
Otto Hoch/Tailor/Fat Woman #2/Male Teacher/Male Attendant/Butcher – Lucas Dixon
Elisa Broussard – Miriam Hyman
Elijah – Brian Lewis
Frieda Hoch/Fat Woman #1/Female Teacher/Piano Teacher – Irene Sofia Lucio
Nicholas Stoughton – Seamus Mulcahy
Helen Roux – Lupita Nyong'o
Sara/Zoe Benoit – Alexandra Trow
Rivka Feinberg/Telegrapher – Adina Verson

elijah received its world premiere by LOCAL Theater Company in Boulder, Colorado September 19 – October 7, 2012 at The Dairy. The cast and crew were as follows:

Directed by Peshia Rudnick
Managing Director – Megan Mathews
Scenic Design by Kathryn Kawecki
Sound Design by William Burns
Projection Design by El Armstrong
Lighting Design by Shannon McKinney
Costume Design by Charlotte Yvonne Ballard
Props by Amanda Paswaters
Technical Director – Kerry Cripe
Master Electrician – Chris Koncilja
Dialects – Tammy Meneghini-Stalker
Stage Manager – Claudia Carson
Assistant Stage Manager – Amanda Paswaters

Helen Roux – Barbra Andrews
Nicholas Stoughton – Matthew Blood-Smyth
Elijah – Benjamin Bonenfant
Rivkah Feinberg/Telegrapher – Lauren Dennis
Elisa Broussard – Rachel Fowler
Father/Georges Deruet – Chris Kendall
Frieda Hoch/Piano Teacher – Mare Trevathan
Noe Benoit/Sarah – Leah Watson
Otto Hoch/Tailor – Stephen Weitz

CHARACTERS:

ELIJAH
FATHER
NICHOLAS STOUGHTON
FAT WOMAN #1
FAT WOMAN #2
TAILOR
MALE TEACHER
FEMALE TEACHER
RIVKA FEINBERG
SARA
PIANO TEACHER
BUTCHER
MALE ATTENDANT
ÉLISA BROUSSARD
HÉLÈN ROUX
TELEGRAPHER
OTTO HOCH
FRIEDA HOCH
GEORGES DERUET
ZOÉ BENOIT

SAMPLE ONLY

SUGGESTED DOUBLING:
(primary role **emboldened**)

4 M, 5 W

ELIJAH

FATHER / GEORGES DERUET

NICHOLAS STOUGHTON

FRIEDA HOCH / PIANO TEACHER

OTTO HOCH / TAILOR / MALE ATTENDANT /
BUTCHER

ÉLISA BROUSSARD

HÉLÈN ROUX

RIVKA FEINBERG / TELEGRAPHER

SARA / ZOÉ BENOIT

TO BE ASSIGNED:

FAT WOMAN 1 & 2

FEMALE TEACHER

MALE TEACHER

NOTES FOR PRODUCTION

On Redundancies

Redundancies between narration & action should be embraced.

There should either be intentional friction between what we hear and what we see or there should be absolute recreation, depending on the situation.

Narration may be omitted in favor of stage action, such as Elijah's discovery of the WWI uniform and Otto's firing of the pistol.

Suggested omissions are underlined.

On Memories & Visions

Memories are different than visions.

While they should be physically represented often within the scene, they should also be brought to life – and perhaps tinted, perverted, and enhanced...

On Sound

A hyper-soundscape: efx (*eg. elevator cage, door slam*), underscoring (*eg. Elijah and Nicholas's arrival in Paris*), and the distant sound of the vibrations from across the Atlantic (*the harmonic designation of memories & visions*).

TIMELINE OF elijah

Prelude

June 11, 1922

Act One

Scene 1 → Scene 3: June 16 – 20, 1922

Scene 4 → Scene 6: June 21, 1922

Scene 7 → Scene 8: June 22, 1922

Act Two

June 23, 1922

Coda

August 20, 1922

LOCATIONS (Aside from Brooklyn Memories)

Prelude: *The S.S. Leviathan, leaving New York*

ACT ONE

Scene 1: *First Class Deck of the S.S. Leviathan;
Private Rail Car; Platform; Streets of
Paris*

Scene 2: *Suite 5D of hotel; Lobby of hotel; eleva-
tor; Streets of Paris*

Scene 3: *Dance hall; Balcony above dance hall*

Scene 4: *Suite 5D*

Scene 5: *An outdoor table at a café*

Scene 6: *Lobby of hotel*

Scene 7: *Maxim's de Paris*

Scene 8: *Suite 5D*

ACT TWO

Scene 1: *Outside Otto's Opium Den*

Scene 2: *Suite 5D*

Scene 3: *Outside and Inside Georges Deruet's
house*

Scene 4: *Inside Otto's Opium Den*

Scene 5: *Suite 5D*

Coda: *The S.S. Leviathan, returning to New York*

◊ = an elastic moment

underlined dialogue may be omitted in favor of action

SAMPLE ONLY

For M & B

SAMPLE ONLY

elijah

Prelude

ELIJAH: On the second Sunday In the month of June In the year nineteen-hundred-and-twenty-two, I was seventeen years and seventeen days old. On that second Sunday, among the cries of seagulls and steam whistles, I stood aboard a giant ship. On the shore, amid a sea of black hats and pink hands, stood my father.

FATHER: Go, Elijah! Go to Paris! Eliiiiiiiiiijah!

ELIJAH: (He was a poor Rabbi from Flatbush and he'd cobbled together a small savings – a gift to me in honor of my graduation.)

FATHER: Find him! Play for him!

ELIJAH: He is referring to Georges Deruet, The legendary but reclusive composer.

FATHER: Find him! Study with him! Bribe him!

ELIJAH: The cries grew louder and the motors began to grind and churn. But I didn't need to hear him, to hear him say:

FATHER: Remember what we –

ELIJAH: – have been through.

FATHER: Remember why I came –

ELIJAH: –to this country, yes, yes...

FATHER: Remember how I led prayers until my throat went hoarse and my eyes went small –

ELIJAH: – to earn this money that will send you back. I know–

FATHER: I want for you to draw your life

ELIJAH: Not with a big, old stick in the sand!

FATHER: But to carve it, with a chisel

ELIJAH: Into stone. I *know*.

FATHER: Write a ballet as there has never before been.

ELIJAH: Trust in the Lord our God, Jesus Chr–

FATHER: Drink not a drop of liquor! Not one drop–

ELIJAH: Find a piano on which to compose.

FATHER: Wire me as *soon as you arrive*.

ELIJAH: Eat kosher.

ELIJAH & FATHER: And most of all.

FATHER: Dream... of your mother.

ELIJAH: My mother.

FATHER: Till September, my boy.

ELIJAH & FATHER: God Bless You.

ELIJAH: I'm free.

FATHER: Now what do I do?

SAMPLE ONLY

Act One

SCENE 1

ELIJAH: And so, I went. On a transatlantic ocean liner – The S.S. Leviathan. I lost my father’s face in the crowd And then I saw my country disappear between the tips of my fingers. Then, days and days of nothing but water. Each evening I stood by the railing, smoking cigarettes and staring out at the yawning darkness. On the sixth day of the voyage, I was approached by a boy my own age. His voice carried the unmistakable melody of wealth.

NICHOLAS: Can I trouble you for a smoke? Thank you.

ELIJAH: We stood in near silence, Hearing only the wind of our exhalations.

NICHOLAS: (*Exhales*)

ELIJAH: (*Exhales*) He introduced himself.

NICHOLAS: Nicholas.

ELIJAH: Shaking his hand, I replied: “Elijah.”

NICHOLAS: (*Exhales*) What is your final destination?

ELIJAH: Paris. And you?

NICHOLAS: Euphoria. (*Exhales*) Paris. (*Exhales*) How old are you?

ELIJAH: Seventeen

NICHOLAS: I'm seventeen. Writer?

ELIJAH: Musician. Composer.

NICHOLAS: "Writer—"

ELIJAH: He said, pointing to himself with the butt of my cigarette.

NICHOLAS: Paris is a spider's web of talent. The very best writers on earth are finding themselves stuck there, Drinking the same air, Thinking the same thoughts, Screwing the same women. Have you ever *been* with a woman before, Elijah?

ELIJAH: No.

NICHOLAS: Oh ho ho, you will. My older brother Walt was stationed in Paris during The War. The War: an opportunity to screw the Germans on the battlefield and the French in the bedroom.

ELIJAH: He wrote his line down.

NICHOLAS: "...French in the bedroom." Walt must have slept with every decent girl in Paris That is, until he married.

ELIJAH: Is he still there – still in Paris?

NICHOLAS: Yes. Buried. (*Exhales*) I am surprised that you have never screwed before. You are quite handsome.

ELIJAH: When I was a boy, fat women would claw my flesh between their fingernails—

FAT WOMAN #1: Oh, what hearts he will break!

FAT WOMAN #2: What eyelashes! I would kill for those eyelashes!

FAT WOMAN #1: The Rabbi's boy—

FAT WOMAN #2: Were it not a sin, I would *truly kill someone* for those eyelashes!

FAT WOMAN #1: And a blonde Jew, no less!

ELIJAH: And at the tailor—

TAILOR: For your son, Avram, I will use a very special cloth. Soft, but strong. And from Egypt, Just like us.

ELIJAH: And as the tailor's measuring tape drew up along my inseam, his thumb would quickly trace along the length of my—

TAILOR: Ah! A big boy you are. And only bigger you will be.

ELIJAH: In school I wasn't the brightest.

ELIJAH: But, Teacher, if a miracle helped Abraham to part the red sea, then why aren't there miracles *today*? Where are *our* miracles?

FEMALE TEACHER: It was Moses!

MALE TEACHER: You would think the son of a Rabbi would know his Torah!

ELIJAH: But the female teachers took pity on me.

FEMALE TEACHER: Those eyelashes! That blonde hair...Oy. You will promise to work harder, little Elijah, yes?

ELIJAH: Yes. (I didn't.) And the male teachers looked at me like a reflection of themselves, though they were old and bent, like copper wire.

MALE TEACHER: Spend less time with young ladies, Elijah, and more time with old books. Buuuuut...were I young like you are, maybe I too would spend less time with ancient history and more time with Rivka Feinberg.

ELIJAH: Yet the most I had done with Rivka Feinberg was accept the chocolate babkas she brought to my door every Friday afternoon.

RIVKA: Do you like them, Elijah? I so want you to like them.

ELIJAH: She always stood like three rising steps: the babka, her breasts, and then her shy, smiling face.

FATHER: Elijah! The piano!

RIVKA: I have heard that you write music. Would you... play for me?

ELIJAH: "I have to go. Thank you for the strudel." And I would close the door.

RIVKA: For the babka. Why do I love you, Elijah? You don't even look Jewish...

ELIJAH: No, I spent my time at the piano.

FATHER: Such music you write! “Ahh!”

ELIJAH: Said the Rabbi, his hand falling upon his heart.
“How much more do I have to practice? Can I go outside?”

FATHER: Never, *never* stop playing your music, little Elijah, For *only when you play* does it feel like your mother is here and with me again.

NICHOLAS: Yes – Paris! I shall live and I shall drink. I shall write and I shall *screw*. What would you say, hypothetically, is the best treasure that lay on the bottom of the ocean floor?
In terms of historical and / or monetary value?

ELIJAH: I don't know.

NICHOLAS: Do you believe in sea monsters? A real leviathan?

ELIJAH: I don't know.

NICHOLAS: Where in Paris will you live, Elijah?

ELIJAH: I don't know.

NICHOLAS: Are you taking the train from Cherbourg to Paris?

ELIJAH: I don't know.

NICHOLAS: Well what *do* you know, Elijah!?

ELIJAH: “Well, Nicholas” I said, throwing my cigarette into the sea. “I know only one thing: Magic.”

NICHOLAS: Magic!?

ELIJAH: “I know that when I close my eyes and hold my breath, I can see memories that live inside my father’s head. They are memories of his dead wife, Sara, The mother I never met.”

NICHOLAS: Show me!

<>

ELIJAH: I see her...She’s standing in the falling snow. She’s...looking through a window at an expensive fur coat. She puts her small hand to the cold glass. I can almost hear her voice:

SARA: Ohhhhhh...

<>

NICHOLAS: You’re really something, aren’t you?
(*Exhales*)

ELIJAH: Why don’t you try it, Nicholas? C’mon!

<>

NICHOLAS: I see...I seeeeee... *My God!*

ELIJAH: What do you see!?

NICHOLAS: I see... *my eyelids!* It seems only the Prophet Elijah can raise the dead.

My – how did we so successfully avoid each other these past six days! Tell me – where are you staying?

ELIJAH: I'm down the starboard stairwell...or is it the port stairwell? I don't – how can a ship have a left or right if water has no shape?

NICHOLAS: Downstairs? You mean you're not first class?

ELIJAH: This is a first class deck? I didn't realize –

NICHOLAS: Elijah, I know we are to be fast friends. You will move up to my cabin. I have three extra beds. And you will stay with me in Paris. My name is Nicholas Meredith Ewing Stoughton. My father is a banker in New York and we own an entire hotel in Paris. I will write stories that will move the mind and you will write music to move the heart. Elijah, we are young. And while we are young, let us live.

ELIJAH: And at that moment, a great gust of wind removed both my hat and yarmulke. They spun over the railing and floated on the back of the breeze, down, down and into the ocean.

NICHOLAS: Is something the matter?

ELIJAH: I... I lost my hat.

NICHOLAS: Trust me – the wind did you a favor. I'll give you one of mine. I brought seven.

ELIJAH: My new friend and I arrived in Cherbourg and as we headed for Paris, I sipped my first champagne in the Stoughtons' private car. The French countryside blurred as my eyes themselves grew blurry. Alcohol. I had only ever tasted wine out of a tarnished silver cup on the Sabbath.

NICHOLAS: What makes the bubbles rise and burst are the imperfections in the glass flutes, Elijah.

ELIJAH: I'm sorry that you cannot afford better glasses, Nicholas.

NICHOLAS: Nice being able to booze out in the open again! Your smokes taste like arsenic. Here – try a *Partagás*.

ELIJAH: Look at the vineyards – I can't believe how much green there is in the world!

NICHOLAS: What rich flavor! Nice to know that Cubans are good for something. "Oh! Do you know what this is?"

ELIJAH: Nicholas said, passing me a tiny bottle. Perfume?

NICHOLAS: Oh, it is a cologne bottle, but it isn't cologne. No – don't open it! Mustn't let the genii out, or all our wishes might come true. Here, try a glass of this whiskey – it's older than God. My father says this bottle came from the collection of Ulysses S. Grant. Of course, my father is full of shit.

FATHER: If I know my son, Butcher, he is scribbling down music as we speak!

NICHOLAS: Shhhh – he doesn't know I took it!

BUTCHER: I always remember how straight he would stand. A fine, fine boy. That will be seventy-cents. Rabbi?

FATHER: Yes, Butcher, of course. Of course.

ELIJAH: I heard the airbrakes kick in and the train slowed to a stop!

NICHOLAS: Welcome to Paris, Old Boy!

ELIJAH: Men quickly hoisted Nicholas's four crimson steamer trunks onto carts, tossing my small grey duffel at the top of the heap.

NICHOLAS: Our luggage will meet us at the hotel. On this beautiful summer day, let us stroll through the streets and select which girls will be ours.

ELIJAH: Nicholas waddled, but still I struggled to keep up.

NICHOLAS: Next year I will go to Princeton. At Princeton, I will join the Triangle Club where I will write light comedies. I will join the Ivy Club, where I will write my first novel while I drink whiskey from a coffee cup.

ELIJAH: I thought I should feel out of place, but this place felt better than home. Oh Rabbi – I am walking the same stones as Georges Deruet himself!

NICHOLAS: This will be a summer to remember, Elijah! Fatima?

ELIJAH: Do you have a light? Wow – is this made from an elephant tusk?!

NICHOLAS: No – better – it's cut from a *Mastodon*. Elijah – don't smoke like that. You gotta look sophisticated! Smoke like this!

ELIJAH: And there were flocks of young women in white, Gorgeous girls, thin as their cigarettes. Blondes. Little noses, not at all like the noses of Flatbush.

NICHOLAS: Are you a Jew, Elijah?

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Oh – don't worry! I come from a long line of philanderers! I'm certain my blood is polluted with the worst of them.

ELIJAH: My father...is a Rabbi.

NICHOLAS: A Rabbi! You know it's funny – you don't even look Jewish. A-ha! Here we are, Elijah! Home! Do you know French?

ELIJAH: I don't. Nicholas let out his melodious giggle.

NICHOLAS: Neither do I. We shall be able to honestly plead ignorance when the women cry out in French, "Stop! Stop!". I wired and arranged a Suite for you. It has a garden view, but I hope you will find it suitable. Tonight, we go to a dance!

ELIJAH: A dance? But I must find Georges Deruet!

NICHOLAS: You are a musician – do you know Jazz?

ELIJAH: A little.

NICHOLAS: Oh – Jazz is my favorite, Elijah! Jazz is improvised! Jazz is fleeting! Existing just for the night, just for the instant and –

<>

ELIJAH: Just for us.

NICHOLAS: For you and me, Old Boy! That's the ticket!
It's a costumed dance. I am going as Napoleon. Find a costume. Or you could come as you are and people will think you a beggar – a joke! Tonight, Elijah, tonight!

ELIJAH: And as we walked into his hotel, Nicholas rolled his thick fingers into mine and said

NICHOLAS: “We are so, so lucky to have found each other.”

SAMPLE ONLY

SCENE 2

ELIJAH: I unlocked a heavy door onto: Shiny sheets – satin or maybe silk? Shelves of leather-bound books, all in French. A marble bath and gold mirror. A huge window overlooked a garden where I could spy hummingbirds. I had never slept in a hotel before – and yet now I was to sleep in the nicest Suite in Paris! But – wait! A costume! I dug through my duffel, but aside from my prayer book and money, I found only my drab shirts and trousers, clothes that I had never before known to be embarrassed of.

RIVKA: Elijah, I can see your muscles through your thin shirt. I would say you need a new one, but I like it as it is. I think you don't really care for babka, so I brought marzipan rugelach. It took me all afternoon.

ELIJAH: It looks really nice, Rivka. I never told her that I didn't even care for sweets. The Rabbi ate everything she brought.

RIVKA: Did you hear that I was voted prettiest girl in our class?

ELIJAH: I did.

RIVKA: You were voted handsomest boy. You know what that means?

ELIJAH: I really need to play my scales now, Rivka.

RIVKA: Of course. I will see you tomorrow in school, Elijah. Sit by me?

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ELIJAH: I took the elevator to the lobby and approached an attendant behind the curved, marble desk. “Sir?”

ATTENDANT: Oui.

ELIJAH: “On...on my last trip here I left behind some clothing.”

ATTENDANT: Suivez-moi. Je peux vous montrer notre section d’objets trouvés.

ELIJAH: He took me to a trunk where they had a collection of all that was left behind. A baby’s dress. A woman’s hat. Some furry thing. Nothing was my size. Nothing was right.

And I was just about to give up when –

ATTENDANT: Ahh!

ELIJAH: I pulled out an American military uniform – from The War. The brown wool coat looked as though it might fit. “Ah ha! Here it is,” I said.

ATTENDANT: Voila!

ELIJAH: Back in my room, I pulled on the uniform. I stared at myself. I was a stranger, a color photograph in a golden frame. I had never even been in a street fight. I had been poor and had nothing worth taking. I had been the son of the Rabbi; no one would even dare attempt to hurt my feelings. Who had left this behind? Probably someone eager to have The War over with. Eager to forget the things he had seen. Probably eager to forget the things he’d done. Who was I to wear it? But it fit me too well.

NICHOLAS: Elijah! Elijah! Open your door! There are women who await your prophecies!
Eliiiiiijah!

ELIJAH: Nicholas Stoughton knelt before me, a hand tucked into his coat, a triangular hat on his head. He spoke in a poor French accent:

NICHOLAS: “Ehhhhhhwwwwwhat do you think?” “I am a teeny-teeny-tiny, tremendously powerful man!”

<>

Where did you find that?

ELIJAH: A... store on the street. His crooked smile diminished. He was thinking of his older brother Walt. The dead soldier.

<>

NICHOLAS: Well. We had better get going. Hurry!

ELIJAH: He handed me a silver flask,

NICHOLAS: Swallow.

ELIJAH: What is this?

NICHOLAS: Swallow! No, bigger! Here! Now give me! Ahhh! And a bit of snuff to top it off!
Woooo! The night is young, but only for now!

ELIJAH: Nicholas raced around corners, dodging horses—

NICHOLAS: Faster!

ELIJAH: Slamming into men on their way to cafés.

NICHOLAS: Hurry, Elijah, hurry!

ELIJAH: He was a bear, but still he kept ten paces ahead.

NICHOLAS: Russia! You are mine!

ELIJAH: People glared as we bumped their shoulders.

ELIJAH: A woman dropped a paper bag of groceries.

NICHOLAS: Elijah – keep up!

ELIJAH: I could hear them think, “What lucky boys of privilege...” Emperor Nicholas was spinning, thrusting his fists into the air, singlehandedly conquering all of Europe.

NICHOLAS: Woooooooooooooooooooo!

ELIJAH: The delight in his eyes was like fireworks. It was 1922 and we were young, abroad, and drunk.

NICHOLAS: “Vive la France!!”

SCENE 3

ELIJAH: A band up front in hazy, blue light. All around me were the rich sons of Paris, dressed as kings, thieves, and wild animals. All around me were Paris's wealthy daughters, in ruffled dresses and masks, wanting nothing more than to fall in love forever, meaning just for one night. I thought of the Rabbi in Brooklyn, bent like wire over some well-thumbed book...

FATHER: Elijah...as I read these very words, are you composing new melodies?

ELIJAH: A body slammed into mine and tumbled down to my shoes. Are you all right?

ÉLISA: Excusez-moi!

ELIJAH: Let me help you—

ÉLISA: You are American?

ELIJAH: Yes.

ÉLISA: I am Élisà.

ELIJAH: Elijah. I couldn't see behind her mask. She had liquor on her breath.

ÉLISA: Dance, Elijah!

ELIJAH: My hand was pressed against the bare skin of her shoulder blades. I never danced with a girl who wasn't my cousin.

ÉLISA: Do you smoke cigarettes, Eli?!

ELIJAH: She called me “Elly.”

NICHOLAS: Elijah – where are you going? Elijah!

ELIJAH: Tugging my hand, she danced me out the door and up two flights of stairs. We found ourselves on a private balcony. The windows of neighboring buildings were lit in pale, gold light. “I know I have one cigarette left...” Her fingers entered the breast pocket of my uniform as she said,

ÉLISA: “Aha!”

ELIJAH: Snapping it in two, she slipped a stub between her lips, and then the other between mine.

ÉLISA: Someday I would like to smoke opium...
(*Exhales*)

ELIJAH: (*Exhales*)

ÉLISA: Brandy? Are you really a soldier?

ELIJAH: Well–

ÉLISA: Je m’excuse. Of course. How rude of me.

ELIJAH: (*Exhales*)

ÉLISA: So...*beautiful*. May I...touch your face?

ELIJAH: May I *see* your face! How old are you?

ÉLISA: Trente-neuf.

ELIJAH: Trente-neuf...that’s...wait...is that...Without warning, she kissed my cheek.

FATHER: Elijah – Have you read *The Protocols*? It boils the blood!

ELIJAH: She kissed my nose.

FATHER: Henry Ford, you Farshtinkener – get in one of your cars and drive far, far away!

ELIJAH: She kissed my neck.

FATHER: And now these lies about poor Walther Rathenau. Yet no one does one THING!

ELIJAH: She kissed my Adam's apple.

FATHER: Do we wait for the laundry to be caked in mud before we wash or do say, “Why is the clothes getting the mud in the first place?” We’ll have another Armenian massacre on our hands!

ELIJAH: I have no time for Armenian massacres now – A woman is –

FATHER: While others are happy to close their eyes to the problems of our people–

ELIJAH: Rabbi – please!!! I suddenly took a step up and onto the edge of the balcony.

<>

FATHER: Elijah?

ÉLISA: You will fall!

ELIJAH: Come up here!

ÉLISA: Vous êtes fou!

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ELIJAH: The cllop of shoes falling on stone. Fingers fastened onto my belt. I closed my eyes to the problems of my people. And she kissed my eyelids. She held my palm and brought it to her breast. I was afraid to let my fingers close. She closed them for me. I could push her. I could jump. Or I could let her keep kissing my ear.

SARA: Ohhhhhh, Avram... That stitching...

ELIJAH: And then, she at last kissed my...lips.

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My first kiss. A breeze moved up the side of the building. Then a horn down in the street. Do you hear that Jazz tune?

ÉLISA: Mmmm...

ELIJAH: I...I think I wrote that?

ÉLISA: Mmmm...

ELIJAH: Her head was on my shoulder. I heard the wind flutter her skirt like a flag.

ÉLISA: Mmmm...

ELIJAH: It was the first time in my life that I wanted to be anyone, anyone but the Rabbi's son. Come with me.

ÉLISA: Oui.

ELIJAH: “Don’t you want to know where?” She didn’t care. Oui... The stranger stepped off the ledge. I followed. She snatched her shoes and ducked back through the window. I followed. We dashed down the stairs. We burst into the Great Hall. We ran across the dance floor!

NICHOLAS: Elijah!!

ELIJAH: And if Jazz were still playing as the stranger and I emerged into the sleepy Paris night, well... I couldn’t hear

SAMPLE ONLY

SCENE 4

RIVKA: Nooooooooooooo!!! Why her, Elijah?!

ELIJAH: The morning sun made my eyelids orange.

RIVKA: She's pretty, Elijah, but she is *old*. Do you know how many pounds of sugar have passed between our hands? What has she done to win your attention? I am a beauty. I am young. I can bake. My eyes hold fire. *And* I am pleasant to talk to, don't you think?

ELIJAH: You expect so much from me. You sound like the Rabbi.

RIVKA: Hush! You don't want to wake her, do you?

ÉLISA: Bonjour, soldat.

ELIJAH: Good morning.

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ÉLISA: Where are you from?

ELIJAH: New York.

ÉLISA: New York! Once I...once I married a man from New York.

ELIJAH: Ha – “Once I married” – you make it sound... incidental. Incidental? It didn't work out?

ÉLISA: He died...in The War.

ELIJAH: I'm sorry.

ÉLISA: I am sorry too.

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ELIJAH: I don't remember your –Loud banging made both of us jump! I climbed out of bed, pulling a blanket around my naked–

NICHOLAS: What a night – what a *night!*

ELIJAH: He did a jolly dance.

NICHOLAS: Oh the music, the moon, the women! If there is a God – he lives in Paris! And if God is living in Paris, may he fix my Godforsaken hangover! Oh! Elijah! Do you have a girl in there?

RIVKA: Yes! Come take her away!

ELIJAH: Maybe you could come back later – we can get lunch –

NICHOLAS: Of course – my goodness! So it seems you aren't so inexperienced anymore! Welcome to the best summer of your life, my friend!

ÉLISA: That voice...

ELIJAH: My friend. Was I – was last night...did you enjoy last night?

ÉLISA: Yes, Eli.

ELIJAH: Was I...did I do a good job?

ÉLISA: A good job?

ELIJAH: What I mean is...She knew what I meant and held one finger to my lips.

ÉLISA: Shhhhhhh....Such a beautiful boy you are.

RIVKA: The boy was meant to be mine...

ÉLISA: How much longer are you...*stationed*...here?

ELIJAH: Oh. I'm not-

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Till September.

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I'm a spy.

FATHER: Where did you learn how to lie? You are a *composer*.

ELIJAH: Now it seems I'm an actor, Rabbi.

ÉLISA: A spy!

ELIJAH: What do you...do you work?

ÉLISA: I clean.

ELIJAH: I dug through my duffel. My clothes are gone.

ÉLISA: Were they...sent to be washed?

ELIJAH: I didn't- (?)

ÉLISA: Will I see you tonight, Monsieur Spy?

ELIJAH: For dinner?

ÉLISA: I would like to see you again. The Rotonde? Dix-neuf heures?

ELIJAH: Seven? Tonight? Well. Sure. I guess.

ÉLISA: Promise? Promise me!

ELIJAH I nodded. I watched her dress. She wasn't as old as all that. But she didn't look nearly as good as Rivka. She bent to pull on her stockings and her stomach creased. The sunlight reflected silver streaks across her abdomen and breasts. Do you have a baby? She paused and glanced down at her body. I had embarrassed her.

ÉLISA: Yes.

ELIJAH: You...you have a motherly glow.

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ELIJAH: Is everything OK? Do you need money? Please take some money. Take some money – to get home I mean.

ÉLISA: I have money, merci. Remember – diner at seven!

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I like you, Spy Eli. You have done magic. For after so much sadness, you make me happy again.

END OF SAMPLE.