

Excerpt Terms & Conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity of scripts.

Family Plays

GOODBYE MARIANNE

*By
IRENE KIRSTEIN WATTS*



GOODBYE MARIANNE

Jessie Award (Canada)

**A true story of hope in a time of terror,
this play won the Jessie Award of Canada
after a successful premiere by the Carousel Theatre in Vancouver.**

Drama. *By Irene Kirstein Watts.* *Cast: 2m., 2w., 1 boy, 2 girls, or 3 minimum (1m. 2w.) with doubling.* Set in Germany in the days immediately following the Nazi-fostered Night of the Broken Glass (November 9, 1938), *Goodbye Marianne* is powerful theatre based on the author's childhood experience in Nazi Germany. Young Marianne Kohn arrives a few minutes late to school one morning to find that Jewish students are no longer permitted to attend. On her way home, she makes an unexpected friend, Ernst. When Ernst discovers Marianne is Jewish—and she finds that he belongs to the Hitler Youth—they quarrel bitterly, leaving Marianne with little hope for the friendship. Though Mrs. Kohn wants to shield and protect Marianne from the truth of the danger they are in, the time for honesty has come. She reveals to Marianne that her father is not away on business as Marianne has been led to believe. He is actually hiding from the Gestapo after escaping a Nazi prison camp where he was nearly beaten to death. Marianne's escape to Canada is arranged through the Kindertransporte underground rescue mission. As she leaves, Ernst gives her a gift that renews her hope for the future and helps her see that all people are not the same. *Flexible set. Suitable for touring. 1930's European costumes. Approximate running time: 55 minutes. Code: G98.*

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308
Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170
Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

www.FamilyPlays.com

ISBN-13 978-0-87602-350-1



Goodbye Marianne

Goodbye Marianne

By

IRENE KIRSTEIN WATTS

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by FAMILY PLAYS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website www.FamilyPlays.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: FAMILY PLAYS, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

© 1994 by
IRENE KIRSTEIN WATTS

© 1997 by
ANCHORAGE PRESS, INC.

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(GOODBYE MARIANNE)

ISBN: 978-0-87602-350-1

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author(s) of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author(s) *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author(s), if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
Family Plays of Woodstock, Illinois”

*This play is dedicated to the memory of my grandfather
who perished in Theresienstadt Concentration Camp in 1944.*

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to my cousins Ruth Marianne Schiffer and Renate Selo, whose memories and early years are closely tied to mine.

Cover photo of Irene Kirstein Watts

Production Credits

Goodbye Marianne was first produced by Carousel Theatre and premiered in October, 1994, at the Norman Rothstein Theatre, Vancouver, Canada, with the following cast:

MARIANNE	Laura Sadiq
ERNEST, MR KOHN, MR ALTMAN N	David Lovgren
MRS KOHN, SCHOOL SECRETARY, INGE	Kerry Davidson

Directed by Elizabeth Ball
Set design by Douglas Welch
Costume design by Cynthia Summers
Original Music by Joan Beckow
Sound design by Nik Von Schulman
Stage Manager: Sherry Thoreson

Note: The music soundtrack is available on cassette and can be obtained through Carousel Theatre Company.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

<u>GIRLS</u>	<u>WOMEN</u>	<u>MEN</u>	<u>BOY</u>
Marianne Kohn Inge	Mrs. Kohn Secretary	Mr. Kohn Mr. Altmann	Ernst

The play may be double cast if desired, reducing players to four or even three. ERNST may play the two men's roles, and MRS. KOHN, may play the Secretary and INGE.

The play is set in Berlin. Germany, November 1938.

The 1935 Nuremberg Laws are in effect. The rights of citizenship for the Jews of Berlin are being eroded daily. Many still cannot believe what is happening. The "Final Solution" is only four years away.

Background to the Play

The play takes place in 1938, which was as critical a year for German Jewry as 1933, the year in which Hitler and the Nazi Party rose to power. Jews had lived in Germany for generations, but the Nuremberg laws of 1935 stripped them of their rights as citizens. Further edicts segregated the Jews from their neighbours and isolated them step-by-step.

9 November 1938 saw the launching of a government planned and sponsored anti-Semitic pogrom, *Kristallnacht*, the Night of Broken Glass. This terror-filled night saw police encourage mobs on a rampage of violence. One hundred and ninety-one synagogues were burned and destroyed, and so were hundreds of Jewish businesses. Brutal attacks, beatings and killings and the arrest of thousands of Jewish men continued for days. The Final Solution, Hitler's vow to destroy European Jewry, was less than four years away.

Hitler's quest for living space beyond Germany, *Lebensraum*, was equal to his hatred of the Jews. Hitler's Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia on 15 March 1939 and on 1 September 1939 invaded Poland. On 3 September 1939 Britain declared war against Germany.

The *Kindertransportes* were the lifeline created by the British government to save Jewish children. They operated for ten months, until the start of the war. Ten thousand children were saved from almost certain death.

Irene Kirstein Watts

Irene Kirstein Watts is a writer, playwright, and director who has worked throughout Canada and Europe. Her publications include *The Fish Princess*, *Making Stories* and *Just a Minute*. Irene was the first Program Director of the Vancouver International Children's Festival.

Scene One

(November, 1938. A living-room in the KOHN apartment. Essential props include a radio set, telephone, a Menorah and a silver framed photo of the family.

MARIANNE is getting ready for morning school. She wears a new double breasted navy coat with large mother of pearl buttons. MRS. KOHN, MARIANNE's mother, is fastening the buckles of MARIANNE's school bag. The phone rings. MARIANNE answers, waits, hangs up.)

MARIANNE: Good morning. Marianne Kohn here . . . No one there - as usual!

MOTHER: Wrong number I expect.

(Quickly changing the subject.)

You look so smart.

MARIANNE: I just love the buttons, everyone's wearing them. Thanks a lot, Mum. Math test today. I hate maths. Mr. Fogel's the meanest teacher in school.

MOTHER: You' ll do fine. Your lunch is packed. Hurry darling, or you'll be late. And, Marianne, you will come "straight home - don't dawdle or speak to anyone will you? Have you got your bus money in a safe place? Oh, and your key. I may be late today.

MARIANNE: Mum, don't fuss. Of course I've got my money, in my pocket. My key's here, *(She lifts up her skirt and shows a pocket in her gym knickers.)* and I have a clean handkerchief, and no, I won't speak to anyone. If someone wants directions or to ask the time, I'll just put my handkerchief in front of my mouth like this, as though I've just come from the dentist, *(She moans and groans, her handkerchief held to her mouth.)* and pretend I can't talk.

MOTHER: No! You know that's not what I meant. Marianne.

MOTHER: Please make sure you don't draw attention to yourself.
Of course you must be polite.

(MARIANNE bobs a curtsy.)

MARIANNE: Only teasing Mum. I do understand. *(A quick hug.)* See you.

MOTHER: Good luck on the test.

(MOTHER exits. MARIANNE walks down stage.)

MARIANNE: I know she's worried, but I'm so tired of hearing the same old thing every day - - "Don't play outside after school. No, you can't go to the movies with Gerda. I'm sorry it's not possible for me to take you. It's not allowed. Be quiet on the stairs when you come home, and be sure to be nice and polite to the landlady."

(MARIANNE imitates the caretaker 's voice:)

"Take your shoes off miss, I've just polished the floor. Don't slam the door."

(In her own voice:) Yes. Mrs. Schwartz.

(She sticks out her tongue.)

Mum and Dad say we're lucky to be allowed to stay in the apartment, a lot of places won't take . . . children. Of course they mean Jews. But we go on pretending that things will change; nothing's going to happen to us, and Berlin is as wonderful as ever.

I mustn't be late for the math test.

(Music.)

Scene Two

(MARIANNE turns and arrives at the school. Tries the door It's locked.)

MARIANNE: What's going on? Why's the front door locked? Where is everybody? Not funny ! Wait till I find out who did this. I'm going to be late for the test. My watch hasn't stopped, has it? No, it's 7:55 a.m. I can hear Mr. Fogel now. "Good day, Miss Kohn Thank you for honouring us with your presence. So, the cream of Berlin society decided on a late breakfast I presume. Sit down, and take two demerits and write 1000 lines on the benefits of a good education and the importance of punctuality. Remember, Miss Kohn, you are privileged to be the only Jewish student in the class."

Then the sniggers and the looks. Just once I'd like to tell him what it's really like to be in his class. Doesn't he realize I'm German too? I'm going to knock at this door till someone hears me. I don't care about drawing attention to myself. I bet Brigitte locked it on purpose to get me in trouble.

(She knocks loudly, A SECRETARY appears. She wears an arm band with a swastika on it as a loyal party member.)

SECRETARY: What are you doing here? I suppose you've come for your records. Wait outside and I'll get them.

MARIANNE: What are you talking about I'm Marianne Kohn. I go to school here. I'm in Miss Stein's class - - don't you recognize me? I'm late, please let me in.

SECRETARY: I know very well who you are. Please look at the notice. Can't you read? You are no longer permitted to study here.

(She reads the notice aloud, pointing to each word, as though reading to a very young child.)

SECRETARY: "As of today, November 15, 1938, Jewish students are prohibited from attending German schools."

(She goes in, slamming the door in MARIANNE's face.)

MARIANNE: That's crazy, they can't do that. What am I supposed to do all day, sit in the apartment? I thought the Führer liked kids. I guess not Jewish ones.

(MARIANNE looks up, hearing laughter. Some ink pellets are thrown.)

TEACHER'S VOICE: That's enough. Settle down.

CHILDREN'S VOICES: Heil Hitler, Mr. Fogel.

(A window is hastily closed. MARIANNE wipes the stain from her coat, and waits. SECRETARY enters.)

SECRETARY: Here are your records. Go home quickly now.

MARIANNE: What about choir practice at lunch time? . . . And it's library day.

SECRETARY: Don't you understand? You may **not** come to school here again. It is forbidden by law. Now take your records and go. *(Exits.)*

MARIANNE: I don't care. I hate you all. I hate you.
(She runs out of the school yard, then remembers she must not draw attention to herself. Walks. There is a sign on a park bench: "Aryans Only." She ignores it and sits down. Music.)

Scene Three

MARIANNE: *(Reading her records out loud.)* "Name of Pupil: Marianne Sara Kohn. Sex: Female. Date of Birth: 03 05 1927. Address: No 2,3 Richard Wagner Strasse, Berlin Charlottenburg. Religion: Jewish. Father: David Israel Kohn. Occupation: Bookseller. unemployed. Mother: Esther Sara Kohn (néé Goldman). Comments: Marianne has been a diligent pupil. A. Stein. Class Teacher"

(She puts her report away into the envelope. She takes out her lunch - - a sandwich neatly wrapped in grease proof paper. Takes a bite. She pulls a skipping rope out of her bag and puts it down beside her.)

Why does something bad always happen when Dad's away? Six weeks and not even a postcard. Ruth said they took her father away in the night - - there was a knock on the door, and it was the Gestapo. She didn't even get to say goodbye. They shave their heads in prison camp. I don't think they get much to eat. Maybe Dad is away on business like Mum says, or perhaps we're going to live in the country with the grandparents. I could have a horse. Mum and Dad might be getting a divorce, and then they'll plead with me to choose between them. *(She becomes very dramatic in the style of the 1930s movie stars. She acts out the roles of MOTHER and FATHER.)* "But Marianne, if you 're not here to mess up your room, what will I do all day?" "I don't know, Mother, you must try to manage without me." "I need you, darling Marianne, to make my morning coffee." "I know Father, it must be so hard when you don't even know how to boil water."

(MARIANNE is so carried away by this scenario that she laughs and chokes over her sandwich. She is oblivious to the entrance of an older girl watching her. INGE wears the uniform of the German Girls' League.)

INGE: What are you laughing at?

MARIANNE: I was just thinking about my father.

INGE: He's that funny! Lucky you! Mine yells at me all the time. He's in the army and thinks I'm one of his recruits. Why aren't you in school?

(MARIANNE attempts to reply.)

Don't bother making up an excuse for me, I don't care. You forgot your homework, right? I'm taking the day off too. No one'll miss us. My entire school's practicing for tomorrow's concert. Some Nazi officials are coming to inspect the school. Very important. I've got the worst voice in the whole school - - sounds like an old crow. My music teacher always tells me, "Just mouth the words, dear." *(INGE contorts her face in imitation of the teacher.)* She never lets me sing out loud.

(The girls giggle and enact the conducting of the choir. A friendship forms fast. INGE sings Horst Wessel's "Lift Up the Flag.")

I'm Inge Bauer. What's your name?

MARIANNE: Marianne.

(In order to avoid saying her last name she picks up the skipping rope. INGE holds out her hand for the rope.)

INGE: Do you mind? Come on, I'll show you a new step I learned yesterday. *(She skips and chants.)*

One, two, let me through
Three, four, police at the door
Five, six, fix the witch
Seven, eight, it's getting late
Nine, ten, begin again.

(MARIANNE joins in and they skip together, chanting in German this time.)

BOTH: Eins, zwei Polizei
Drei, vier Officier
Fünf, Sechs alte hex
Neun, zehn auf wiedersehn.

INGE: Not bad.

(They collapse laughing onto the bench.)

I'm starved. I left my lunch in school. Got anything to eat?

(MARIANNE rewinds the rope.)

MARIANNE: There's an apple in my bag, help yourself.

INGE: Thanks. Nice bag.

MARIANNE: Thank you.

(INGE rummages in the school bag. Finds an apple and is about to take a bite when she sees MARIANNE's name in gold embossed letters inside the lid. She reads.)

INGE: Kohn . . . *(Pause.)* That's a Jew name. *(She drops the apple and wipes her hands.)* Pooh. I thought there was a funny smell around here. Ugh. I feel sick. I could've been poisoned. Get off the bench. Can't you read? "Aryans Only," Don't you know there's a law against Jews sitting on public property?

MARIANNE: I can read, and I'm the public too.

(INGE hurls the bag off the bench.)

INGE: Oh no you're not. You're a dirty Jew. Kohn, Kohn, give us a loan. All right Miss Hook Nose witch, give me some money. You'd better, or I'll tell the park keeper you stole it from me, and you know who he'll believe, don't you?

MARIANNE: I'm not going to give you anything. Get away from me.

(INGE goes through MARIANNE's coat pocket, shoving her.)

Stop it, that's my bus money.

(They struggle. MARIANNE tries to leave, INGE gets hold of her coat buttons and starts to twist them off.)

INGE: Smart buttons, just what I need for my new winter jacket. Too bad they smell like you!

(INGE gives MARIANNE, a last push, and as she falls sees her necklace with Star of David, which MARIANNE always wears under her blouse. INGE is about to grab it. MARIANNE tries to protect her necklace.)

MARIANNE: You dare touch my Star of David!

INGE: Don't worry, I wouldn't touch that stinking star. I'd probably catch some terrible disease.

(She gives MARIANNE a final push. MARIANNE remains lying on the ground. INGE wipes her hands ostentatiously. Exits whistling "Lift Up the Flag.")

VOICE: *(Off stage.)* Anything wrong young lady?

INGE: No sir, thank you, no trouble at all. Heil Hitler.

VOICE: Heil Hitler.

(MARIANNE gets up and tidies herself. Hides Star of David under her blouse. Exit. Music.)