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*Dramatic Publishing*

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# **I Never Saw Another Butterfly**

**(The Musical 🎵)**



*Based on the play by  
Celeste Raspanti*

*Book and lyrics by  
Joseph Robinette*

*Music by  
E. A. Alexander*

"Such, such a yellow Is carried lightly way up high.  
It went away I'm sure because /  
It wished to kiss the world goodbye.  
For seven weeks I've lived in here /  
Penned up inside this ghetto,  
But I have found my people here /  
The dandelions call to me  
And the white chestnut candles in the court.  
Only I never saw another butterfly."



—Poet: Paul Friedmann, died at Auschwitz, 1944.

# I Never Saw Another Butterfly

**Musical. Based on the play by Celeste Raspanti. Book and lyrics by Joseph Robinette. Music by E.A. Alexander. Cast: 8m., 5w., 8 children. With doubling 3m., 4w., 4 children. Either cast may be expanded as desired.** This musical version of Celeste Raspanti's widely produced play brings an added dimension to the story of the children of Terezin, a ghetto under Nazi rule during World War II. Though few of the children survived, their lives were given meaning and hope through the tireless efforts of an inspirational teacher, Irena, who challenged their creativity and artistry in a makeshift classroom using scavenged materials which she kept hidden from the authorities. More than 5,000 drawings, poems and prose pieces were produced by the children in the concentration camp during its three-year existence, thus providing a legacy that continues to be honored and celebrated today. As narrated by one of the survivors—and close friend of Irena—Raja takes the audience on a never-to-be-forgotten adventure that moves seamlessly back and forth between past and present. The musical is rich in its variety of songs. From the opening “Terezin” to the uplifting finale, the numbers include: “We’ll Stick Together,” “When I Go Home,” “Do the Best With What You’ve Got” and “The Gift.” The final words of the song “I Leave You These” best summarize the theme of the musical. As Irena is leaving Terezin to meet her fate, she secretly passes the writings and drawings to Raja and sings: “If these poems and pictures live on after us all, then on these days the sun will never set, and night shall never fall, the world will not forget, the children’s distant call, night shall never fall.” *Area staging. Approximate running time: 90 minutes. Promotional CD available. Code: 103.*

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# **I Never Saw Another Butterfly**

A Musical in Two Acts

Book and Lyrics by  
**JOSEPH ROBINETTE**

Music by  
**E.A. ALEXANDER**

Based upon the play by  
**CELESTE RASPANTI**



**Dramatic Publishing**

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Music by E.A. ALEXANDER  
Based on the play by CELESTE RASPANTI

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(I NEVER SAW ANOTHER BUTTERFLY)

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTES

From 1942 to 1945 over 15,000 Jewish children passed through Terezin, a former military garrison set up as a ghetto. It soon became a station, a stopping-off place, for hundreds of thousands on their way to the gas chambers of Auschwitz. When Terezin was liberated in May 1945, only about one hundred children were alive to return to what was left of their lives, their homes and families. The story of those years at Terezin remains in drawings and poems collected and published in the book, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*.

The appendix to *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* briefly notes the names, the dates of their birth and transportation to Terezin. For most of the children whose work appears in the book, the brief biography ends, “perished at Auschwitz...” But one child, Raja Englanderova, “after the liberation, returned to Prague.” This musical—based on the play by Celeste Raspanti who also wrote these notes—is an imaginative creation of Raja’s story from documentary materials: poems, diaries, letters, journals, drawings and pictures.

# I Never Saw Another Butterfly

A Musical in Two Acts

For a cast of 11\* – 21 (more, if desired)

FULL CAST (8m, 5w, 8 children [flexible])

RAJA ENGLANDEROVA . . . . . from Terezin  
FATHER . . . . . her father  
MOTHER . . . . . her mother  
PAVEL . . . . . her brother  
IRCA . . . . . Pavel’s fiancée  
IRENA SYNKOVA . . . . . a teacher  
RENKA . . . . . her assistant  
HONZA . . . . . a friend of Raja  
RABBI . . . . . a spiritual leader  
1<sup>ST</sup> CHILD  
2<sup>ND</sup> CHILD  
3<sup>RD</sup> CHILD  
4<sup>TH</sup> CHILD . . . . . children of Terezin  
5<sup>TH</sup> CHILD  
6<sup>TH</sup> CHILD  
7<sup>TH</sup> CHILD  
8<sup>TH</sup> CHILD  
1<sup>ST</sup> OFFICIAL . . . . . German officials  
2<sup>ND</sup> OFFICIAL  
1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER . . . . . German soldiers  
2<sup>ND</sup> SOLDIER  
OFFSTAGE VOICES

TIME: 1942 – 1945.

PLACE: Terezin (and Prague), Czechoslovakia.

\* See following page for small cast.



SUGGESTED DOUBLING FOR SMALL CAST ( 3m, 4w  
and 4 children)

1 <sup>ST</sup> MAN	1 <sup>ST</sup> Official, Pavel, 1 <sup>ST</sup> Soldier
2 <sup>ND</sup> MAN	2 <sup>ND</sup> Official, Father, 2 <sup>ND</sup> Soldier
3 <sup>RD</sup> MAN	Honza, Rabbi
1 <sup>ST</sup> WOMAN	Raja
2 <sup>ND</sup> WOMAN	Renka, Irca
3 <sup>RD</sup> WOMAN	Irena
4 <sup>TH</sup> WOMAN	Mother
1 <sup>ST</sup> CHILD	1 <sup>ST</sup> and 5 <sup>TH</sup> Children
2 <sup>ND</sup> CHILD	2 <sup>ND</sup> and 6 <sup>TH</sup> Children
3 <sup>RD</sup> CHILD	3 <sup>RD</sup> and 7 <sup>TH</sup> Children
4 <sup>TH</sup> CHILD	4 <sup>TH</sup> and 8 <sup>TH</sup> Children

OFFSTAGE VOICES

(If desired, the actors—including the taller children—when available—may don capes and shawls and appear in crowd scenes and/or the wedding scene.)

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### ACT ONE

1. "Terezin" . . . . . Raja and Company
2. "We'll Stick Together" . . . . Irena, Renka and Children
3. "The Rules" (spoken over music). . 1<sup>ST</sup> and 2<sup>ND</sup> Soldiers
4. "Do the Best With What You've Got" . . . Irena, Renka  
and Children
5. "Welcome Shabbat" . . . Mother, Father, Raja and Pavel
6. "You Don't Know..." . . . . . Honza and Raja
7. "When I Go Home" . . . . . Children

### ACT TWO

8. "Curfew" . . . . . 1<sup>ST</sup> and 2<sup>ND</sup> Soldiers
9. "The Gift" . . . . . Raja and Honza
10. "Wedding Psalm" . . . . . Rabbi, Irca, Pavel and Guests
11. "Ludvik" . . . . . Children and Honza
12. "Reprise: You Don't Know..." . . . . . Raja and Honza
13. "I Leave You These" . . . . . Irena, Raja and Company
14. "Bows and Reprise: Ludvik" . . . . . Company

# ACT ONE

*(An open stage with various levels and steps. The several different scenes are suggested by simple props brought on and off by the ACTORS. Modest backdrops and/or projections may be used to enhance the locales.)*

*Before the curtain opens, RAJA, a young woman, is discovered in a softly lighted area at DR. She is silent for a moment, then speaks directly to the audience.)*

RAJA. My name—is Raja... I was born in Prague... I am a Jew... And I survived Terezin.

*(She exits as the curtain opens. In dim lighting, perhaps accompanied by a light mist or fog, the ACTORS—except for those playing RAJA and the two OFFICIALS—enter as they sing and stand at various points about the stage, perhaps forming a semicircle.)*

## (SONG #1: “TEREZIN”)

GROUP 1.

**TEREZIN, TEREZIN, TEREZIN, TEREZIN,  
TEREZIN, TEREZIN.**

GROUP 2.

**TEREZIN, TEREZIN, TEREZIN, TEREZIN.**

GROUP 3.

**TEREZIN.**

ALL.

**IT WAS A TOWN IN THE MIDST OF A LAND  
MOST BEAUTIFUL**

GROUP 1.

**RIVERS GENTLY FLOWING, FLOWERS FREELY  
GROWING.**

**SONGBIRDS CALLING, COVERED WITH DEW  
'NEATH MOUNTAINS SO BLUE AND  
BUTTERFLIES.**

**BUTTERFLIES, BUTTERFLIES, BUTTERFLIES.**

GROUP 2.

**RIVERS FLOWING. FLOWERS GROWING.**

**MEADOWS SPRAWLING, COVERED WITH DEW  
AH, AH, AH, BUTTERFLIES.**

GROUP 3.

**RIVERS FLOWING, FLOWERS GROWING,  
'NEATH MOUNTAINS SO BLUE.**

**BUTTERFLIES, BUTTERFLIES, BUTTERFLIES,  
BUTTERFLIES.**

ALL.

**THERE ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE BUTTERFLIES**

GROUP 1.

**DOTTING THE SKIES WITH YELLOW AND  
GOLD AND RED AND BROWN**

GROUP 2 & 3.

**BUTTERFLIES**

ALL.

**DARTING PLAYFULLY ABOVE THE TOWN OF  
TEREZIN**

GROUP 1.

**IT WAS A TOWN IN THE MIDST OF A LAND  
MOST BEAUTIFUL...**

GROUP 2 & 3.

**TEREZIN, TERERZIN, TEREZIN, AH...**

GROUP 1 & 2.

**UNTIL, UNTIL, UNTIL, UNTIL, UNTIL...**

GROUP 3.

**AH...**

*(Two GERMAN OFFICIALS enter.)*

1<sup>ST</sup> OFFICIAL. I think you have found the perfect place,  
Herr Muller. High walls, deep moats, narrow streets.  
And in such a lovely setting.

2<sup>ND</sup> OFFICIAL. A little jewel in Czechoslovakia's crown.

1<sup>ST</sup> OFFICIAL. And what do they call this town?

2<sup>ND</sup> OFFICIAL. Terezin. Built by the emperor Joseph over a hundred and fifty years ago. He named it for his mother, Maria Terese.

1<sup>ST</sup> OFFICIAL. I think it will make our leader happy, this Terezin.

2<sup>ND</sup> OFFICIAL. We have followed his orders to the letter. *(He takes out a folded piece of paper and reads.)* "...a place which we can turn into a model ghetto inhabited by Jews. A village we can proudly display to the world if it becomes suspicious of our...other business." The Jews will come here willingly. They are aware of the dangers in their current surroundings.

1<sup>ST</sup> OFFICIAL. We will attract the best and the brightest to show to the world.

2<sup>ND</sup> OFFICIAL. But we must also make room for a few of the poor and the sick.

1<sup>ST</sup> OFFICIAL. Indeed. After all, it *is* to be a *model* ghetto.

2<sup>ND</sup> OFFICIAL *(again reading from the paper)*. "...a gift to the Jews from the Fuhrer." *(He puts the paper away.)* While he does *his* other business.

1<sup>ST</sup> OFFICIAL *(saluting)*. Heil, Hitler.

2<sup>ND</sup> OFFICIAL *(saluting)*. Heil, Hitler.

*(They exit.)*

ALL *(singing)*.

**TEREZIN, TEREZIN, TEREZIN, TEREZIN.  
IT WAS A TOWN IN THE MIDST OF A LAND  
MOST BEAUTIFUL...UNTIL—**

GROUP 2 & 1 (*alternately*).  
**UNTIL, UNTIL, UNTIL,**  
**UNTIL, UNTIL, UNTIL,**  
**UNTIL, UNTIL, UNTIL.**

GROUP 3.  
**AH...**

(*RAJA reenters.*)

RAJA (*speaking*).  
My name is Raja. I was born in  
Prague. I am a Jew and I  
survived Terezin. But many others  
were not as fortunate.

GROUP 1, 2 and 3.  
**AH, AH, AH...**

ACTORS (*speaking in turn*). Zuzana Winterova,  
11 years old—perished at Auschwitz,  
October 4, 1944... Gabriela Freiova,  
10 years old—perished at Auschwitz,  
May 18, 1944... Frantizek Brozan,  
14 years old—perished at Auschwitz,  
December 15, 1943... Eva Bulova,  
15 years old—perished at Auschwitz,  
October 4, 1944...

(*The VOICES begin to fade.*)

Liana Franklova, 13 years old—  
perished at Auschwitz, October  
19, 1944... Alfred Weiskopf,  
16 years old—perished at  
Auschwitz, December 18, 1944...

ALL.  
**TEREZIN, TEREZIN,**  
**TEREZIN, TEREZIN,**  
**TEREZIN, TEREZIN.**

ALL (*except RAJA singing*).

**IT WAS A TOWN IN THE MIDST OF A LAND  
MOST BEAUTIFUL.**

SOLO 1.

**RIVERS GENTLY FLOWING—**

RAJA (*speaking*).  
And there were others.

ALL (*singing*).  
**AH...**

SOLO 2.  
**FLOWERS FREELY  
GROWING**

My mother, my father...

ALL.  
**AH—**

SOLO 3.  
**SONGBIRDS CALLING,**

SOLO 4.  
**MEADOWS SPRAWLING,**

My brother, my aunt, my friends.  
They are all gone.

ALL.  
**AH...**

SOLO 5.  
**COVERED WITH DEW.  
'NEATH MOUNTAINS  
SO BLUE.**

And I am all alone.



GROUP 1.  
**AND BUTTERFLIES,**

But that is not important.

GROUP 2.  
**AH...**

GROUP 3.  
**BUTTERFLIES,  
BUTTERFLIES.**

Only one thing is important...

GROUP 2.  
**AH—**

GROUP 3.  
**BUTTERFLIES.**

GROUP 1.  
**BUTTERFLIES.**

GROUP 2.  
**AH—**

GROUP 3.  
**BUTTERFLIES.**

I am a Jew, and I survived.

ALL.  
**BUTTERFLIES.**

I survived!

*(ALL except RAJA exit as a distant train whistle is heard, followed by the low cadence of a beating drum.)*

RAJA. In March 1939, Nazi Germany armed forces entered Prague. December 1939, Jewish children were no longer

allowed to attend state elementary schools. June 1940, the concentration camp at Auschwitz was established. September 1941, mass deportation of Jews began. October 1941, the first transports left Prague for Terezin. (*A nearer train whistle is heard.*) Among them were children...many children. I was one of them.

*(She exits as the screeching brakes of a train are heard.)*

STATIONMASTER'S VOICE *(from offstage)*. Train from Prague now arriving. Stand to the back of the platform please. Children will disembark first, followed by women and then men. (*A final train whistle is heard.*) Welcome to Terezin.

*(Offstage VOICES of the PASSENGERS are heard, then fade as RENKA, a young woman in her twenties, enters holding the hands of two CHILDREN who carry bags or small suitcases. Other CHILDREN with modest luggage follow behind. They appear somewhat uncertain, even frightened, of their new surroundings.)*

RENKA *(calling out)*. Irena, Irena Synkova—it's Renka...

*(IRENA, a bit older than RENKA, enters holding a sheaf of odd-sized papers.)*

IRENA. Ah...more children have arrived.

RENKA. Nearly four hundred this time.

IRENA. Later, when the workers return—and the older children—we'll make room for this new group in the barracks. Each one must have a place.

RENKA. And tomorrow, when another trainload arrives?

IRENA. We'll find places for them as well. *And* we'll make room for them in the school. They must start living again.

1<sup>ST</sup> CHILD. There is a school here?

IRENA. Yes. It won't look like the one you went to. It won't be as nice. But we will learn—and also have fun. I will be your teacher. And Miss Renka will be my helper.

RENKA. We are fortunate the authorities allowed you to establish a school—of any kind.

IRENA. They had little choice. I asked them what outsiders would think when they visited this— (*somewhat sarcastically*) —“model ghetto” and found no school.

2<sup>ND</sup> CHILD. I want to go back home to my own school.

IRENA. Of course you do. But for now, we'll be here.

3<sup>RD</sup> CHILD. I don't think I like it here.

IRENA. But you just arrived.

RENKA. You'll get used to it in time.

4<sup>TH</sup> CHILD. I'm afraid of this place.

IRENA. You're not afraid of me, are you?

4<sup>TH</sup> CHILD. No.

RENKA. Or me?

4<sup>TH</sup> CHILD. No.

IRENA (*pointing to another child*). Or him?

4<sup>TH</sup> CHILD. No.

RENKA (*pointing to another child*). Or her?

4<sup>TH</sup> CHILD (*almost laughing, despite himself*). No.

5<sup>TH</sup> CHILD. Or me?

4<sup>TH</sup> CHILD. No.

6<sup>TH</sup> CHILD. Or me?

CHILDREN (*each in turn, giggling*). Or me? Or me? Or me? Or me?

4<sup>TH</sup> CHILD (*laughing with the others*). No. No. No. No.

IRENA. There...you see. A place is just a place. But it's the people who make a place what it is. And if the people are always there to help each other, there's no need to be afraid.

**(SONG #2: "WE'LL STICK TOGETHER")**

IRENA (*singing*).

**WE'LL STICK TOGETHER LIKE BIRDS OF A FEATHER,**

**SO WE CAN WEATHER ANY STORM THAT COMES.**

**WE HAVE EACH OTHER, WE'LL CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER**

**LIKE THE VERY, VERY BEST OF CHUMS.**

(*Speaking.*)

Get into pairs, and I'll show you what I mean.

(*Singing to 1<sup>ST</sup> CHILD.*)

**IF YOU SHOULD FALL IN A HOLE, JUST SHOUT.**

1<sup>ST</sup> CHILD (*playing along, speaking*). Oh, no!

IRENA (*singing*).

**AND I'LL BE THERE TO HELP YOU OUT.**

(*She performs the actions—as all subsequent actions will be performed—then goes to 2<sup>ND</sup> CHILD.*)

**IF YOU'RE HAVING A DREARY DAY—**

2<sup>ND</sup> CHILD (*speaking*). I'm lonesome.