

SCENE FOURTEEN

The Schnitzer family is walking home after the Hanukkah service. It's now quite dark outside.

MRS. SCHNITZER: I'm glad we had the service – it was one of Rabbi Cohon's best sermons.

DR. SCHNITZER: Yes. We did the right thing. But it was nerve-racking.

MRS. SCHNITZER: I know.

ISAAC: You mean because ... you know ... of the bomb ...

MRS. SCHNITZER: Except there was no bomb. Those people just tried to scare us ... and it didn't work.

RACHAEL: Yeah – *I* wasn't scared.

Isaac rolls his eyes. Then, suddenly, he yells out.

ISAAC: Mom, Dad! What's that in the Nelson's window? (*pause*) It's a *menorah*!

MRS. SCHNITZER: It looks like one.

ISAAC: But the Nelsons aren't Jewish.

DR. SCHNITZER: You're right, they're not.

RACHAEL: Look! There's another one (*turns around*) and another one ...

ISAAC: There's one in Matt Jorgen's window. I know *he's* not Jewish and ... (*his eyes pop open*) Mom, Dad, isn't that the *convent*?

His parents nod.

ISAAC: But there're menorahs all over it!

His parents nod again, smiling.

ISAAC: This is getting really weird.

MRS. SCHNITZER: It's just like Mrs. MacDonald imagined it would be.

ISAAC: (*looking suddenly worried*) But suppose someone else gets their windows smashed ... or worse.

MRS. SCHNITZER: Isaac, the truth is, some people *have* been threatened ... their windows broken ... their car tires slashed. And you know what? It hasn't stopped them. They just got more determined. Rev. Torney and Mrs. MacDonald mimeographed thousands of pictures of menorahs, and the Billings Gazette printed a full-page menorah and asked people to display it on a door or window in their homes. And they did, Isaac. They put up *tens* of thousands. And there's something else.

ISAAC: What?

MRS. SCHNITZER: Well, each time a church, or school or someone's home has been vandalized, and its been reported in the *Billings Gazette*, the next day enough money comes in the mail for the windows to be repaired.

ISAAC: Where does it come from? Who sends it?

DR. SCHNITZER: No one really knows. But the money keeps coming.

ISAAC: It's like another Hanukkah miracle.

DR. SCHNITZER: Maybe so, Isaac. Maybe so ...

ISAAC (*after a pause*): Mom, Dad ... er, Rabbi ... remember last year when I told you I wanted to bring some of my Hanukkah presents to school to show the other guys?

DR. SCHNITZER: Uh-huh.

ISAAC: Well... now, don't be mad, but I didn't tell them they were Hanukkah presents. I felt funny. Nobody else gets Hanukkah presents. Everyone gets presents for *Christmas*.

MRS. SCHNITZER: So what did you do?

RACHAEL: He told everyone they were Christmas presents.

ISAAC: But not *this* year. This year, when I show my presents, everyone's gonna know I got them for Hanukkah.

MRS. SCHNITZER: I'm glad, Isaac.

ISAAC: Hey! Over there ... look, look!

DR. & MRS. SCHNITZER, and RACHAEL (*startled*): What? What?

ISAAC: Right there! (*points to a house with a handwritten sign with a menorah and a cross, and reads out loud*) For our friend, Isaac. With love from Teresa and the Hanleys. (*grins broadly*) She didn't tell me. She didn't say a word ...

MRS. SCHNITZER: You know, honey, hate can make a lot of noise. Love and courage are usually quieter, but in the end they're the strongest.
[For non-musical version, scene ends with the dialogue on p. 72.]

Music begins as the entire cast comes together. Jeff stands alone, observing, at the edge of the stage.

Song – “Paper Candles in Our Windows” - (optional)

REV. TORNEY:

IT'S EASY TO STAY SILENT WHEN YOUR NEIGHBORS ARE
IN NEED
ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY'RE NEIGHBORS YOU DON'T
KNOW

MRS. MACDONALD:

SO I TOOK A CHANCE ON HISTORY

AND I FOUND WHAT SELFLESS LOVE CAN BREED
I'M SURE WE ALL AGREE

CHIEF INMAN:

ANY CITY OR ANY TOWN CAN BE A TARGET
BUT WE DIDN'T WANT TO SEE THAT HAPPEN HERE
SO WE REFUSED TO FALL ASLEEP
AND OUR CITY WOKE TO TAKE A STAND AND FIGHT IT
AND WE ROSE TO VICTORY

HANLEY FAMILY (*except TERESA*):

PAPER CANDLES IN THE WINDOWS OF EVERY HOUSE AND
EVERY STORE
PAPER CANDLES BURNING BRIGHTER THAN THE ONES WE
USED BEFORE
WHEN OUR CITY'S FACED WITH EVIL WE
CAN LIGHT THE FLAMES THAT HELP US SEE
PAPER CANDLES IN OUR WINDOWS

DR. SCHNITZER:

I COULDN'T COMPREHEND HOW SOMEONE HAD THE
NERVE
TO DAMAGE PEOPLE'S HOMES THEY DIDN'T KNOW

MRS. SCHNITZER:

BUT WE TOOK THIS CHANCE TO TEACH OUR KIDS
TO STICK UP FOR THE RIGHTS THAT THEY DESERVE
THE BEST LESSON WE CAN SHOW

ALL (*except Isaac and Teresa*):

PAPER CANDLES IN THE WINDOWS OF EVERY HOUSE AND
EVERY STORE
PAPER CANDLES BURNING BRIGHTER THAN THE ONES WE
USED BEFORE
WHEN OUR CITY'S FACED WITH EVIL WE
CAN LIGHT THE FLAMES THAT HELP US SEE
PAPER CANDLES IN OUR WINDOWS

ISAAC:

I WAS SCARED WHEN I HEARD THAT ROCK COME
CRASHING THROUGH MY WINDOW
TO KNOW THESE PEOPLE OUT THERE WERE HIDING IN THE
SHADOWS

TERESA:

BUT THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR, WHEN YOU'VE HAD
AN AWFUL SCARE
THROUGH GOOD TIMES AND BAD, WE'LL ALWAYS BE
THERE

The townspeople freeze, and Jimmy and John appear and join Jeff onstage.

JOHN: C'mon, it's time to go. This is just one town ... one lousy town.
There are other places ... other towns. It'll be different.

JEFF: Maybe ... I don't know ... But I'm through.

JIMMY: Whadd'ya *mean*? I just spoke to ...

JEFF: I don't care who you spoke to. I'm out. (*pause*) See ya.

Jeff walks away from them and stays to watch the rest of the finale from the shadows, as the cast "unfreezes" and the song continues.

ALL:

PAPER CANDLES IN THE WINDOWS OF EVERY HOUSE AND
EVERY STORE
PAPER CANDLES BURNING BRIGHTER THAN THE ONES WE
USED BEFORE
WHEN OUR CITY'S FACED WITH EVIL WE
CAN LIGHT THE FLAMES THAT HELP US SEE
PAPER CANDLES IN OUR WINDOWS

ISAAC (*thinks for a moment and then bursts out*): Mom, Dad, let's go
home!

DR. SCHNITZER: What's the rush?

ISAAC (*in mock exasperation*): Whadd'ya mean, "What's the rush?" It's time to light my menorah.

THE END