

# Solo on Sax

## Rock Ballet

*Libretto by Ilana & Victor Eydus*

*Music by Victor Eydus*

*Illustrations by David Eydus*

*“Who is rich? He who is happy with his portion.”*

*Hirkei Avos, the Chapters of the Fathers*

### Libretto

*Scene of action: Santa Colbasina, California*

*Time of action: about two years ago*

### THE CAST

**Paula**, a freshman student of Shipsa Jr. High

**Mike**, her big brother, a college student

**Leon**, their grandfather

**Jessica, Chris, Yeon Yee**, Paula's friends

**Furball**, hamster

**Overture.** A melody on a sax is interrupted by rock music. An energetic dance in front of the curtain.

### Act 1.

**Scene 1. Boring.** Paula is having a lesson. A teacher shows something on the whiteboard, but Paula is too bored to pay attention. In the window she can see kids playing the ball outside. She is all with them, helping her friends to win. The teacher catches her distracted and reprimands. Paula is trying to concentrate, but it's too boring for her and other kids in the class.

**Reprise.** I wish I could run away.

**Scene 2. Grandfather.** Paula is at home with Leon. The grandfather is furious that Paula could not find him on the parking lot, when he came to pick her up after school. Instead she went to the school office and called the grandmother. Obviously, the grandmother explained it all to her husband. Paula has to listen that she is a bad student, brings the not-good-enough grades, late for school in the morning, and now failed to find her grandfather's car.

**Reprise.** Paula with her pet hamster. I wish I could run away from this all.

**Scene 3. Listen to Sara.** Late afternoon the same day. Paula is at the Jewish religious school preparing for her bat-mitzvah. She studies the bible, to say the prayers and read Torah in front of the whole congregation. Though studying the religious text is as boring as any other lesson, one line got her attention: "And God said to Avraham, ... in all that Sara has said to thee, hearken to her voice.". She and other girl students dance and sing to the boys "Listen to your Sara, hearken to her voice."

**Reprise.** Why do I have to study so much?

**Scene 4. Plan.** Evening the same day. Paula tells her brother Mike that she cannot take it any more. Everybody nags at her; she has to study way too much. She is sick and tired of all that. She wants to run away and retire. Mike has a plan. After her bat-mitzvah, Paula will get lots of presents, many will be checks. He will help her invest the money, and when it will grow to be enough to retire, he will help her to buy a condo and settle there; but for now she should study well at Shipsa, and at religious school. Paula agrees. When she steps out, he laughs how he tricked her into learning.

**Scene 5. Bat-Mitzvah Party.** Two months later, evening after bat-mitzvah. Paula meets her guests in a hotel ballroom. They congratulate her, drop an envelope in a decorated box for presents, write something nice on a board with Paula's portrait, and proceed through the blue-and-white balloon gate. All her friends from both Shipsa and religious school are there. After the ceremony of candle lighting, the whole crowd gets engaged in a Jewish dance. Paula plays the leading part on her alto sax.

**Scene 6. Hitting the Street.** Next morning. Paula sits on the floor, surrounded by boxes with presents, flowers, and balloons. The hamster enjoys running around it all. Paula



shows Mike checks for almost five thousand dollars. Mike suggests putting the money in the bank. But Paula shows him an article in Wall Street Journal. She secretly studied the stock market, and decided to invest in a local stem-cell pharmaceutical start-up. Mike admires her efforts, but still thinks that she is crazy, the investment is too risky. Paula explains the benefits of the industry, and reminds him that an investment for early retirement is her goal. Mike has to agree and support her.

**Reprise.** I will not have to study so much soon.

## Act 2.

**Scene 1. Viva Arnold.** A year later. Paula is having a lesson. A teacher shows something on the whiteboard, but Paula is too excited to pay attention. She stealthily reads an article in her favorite Wall Street Journal. The stem-cell start-up, she put all her money in, has made a drug, which helps cure some types of cancer. The stock value jumped over two hundred times. Paula is a millionaire. Unable to hold her emotions, Paula runs to the teacher and shows everybody an article. She does not need to go to school any more, she can retire and enjoy a life of endless parties. The class gets wild.

**Scene 2. Moving in.** Next week Friday after school. The marching band escorts Paula to her new residence in the beach part of Santa Colbasina. Mike with a key from the new condo leads the procession. Paula with her sax and other musicians are in front, followed by rest is the class. The last is Leon with the hamster in the cage.

**Scene 3. Breakfast.** Saturday late morning. After a sleepover party the girls try to make breakfast. It's so much fun to be away from all their parents, and do just whatever they want.

**Scene 4. Dinner.** Afternoon the same day. More kids come over to join the fun. The music is loud, the dancing never stops. There is a lot of dirty dishes, but who cares? Jessica calls the Chinese restaurant and orders the dinner. When the food comes, they eat it on the floor and watch TV.

**Scene 5. Sunday.** Next day. Kids come and go as they please. The music roars. The poor hamster is hiding in the



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corner; Paula feeds him quietly. She tries to play on the sax, but the music is too loud. Most of the kids go home at the end.

**Reprise.** I cannot stand so much fun.

**Scene 6. Alone. Monday morning.** Jessica, Chris, and Yeon Yee wake up early and prepare to leave. Paula begs them to stay, but they cannot, they have to go to school. They have to study, and make their careers. They remind Paula, that not everyone can retire so early. They leave. Paula looks around. The condo is a mess: the carpet is soiled, garbage is everywhere, the pile of dirty dishes is huge. She is lonely and sad; her only friend is a little hamster, who wants to play with her. She feeds the hamster, then carefully takes out her sax from a case, and plays the “I wish I could run away” tune.

**Scene 7. At School. An hour later.** Paula’s classmates are in class. A knock on the door; Paula comes in. Everybody is surprised and happy to see her. She explains that she decided not to retire yet, but go to college and become a biology scientist. She sits down. In the window she can see kids playing ball outside. The teacher catches her distracted and reprimands. Paula smiles back.

**Finale.** Kids walk around town, placing ads “Condo for Sale”.

