

ANNE FRANK: ON THE AIR (excerpt)

This is set in summer, 1947, during a rehearsal for a live broadcast of a new radio play based on the just-published Anne Frank diary. Most of the dialog is part of the radio script, though the actors break with interjections and questions now and again.

ANNE (to diary)

And I realized that she was right - that the call-up was designed to send all of us away. An hour later, Mummy returned and confirmed my worst fear – that we would be leaving home immediately...

WOMAN 3:

Girls, you have to be prepared to leave in the morning. I've laid out your school satchels on your beds – I need you to start packing them with your essentials.

ANNE

How long will we bewherever we're going?

WOMAN 3

I don't know Anne. It could be weeks, it could be months.

MARGOT

It could be years!

WOMAN 3

Yes Margot, it could be years. But it's the best plan we have now, and there isn't a moment to waste, so please, get packing now.

ANNE

Margot and I went up to our room to begin choosing the items to take with us on this strange adventure.

MARGOT (*packing, looks at Anne holding the Diary*)

You can't take that diary – it's not necessary.

ANNE

I have my essentials; my comb, my handkerchiefs, school books...

MARGOT

You'll need more clothes. You don't know how long you'll be gone, or whether you'll ever be able to go out and buy new ones. Leave that diary, and put in more dresses and underwear.

ANNE

Surely they'll have water where we're going, I can wash clothes when we get there.

MARGOT

Why are you so stuck on your fantasies, your memories, when you should be thinking about real things, the things you'll need to survive!

ANNE

Memories mean more to me than dresses. Please, let's not try and leave ourselves behind with the new life; let me keep the things that I'll need.

MARGOT

Do whatever you want. You're beyond reason.

ANNE

(to diary) Well, as you can imagine, you certainly went into my satchel that night.

SOUND EFFECT – 'OUR LOVE AFFAIR'

I turned on the radio that night as I lay down to sleep, and I looked around my room, seeing the dolls and toys that I loved so much as a child. It seemed like all of those things were part of a life that was already in the past. I couldn't help but wonder what sort of adventure might await us in what we were calling The Hiding Place.

MUSIC SLOWLY FADES OUT OUT (built in to cue)

WOMAN 3 *(whispering)*

Anne....Anne – wake up. Time to go! Quickly...get the sleep out of your eyes.

ANNE

(sleepy) hm...what time is it?

WOMAN 3

5 o'clock. Hurry up and get dressed. We want to leave before dawn. Here put on this woolen underwear.

ANNE

Mummy, it's July – why would I want to wear woolies?

WOMAN 3

Because you can't take a suitcase. If the Nazis see us with luggage they'll know we're leaving, so you'll have to wear all your clothes out. Here, put on these pants...and these vests...and here, here's your warmest dress...*(she keeps going with a list of items and steps back from the microphone to recede into the background)*

ANNE

By the time she was done, I had on two vests, three pairs of pants, and a dress. On top of *that*, I wore a skirt, jacket, summer coat, two pairs of stockings lace up shoes, wooly cap, scarf, and still more!

ANNE *(continued)*

I looked one last time at my room, saying goodbye to my things and too Moortje, my little cat.

SOUND EFFECT – CLARINET (fade out in cue)

(to cat) Moortje, my love, you'll be going to a new home now.

MAN 2

(a brief pause, and then) Meow....*(he breaks)* Sorry, Sam, I'll work on it, I promise....hey couldn't she have a dog instead? I bark real good!

PRODUCER

Don't worry about it – going on!

ANNE

We've written a note to Mrs Goudsmit, the neighbor woman, and she'll make sure that you are taken care of. I wish we could take you with us, but Daddy said that you had to remain here. So come here now, please...give me your very best purr...I hope to see you again soon!

MAN 2

Meow (*sadder*)

ANNE

Please be a good girl (*look between her and Man 2 – they want to laugh*)..and don't forget me. We'll be back for you someday soon, I promise!

MAN 2

Meow (*soooo sad*)

ANNE

And at seven-thirty, the door closed behind us, and we began our escape to our hiding place, not knowing what lay ahead for ourselves.