ACT 1

Scene 1

(ARAM DASS gestures and the street is now in full movement and energy.
Colorful lights strung, children running around. Fog. We see dolls and animal-type puppets. Featured are the RAT and MONKEY which we will see later. MALE ONE and MALE TWO operate them and entertain the crowd. No pretense, at this point, of the puppets being any more than fun toys for children.
SARA enters alone, amazed at the sight of this strange place. The youthful CAPTAIN CREWE enters a beat later. He is enjoying the energy of the street.)

ARAM DASS. Once upon a time, on a winter's day deep in the heart of London...

NURSE/SHOPKEEPER. ... where the yellow fog hung so thick and heavy in the streets that all the shop windows blazed with lights.

(The BEGGAR GIRL left over from the Prologue, almost an animal, slinks close to a few young children and an adult pulls them away. SARA sees her and they study each other briefly, until the little tramp darts away—this is ANNE. SARA is concerned.)

ARAM DASS. A young missus stared at the passing people...

NURSE/SHOPKEEPER. ... with a queer, old-fashioned thoughtfulness in her big eyes.

ARAM DASS. One did not expect to see such a look on her small face.

NURSE/SHOPKEEPER. It would have been an old look for a
grownup ...

RAM DASS. ... and Sara Crew was merely a young child who
felt as if she had lived a long, long time.

MALE TWO/SHOPKEEPER. (In the background, calling out
like a Barker in a carnival. This is a continuous vocal element in the
cacophony of the square. A lineup of beautiful dolls comes into focus.)
See all my fine dolls! Big dolls, little dolls ...

(CAPTAIN CREWE runs on and points out a doll.)

CAPTAIN CREWE. (Calling out.) Sara! Come quick. Look at
these beautiful ladies!

RAM DASS. Captain Crewe was a rich, rash, innocent young
man who wanted his daughter to have everything she admired. They
were to be separated for a great many years.

NURSE/SHOPKEEPER. (Very practical; no nonsense.) And so
he bought a great many more things than she needed.

CAPTAIN CREWE. When I am gone, Sara, you must not spend
all of your time with your books. You ought to play more with dolls.
(SARA does not respond.) And so we will buy you all the dolls you
would ever want.

SARA. Papa, dolls ought to be intimate friends. If I went out and
bought a new doll every few days I should have more than I could
evvy be fond of. Emily is going to be my friend when you are gone.

CAPTAIN CREWE. Emily? Who is Emily?

SARA. She is the doll I haven’t got yet and you are going to buy
for me Papa!

(RAM DASS, ever present, gestures. The MONKEY PUPPET, oper-
ated by MALE TWO/SHOPKEEPER, jumps on SARA’s shoulder,
then runs over to a crowd of children—screaming and squailing.
Applause from the crowd.)

MALE ONE/SHOPKEEPER. ... dolls with black eyes and dolls
with blue—

CAPTAIN CREWE. (Searching for EMILY, choosing a doll, not
EMILY.) What about this one Sara? Isn’t she beautiful enough to be

Emily?

SARA. Oh no, Papa. I want Emily to look as if she wasn’t a doll
really and listen when I talk to her. The trouble with most dolls, Papa,
is that they never seem to hear.

NURSE/SHOPKEEPER. ... dolls with brown curls and dolls
with golden braids ...

(RAM DASS gestures and the live EMILY appears in the lineup of
beautiful dolls, holding the DOLL EMILY. She is different from
the other dolls. Perhaps some sadness in her face.)

SARA. Oh, Papa! There is Emily! She was actually waiting there
for us.

CAPTAIN CREWE. (As the live EMILY hands the DOLL to
CAPTAIN CREWE.) Dear me, I feel as if we ought to have someone
introduce us ...

SARA. You must introduce me and I will introduce you. I know
her the minute I saw her—so perhaps she knew me, too.

CAPTAIN CREWE. She certainly has a very intelligent expres-
sion in her eyes.

SARA. Of course, Papa. Papa, this is Emily. And we must give
her a wardrobe as grand as my own. I’m her mother, though I am go-
ing to make a companion of her!

(MALE TWO/SHOPKEEPER, controlling the RAT PUPPET, runs
through a crowd of children and a little girl screams. The RAT
takes a bow and the crowd applauds. The crowd dissipates.)

Scene 2

(RAM DASS gestures and the atmosphere suddenly changes—a bit
dark and foreboding as they see ‘the place’ in front of them.)

SARA. Papa.

CAPTAIN CREWE. What is it, darling?