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ACT ONE

(Darkness. We hear the sound of a doorknob turning and a door swinging open.)

#1 - Ragtime (Opening)

(We see the silhouette of THE LITTLE BOY as he stands in the shaft of light from the open door.

THE LITTLE BOY's footsteps echo as he walks down the shaft of light to a stereopticon viewer on the floor. He picks it up and brings it to his eyes.

Two screams, each with an image of a large Victorian house, its inhabitants and neighbors, descend, merge and leap into three-dimension.)

START

THE LITTLE BOY

In 1902 Father built a house at the crest of the Broadview Avenue hill in New Rochelle, New York, and it seemed for some years thereafter that all the family's days would be warm and fair.

END

(PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE are revealed.)

PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE

THE SKIES WERE BLUE AND HAZY
RARELY A STORM. BARELY A CHILL.

WOMEN

LA LA LA LA LA...

PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE

THE AFTERNOONS WERE LAZY
EVERYONE WARM. EVERYTHING STILL.

MEN

LA LA LA LA LA...

ALL

AND THERE WAS DISTANT MUSIC,
SIMPLE AND SOMEHOW SUBLIME,
GIVING THE NATION
A NEW SYNCOPATION -
THE PEOPLE CALLED IT RAGTIME!

(FATHER steps forward, a strong, commanding figure.)