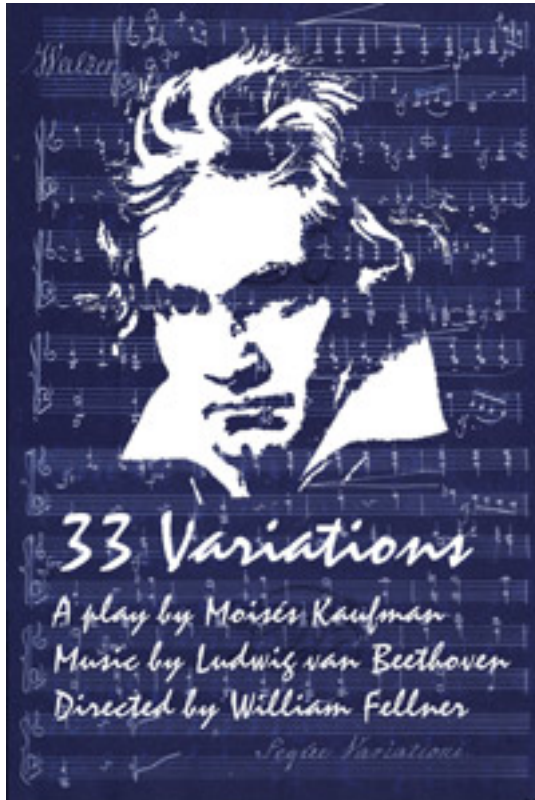


33 Variations

A Play at the Chapel Street Players

Information collected and adapted from various Internet sources. [JFW]

Apr 17, 18, 23, 24, 25 @ 8pm / Apr 19 @ 2pm / 2015



Written by Moisés Kaufman

Music by Ludwig van Beethoven

Directed by William Fellner

With the acting talents of Caitlin E. Adams, Ray Barto, Patrick Cathcart, Hugh Dugan, James Galloway, April Kendra, Jim Simperts and Carol Van Zoeren

Drama, imagery, and music combine to tell a story of compassion, love, and obsession across two centuries and two continents. It received five Tony nominations for 2009 (one win), including Best Play.

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In 1819, Anton Diabelli, a Viennese music publisher, invited 50 composers to submit one variation each on a waltz of his own composition. Only Ludwig van Beethoven, then at the height of his musical power, declined. He regarded Diabelli's waltz as a

trivial patchwork. But then, strangely, Beethoven began writing variation after variation, ultimately 33 in all. Some 200 years later, the musicologist Katherine Brandt is determined to understand why. In the course of these parallel journeys, a mother will be reconciled with her daughter, a composer with his genius.

Background	1
Synopsis & Critique	4
Detailed Scene-by-Scene Activity.....	6

Background

The era in which Beethoven lived was a tempestuous one. Revolutions in America, France and later Spain sparked fears of revolution amongst the Nobility in countries across Europe. The age gave us the Romantic poets Lord Byron, John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelly, and authors Johann Wolfgang von

Goethe, Victor Hugo and Jane Austen. Georg Wilhelm Frederich Hegel was writing major works of philosophy. Francisco Goya, John Constable and Joseph Mallord William Turner were all producing new paintings.

At one point, Beethoven was caught by the political upheaval and lost his post in Bonn. He remained in Vienna because French troops had occupied Bonn. Against this backdrop of war and political upheaval, Beethoven often ignored the preferences of his teachers in favor of his own stylistic innovations. Just as literature and art were moving into Romanticism, music was moving from Classical to Romantic. Beethoven is a transitional figure who seems to embody the volatile nature of the age.

1814 The Congress of Vienna opens in September, to settle issues arising from the French Revolution and the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. Beethoven enjoys great success with occasional works (Congress Cantata "The glorious moment"), performances of his Seventh and Eighth Symphonies and the new version of Fidelio, due to the interest shown by international high society. In March, Paris falls and Napoleon is exiled to the Mediterranean island of Elba.

1815 In March, Napoleon escapes Elba, gathers an army and marches on Paris. On June 18, in the Battle of Waterloo, Napoleon is defeated with heavy losses on both sides. Napoleon is imprisoned on the Atlantic island of St. Helena.

1818 As a consequence of his increasing deafness, Beethoven starts using conversation books to communicate. Beethoven composes Hammerklavier Sonata op. 106.

1819 Anton Diabelli writes to 50 composers requesting variations on a waltz of his own composition.

1820 In March, the Archduke Rudolph is enthroned as the Archbishop of Olmütz. Beethoven starts writing the Missa Solemnis for this occasion, but does not complete it until 1823.

1821 Napoleon dies on May 5.

1822 Beethoven composes his last Piano Sonata: op. 111.

1823 Beethoven completes his Diabelli Variati

Anton (Antonio) Diabelli (1781-1858) Diabelli was a Viennese music publisher, singer and composer of Italian descent. In 1818, he partnered with Pietro Cappi to form Cappi & Diabelli, a music arranging and publishing

firm. Diabelli is best known as a music publisher and as the author of the waltz which is the source for Beethoven's Variations.

Diabelli's Waltz

Vivace Lively

Anton Diabelli

The image displays the musical score for Diabelli's Waltz, arranged in four systems. Each system consists of a piano (treble clef) and bass clef staff. The tempo is marked 'Vivace' and the mood is 'Lively'. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *p* (piano), *f* (forte), and *ff* (fortissimo). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is written in a standard musical notation style with notes, rests, and bar lines.

50 other composers contributed a variation on Diabelli's theme:

Ignaz Assmayer

Carl Maria von Bocklet

Leopold Eustachius Czapek

Carl Czerny

Joseph Czerny

Moritz Graf von Dietrichstein

Joseph Drechsler

Emanuel Aloys Förster

Franz Jakob Freystädtler

Johann Baptist Gänsbacher

Abbé Joseph Gelinek

Anton Halm

Joachim Hoffmann

Johann Horzalka

Joseph Hügelmann

Johann Nepomuk

Hummel Anselm Hüttenbrenner
Friedrich Kalkbrenner
Freidrich August Kanne
Joseph Kerzkowsky
Conradin Kreutzer
Eduard Baron von Lannoy
Maximilian Joseph Leidesedorf
Franz Liszt
Joseph Mayseder
Ignaz Moscheles
Ignaz Franz Edler von Mosel
Franz Xaver
Wolfgang Mozart
Joseph Panny
Hieronymus Payer
Johann Peter Pixis
Wenzel Plachy
Gottfried Rieger

Philipp Jakob Riotte
Franz Roser
Johann Baptist Schenk
Franz Schoberlechner
Franz Schubert
Simon Sechter
Archduke Rudolf of Austria
Maximilian Stadler
Joseph von Szalay
Wenzel Johann Tomascheck
Michael Umlauf
Friedrich Dionysius Weber
Franz Weber
Carl Angelus von Winkhler
Franz Weiss
Johann Nepomuk August Wittasek
Johann Hugo Worzischek

Anton Felix Schindler (1795-1864) Schindler's calling card read "a friend of Beethoven." He was in fact Beethoven's associate and secretary. Schindler wrote the earliest biographies of Beethoven; as early as the 1850s, however, his account was called into question as inconsistencies with the historical record came to light. Schindler appears to have exaggerated the length of his acquaintance with Beethoven (six years, not the 12 he claimed) and may have made false entries into his conversation books to suggest a greater length of friendship with the composer. The unreliability of his accounts and the pervasiveness of some of the myths he established about Beethoven have continued to complicate the issues of Beethoven's biography.

Synopsis & Critique

In 1819, the music publisher, Anton Diabelli, wrote a 32-bar, 45-second waltz. Diabelli's theme has been criticized for its predictability, lack of imagination and repetition. It is split into two 16-bar phrases, each of which repeats exactly. He invited the leading composers in Vienna, including Ludwig van Beethoven, each to create a variation on its theme. The collective work would be published in a single volume.

According to legend everyone accepted except Beethoven, who considered Diabelli's waltz "a cobbler's patch" (*Schusterfleck*)—too ordinary, clumsy and repetitive to warrant his attention.

For what may had been financial reasons, Beethoven changed his mind. For

reasons unknown, he eventually became obsessed with the waltz and wrote 33 variations over a three-year period. The original work lasts about 45 seconds, but Beethoven's variations can last 45 minutes or longer.

Uncovering the mystery of Beethoven's obsession is the focus of Moisés Kaufman's play "33 Variations," which premiered September 2007 in Washington DC at the Arena Stage and opened on Broadway in 2009. Kaufman is a Tony and Emmy award nominated director and playwright. He is perhaps best known for the plays *Gross Indecency*, *The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* and *The Laramie Project*, which are among the most performed plays in America over the last decade.

Characteristically for Kaufman, the play experiments with theatrical forms from scene to scene. Action shifts from past to present, and repetitions, music, singing and even a fugue are built into the play's structure. Scenes do not correlate with Beethoven's Variations; rather, Kaufman uses them as a catalyst to think about form and explore theatrical themes.

For music fans and just about everybody else, Ludwig van Beethoven remains the archetype of the tortured artist, striving against physical infirmity to reach the stars. In the play, you see the singularly driven Beethoven fighting deafness and disease to wring out every possible variation of the original waltz. You witness his assistant Anton Schindler catering to his every need and negotiating for more money and time with Diabelli.

All the while, a pianist is center stage playing the music in Beethoven's head so you can hear pieces of variations in development. In one thoroughly riveting scene, Beethoven joins forces with this piano — coaxing notes from its keys, feeling the vibrations on its strings, and stroking the curved woodwork like a lover—in a concerted effort to make perfect, timeless, life-altering music.

Like Peter Shaffer's play "Amadeus," which dramatizes the lives of composers Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri, "33 Variations" allows you to live with a legend, share his thoughts and creative process, and witness first-hand his immense genius. Like Beethoven, Kaufman can not leave well enough alone. He provides in his play variations on the themes of the personal cost of perfectionism as well as the mercilessness of time and illness.

The play, written in 33 scenes, jumps back and forth from the 1800s to modern times, where Dr. Katherine Brandt, a sharp-witted, terminally ill musicologist, confronts the betrayal of her body. She is busy uncovering the mystery of Beethoven's 33 variations. Why was Beethoven compelled to wring every possibility out of a simple theme by a minor music publisher? Her passion and obsession rivals that of the composer's. She is naturally assertive

by nature but is humbled by her affliction with progressive amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, which is as debilitating and fatal as Beethoven's ailments.

Kaufman says "It's really a question about inspiration ... what is it that Beethoven sees in this 32 bars of nothing?" I always say it would be like if Philip Glass found a song by Britney Spears and decided to spend the next four years of his life studying and making variations on it." Kaufman consulted with several of the world's most respected Beethoven scholars in the four years he was researching and workshoping the play. He says that he is obsessed with Beethoven's process, because mistakes and dead ends can often shed the most light. "The important thing in an archeological dig is not only the objects that are found, but looking at the dig itself, and seeing where every shovel came onto the earth," Kaufman says. "All of the marks are part of the thing that was rescued."

Katherine travels to Germany despite the concerns of her nurse and her daughter. Her daughter has serious commitment issues, both professionally and personally and her struggle to decide on a career is the equivalent of Diabelli's defining mediocrity. In Germany with the assistance of archives curator, Gertrude Landerburger, she researches Beethoven's sketchbooks in the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn. Gertrude is a stereotypical officious German bureaucrat who transitions to become the musicologist's best friend.

Mr. Kaufman's script impressively and unobtrusively makes musicology accessible to the uninitiated without professorial condescension. When his dialogue relies on historical documents for its substance it is crisp and intriguing. He did the same in his plays "Gross Indecency, which tells the story of Oscar Wilde through court transcripts, and "The Laramie Project," which uses words from actual interviews to chronicle the murder of Matthew Shepard. The parallels between past and present and the parallel courses of Katherine's academic and personal paths to knowledge make sense intellectually. But to make alive the parallels between Beethoven's past and Katherine's present requires humor and the skill of a musically oriented director. This is especially the case when the worlds of Beethoven and Katherine overlap and its occupants actually acknowledge one another.

Detailed Scene-by-Scene Activity

Act I

1. Theme

Katherine Brandt and her daughter Clara are in a doctor's waiting room; they've been there for two hours. Finally, a nurse—Mike—comes to take Katherine in for her examination. Clara reveals to Mike that her mother is planning to fly to Bonn, Germany in a week and would like him to advise Katherine against it, which Mike

won't do. Clara insists she accompany her mother into the examining room, which Mike won't allow. Irritated, Clara asks Mike to speak with her in private. When they leave the room, Katherine shares with the audience her reason for going to Bonn. It is the culmination of her life's work as a musicologist and Beethoven scholar. She has always been baffled by the Diabelli Variations. They were inspired by a commission from a music publisher, Anton Diabelli, who had written a short waltz and invited 50 composers to each create one variation, which he would publish as a collection. Forty-nine of them accepted but Beethoven declined—at first. Inexplicably, he changed his mind and composed not one variation but 33! Not only that, but he spent five precious years on them. This is why Katherine must go to Bonn: to see first-hand Beethoven's original sketchbooks and diaries. In them she hopes the reason for his obsession will be revealed.

2. Eavesdropping

Anton Schindler, Beethoven's secretary, is eavesdropping on Beethoven's creative process. Sounds of chaos come from Beethoven's office: bizarre notes on the piano, out-of-tune singing, finally a crash and a bellowing call for Schindler. Beethoven demands paper and ink, completely ignoring Schindler's reminder that the supplier has yet to be paid for the previous order.

3. Research

Katherine is at home packing for her trip. Clara is there and asks her mother, one more time, to stay. They are both tense. Clara hovers around Katherine. Katherine subtly criticizes Clara. Each changes the subject when the other hits a nerve—Katherine thinks Nurse Mike is interested in Clara, Clara denies it. Clara offers to go with Katherine. Katherine wonders at Clara's inability to choose a career and stick with it. Clara reluctantly accepts the fact that her mother is going to Germany regardless of her concerns and settles for the promise that Katherine will call if her condition gets worse.

4. Negotiating Genius

Schindler visits Diabelli's office to discuss the commission. Diabelli is thrilled to hear that Beethoven has been inspired to compose seven or eight variations on his waltz. His elation is dampened when Schindler reveals Beethoven's terms: 80 ducats in advance (today a value of approximately \$2,100.) Because Beethoven's poor health has kept him from writing anything of significance for years, Diabelli is not willing to take the risk. He offers half up front and the other half upon completion.

5. Two Worlds

Clara waits at the computer repair shop for her number to be called. "Sixteen!" She is number 34. Frustrated, she asks the man next to her how long he's been waiting. He responds flirtatiously at first and then is mortified when he realizes Clara doesn't recognize him—it is Mike, the nurse who examined her mother a few days ago. Clara apologizes and lets down her guard. When Mike asks about Katherine,

Clara shares that Katherine's been sick for eight months but only told her two weeks ago. Others in Katherine's situation might choose to stay home with their family, however they don't have that kind of relationship. Instead Katherine feels she must finish her research no matter what. Number 17 is called—that's Mike's number. He offers it to Clara, who gratefully accepts.

6. Fasten Your Seatbelts

Katherine is on the airplane and reading a book: Schindler's biography of Beethoven. Simultaneously, Beethoven and Schindler arrive in the countryside—for them it's 1822. Beethoven is relieved to be away from the sounds and smells of the city, which overwhelm him. Here, in the silence and calm, he knows he can compose. Schindler is worried about their expenses and urges Beethoven to stop working on the Variations—12 is more than enough and Diabelli is getting impatient. Beethoven doesn't care. He knows the waltz has more to reveal; he needs more time to tease it out. The voice of the flight attendant grabs Katherine's attention—they have arrived in Bonn.

7. Bonn

Katherine emails Clara her first impressions. Bonn invigorates her. She sees great promise in a city that embraces its musical history so completely. Anxiously, she awaits tomorrow and her first glimpse of Beethoven's sketchbooks.

8. The Sketches—Part 1

In Beethoven-Haus—the official Beethoven library—Katherine is escorted by Dr. Gertie Ladenburger, the librarian, to the archives. Gertie explains the significance of the sketchbooks. They reveal Beethoven's creative process in a way that his published works can't. Because he composed on paper, the 200-year-old pencil marks show the directions he explored on any given composition before writing the final draft in pen. Gertie locates the Diabelli Variations sketchbook and Katherine gets down to work.

In New York, Clara is worried and calls Mike. She's received an email from Katherine full of typos, something completely out of character. Terrified that her mother is getting worse and frustrated by the lack of answers from doctors, she wonders if Mike can offer an explanation. He can't. Her mother's illness is one that has no cure and no real treatments. Naturally she is not comforted. Mike offers to meet her in person to talk more. Clara accepts.

9. Classical Music

Clara and Mike are on their first date—a classical concert. We see the scene twice: once from Clara's point of view, once from Mike's. Both are excited, nervous, self-conscious and awkward. With great emotional effort, they manage to hold hands.

10. The Sketches—Part 2

Diabelli calls on Beethoven to find out why he's taking so long. It's been a year

since the original commission and he is desperate to publish 19 variations Beethoven has completed. Beethoven won't let him. It doesn't matter to him how many variations are done; the work is still not finished.

11. Baseball

Katherine bumps into Gertie at the train station. She thanks Gertie for her help over the last three months. Gertie notices Katherine's cramped hand and asks if she's in pain. Katherine at first insists it's nothing, then tries to explain. But she doesn't have to—Gertie recognizes the symptoms of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), the illness that ended her aunt's life five years ago.

12. Circus Music

Schindler is alarmed when he finds Diabelli in Beethoven's office looking through the sketches—Beethoven would be furious if he found out. Diabelli is equally alarmed by what he takes to be an insult from Beethoven—he's making a mockery of Diabelli's waltz and accepted variation form. Schindler reminds him that they are only sketches and shouldn't be judged. Rather, Diabelli should be grateful for the immense time and effort Beethoven is putting in—time and effort that would be better spent on more lucrative and important works like the Mass or the ninth symphony. Diabelli is placated.

13. Clara

Katherine and Gertie are still at the train station, now discussing a theory—Katherine believes Beethoven is mocking Diabelli: he intends to show the world his genius by turning something average into something extraordinary. Gertie realizes that Clara has left yet another message for her mother and wonders why Katherine isn't returning the calls—could it be she doesn't like her daughter? Katherine reveals her feeling that Clara will never amount to anything.

14. Dancing

Clara and Mike enjoy themselves at a nightclub. Mike shows Clara a clipping of the glowing review she received for her costume design work and wonders at her recent talk of changing careers. She explains that she has no interest in doing just one thing her whole life; variety and conquering new challenges are her priority. They kiss. When the kiss becomes passionate Clara pulls away. She wants to focus on the relationship with her mom and shield him from becoming involved in her mother's illness even though he has the skills, experience and desire to help. Clara reluctantly tells him that Katherine fell in the Beethoven-Haus library and had to be hospitalized for a day. On the phone Katherine insists everything is fine, but Clara is still concerned and offers to go to Bonn. Katherine refuses. Mike reminds Clara that she doesn't need her mother's permission.

15. Accidents Of Faith

Schindler rebukes Beethoven for spurning a wealthy Count who could have hired him and solved their money problems. Beethoven isn't concerned. He's committed

to finding an ending for the Variations and can't be distracted by irritating conversation. A ringing in Beethoven's ears interrupts the argument. He shakes off Schindler's concern and instead shows him two more variations. The ringing in his ears intensifies and the pain is excruciating.

16. The Exam

Alone, Katherine enters an examination room and removes her blouse and bra. She is subjected to a series of x-rays that become a barrage of flashing lights and sound. She is overwhelmed by her vulnerability and breaks down. Beethoven, lost in his own thoughts, comes to sit behind her on the gurney. Katherine leans on him, taking comfort in the subject of her obsession.

17. Septet

The results of Katherine's tests are in and they are not hopeful. Mike and Clara are in New York, and Gertie and Katherine are in Bonn, all four discuss the implications. The disease is progressing faster than expected; Katherine may only have another year left to live. Despite that, she refuses to return home; she needs more time. At the same time, Beethoven fears he can't find an ending to the Variations. He, too, needs more time. Clara fears she's running out of time to heal their relationship. Mike urges her to go to Bonn and insists on coming with her.

Act II

18. Here Be Dragons

Clara and Mike have been in Bonn for two weeks. Katherine's illness is progressing and her hypothesis evolving. She no longer believes Beethoven was scornful of Diabelli's composition. Instead she sees in Beethoven's obsession an effort to transform the waltz into its best self. She is not happy that Clara and Mike are there but the three of them have developed a routine that allows her research to continue.

19. The Conversation Notebooks

Beethoven barely survives a major illness that takes him away from the Variations for three years. He is now completely deaf. When Diabelli comes to visit he must write his questions in a notebook for Beethoven to read. Despite the illness, Beethoven has made significant progress on his Mass, which Diabelli eagerly agrees to publish as soon as it's finished. No mention is made of the Variations.

20. Physical Therapy

Mike shows Clara how to help Katherine with exercises designed to increase flexibility and strength. At first awkward, the simple movements become a kind of dance that gives Katherine and Clara an opportunity to connect. Mike and Clara help Katherine stand which causes her to laugh uncontrollably but not from happiness. She's experiencing "emotional incontinence," yet another symptom of ALS.

21. Joyful Silence

Returning to Beethoven's house after being fired, Schindler finds him in a frenzy. Beethoven has returned at long last to Diabelli's commission and is completely consumed. His rooms are in chaos and he is a mess. The illusive ending is still nowhere in sight, but Beethoven now knows why: It isn't time yet. There is still so much in the waltz to be discovered.

22. The Discovery

Katherine discovers major discrepancies in Schindler's biography of Beethoven. Is it possible, then, that he was also wrong about Beethoven's initial scorn for Diabelli's composition? If so, she is no closer to solving the mystery of his obsession. This realization shakes her, aggravating a new symptom—her tongue is twitching. She is losing control of her speech.

23. Cheeseburger

Mike shows Clara how to operate an augmentative speech device that will help Katherine communicate when she can no longer speak. They experiment playfully with the buttons. Mike has preprogrammed one to tell Clara he loves her. Clara is taken off guard but Mike doesn't hold back. He wants to spend the rest of his life with her. Clara is deeply touched

24. Beauty

In Diabelli's office, Schindler begs him not to publish the other composers' variations yet and assures him that Beethoven is creating something worth waiting for. As proof, he shows Diabelli two sketches he has taken without Beethoven's knowledge. Diabelli is amazed at how beautiful and complex they are. Beethoven enters, taking them both by surprise. Schindler hides the stolen sketches behind his back and is grateful to be sent on an errand. Beethoven has learned to read lips, so he and Diabelli are able to speak without a notebook. Beethoven insists he still needs time with the variations. Diabelli gives him 30 days. As he leaves, Beethoven casually hands Diabelli the finished manuscript of his Mass.

25. Cafeteria Food

Gertie, Mike and Clara get food in the hospital cafeteria. Gertie bluntly announces that Katherine needs male companionship—just because she's sick doesn't mean she has no sexual appetite. Clara is startled by how open the normally reserved Katherine must be with Gertie. But realizing that physical intimacy might be good for her mother, Clara agrees. Gertie suggests they hire someone and knows just where to look—the Internet.

26. Fugue

Beethoven is alone, engrossed in composing a fugue. As he explores his ideas, we hear the music develop, following his every instruction.

27. Morphine

Katherine, Clara and Gertie are in a café. Katherine's health is getting worse, but she still manages to share an anecdote that makes them all laugh. Gertie feels compelled to make sure Clara is comfortable with Katherine's plans for the end and is embarrassed to discover that Katherine hasn't told her yet. Angry that Gertie brought it up, Katherine nonetheless allows Gertie to explain: when Katherine becomes incapable of communication she'd like to be allowed to die. Mike has already supplied morphine and Gertie is prepared to administer it. Clara, angry and hurt that Katherine kept this from her despite everything she's done, storms out. It appalls Gertie that Katherine wouldn't tell Clara something so important. Katherine claims to be protecting Clara from having to make painful decisions. Gertie doesn't believe her and also leaves. Katherine tries to go after them but her wheelchair gets stuck. Furious and frustrated, Katherine begins to cough and choke violently.

28. Intimacy

Mike is already in bed by the time Clara returns to the apartment from the hospital. She undresses and explains that Katherine choked on her own phlegm. The doctors were able to clear her throat and allowed her to come home but only because Katherine absolutely refused to stay. Clara wonders if, without her mother's constant pushing, she'll completely mess up her own life. Mike assures her that won't happen—he sees in her all the strength her mother doesn't see. Comforted, they begin to make love.

29. A Peace Offering

Katherine and Gertie examine sketches in the apartment kitchen. Clara enters and is surprised to see a sketchbook out of the library. It's Gertie's peace offering. When Clara hums Diabelli's waltz both Katherine and Gertie are curious as to why. Clara thinks it's pretty and likes the rhythm. Gertie realizes that Clara has made an important observation about the real nature of the waltz—Diabelli didn't write a bad concert waltz, he wrote a good beer-hall waltz. Katherine begins to see her daughter in a different light. The moment is interrupted when Katherine again begins to cough and choke.

30. Not A Human Being

Beethoven is very sick. He has not left his study in days, is decrepit and completely lost in his own head. When he urinates on the floor, Schindler rushes to his side, pleading with him to rest. Beethoven rants, insisting his abilities make him an instrument of God. Schindler tries to comfort him while Katherine is given an MRI. In the hospital waiting room, Mike and Gertie offer Clara their support. She is exhausted and frightened. Schindler tends to Beethoven, Katherine endures yet another frightening test and Clara tries to cope with the reality that awaits her mother. Seeking solace, they all sing a portion of Beethoven's Mass together.

31. Limbo

Katherine and Beethoven are finally face-to-face. Beethoven reminds her that it took 25 years for him to lose his hearing. When it was finally gone he actually felt

relieved. Freed from the dramatic swings between hope and despair, he was able to create music he never would have otherwise. Beethoven asks about Clara and Katherine begins to cry—she desperately wants her daughter to be happy. Beethoven wonders why Katherine thinks she isn't? With ceremony, Diabelli enters and presents the completed book of Beethoven's Variations.

32. Breakfast

In Katherine's hospital room, she, Gertie and Clara proofread her book. Mike sleeps in a chair and Gertie takes the finished chapters to the post office, leaving Katherine and Clara alone. They discuss Clara and Mike's relationship—they are in love but when Mike returns to New York next week, Clara plans to stay in Bonn with Katherine.

33. Variation #33

Katherine presents the results of her research at a musicology conference. She acknowledges the original hypothesis that Beethoven wanted to prove he could create a masterwork out of a grain of sand was incorrect. After examining the sketchbooks, she now believes that he saw tremendous potential in Diabelli's theme. Clara takes the stage with the pages of Katherine's lecture and continues speaking when Katherine stops. Clara is in front of her mother's peers, delivering the lecture three weeks after her mother's passing.