

The Rehearsal Room.

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Characters.

10 Females, 6 Males and 1 Junior Male. Any number of extra cast.

Gladys. A lady aged between 50 and 70, she has never been married having looked after her sister until she died recently.. A good singer.

Janet. A lady aged between 35 and 50, she is a good friend of Gladys and a nurse, she is married but her husband is not in the society.

Jamie. A man aged between 25 and 40, an Estate Agent and a friend of Barry and Amanda, he is married but his wife is not a member of the society. A good singer.

Barry. A man aged between 45 and 65, married to Amanda. Has his own business.

Amanda. A lady aged between 45 and 65, married to Barry. A "Nag" but she loves Barry dearly.

Susan. A lady aged between 35 and 55, she is one of the "group", Mavis, Betty, Joyce and herself. She works as a carer.

Mavis. A lady aged between 30 and 40, also one of the "group" she is a housewife with children.

Emma. A young girl aged between 18 and 25, she is a hairdresser, still living at home. Does not realise that Andy has REAL feelings for her. A good singer.

Margret. A lady aged between 50 and 65, a teacher and also the MD of the society for most of the shows. Has problems with Bob.

Joyce. A lady aged between 30 and 45, the arrogant member of the "group" her husband is a Bank Manager.

Roger. A man aged between 35 and 55, single, probably “Gay”. The pianist who is quite “touchy” when criticised.

Betty. A lady aged between 35 and 45, a housewife, the “Dippy” one of the group.

Andy. A young man aged between 18 and 25, an assistant manager at a supermarket; in love with Emma but feels he has no chance. A good singer.

Bob. A man aged between 40 and 60, the Deputy Head Teacher at the same school as Margret which explains some of the tension between them. The Chairman of the Society.

Anne. A lady aged between 30 and 40, she has recently lost her husband to a heart attack and is bringing up her son Mark on her own.

Mark. Young boy aged between 12 and 13, son of Anne, having problems since his father died, he loves to dance but is NOT “Gay” and gets into fights because other kids pull his leg over his dancing. A good dancer.

George. A man aged between 50 and 60, recently widowed, he holds a candle for Gladys and has done most of his life. Has his own business.

Songs.

“We’ll gather Lilacs.” From “Perchance to Dream.”

“This is my lovely day.” From “Bless the Bride.”

“Sand and Water.” As featured in the TV Series, “ER.”

“I could be happy.” From “The Boyfriend.”

“Leaning on a lamppost.” From “Me and My Girl.”

“I remember it well.” From “Gigi.”

“Oom-Pah Pah.” From “Oliver.”

“Oh What a Lovely War.” From “Oh What a Lovely War.”

“Time Warp.” From “The Rocky Horror Show.”

“Another Suitcase in another hall.” From “Evita.”

“It’s only make believe.” From the film “It’s only make believe.”

“Flash Bang Wallop.” From “Half a Sixpence.”

“Tell me it’s not true.” From “Blood Brothers.”

“As if we never said goodbye.” From “Sunset Boulevard.”

“Can you feel the love tonight.” From “The Lion King.”

“I love to Boogie.” From “Billy Elliot.”

“Radio Ga Ga.” From “We will Rock You.”

Act One.

Scene One.

(The scene is a rehearsal room. It is split into two areas, the main hall and a small kitchen.

Two ladies enter chatting.)

Gladys. “Brrr. it’s cold in here, why can’t the janitor put the heating on before he leaves”?

Janet. “We’re lucky they let us put the heating on at all, I don’t think the Vicar is too keen on us since the incident with the unlocked door.”

Gladys. “That was NOT my fault! I thought George had locked up”.

Janet. “Well whoever was supposed to have locked up the Vicar was fuming when he found the place open the next day.”

Gladys. "Well I still don't see why they can't leave the heating on for an hour, we pay enough."

Janet. "Come on, let's get the kettle on before the rest arrive, we can turn the cooker on too, that will give the heating a boost."

(They move on into the kitchen area.)

Janet. "I'll get the cups out; you get the kettle on and be quick about it, and turn on the heating while you're at it."

Gladys "I'm too old to be "quick about it" as you put it, who do you think I am, that Adrian Boulton fellow"?

Janet. "Usain Boulton"!! Adrian Boulton is a conductor!!

Gladys. "Oh! Well you know what I mean"!

(They both get on with their respective tasks.)

Gladys. "I don't think it was a good idea to do a concert, what's he calling it? "The Brits in the West End". Sounds very boring

Janet. "Bob's idea and you know no one likes to argue with him. In all fairness that first run through of the songs went really well and the fact is doing a concert is a good way to raise cash, the last show we did cost a fortune and we lost a lot of money on it..

Gladys. "You're right I suppose, but I miss the acting, I prefer it to singing."

Janet. "That's because you can't sing"!

Gladys. "Cheeky Mare! I'll have you know Mary said I had a lovely soprano voice."

Janet. "Where do you keep it? In a drawer at home"!

Gladys. "Hark at Dame Kiri Te Kanawa."

(They laugh.)

Janet. "Let's face it; we are condemned to be forever in the chorus, now get that cooker on."

(Three more people enter the building.)

Jamie. "Did you see the football last night, I thought City were a bit lucky in the end."

Barry. "Won it in the first half then went to sleep, nearly cost them."

Amanda. "Can you two not talk about anything else, all I ever hear from you is "City" this and "City" that, were here to sing not talk about football."

Barry. "You women will never understand, this could be City's year, first time for over fifty years."

Amanda. "I'm sorry but the words "So what" come to mind."

Barry. "So what? So what? You women are amazing, you just don't get it do you."

Amanda. "Don't get what? All I know is we are here for the music so will you please shut up about football for the next few hours."

Jamie. "You're wasting your time Barry, my missus is just the same."

Barry. "I suppose you're right. Is Dave coming tonight"?

Jamie. "I'm not sure, he isn't fussy to our MD, mind you, who is"?

Barry. "She is a bit of a pain but she knows her stuff."

Jamie. "She may know her stuff as you put it but she could smile occasionally."

Barry. "Fair do's if you looked like her you wouldn't be inclined to smile much either."

Amanda. "Huh, look who's talking, Brad Pitt."

Barry. "I do have a "look" of him now you come to mention it."

(Entering behind these three are a few more people, men, but mainly women.)

Susan. "The only way you would be mistaken for Brad Pitt is down one, and what are you wearing? You look like a tall wallet. (Barry is wearing a leather jacket.)

Barry. "What? Oh, Hi Susan brought the usual suspects with you I see."

Susan. "Sensible girls always travel in threes."

Jamie. "So do witches."

Susan. "Nice one, been in the knife drawer have we"?

Jamie. "I have to be sharp to trade insults with you."

Mary. "Now, now you two, anyone would think you were married."

Jamie. "Married, to her? God forbid."

Susan. "You should be so lucky."

Barry. "Okay, enough you two, come on let's find a seat before the rest of the rabble arrive."

(They all move to the seating area and another group of people come in just generally chatting, all are women.)

Mavis. "So I told her, "It's none of your business." But she still kept going on about how the noise had been horrendous and how I should keep my children in check. It was only a kiddie's party for goodness sake, how do you keep 10 kids under 7 quiet"?

Susan. "She's always been the same that one, thinks she's a "cut above". I feel sorry for Harry; poor man's always getting an earful."

(Just then the MD Margret enters.)

Margret. "Come on ladies, quick as you can, find a seat and we can make a start, we've a lot to get through tonight."

Jamie. "Anne's not here yet, not sure if she is coming, last time I saw her she said she had a lot on and might not make it."

Margret. "Oh for goodness sake can't she EVER be on time? (Looking around.) Where's Roger"?

Amanda. "He's not here either."

Margret. "This is ridiculous we can't start without a pianist. Can you play for us Joyce, just until Roger arrives"?

Joyce. "Well I could but Roger has the keyboard in his car."

Margret. "Damn! How am I supposed to have a rehearsal without a leading lady and a pianist"?

Barry. "That's set her off now, it's going to be a LONG night"!

Jamie. "A VERY long night indeed."

(Lights Fade.)

(We cut forward about 20 minutes; the cast are seated, including Gladys and Janet. The pianist has arrived but not the leading lady.)

Margret. "Okay, now perhaps we can make a start". (Gladys and Janet are chatting) "If it is okay with you two"?

Gladys. "Sorry Margret, I was just checking with Janet that she had put the water heater on."

Margret. (Sarcastically) "And has she"?

Gladys. “Yes, it will be red hot by 9-00pm.”

Margret. (Sarcastically) “Oh I am pleased, now can we please get on.”

Joyce. “Actually Margret I have a question, are the Baritones going to sing the Tenor line like last time or are they going to try to sing the line as it is written”?

Margret. “I want to try to perform it as it is written but if it gets too much for the gentlemen involved we will revert to how we did it last time.”

Andy. (In an aside to Barry next to him) “Bloody cheek, Margret told you to sing the Tenor line; you never had a chance to sing the right line. I’ve good mind to tell her so.”

Barry. “Let it go; it’s just Margret’s way, she just gets uptight when she’s directing, she wants everything to be just right that’s all.”

Margret. (Getting exasperated) “Can we PLEASE get on? We have been here half an hour already and we haven’t sung a note”! “Roger, can you give us the intro and the first four bars”?

(Roger obliges and plays the intro to “We’ll gather Lilacs” from Ivor Novello’s “Perchance to Dream.” But just as he finishes Bob, the Chairman of the Society walks in. Bob and Margret loathe each other.)

Bob. “That sounded excellent Roger, (turning to Margret) any problems”?

Margret. (Sarcastically) “No, everything is just “peachy”. What do you think! We have no lead soprano, the pianist has only just arrived, we only have four of the songs on song sheets but apart from that everything is “peachy”, just “peachy”.”

Bob. “Sorry about all that but I have one piece of good news, Anne is just outside.”

Margret. “Oh that’s good of her, only half an hour late.”

Bob. "Don't be too hard on her, she had to see the headmaster about Mark, apparently he's been in trouble again."

Margret. "He's always in trouble."

Gladys. "Only since he lost his Dad, hit him hard that did, him being only 12 when it happened."

Janet. "Yes it was awful and sudden too."

Margret. "Oh for goodness sake can we PLEASE get on; it's all very sad but it was over a year ago."

Barry. "Actually more like 18 months, I remember it was the day City beat United and we went top of the league, didn't last though."

Amanda. "Why does EVERYTHING you talk about come down to football? A man died, a bit more important than a football match don't you think"?

Barry. "I wasn't comparing for Pete's sake, why do you always have a go whenever I open my mouth"?

Jamie. "Now, now you two, let's try to keep it civilised."

Barry. "Mind your own business Jamie, this between me and Amanda."

Jamie. "Sorry I spoke"!

(There is an awkward silence, and then Anne enters.)

Anne. "Sorry I'm late, kids you know how it is"? (Several people nod in agreement).

(Anne takes off her coat and takes a seat.)

Margret. "At last! Now can we PLEASE do the first number?"

(Roger replays the opening and they all sing "We'll gather Lilacs" led by Anne and Jamie.)

We'll gather lilacs in the spring again
And walk together down an English lane
Until our hearts have learned to sing again
When you come home once more

And in the evening by the firelight's glow
You'll hold me close and never let me go
Your eyes will tell me all I need to know
When you come home once more

We'll gather lilacs in the spring again
And walk together down an English lane
Until our hearts have learned to sing again
When you come home once more

And in the evening by the firelight's glow
You'll hold me tight and never let me go
Your eyes will tell me all I want to know
When you come home once more

When you come home once more
When you come home once more

Margret. "That was excellent, a bit more feeling from the Tenors please but excellent nonetheless."

Janet. (Under her breath) "Praise, I don't believe it"!

Gladys. "Don't get too excited, it won't last; (loudly) time for a brew?"

Margret. “Yes, okay, but 10 minutes, no more.”

(The cast move towards the kitchen.)

(Lights Fade.) (Everyone moves back into position.)

Margret. “Right, having wasted 20 minutes can we please get on? This time it’s one of my favourites, “This is my lovely day” from Vivian Ellis’s “Bless the Bride”. It’s a bit dated but it should suit the older members of our audience.”

George. “She means the geriatrics”!

Susan. “George! You shouldn’t call them that, they are our “Bread and Butter”, without them, no show”

George. “I know, only kidding, actually I quite like these old songs don’t you”?

Margret. (Getting exasperated again) “Can we please get on without all this chit-chat, we should be more professional. Roger, can you play us through the opening and the first four bars, and Tenors can we PLEASE have some feeling in those voices. Jamie, Anne, let me hear the love you have for each other in every note. Right, Roger”

(They sing “This is my lovely day”, again led by Anne and Jamie.)

(Anne)

This is my lovely day

This is the day I shall remember the day I'm dying

They can't take this away

It will be always mine, the sun and the wine

The sea birds crying

All happiness must pay

And who can tell if fate means well

Or the sky is lying

But look at me and say
You will remember too that this is our lovely day

(Jamie)

I'll remember, I'll remember
When the time has come for happiness to pay

(Anne)

Sad and sighing, old and dying
I'll remember how we loved our lovely day

(Jamie)

This is my lovely day
This is the day I shall remember the day I'm dying
They can't take this away
It will be always mine, the sun and the wine
The sea birds crying
All happiness must pay
And if our ship goes down
She'll go with the flag still flying

(Anne)

But look at me and say
You will remember too that this is our lovely day

(Jamie)

I'll remember, I'll remember
When the time has come for happiness to pay

(Both)

Sad and sighing, old and dying

I'll remember how we loved our lovely day

Our lovely day

Our lovely day.

Margret. "That was okay, but we can do better. Jamie, put some feeling into it, this is supposed to be the best day of your life, you sounded like you were going to a funeral, not a wedding. Okay, let's call it a night, same time next week, and PLEASE, try to be on time"!

(They all leave the stage except Anne and Jamie.)

Jamie. "Mark in trouble again"?

Anne. "Not really; he gets a bit of bullying because he is in the dance class and he reacts by using his fists sometimes. As for the rest of his school work he's just not doing as well as he should. Still misses his Dad; mind you, so do I".

Jamie. "He was a nice fella Adam, we all miss him."

Anne. "But not like I do."

Jamie. "No, I suppose not. Do you need a hand locking up"?

Anne. "No I'll be fine, see you next week." (Jamie leaves)

(Anne tidies up the chairs a bit then wistfully sings Beth Nielsen Chapman's "Sand and Water". She then leaves the stage.)

All alone I didn't like the feeling

All alone I sat and cried

All alone I had to find some meaning
In the center of the pain I felt inside

All alone I came into this world
All alone I will someday die
Solid stone is just sand and water, baby
Sand and water, and a million years gone by

I will see you in the light of a thousand suns
I will hear you in the sound of the waves
I will know you when I come, as we all will come
Through the doors beyond the grave

All alone I heal this heart of sorrow
All alone I raise this child
Flesh and bone, he's just
Bursting towards tomorrow
And his laughter fills my world and wears your smile

I will see you in the light of a thousand suns
I will hear you in the sound of the waves
I will know you when I come, as we all will come
Through the doors beyond the grave

All alone I came into this world
All alone I will someday die
Solid stone is just sand and water, baby
Sand and water and a million years gone by.

(She exits.)

Scene Two.

(It is the following week Gladys and Janet enter.)

Janet. "So I said to her, "Where are you going for your hols then"? And she says she can't remember as her husband booked it, all she can remember is it had something to do with cows. So I said, "Isle of Wight"? You know, Cowes on the Isle of Wight. And she says no, that's not it. So I said "Guernsey" and she says no again. "Jersey" I say. "No" she says, "It's abroad somewhere". Do you know where they are going"?

Gladys. "Spain"?

Janet. "That's what I said, no, you'll never guess, Bulgaria"!!!!

(They both burst out laughing. Several others are entering as they start to laugh.)

George. "What are you two laughing at"? (He joins them in the kitchen and Janet re-tells her story, they start laughing again. While this is happening Barry is arguing again with Amanda.)

Amanda. "I told you to check the door, and did you? Of course not".

Barry. "Sometimes I think you just imagine these conversations you have with me, I still don't remember you even mentioning the door."

Amanda. "Give me strength; you never listen to a word I say." (Hearing the laughter) "What are they laughing at"?

Barry. (Distractedly) "No idea anyway, you always want to talk when I'm watching the match on the box. Why do you always want to talk when the football's on and never when Eastenders is on"?

Amanda. (Still looking toward the kitchen) "Don't start on about how much TV I watch, I don't watch half as much as you."

Barry. "Rubbish, you're always watching the box and....."

Jamie. "Children, children, enough, how on earth have you two stayed together for twenty years"?

Amanda. "I only stay for the sake of the kids and he would starve if I left him, he can't even boil and egg without help."

Barry. "True, but I am a dab hand at ordering Pizza and Indian."

Amanda. "Your idea of a balanced diet is a burger in each hand; it will kill you one day."

Barry. "Oh give over woman."

(They wander to their seats still arguing but with no real conviction. Margret enters walking purposely and quickly with a script under her arm.)

Margret. "Are we all here yet"?

Gladys. (From the kitchen) ""Janet's never been all here"! (She laughs, no one else does).

George. "Only a few missing and it's not 7-30 yet."

Margret. "How many times do I have to say it, we START at 7-30 we don't ARRIVE at 7-30!"

George. "Sorry Margret, oh look here comes Anne and some of the others."

(Anne enters with Roger and the remainder of the cast.)

Roger. "So have you got Mark sorted out"?

Anne. (Angrily.) "Sorted out? If you mean have I given my son the support he needs, the answer is "Yes""!!!

Roger. "Sorry, I was only asking how things were going, no need to get so tetchy"!

Anne. "Why do people think my son needs "sorting out" as you put it? He just needs the love and attention I am giving him"! (She storms away from Roger and sits down heavily.)

Roger. "Well I never! I only asked a simple question."

Susan. "Wrong question, wrong time. You should be more careful how you phrase things."

Joyce. "Well she can defend him all she likes but I've heard the boy is out of control."

Susan. "And who told you that? Margret I suppose."

Joyce. "Well no actually, it was Betty." (She turns to look at Betty.)

Betty. "And I heard it from our John, he's at the same school; says Mark is always in trouble, fighting and what have you."

Margret. "I don't know what you lot are gossiping about but can we save it until the tea break, or preferably until we finish? Good, now can we PLEASE get on?"

Roger. Are we doing "Leaning on a lamp" or "I could be happy" first?

Margret. We'll start with "I could be happy." Emma, Andy are you okay to do it, I hope you've learned the words by now, I don't want you looking at song sheets while you're trying to act."

Andy. (Guiding Emma to the centre) "Yes, we're ready, well as ready as we'll ever be."

Margret. "Okay, so when you're ready Roger"? (Roger nods and begins to play and the cast sing "I could be happy" with Andy and Emma leading the singing. The song is done well but Margret is not happy.)

I don't claim that I am psychic

But one look at you and I kick

Away every scruple
I learnt as a pupil
In school my dear

I'm not one to make predictions
But I've thrown off all restrictions,
And I don't mind confessing
I think it's a blessing
That you are here

Though I'm prepared to find I'm wrong
I've got a funny feeling we belong together

I could be happy with you
If you could be happy with me

I'd be contented to live anywhere
What would I care
As long as you were there?

Skies may not always be blue
But one thing is clear as can be
I know that I could be happy with you, my darling
If you could be happy with me.

I could be happy with you
If you could be happy with me
I'd be contented to live anywhere

What would I care
 As long as you were there?
 Skies may not always be blue
 But one thing is clear as can be
 I know that I could be happy with you, my darling
 If you could be happy with me.

Margret. “Well I suppose it will have to do, but you two need to “act” it a little better, it’s a fun song, try to LOOK happy even if you aren’t. Okay no messing about; let’s go straight to “Leaning on a lamppost” Yes, I know it’s a bit naff but we are still in the aftermath of the war, we’re still in the forties, the songs will be more to your liking next week.”

Susan. “What about our tea break”?

Margret. “Do we really need one? (Seeing the long faces.) Oh alright, but PLEASE only 10 minutes not the twenty you took last week.”

(Lights Fade.)

Betty. “ What are we doing next week”?

Susan. (A little exasperated.) “We’re doing “Oom-Pah-Pah.” From “Oliver.” and “Oh what a lovely war.”

Betty. “What’s that from”?

Margret. (Really exasperated.) “It’s from “Oh what a lovely war.” for goodness sake. Now can we PLEASE do what we are supposed to be doing? Roger if you please.”

(Roger begins to play “Leaning on a lamppost.” Jamie and Anne take centre stage again and Emma and Andy move back in with the chorus.)

I'm leaning on a lamp,
Maybe you think I look a tramp,
Or you may think I'm hanging 'round to steal a car.
But no, I'm not a crook,
And if you think that's what I look,
I'll tell you why I'm here
And what my motives are.

I'm leaning on a lamppost at the corner of the street,
In case a certain little lady comes by
Oh me, oh my,
I hope the little lady comes by.
I don't know if she'll get away,
She doesn't always get away,
But anyway I know that she'll try.
Oh me, oh my,
I hope the little lady comes by.

There's no other girl I could wait for,
But this one I'd break any date for,
She'd never leave me flat,
She's not a girl like that,
She's absolutely wonderful
And marvellous and beautiful,
And anyone can understand why
I'm leaning on a lamppost at the corner of the street,
In case a certain little lady comes by.

There's no other girl I could wait for,
But this one I'd break any date for,
She'd never leave me flat,
She's not a girl like that,
She's absolutely wonderful
And marvellous and beautiful,
And anyone can understand why
I'm leaning on a lamppost at the corner of the street,
In case a certain little lady comes by.

Margret. "Better, not great, but better. Can the sopranos sing a little louder on the final verse, you are being drowned out by the men."

Amanda. "She could ask you fellas to sing quieter but you all like the sound of your own voices too much for that to work"!

Barry. Very funny I don't think."

Jamie. Enough you two, I'm thirsty, time for a pint, whose round is it"?

(They move off as do most of the others except Gladys and George.)

Margret. "Same time next Monday ALL of you PLEASE"!

(Everyone except Gladys and George are now gone. They have to tidy up and lock up.)

George. I don't mind singing in the chorus but just once I would like to take the lead. Too old now though."

Gladys. "No you're not."

George. "Do you think? I suppose I could always sing a duet with you."

Gladys. "One flaw there, I'm not a very good singer."

George. "Who says"?

Gladys. "Janet for one, and anyway I'm happy enough taking a back seat."

George. "Well I think you have a lovely voice, you just need to sing out instead of holding back. And as for taking a "back seat" don't you think you've put other people first for long enough"?

Gladys. "My sister meant the world to me George. When I was little she always looked out for me; it was only right that I looked out for her."

George. "I suppose, but she's gone now, isn't it time you had some fun, put yourself first for a change"?

Gladys. "It's been so long I'm not sure I know how to put myself first, but maybe you're right, maybe I should give it a try."

George. "You know I always loved you a little bit, even after I met Vanessa, but you were so committed to looking after your sister I knew we had no chance."

Gladys. "Vanessa was a lovely woman, you were lucky to have her. (George nods in agreement.) We did have that one date if you remember."

George. "Yes, of course I remember. It was a bit like that song from "Gigi", what was it called?"

Gladys. "You always had a lousy memory; it was called "I remember it well"!"

George. "Oh yes that was it."

(The music for "I remember it well" starts and George starts to sing and Gladys joins in.)

George: We met at nine

Gladys: We met at eight

George: I was on time

Gladys: No, you were late

George: Ah, yes, I remember it well. We dined with friends

Gladys: We dined alone

George: A tenor sang

Gladys: A baritone

George: Ah, yes, I remember it well. That dazzling April moon!

Gladys: There was none that night and the month was June

George: That's right. That's right.

Gladys: It warms my heart to know that you remember still the way you do

George: Ah, yes, I remember it well

George: How often I've thought of that Friday

Gladys: Monday

George: night when we had our last rendezvous and somehow I foolishly wondered if you might

by some chance be thinking of it too? That taxi ride.

Gladys: You walked me home

George: You lost a glove

Gladys: I lost a comb

George: Ah, yes, I remember it well. That brilliant sky

Gladys: We had some rain

George: Those Russian songs

Gladys: From sunny Spain?

George: Ah yes, I remember it well. You wore a gown of gold

Gladys: I was all in blue

George: Am I getting old?

Gladys: Oh, no, not you

Gladys: How strong you were. How young and gay. A prince of love in every way

George: Ah, yes, I remember it well.

(The laugh when they finish and walk out arm in arm.)

Scene Three.

(Margret enters first; everyone else enters in dribs and drabs, with Bob leading the way).

Bob. "Don't worry Margret; I'm not here to interfere, just wondering how it's going"?

Margret. "It's going just fine if we can actually get started on time for a change, it was nearly 8-00 pm when we got going on Monday."

Bob. "Don't push too hard, after all the members do this for fun, no one is paying them, in fact they pay us."

Margret. "If I didn't "push" as you put it nothing would get done."

Bob. "Yes, I understand you have to keep them on their toes but just remember if you push too hard they might pack it in and go home."

Margret. "I don't think so, for most of them this is the only thing that they have in their lives, what would Gladys or Janet do if they didn't come here"?

Bob. "And what would we do without them? Just go easy eh"? (He walks away towards the kitchen.)

Joyce. "What are we doing first"?

Mavis. "Oh what a lovely war."

Betty. "I like that one, whose doing the lead"?

Joyce. (Angrily.) "Jamie and Anne again, why it is ALWAYS her I don't know."

Mavis. "Well she does have a good voice."

Joyce. "Well mine is just as good. She only gets the lead every time because she is related to Bob."

Susan. "That's a bit unfair."

Mavis. "Never mind, you are doing "As if we never said goodbye" and that is a lovely song."

Joyce. "Yes, but it is the only one I am doing."

Jamie. (To Barry.) "If you don't mind me saying old man you don't look your usual self tonight."

Barry. "Actually I don't feel too chipper, must be the onions I had with the Fish and Chips."

Amanda. "If you ate a little slower, you wouldn't continually get indigestion like you do."

Barry. "Don't start, I don't eat that fast."

Amanda. "Fast? You've usually finished your tea before I've started mine."

Barry. "That's because I don't like eating cold food."

Amanda. "That's rubbish; you eat salads and ice creams just as fast"!

Barry. "It's just the way I am; I came from a big family, if you didn't eat quickly you didn't eat at all." (He laughs at his own little joke.)

Amanda. "Laugh all you like but you'll regret it one of these days, you'll get ulcers."

Margret. "Right, can we get on? Roger, when you're ready."

(Roger plays "Oh what a lovely war." And the cast sing it.)

**Oh, oh, oh, it's a lovely war,
Who wouldn't be a soldier, eh?
Oh, it's a shame to take the pay;
As soon as reveille is gone,
We feel just as heavy as lead,
But we never get up till the sergeant
Brings us breakfast up to bed.**

**Oh, oh, oh, it's a lovely war,
What do we want with eggs and ham,
When we've got plum and apple jam?**

Form fours, right turn,
How shall we spend the money we earn?
Oh, oh, oh, it's a lovely war.

Up to your waist in water,
Up to your eyes in slush,
Using the kind of language,
That makes the sergeant blush.
Who wouldn't join the army?
That's what we all inquire;
Don't we pity the poor civilian,
Sitting beside the fire.

Oh, oh, oh, it's a lovely war,
Who wouldn't be a soldier, eh?
Oh, it's a shame to take the pay;
As soon as reveille is gone,
We feel just as heavy as lead,
But we never get up till the sergeant
Brings us breakfast up to bed.

Oh, oh, oh, it's a lovely war,
What do we want with eggs and ham,
When we've got plum and apple jam?
Form fours, right turn,
How shall we spend the money we earn?
Oh, oh, oh, it's a lovely war.

Margret. (Mindful that Bob is watching.) “That was very good ladies and gentlemen, perhaps a bit more oomph in the chorus but otherwise very good indeed.”

Janet. (Under her breath to Gladys) “What’s up with Margret, if I didn’t know better I’d say she’s on the Happy Pills”!

Gladys. “I think Bob told her to go easy.”

Janet. “And she listened? I find that hard to believe.”

Gladys. “Margret wants to direct our next production; it’s one of her favourites, “Hello Dolly”. She knows if she upsets Bob he will make sure the committee don’t give it to her and after the fiasco that was “Carousel” she needs this concert to work.

Susan. “If he gives it to her I won’t be in it.”

Mavis. “Me neither.”

George. “Oh give over, Margret’s not that bad, that man we had for “Mame” was awful, he had no idea what he was doing; at least Margret knows what she is doing.”

Mavis. “Well she made a right old mess of “Carousel”, fancy casting Brian in the lead, he couldn’t sing for toffee.”

George. “Margret didn’t cast him, Bob did, that’s why they don’t get on, they blame each other.”

Betty. “George is right, the show was fine, it was Brian who ruined it and you can’t blame Margret for that.”

(The girls shut up.)

Janet. “Brew time.”

(Lights Fade.)

Margret. “Right, let’s get on. Now this one does need a lot of Oomph, so come on, give it all you’ve got. Are you ready Anne or do you want a bit of a breather?”

Anne. “No, I’m ready to go whenever you say.”

Joyce. (To those sitting nearby.) “There she goes, smarming up to Maam, no wonder she gets all the choice songs.”

George. “Oh do shut up Joyce, you should be grateful you have a song, you never hear Gladys moaning and she’s got a better voice than you have.”

Joyce. “Since when? She hardly makes a sound and when she does sing, she only ever mumbles.”

George. “Just shut up Joyce, you don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Joyce. “Got a crush have we George, bit old for that aren’t you”? (George goes to reply but Margret butts in.)

Margret. “Enough of the chit chat, let’s get on. Roger? Anne? Okay let’s give it a go.”

(They sing Oom-Pah-Pah with Anne taking the lead.)

There's a little ditty they're singin' in the city

Especially when they've been on the gin or the beer

If you've got the patience your own imaginations will tell you just exactly what you want to hear

Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, that's how it goes

Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, everyone knows

And they all suppose what they want to suppose when they hear oom pah pah

Mr. Percy Snodgrass would often have the odd glass

But never when he thought anybody could see

Secretly he'd buy it, and drink it on the quiet
And dream he was an Earl with a girl on his knee
Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, that's how it goes
Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, everyone knows
What is the cuase of his red shiny nose?
Could it be oom pah pah?

Pretty little Sally goes walking down the alley
Displays her pretty ankles to all of the men
They could see her garters, but not for free and gratis
An inch or two and then she knows when to say when
Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, that's how it goes
Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, everyone knows
Whether its hidden or whether it shows
It's the same oom pah pah

She was from the country, but now she's up a gumtree
She let a fellow beat her, and lead her along
What's the use of cryin', she made her bed to lie in
She's glad to bring a coin in, and join in this song
Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, that's how it goes
Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, everyone knows
She is no longer the same blushing rose
Ever since oom pah pah

Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, that's how it goes
Oom pah pah, oom pah pah, everyone knows

And they all suppose what they want to suppose
When they hear oom pah pah.

Margret. “Well that was alright but I do think some of you can do better, some of you don’t enunciate your words, don’t mumble, be precise. Okay, let’s call it a night, Bob, can I have a word”? (Bob joins Margret and they walk off together.)

Joyce. “I wonder what that’s about”?

Betty. “Who knows? But we’ll find out soon enough if it’s anything important.”

Joyce. I don’t understand you Betty? I want to know what’s going on now, not find out when it’s too late to argue.”

Betty. (Picking up a chair to put it away as everyone else has now gone) “Argue about what”?

Joyce. “That’s just the point, we don’t know”!

Betty. I don’t like arguments, it spoils the atmosphere. Every time we get well into rehearsals someone gets upset or someone storms out, or both.”

Joyce. “Betty, why would anyone storm out if they weren’t upset? You do say some of the silliest things at times.”

Betty. “Well, you know what I mean; sometimes people say things they shouldn’t.”

Joyce. (Indignantly) “Excuse me! It was you who told me about Mark.”

Betty. “Yes but you didn’t have to repeat it so Anne would hear.”

Joyce. “That was Roger and you well know it.”

Betty. “Yes, but you agreed with him.”

Joyce. “Well he was right, that boy is out of control and needs to be put right.”

(Just then Anne re-enters.)

Anne. "Sorry, forgot my coat." (She picks up her coat and leaves.)

Betty. "Do you think she heard us"?

Joyce. "I don't care if she did; I was only stating the truth." (But she is clearly worried).

Betty. "The place looks tidy enough, I'm off, come on I'll give you a lift."

(They both leave.)

Scene Four.

(Several people enter including Janet, Gladys James, Barry and Amanda.)

Gladys. "It's really hot in here tonight."

Janet. "You were moaning the other night that it was cold"!

Gladys. "Yes, but I'm sweating already and that's before we put the cooker on."

Janet. "Men sweat, women merely perspire."

Gladys. "And we ladies just glow"!

They move off laughing.

Jamie. (To Barry.) "Are you sure you should have come tonight? You don't look well."

Barry. "I'm fine, just a bit of heartburn from last night's curry."

Amanda. "Eaten at 90 miles an hour as usual."

Barry. "Oh don't keep going on about it, I'm fine."

Amanda. "And I'm the Duchess of Kent"!

(They sit down.)

(Margret, Bob and Joyce enter.)

Joyce. "Well I just wonder if she is going to turn up."

Bob. "Of course she will; I spoke to her earlier and she said she would be here by 7-45pm at the latest."

Margret. "So she's going to be late again; Mark?"

Bob. "I don't know, I don't think so."

Joyce. Of course it's Mark, it's always Mark. Anyway I wasn't talking about tonight I was talking about the actual show. How can we be certain she will turn up? If her precious son is in trouble again that will be it."

Bob. "You'll be pleased to hear Margret and I discussed that last week. If Anne can't make it we would ask you to step in, you know the songs."

Joyce. "Oh I see, if the darling Anne can't make it I get to be the stand in"!

Margret. (Calling her bluff) "If you don't want to do it I could always ask one of the other girls."

Joyce. "No you don't have to do that, I would never let the society down, of course I will fill in if necessary."

Bob. "Good, that's settled, now can we get on"?

(By now everyone apart from Anne is present.)

Margret. "I hope you have all warmed up before you got here, if not you should have done."

Roger. "Are we doing "Time Warp" first?"

Margret. "Yes, and can you please play it at the right speed, it was far too slow when we tried it on Monday."

Roger. (Indignantly) "I played it as it is written and if you can get someone to play it better please feel free." (He gets up to leave.)

Bob. "Come on Roger, don't get upset, I'm sure Margret wasn't criticising you, just that she wants it playing just a little bit faster if you don't mind. You know we all think you are the best pianist in the area."

Roger. (Sitting down again.) "Well if Margret would just ask nicely instead of being so off hand there wouldn't be a problem."

Bob. "Margret's sorry, aren't you Margret"?

Margret. (Rather sarcastically.) "Yes, of course I am, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings; now can we please get on?"

(At this point Anne walks in and simply sits down, no one says anything.)

(They sing "Time Warp".)

RiffRaff: It's astounding;

Time is fleeting;

Madness takes its toll.

But listen closely...

Magenta: Not for very much longer.

RiffRaff: I've got to keep control.

I remember doing the time-warp

Drinking those moments when

The Blackness would hit me

Riff &

Magenta: And the void would be calling...

All: Let's do the time-warp again.

Let's do the time-warp again.

Narrator: It's just a jump to the left.

All: And then a step to the right.

Narrator: With your hands on your hips.

All: You bring your knees in tight.

But it's the pelvic thrust

That really drives you insane.

Let's do the time-warp again.

Let's do the time-warp again.

Magenta: It's so dreamy, oh fantasy free me.

So you can't see me, no, not at all.

In another dimension, with voyeuristic intention,

Well secluded, I see all.

RiffRaff: With a bit of a mind flip

Magenta: You're into the time slip.

RiffRaff: And nothing can ever be the same.

Magenta: You're spaced out on sensation.

RiffRaff: Like you're under sedation.

All: Let's do the time-warp again.

Let's do the time-warp again.

Columbia: Well I was walking down the street just a-having a think

When a snake of a guy gave me an evil wink.

He shook-a me up, he took me by surprise.

He had a pickup truck, and the devil's eyes.

He stared at me and I felt a change.

Time meant nothing, never would again.

All: Let's do the time-warp again.

Let's do the time-warp again.

Narrator: It's just a jump to the left.

All: And then a step to the right.

Narrator: With your hands on your hips.

All: You bring your knees in tight.

But it's the pelvic thrust

That really drives you insane.

Let's do the time-warp again.

Let's do the time-warp again.

Margret. "That was fine; the tempo was spot on, thank you Roger." (Roger acknowledges the small compliment.)

Betty. "I'm glad we've got past those old songs, they were such a dirge."

Mavis. "Not exactly 21st Century what we are doing tonight."

Betty. I know, but you know what I mean, at least the two we're doing tonight are a bit more up to date."

Janet. "Brew up"!

(Lights Fade.) (People are chatting in their seats.)

Margret. "Can we PLEASE stop this chit chatting and get on. Can we at least try to be professional in what we are trying to do? (There are murmurs of "yes" and "sorry".) Okay, so Roger can we now have the opening eight bars of "Another Suitcase in Another Hall" so we can hear the tempo before we start."

Roger. (Indignantly again.) "Are you insinuating I am going to play the wrong tempo"?

Margret. "No, of course not, I just want the singers to get a feel for the flow of the piece."

Roger. (Calming down.) "That's okay then." (He begins to play.)

Margret. "Okay Emma, let's give it a try."

(They sing "Another Suitcase in Another Hall".)

I don't expect my love affairs to last for long
 Never fool myself that my dreams will come true
 Being used to trouble I anticipate it
 But all the same I hate it, wouldn't you?

[Chorus:]

[Eva:] So what happens now?

[Che:] Another suitcase in another hall

[Eva:] So what happens now?

[Che:] Take your picture off another wall

[Eva:] Where am I going to?

[Che:] You'll get by, you always have before

[Eva:] Where am I going to?

Time and time again I've said that I don't care
That I'm immune to gloom, that I'm hard through and through
But every time it matters all my words desert me
So anyone can hurt me, and they do

[chorus]

Call in three months time and I'll be fine, I know
Well maybe not that fine, but I'll survive anyhow
I won't recall the names and places of each sad occasion
But that's no consolation here and now.

[chorus, with Che's lines being sung by the starlets]

[Huevo:]

Don't ask anymore.

Amanda. "Barry? Are you alright Barry? Barry!" (Barry slowly sinks to the floor. James rushes to him.)

Jamie. "Someone call an ambulance, I think he's had a heart attack or something."

(Amanda screams and tries to go to Barry but some of the girls hold her back. George is ringing for an ambulance.)

End of Act One.

Act Two.

Scene Five.

(Gladys and Janet enter and go to the kitchen.)

Gladys. "Has there been any news about Barry"?

Janet. "Well it was an angina attack not a heart attack but it is still pretty serious, Amada said they would be keeping him in for a week or two then hopefully the medication will have settled things down; but he will be on tablets for the rest of his life."

Gladys. "Brings it home to you how fragile life is. How old is Barry"?

Janet. "He's only 55; it's no age to be at death's door. Look out here come the rabble."

(The rest of the cast apart from Barry, Amanda and Anne begin to enter all gossiping about Barry.)

Joyce. "I heard his heart stopped for ten minutes."

George. "God knows where you hear these rumours, his heart NEVER stopped and he is making a good recovery, he might even be fit enough to do some of the concert."

Joyce. "After a heart attack? I don't think so."

Betty. "It wasn't a heart attack, it was an angina attack."

Susan. "What's the difference"?

Betty. "I don't know exactly but I do know angina isn't as bad as a proper heart attack."

Joyce. "Hark at Florence Nightingale, knows all you need to know about cardiac disease."

(Margret enters.)

Margret. "Could we have a bit of hush? I knew you would all be desperate for news about Barry so to make sure we all got our facts straight, (She looks directly at Joyce) I asked Jamie to give us an update before we get started on tonight's rehearsal, Jamie"?

Jamie. "In a nutshell Barry was very lucky, it was a minor angina attack, the Doctors called it a warning. He will be in hospital until next week but if everything goes to plan he should be back home by next Friday. He doesn't have to give up singing, but he does have to alter his eating habits, no more greasy curries etc. The doctors say if he does as he is told, takes the tablets etc he will be fine for a few more years yet."

Gladys. "Oh that is wonderful news."

Joyce. "If the doctors are right, I don't trust them nowadays, too many can hardly speak English."

George. "Careful Joyce that was sounding a little bit too racist for my liking."

Joyce. "Don't you call me a racist, I'll have you know my cleaner is from Bosnia and I chat to her every day and I give her some of my old frocks."

Andy. "Whoopee for Lady Bountiful, I bet you only pay her the minimum wage though."

Bob. "That's enough; I won't have all this squabbling in the society, if you can't be pleasant to each other then you know where the door is."

Andy. "Sorry Bob."

Bob. "Apology accepted, now can we get on, the concert is in six weeks and we have six more songs to learn so that leaves only two or three nights for run throughs."

Margret. "Bob's right, we need to get on."

Susan. "Bob's Right" (To Betty) I never thought I would hear Margret say those words."

Margret. "Roger can we have a quick listen to the opening eight bars"?

Roger. "Of what, "Tell me it's not true" or the "Young Ones"?"

Margret. "Actually Roger I've decided to drop "The Young Ones" and replace it with "Flash Bang Wallop" from "Half a Sixpence". It's a bit out of sequence but I think it suits us better so let's do "Tell me it's not true" first. We can practice "Flash Bang Wallop" on Monday and then do it next Wednesday. It will mean doing three songs that night so it will be imperative we are all on time. Okay Roger"?

(Roger plays the opening eight bars of "Tell me it's not true".)

Margret. "Emma? Are you ready? Everyone? (There are mumbles of agreement) okay let's give it a go."

(They sing "Tell me it's not true" with Emma taking the lead.)

MRS. JOHNSTONE

Tell me it's not true,

Say it's just a story,

Something on the news.

Tell me it's not true,

Though it's here before me,

Say it's just a dream,

Say it's just a scene,

From an old movie of years ago,
From an old movie of Marilyn Monroe,

Say it's just some clowns,
Two players in the limelight,
And bring the curtain down.

Say it's just two clowns,
Who couldn't get their lines right,
Say it's just a show on the radio,
That we can turn over and start again,
That we can turn over; it's just a game.

MRS. JOHNSTONE AND COMPANY

Tell me it's not true,
Say I only dreamed it,
And morning will come soon.

Say you didn't mean it,
Tell me it's not true,
Say it's just pretend,
Say it's just the end,
Of an old movie from years ago,
From an old movie of Marilyn Monroe.

Tell me it's not true,
Say I only dreamed it,
And morning will come soon.

Tell me it's not true
Say you didn't mean it.
Say it's just pretend
Say it's just the end
Of an old movie from long ago
From an old movie with Marilyn Monroe.

Margret. "Well that was better than I expected, but it is still rather ragged in places, we need to be tighter with the harmonies."

Emma. "Was I okay Margret"?

Margret. "You were fine dear, don't get too nervous about singing on your own, you have a lovely voice."

Emma. (To the others). "I feel so under pressure when I sing solo."

Bob. "Pressure my dear? I'll tell you what my Dad said about pressure. He said "Pressure is having a Messerschmitt 109 up your arse at 20,000 feet; everything else is merely an inconvenience."

(Everyone laughs.)

Gladys. "Can I serve the tea now Margret"? (Margret nods.)

(Lights Fade.)

Margret. "I've decided to call it a night, I will hand out song sheets for "Flash Bang Wallop" as you leave, make sure you have one so we can go straight into it next week.

(As they are leaving Betty talks to George and the "Group".)

Betty. "I'm disappointed we aren't doing "The Young Ones" I quite enjoyed singing it, though I prefer the Beatles to Cliff Richard."

George. "Did you know I could have been a Beatle"?

Betty. "Don't be ridiculous."

George. "It's true; it was only genetics that stopped me."

Betty. "Genetics?"

George. "Yes, I didn't have enough legs!"

(Gladys laughs and hits George playfully.)

(They all start to leave)

Joyce. (To anyone in the vicinity.) "Did you notice Anne wasn't here tonight?"

Betty. "You're right, I hadn't noticed until you said."

Mavis. "What's going to happen if she doesn't turn up for the concert, it will be a disaster."

Joyce. "Don't worry, I've already been put on standby if she doesn't make it and I won't let the society down."

Susan. "That's a bit harsh; Anne has a lot on her plate at the moment."

Joyce. "If she cannot find time for the rehearsals she shouldn't have agreed to do the concert."

(They all leave except Emma and Andy who start the tidying up.)

Emma. "Do you think Margret was really happy about my performance"?

Andy. "Of course she was why wouldn't she be"?

Emma. "My Mum always said I had a lovely voice, but all Mum's say that don't they"?

Andy. "Maybe, but in your case your Mum was telling the truth."

Emma. "You're so kind to me, I couldn't ask for a better friend."

Andy. "I'll always be your friend and I hope you remember me when you're a big star."

Emma. "Now you're being silly. Mind you I would love to be in a really BIG show, you know, on the West End or Broadway."

Andy. "Wouldn't we all; but you have the voice to do it, you just need to believe in yourself."

Emma. "You are lovely the way you support me all the time, I don't know what I would do without you. (She pecks him on the cheek.) Can I leave you to lock up; I promised Mum I would meet her in the Lion"?

Andy. "Sure, no problems. (He watches her go. Wistfully he talks to himself.) Everyone thinks we're an item, everyone but Emma. I wish I could tell her how I really feel but she'd just laugh at me, or worse, get angry. I couldn't bare that."

(He sings "It's only make believe" then walks out.)

People see us everywhere.

They think you really care.

But myself, I can't deceive;

I know it's only make believe.

My one and only prayer, is that some day, you'll care.

My hopes, my dreams come true, my one and only you.

No one will ever know how much I love you so.

My only prayer will be, some day you'll care for me,

But it's only make believe.

My hopes, my dreams come true, my life, I'd give for you.

My heart, a wedding ring, my all, my everything.
 My heart I can't control; you rule my very soul.
 My only prayer will be, some day you'll care for me,
 But it's only make believe.

My one and only prayer, is that some day, you'll care.
 My hopes, my dreams come true, my one and only you.
 No one will ever know how much I love you so.
 My only prayer will be, some day you'll care for me,
 But it's only make believe.

Scene Six.

(The cast all enter minus Joyce.)

Betty. "Joyce is devastated she has to miss tonight, she was supposed to sing her solo."

Susan. "She'll be more devastated if the cops hold on to Harry; they reckon he has embezzled thousands from the Bank. I know he was well paid but I often wondered how they could afford all those fancy holidays and a full time maid, seems now we know."

Betty. "They've only taken him in for questioning; he's innocent until proven guilty."

Susan. "Well in my book there's no smoke without fire."

(Amongst most of the others Margret comes in.)

Betty. "Margret, have you heard about Harry.?"

Margret. "I'm sure we've all heard by now, regardless we need to get on, the concert is only four weeks away."

Mavis. "But without Joyce we've no stand-in for Anne."

Margret. "Why do we need a stand in for Anne? Oh don't tell me, Mark's in trouble again."

Mavis. "No he's not in trouble but Anne's babysitter has got a full time job so won't do it anymore."

Margret. "Well that's it then, we will have to cancel the concert."

George. "We can't do that, we've already sold 200 tickets, booked the hall and the orchestra."

Bob. "But Margret's right, with no Anne or Joyce we're snookered."

Janet. "We could tell Anne to bring Mark with her, I'll look after him, I don't mind."

George. "But what about you, you won't be able to join in the singing."

Janet. "Course I can, I can sing in the kitchen for the time being, Mark can help me with the teas."

Margret. "Do you really think it would work"?

Bob. "Got to be worth a try, we've no other options. I'll ring her now." (He moves away to make the call.)

Margret. "We still have a problem, Joyce was supposed to sing "As if we never said goodbye", she's the only one who knows it well enough; Anne can't do it at this late date."

George. "I know someone who knows it; in fact she knows all the songs."

Margret. "Who"?

George. "Gladys."

Margret. "With all due respect to Gladys, she may know the words but she simply hasn't got a powerful enough voice to carry it off."

Gladys. "She's right, I can't do it."

George. "Oh yes you can, I've heard you around the house, you belt it out like a good 'un."

Margret. "Excuse me, but how do you know what she sounds like around the house"?

(George and Gladys look sheepishly at each other.)

Mavis. "You crafty pair and you never let on."

Susan. "Yes, you crafty beggars. When's the wedding?"

George. "We're just probationary cohabiters at the moment. Look we're sorry we never said; we wanted it to be a secret until we both felt it was the right time."

Margret. "Do you really think Gladys can do the song"?

George. "I'm certain."

Gladys. "Well I'm not, and it's me that will have to do it, and I'm not sure I like being called a "probationary cohabiter" either!"

George. "Sorry love, only kidding, but you can do the song I know it."

Bob. "Anne is on her way and as for Gladys doing the solo, there's only one way to find out, let's give her a chance now while we wait for Anne."

Margret. "Okay, what have we got to lose? Okay everyone let's get in our places and give this a try. Gladys, are you willing to give it a try"?

Gladys. "I suppose so, but I'm not sure I can do it."

Bob. "Like I said, only one way to find out, "Suck it and See".

(Everyone is in their place and Roger begins to play. Gladys begins to sing but in a very quiet voice.)

Margret. "That's no good Gladys, you have to project, you have to sing out."

George. (Giving Gladys a hug) "Just sing out like you do at home, you can do it."

(Roger starts again and this time Gladys goes for it to the astonishment of everyone present.)

I don't know why I'm frightened

I know my way around here

The cardboard trees, the painted seas, the sound here...

Yes, a world to rediscover

But I 'm not in any hurry

And I need a moment

The whispered conversations in overcrowded hallways

The atmosphere as thrilling here as always

Feel the early morning madness

Feel the magic in the making

Why, everything's as if we never said goodbye

I've spent so many mornings just trying to resist you

I'm trembling now, you can't know how I've missed you

Missed the fairy tale adventure

In this ever spinning playground

We were young together

I'm coming out of make-up

The lights already burning

Not long until the cameras will start turning...

And the early morning madness

And the magic in the making

Yes, everything's as if we never said goodbye

I don't want to be alone

That's all in the past

This world's waited long enough

I've come home at last!

And this time will be bigger

And brighter than we knew it

So watch me fly, we all know I can do it...

Could I stop my hand from shaking?

Has there ever been a moment

With so much to live for?

The whispered conversations in overcrowded hallways

So much to say not just today but always...

We'll have early morning madness

We'll have magic in the making

Yes, everything's as if we never said goodbye

Yes, everything's as if we never said goodbye...

We taught the world new ways to dream!

Margret. "I don't believe what I just heard"!

George. (Hugging Gladys) "I do, I knew you could do it." (Everyone gathers around Gladys saying "Brilliant", "Amazing" etc.)

Betty. "All we need now is Anne."

Janet. "Let's have a brew while we wait for Anne then we can start again and work right through."

Bob. "Good thinking, two sugars in mine." (Lights Fade.)

(Anne and Mark finally arrive.)

Anne. "I'm really sorry to mess you all about like this and I can't thank you enough Janet for your kind offer to look after Mark."

Janet. "It's no problem, just get yourself sorted and sing. Come on over here Mark to your Auntie Janet, I have chocky biscuits."

Margret. "Jamie, are you ready"?

Jamie. "Yes, I'm ready."

Margret. "Roger"?

(Roger begins to play "Can you feel the love tonight"? Jamie begins to sing.)

(In the kitchen Mark begins to dance.)

There's a calm surrender to the rush of day
 When the heat of a rolling world can be turned away
 An enchanted moment, and it sees me through
 It's enough for this restless warrior just to be with you

And can you feel the love tonight
 It is where we are
 It's enough for this wide-eyed wanderer
 That we got this far
 And can you feel the love tonight
 How it's laid to rest

It's enough to make kings and vagabonds
Believe the very best.

There's a time for everyone if they only learn
That the twisting kaleidoscope moves us all in turn
There's a rhyme and reason to the wild outdoors
When the heart of this star-crossed voyager beats in time with yours

And can you feel the love tonight
It is where we are
It's enough for this wide-eyed wanderer
That we got this far
And can you feel the love tonight
How it's laid to rest
It's enough to make kings and vagabonds
Believe the very best.

Margret. "Jamie that was lovely and well done the rest of you, I do believe we are getting there."

Janet. (To everyone.) "Not as lovely as what I have just witnessed."

Gladys. "And what vision have you just seen then"?

Janet. (To Mark.) "Come on Mark; show them how you can dance."

(Mark just stands there.)

Janet. "Roger play that song again."

Anne. "Leave him alone, if he doesn't want to dance he doesn't have to. Don't you think he gets enough hassle about his dancing at school"?

Janet. "But he's good, really good."

Anne. "Mark, do you want to dance, you don't have to if you don't want to."

Janet. "Go on Mark; show them what you showed me."

Anne. "Janet, stop trying to force him to do what he doesn't want to do."

Mark. "Actually Mum I don't mind, I really liked doing it."

Janet. "Roger, go on play the tune."

(Roger plays and Mark dances.)

Mavis. "That was great. (Pause.) He could dance "I like to Boogie" when we sing it at the concert, it would go down a storm."

Margret. "I'm not sure about that and anyway Mark may not want to."

Mark. "Would it be in front of an audience?"

Margret. "Oh yes, there will be a lot of people watching." (She thinks this will put him off.)

Mark. "In that case I would love to have a go."

Anne. "Are you sure love?"

Mark. "Yes, I'm sure."

Bob. "Okay then, we'll get Gaynor our choreographer to work with you at the weekend and you can try it out at rehearsal on Wednesday, is that okay with you Margret?"

Margret. "It seems I have little say in the matter."

Bob. "Of course you do, if you say "No" that's it."

Margret. "Well he is good and having a real "Billy Elliot" on the stage when we do the number would look good, so, okay, we'll give it a try next week. But if Mark is going to

dance you will all have to dance and that means a rehearsal on Sunday afternoon. I wanted to choreograph “Radio Ga Ga” anyway so it would be an opportunity to do both. Are you ALL willing to come in on Sunday”? (There is a general murmur of approval.)

Anne. “Mark, you only have to do this if you REALLY want to.”

Mark. “I do, honestly.”

Bob. “So it’s settled, great.”

Margret. I think we have just enough time to try “Flash Bang Wallop” before we call it a night.”

George. “Flash Bang Wallop” goes my pint”!

Margret. “Okay, whenever you’re ready.”

(Roger plays “Flash Bang Wallop” and the cast sing it led by Jamie.)

(Smile please, all smile. You too, Sir)

(I am smiling)

All lined up in a wedding group

'Ere we are for a photograph

We're all dressed up in a morning suit

All trying hard not to laugh

Since the early caveman in his fur

Took a trip to Gretna Green

There's always been a photographer

To record the 'appy scene.....

'Old it, flash, bang, wallop, what a picture

What a picture, what a photograph

Poor old soul, blimey, what a joke

Hat blown off in a cloud of smoke

Clap 'ands, stamp yer feet

Bangin' on the big bass drum

What a picture, what a picture

Um-tiddly-um-pum-um-pum-pum

Stick it in your fam'ly album

(Thanks very much, one more picture. Hold it!)

The same thing 'appened long ago

When man was in his prime

And what went on we only know

From the snaps he took at the time

When Adam and Eve in their birthday suit

Decided to get wed

As Adam was about to taste the fruit

The man with the cam'ra said.....

'Old it, flash, bang, wallop, what a picture

What a picture, what a photograph

Poor old Eve, there with nothing on

Face all red and 'er fig leaf gone

Clap 'ands, stamp yer feet

Bangin' on the big bass drum, W-e-e-a-ay!

What a picture, what a picture

Um-tiddly-um-pum-um-pum-pum

Stick it in your fam'ly album

(Thanks very much. One more picture, hold it!)

You've read it in a folio

Or seen it in a Shakespeare play

How Juliet fell for Romeo

In the merry month of May

And as 'e climbed the orchard wall

To reach 'is lady fair

As he tumbled, she began to bawl

As he floated through the air.....

'Old it, flash, bang, wallop, what a picture

What a picture, what a photograph

Poor young chap, what a night 'e spent

Tights all torn and 'is rapier bent

Clap 'ands, stamp yer feet

Bangin' on the big bass drum, W-e-e-a-ay!

What a picture, what a picture

Um-tiddly-um-pum-um-pum-pum

Stick it in your fam'ly album

(One more picture, hold it!)

King 'Enry the Eighth had several wives

Including Anne Boleyn

And he kept an album of their lives
 With all their photos in
 As Anne Boleyn was on her knees
 Dressed in her very best frock
 King 'Enry shouted, "Smile, Dear, please"
 As 'er 'ead rolled off the block.....

'Old it, flash, bang, wallop, what a picture
 What a picture, what a photograph
 Comes the print in a little while
 Lost 'er 'ead, but she kept 'er smile
 Clap 'ands, stamp yer feet, Ye-e-a-y!
 Bangin' on the big bass drum
 What a picture, what a picture
 Um-tiddly-um-pum-um-pum-pum
 Stick it in your fam'ly album

(Thank you very much. One more picture, hold it!)

When Napoleon married Josephine
 There was just the same to-do
 He galloped home from the battle scene
 All the way from Waterloo
 And as he came from orf 'is 'orse
 To the boudoir where she sat
 She said to 'im, in French of course
 As he took of his big cocked 'at

'Old it, flash, bang, wallop, what a picture

What a picture, what a photograph

There she was, with a big Hussar

All caught up in 'er oh-la-la

Clap 'ands, stamp yer feet, Ye-e-a-y!

Bangin' on the big bass drum

What a picture, what a picture

Um-tiddly-um-pum-um-pum-pum

Stick it in your fam'ly album

Stick it in your fam'ly

Stick it in your fam'ly

In your fam'ly album!

Margret. "That was fine for a first try, let's call it a night."

George. "At last! Now I can get that pint."

(They all start to leave leaving Susan and Mavis to tidy up.)

Mavis. "What a night hey"?

Susan. "I'll say, all we need now is Barry and Amanda back and everything will be great. Do you think Barry will be able to come to rehearsals"?

Mavis. "I don't think he will be able to join in but I heard he was on his feet and out and about so Amanda might bring him next week."

Susan. "Well here's hoping. That's tidy enough, come on I want a drink."

(They leave.)

Scene Seven.

(They all enter, with Barry and Amanda coming in a few seconds after the last person.)

Gladys. "Barry, it's so good to see you and looking so well."

Janet. (To Gladys). "I told you on Saturday how well he looked didn't I"?

Gladys. "You did, but you look SO well Barry."

Barry. "I feel well, in fact I feel great."

Amanda. "It's early days but the Doctors are really pleased with him and he's promised to look after himself better, no more Indian Takeaways or fry-ups."

Barry. "Well not on the same day anyway. (He laughs; Amanda gives him an admonishing look.) Only kidding love."

Jamie. "It really is great to have you both back, are you allowed to sing Barry"?

Barry. "Not tonight, but the Doc says if I feel up to it I may be able to sing on the night."

Amanda. "I'm not sure about that, I think you should take it easy for at least a few months."

Barry. "We'll see love, I promised I'd take it easy and I will."

Mavis. "Have you heard about Gladys and Mark"?

Amanda. "Yes, Jamie has kept us up to date; do we know what's happened to Harry"?

Susan. "He's been released on bail; Joyce says it's all a big mistake and he will soon be cleared when all the facts are known."

Amanda. "Is she coming tonight"?

Susan. "Not tonight but she says she might come next week, though I doubt it."

Mavis. "It's such a shame, she was really looking forward to the concert and after all she isn't responsible if Harry did embezzle the money."

Andy. "Maybe not, but she was happy enough to spend it."

Bob. "Come on, let's not prejudge the situation, "Innocent until proven guilty" and all that.

Andy. "I suppose, but she's such a snob, can't help feeling she got what was coming."

Margret. While all this is all very interesting it isn't get any work done so can we please get on with what we are really here for? (There is a murmur of assent.) Right, okay Roger? Okay Mark? Okay Andy? Okay everyone? Right, let's give it a go."

(Roger begins to play, Andy begins to sing and Mark begins to dance as the rest join in.

Barry sits at the back quietly joining in.)

We love to boogie, we love to boogie

Jitterbug boogie, Bolan pretty boogie

We love to boogie on a Saturday night

Belinda Mae Fender's got a Cadillac Bone

Jenny's lost her cherry walking

all the way home

The passions of the Earth blasted it's mind

Now it's neat sweet ready for

the moon based grind

We love to boogie

We love to boogie on a Saturday night

We love to boogie

High school boogie, jitterbug boogie

We love to boogie on a Saturday night

**You rattlesnake out with your tailfeathers high
Jitterbug left and smile to the sky
With your black velvet cape
We love to boogie, we love to boogie
Jitterbug boogie, Bolan pretty boogie
We love to boogie on a Saturday night
and your stovepipe hat
Be-bop baby the dance is where it's at**

**I love to boogie
Yes I love to boogie on a Saturday night
I said I love to boogie, I love to boogie
Jitterbug boogie, I love to boogie
I love to boogie on a Saturday night**

I love to boogie.

Margret. "It wasn't perfect but it was okay. Mark, you were great, one day you are going to be a truly great dancer."

Janet. "Time for a brew"?

Margret. "Yes, I think we've earned it."

(Lights Fade.)

(Joyce walks in, everyone is quiet then Gladys speaks.)

Gladys. "Joyce, lovely to have you back, we are all so sorry for all the trouble you and Harry are having."

Joyce. "Thank you Gladys, I came because I have nothing to be ashamed of, Harry has done nothing wrong and will be cleared in no time, the idea that he is a thief is totally ridiculous."

Susan. "Of course it is, (Speaking to the assembly.) Isn't it what we've all been saying"?

Mavis. (Under her breath.) "Well some of us have."

Betty. "Well I think you are very brave to come tonight."

Andy. "Well I think she's got a damn cheek."

Bob. "That will do Andy; Joyce has every right to be here if she wants to."

Emma. "You do know Gladys is doing your solo"?

Joyce. "Well actually I assumed that since I am back that I would be doing it as planned."

George. "Well think again, Gladys did it in rehearsal and she will be doing it on the night, isn't that right Margret"

Gladys. "I really don't mind, after all it was Joyce's to start with."

Margret. "No Gladys, you will be doing it on the night, Joyce, we're glad to have you back of course but I'm not changing who does the solos at this late stage.

Joyce. "Well I don't think that's fair, after all I was the understudy to Anne, now I'm just in the chorus"?

Margret. "I'm sorry Joyce, but that's how it is."

Joyce. "I'm beginning to wish I hadn't bothered to come."

Bob. "Don't say that Joyce, you are a valued member of the society, you will get another chance in the next show I'm sure."

Mavis. (Under her breath.) "If she's not in prison."

(Joyce chooses to sit down.)

Margret. "Great, now that's settled let's get down to some serious work. This is the last number and you know what they say, "The last one's always a good one." So no hanging back, Jamie, Roger, are you ready? (They nod) Then let it rip"!! (Barry joins in and stands next to Radio

So don't become some background noise

A backdrop for the girls and boys

Who just don't know or just don't care

And just complain when you're not there

You had your time, you had the power

You've yet to have your finest hour

Radio - radio

All we hear is radio ga ga

radio ga ga radio goo goo

All we hear is radio ga ga

radio blah blah

Radio what's new?

Radio, someone still loves you

We watch the shows - we watch the stars

On videos for hours and hours

We hardly need to use our ears

How music changes through the years

Let's hope you never leave old friend
Like all good things on you we depend
So stick around 'cos we might miss you
When we grow tired of all this visual
You had your time - you had the power
You've yet to have your finest hour
Radio - radio

All we hear is radio ga ga
Radio goo goo
Radio ga ga
All we hear is radio ga ga
Radio goo goo
Radio ga ga
All we hear is radio ga ga
Radio blah blah
Radio what's new ?
Someone still loves you

Radio ga ga (ga ga)
Radio ga ga (ga ga)
Radio ga ga (ga ga)

You had your time - you had the power
You've yet to have your finest hour
Radio – radio. (Amanda who gives him a big hug.)

Radio - radio

I'd sit alone and watch your light

My only friend through teenage nights

And everything I had to know

I heard it on my radio

You gave them all those old time stars

Through wars of worlds - invaded by Mars

You made 'em laugh - you made 'em cry

You made us feel like we could fly

Margret. "Well done everyone, same time next week then the concert itself. I want a complete run through next week so no cry-offs please and PLEASE be on time"!!!

(Everyone leaves.)

THE END.

