



A musical comedy set in 1914

Book by
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Lyrics by
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Music by
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CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Emily Latchett	Under kitchen maid
Ben	Boot boy
Sally Coombes	Maid
Albert Ecclestone	Under footman
George Parker	Groom
Lucy Ambleside	Ladies maid
Alexander Town	Butler
Doris Lovegrove	Cook
Emmeline Pankhurst	Suffragette
Bert	Artisan
Fred	Artisan
Tom Snodgrasse	Police constable
Gerald Land	Theatre manager
Maude	Theatre dresser
Newsboy	

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

Scene 1	Below stairs
Scene 2	Park
Scene 3	Below stairs
Scene 4	Below stairs
Scene 5	Country house verandah
Scene 6	Below stairs
Scene 7	Park with bench
Scene 8	Backstage at the theatre
Scene 9	Below stairs

ACT TWO

Scene 1	The seaside
Scene 2	Park with bench
Scene 3	Backstage at the theatre
Scene 4	Below stairs
Scene 5	British street/Ypres trenches
Scene 6	Backstage, two months later
Scene 7	Below stairs
Scene 8	Stage of the theatre

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT ONE

1. Overture
2. Below stairs
3. Nobody is better than me
4. Nobody is better than me *reprise*
5. Votes for women
6. Nobody is better than me *reprise*
7. My girl
8. I am a very fine cook
9. Background waltz
10. Order in our lives
11. Order in our lives *reprise*
12. Would you like to take a walk?
13. High tea
14. My name is Arlette
15. Entr'acte

ACT TWO

16. On high days and holidays
17. One brief moment
18. Ridiculous
19. A parlour maid
20. The stage is no place for a decent girl
21. When I'm alone at night
22. Soon I will be a fine cook
23. Nobody is better than me/Order in our lives
24. When our boys come marching home
25. When our boys come marching home *reprise*
26. Finale

No.1 Overture

ACT ONE – SCENE ONE

The curtain rises on a dark stage. One or two flights of stairs lead up to a landing. At stage level left is a cooking range and a preparation table with a door leading off to the washing area. Right rear is a window to an alley below pavement level and a door leading out to it. Centre right is a large table with several chairs around it. A candle appears in the darkness at the top of the upper stairs left and descends to stage level revealing EMILY, the tweeney. She is only about 13 years old and is dressed in a grey skirt and blouse. She is shivering with the cold and moves quickly towards the fireplace to light the fire, which is already set. As she passes the table right, she kicks a bundle of clothes under it which starts to move, slowly revealing BEN, the bootboy, about the same age, who yawns, stretches, gets to his feet. EMILY, still on her knees by the fire, starts to sing.

No.2 Below stairs

EMILY *[Sings]* IT'S FOUR IN THE MORNING AND NO ONE'S ABOUT
[Music only of 'Below stairs, below stairs']
 IT'S BLACK AS A COALMINE, OF THAT THERE'S NO DOUBT
[Music only of 'Below stairs, below stairs']

BEN *[Sings]* THE AIR IS SO COLD THAT YOU FEEL YOU ARE BREATHING IN ICE
 AND NOTHING IS STIRRING DOWN HERE, NO NOT EVEN THE MICE
 EMILY/BEN IT'S FOUR IN THE MORNING, WE'RE NOT YET AWAKE
 BELOW STAIRS, BELOW STAIRS
 TO GET UP AT THIS HOUR JUST SEEMS A MISTAKE
 DOWN HERE, BELOW STAIRS

BEN starts polishing boots and EMILY works on stove. SALLY COOMBES, a maid and ALBERT ECCLESTONE, an underfootman, appear on upper level.

SALLY/ALBERT IT'S TIME TO GET UP THOUGH WE FEEL HALF ASLEEP
 EMILY/BEN/SOPS *[Music only but they each yawn alternately on each phrase of music]*
 THE NIGHT WAS SO SHORT THAT WE'RE STILL COUNTING SHEEP
[Music only but each yawns again and, during this, they move down and GEORGE PARKER and LUCY AMBLESIDE appear on upper level.]

LUCY/GEORGE WE THINK WE'RE HARD DONE BY BUT OTHERS ARE ALREADY DOWN
 SALLY/ALBERT/
 EMILY/BEN/SOPS THEY'RE STARTING TO WORK WATCHING OUT FOR THEIR BOSS
 MISTER TOWN *[They move down during this]*
 ALL IT'S TIME TO GET ON THOUGH WE'RE STILL HALF ASLEEP
 BELOW STAIRS, BELOW STAIRS
 THE NIGHT WAS SO SHORT THAT WE'RE STILL COUNTING SHEEP
 DOWN HERE, BELOW STAIRS

TOWN, the butler, appears on the upper level and claps his hands.

TOWN I trust everyone is happy in their work.

ALL Yes, Mr Town.

ALL *[Sing]* BELOW STAIRS, WE MUST NOT BE SAD
 BELOW STAIRS, LIFE IS NOT SO BAD
 FOR WE HAVE OUR FOOD AND A ROOM HERE
 LET'S HAVE NO DOOM AND NO GLOOM HERE
 BELOW STAIRS, EV'RYTHING IS SURE
 BELOW STAIRS, WE CAN FEEL SECURE
 SO LIVE YOUR LIFE FOR TODAY
 LIFE IS GOOD, SO THEY SAY.
 FOR THOUGH IT'S NOT ALL MILK AND HONEY
 AND WE DON'T HAVE LOTS OF MONEY
 HAPPINESS IS WHAT WE'RE AFTER
 SHARING WORK WITH LOTS OF LAUGHTER
 EV'RY DAY BRINGS SOMETHING NEW TO DO
 AND THAT IS WHY WE SAY TO YOU
 BELOW STAIRS, IT'S ANOTHER DAY
 BELOW STAIRS, WE MUST EARN OUR PAY

FOR WE HAVE OUR FOOD AND A ROOM HERE
 LET'S HAVE NO DOOM AND NO GLOOM HERE
 BELOW STAIRS, EV'RYTHING IS SURE
 BELOW STAIRS, WE CAN FEEL SECURE
 SO LIVE YOUR LIFE FOR TODAY
 LIFE IS GOOD, SO THEY SAY.
 FORGET YOUR WORRIES AND CARES
 WAY DOWN HERE BELOW
 BELOW STAIRS

TOWN That is what I like to hear, a happy staff is a hardworking one. *[He looks at his pocket watch.]* What are you doing, Lucy? The tray should be on its way upstairs by now.

LUCY *[Grabs tray that she has been preparing and rushes upstairs.]* Yes, Mr Town, coming right away.

SALLY and ALBERT are clearly contriving to work as closely as possible to each other, surreptitiously flirting. DORIS LOVEGROVE, the cook, appears on upper level.

DORIS What's this, everything moving at a snail's pace? Needs my 'ands behind 'em, it does, Mr Town, my 'ands behind 'em.

TOWN Now then, everyone, about your business. Sally, those skirting boards weren't cleaned properly yesterday. Do it today and make me proud of you.

SALLY Yes, Mr Town. *[She exits.]*

TOWN Have you cleaned all the shoes, Ben?

BEN Yes, Mr Town, and yer can see yer face in 'em.

TOWN Good, then you can go and help Mr Parker with the horses – I know how you like them.

BEN Thank you, Mr Town.

TOWN Off you go then, George, the carriage may be needed today.

BEN runs off through door right followed by a grumbling GEORGE

TOWN Albert, there are some things to be collected from Mr Jackson's emporium for the master. Go straight there and straight back and don't dawdle with the girls. *[SALLY glowers at ALBERT, obviously jealous at the thought.]*

ALBERT What, me, Mr Town? *[TOWN takes out his pocket watch and looks at it pointedly.]* Right away, Mr Town, right away. *[He exits right.]*

DORIS Is that water ready for the tea yet, girl?

EMILY Yes, cook. *[She hurries over with kettle and pours it into the teapot, handling the heavy kettle with difficulty but DORIS just watches her until she has finished and then stirs the tea and puts the lid on.]*

DORIS I 'ad a kettle twice the size of that 'un when I was your age but we were stronger in those days. Ready for your morning tea, Mr Town?

TOWN I am indeed. All is running smoothly upstairs and down. Has the paper come back yet?

DORIS No, and I'll swear she gets slower every day. Perhaps you ought to have a word with her. She seems to have got a bit above herself since she's become the mistress's maid.

TOWN Can't have that, Mrs Lovegrove. Position and order must be maintained. I'll talk to her as soon as she comes down.

DORIS *[LUCY enters with a tray.]* Here she is now. And not before time, girl. Mr Town's been waiting for his paper.

LUCY I can't 'elp it if they took their time this morning.

TOWN Enough of your cheek, Lucy. Come over here.

LUCY *[Crossing to him still carrying the tray and standing in front of him demurely but with an irrepressible twinkle in her eye.]* Yes, Mr Town?

TOWN Put the tray down.

LUCY Yes, Mr Town. *[She puts the tray down and hands him the paper.]* Yer paper. *[She bobs an exaggerated curtsey.]*

TOWN Don't get smart with me or with Mrs Lovegrove. You are only on trial as a ladies maid and I could suggest you be replaced.

LUCY *[Suddenly worried]* Oh, you wouldn't do that, Mr Town, would you? I like being Lady Amelia's maid.

TOWN Then remember your place and watch your manners.

LUCY *[Contrite]* Oh, I will, Mr Town, I will. And I'm sorry about this morning, Mrs Lovegrove.

DORIS Hummph! Well just you watch yourself in future, my girl. I'll choose to forget it this time. Your tea now, Mr Town?

LUCY Oh, thank you. *[She turns away from them and pulling a face pokes her tongue out. She walks towards the front of the stage as the other two get on with their tea..]* They treat me like dirt, they do. Just because he's the butler and she's the cook, they think they're better than me, but they're not. *[Dim lights except on Lucy. Action behind slows down]*

No.3 Nobody is better than me

LUCY *[Sings]*

THE KING UP IN HIS PALACE IMAGINES HE'S THE TOPS
 BUT HE'S NOT, NO HE'S NOT
 THERE'S DUKES AND LORDS AND ADM'RALS
 WHO THINK THEY ARE THE CREAM
 BUT THEY'RE NOT, NO THEY'RE NOT
 I MAY BE JUST A SERVANT WHO DOES WHAT SHE IS TOLD
 BUT IT WAS GOD WHO MADE ME, MADE ME IN HIS MOULD.
 SO IF WE ALL ARE EQUAL AND I MAY BE SO BOLD
 NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME

NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME
 ALTHOUGH I DON'T EXPECT THEM TO AGREE
 FOR I'M AS GOOD AS THE REST OF THEM
 IN FACT I'M ONE OF THE BEST OF THEM
 NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME

THE LAWYER IN HIS OFFICE WHO CHARGES FOR HIS TIME
 THINKS HE'S IT, NOT A BIT
 THE BANKER COUNTING FIVERS THAT OTHERS SWEATED FOR
 IS SO VAIN, IT'S A PAIN
 I MAY BE FROM THE POOR HOUSE WHERE NO ONE SEEMED TO CARE
 BUT IF THIS WORLD'S MY OYSTER I JUST WANT MY SHARE
 FOR I BELIEVE WE'RE EQUAL - YES, EACH AND EV'RY ONE
 NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME .

NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME... *[Music stops as TOWN interrupts.]*

TOWN Lucy!

LUCY *[She freezes.]* Yes, Mr Town?

TOWN Fetch some more hot water for Mrs Lovegrove.

LUCY *[Relieved]* Right away. *[As she moves to do it, she starts singing quietly but gets louder as she goes on.]*

NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME
 ALTHOUGH I DON'T EXPECT THEM TO AGREE
 FOR I'M AS GOOD AS THE REST OF THEM
 IN FACT I'M ONE OF THE BEST OF THEM
 NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME!
 FOR I'M AS GOOD AS THE REST OF THEM
 IN FACT I'M ONE OF THE BEST OF THEM
 NOBODY, NOBODY, NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME!

GEORGE enters with BEN, as does ALBERT, clearly out of breath, who makes a beeline for SALLY..

GEORGE Those horses are getting more difficult to handle by the day. They're not getting enough exercise.

DORIS Well, you should take them out more, it's your job.

GEORGE When do I get the time? It's run here, fetch that, take me there, bring me back. This house needs an underfootman and a groom but I'm supposed to do their jobs as well as my own.

TOWN I suggest that if you have so much to do, George, you had better get on with it. The devil makes work for idle hands.

SALLY 'Is hands aren't usually idle, are they, George? *[Said deliberately to make ALBERT jealous, who reacts accordingly.]*

GEORGE *[Stiffly]* What are you implying?

LUCY *[Bringing hot water to cook]* Ooh, listen to 'im, 'implying'? You've been picking up new words again.

GEORGE So what's wrong with that?

LUCY Nothin', as long as you know what they mean.

One of the bells rings. {SOUND CUE}

TOWN *[Pulling out a pocket watch]* The master will be wanting his carriage, George. Fetch it round to the front door at once. *[He stares.]* You too, young Ben, stop going to sleep and move yourself. The rest of you have your jobs to do. *[The servants all exit.]*

DORIS *[Standing]* Yes, I've got my stores to check, too, *[Glares at LUCY.]* just in case anything else is missing. *[LUCY stumps off to the pantry.]* And clean that stove, Emily, don't just stroke it. *[She exits.]*

TOWN Lucy, don't forget the parlour fire. It wasn't cleaned properly yesterday. *[He exits upstairs.]*

LUCY Yes, Mr Town. *[After he has gone, she mimics him.]* 'Position and order must be maintained'.

EMILY Shsssh, he'll hear you.

LUCY So what if he does? Miss Amelia likes me and she won't listen to the likes of 'im.

EMILY But she will listen to the master and 'e listens to Mr Town.

LUCY Miss Amelia's got a mind of 'er own. Did you know she got arrested for causing a public disturbance?

EMILY Why did she do that?

LUCY Because she's a suffragette, fighting for women's rights.

EMILY But women don't have any rights.

LUCY Silly girl, that's what she's fighting for.

EMILY I'd like to be a suffragette

LUCY Don't be silly, who'd take any notice of the likes of you?

EMILY Well, I'm a woman, aren't I?

LUCY No, you're not. You're a scullery maid and you don't count for nothing.

EMILY Well I 'eard you just now saying 'nobody's better than me'.

LUCY That's me and I'm me. And you're you, so you don't count. *[EMILY starts to sniffle.]* Oh, for god's sake, don't sniffle, Emily. What I mean is that in this world you don't count for anythin' unless you're rich or 'ave an important position or are married to someone important – or become famous like they do on the music 'alls.

EMILY Well, you're none of them.

LUCY Not yet. But one day I will be, mark my words. One day I will be somebody special and then they'll all look up to me. Maybe I'll go on the 'alls and become as famous as that Marie Lloyd. I've just got to make my chance. *[Sings]*

No.4 Nobody is better than me

FOR I'M AS GOOD AS THE REST OF THEM
IN FACT I'M ONE OF THE BEST OF THEM
NOBODY, NOBODY, NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME.

EMILY Cor!

LUCY *[Bustling about]* But until then I've grates to clean. Now where's my cleaning apron?

ALBERT exits, playfully pinching SALLY as he does. Blackout.

ACT ONE – SCENE TWO

The park. EMMELINE PANKHURST is standing on a portable 'soapbox' (with optional lectern-type front). A parade of women enters and face her with banners.

EMMELINE Sisters, I welcome you all here today to join me in the battle for women's freedom. *[As she is speaking, two men wander in and stand at the back of the women.]* We have been fighting, fighting long and hard for the vote but we must not let up until our struggle is won.

BERT Get 'ome to yer 'usband dearie and 'ave a fight wiv 'im.

FRED Yeah, any proper woman would be at 'ome making 'er old man's tea.

BERT *[Nudging Fred.]* Or waiting in bed for 'im. *[They both laugh raucously.]*

EMMELINE Ignorance and prejudice like yours is what has kept women down for centuries but times are changing. We are taking hold of our own destiny in future.

TOM enters and stands at the back watching.

BERT You can take hold of my destiny if yer want to, luv, might make yer feel less frustrated.

FRED Yeah, yer can see what she needs, mate, a good seein' to.

EMMELINE That's all you men ever think about. You've got your brains firmly down your trousers. You wouldn't know how to hold an intelligent conversation or argue a point.

BERT I always argue my points with these. *[Holds up hands.]*

EMMELINE Exactly! Give me one good reason why women shouldn't be allowed to vote.

BERT Because they ain't fit to think for themselves, only to 'ave babies and look after us. Women should know their place and by 'appy wiv it. Not tryin' to stir up trouble for us blokes.

They both laugh again. Some of the women try to shush them up.

WOMAN 'Ere, you just shut your mouth.

BERT Don't you speak to me like that, missus, or I'll take me belt to yer.

EMMELINE That's your answer to everything, isn't it? All men are the same. If you haven't got the brains to argue a case, you resort to violence. Women have just as much right to the vote as men. We bear and bring up your children and we run the home.

BERT I run my 'ome, not my missus. She just does as she's told.

FRED That's right. Can't 'ave women gettin' above themselves, can we?

EMMELINE But we are getting above ourselves and we shall continue to do so, won't we ladies? *[Cheers from the women.]* It may take us time but we shall wear down the entrenched bastions of male power until the government is ready to grant us our god-given rights.

BERT I'll give you a god-given right and a left if I get 'old of yer. *[He tries to push through the women to get to her but they close ranks and block his way.]*

EMMELINE Why shouldn't we have the right to the vote? We work as hard as you men and we are just as intelligent. The government cannot deny us our rights forever, so why not accept it and give us the vote? *[She starts the song and women join in.]*

No.5 Votes for womenEMMELINE [*Sings*]

ALL WOMEN

VOTES FOR WOMEN IS OUR CALL
 VOTES FOR WOMEN ONE AND ALL
 SING IT TILL WE WIN THE FIGHT
 SING IT EV'RY DAY AND NIGHT
 NOW WE ARE NO LONGER WEAK
 SUFFRAGE IS THE RIGHT WE SEEK
 JUSTICE IS OUR BEACON
 WE SHALL NEVER WEAKEN
 TILL WE WOMEN GET THE VOTE

YOUNG AND OLD SUFFRAGETTES INTO BATTLE
 FROM EACH TOWN AND CITY IN THE LAND
 NEVER MIND IF THEY TREAT US LIKE CATTLE
 WITH BANNERS AND HOPES HELD HIGH
 LET'S MAKE OUR STAND

WOMEN FORWARD SIDE BY SIDE
 MAY OUR CONSCIENCE BE OUR GUIDE
 NO ONE WILL IGNORE US
 WHEN THEY HEAR THIS CHORUS
 VOTES FOR WOMEN IS OUR CALL

YOUNG AND OLD SUFFRAGETTES INTO BATTLE
 FROM EACH TOWN AND CITY IN THE LAND
 NEVER MIND IF THEY TREAT US LIKE CATTLE
 WITH BANNERS AND HOPES HELD HIGH
 LET'S MAKE OUR STAND

WOMEN FORWARD SIDE BY SIDE
 MAY OUR CONSCIENCE BE OUR GUIDE
 NO ONE WILL IGNORE US
 WHEN THEY HEAR THIS CHORUS
 VOTES FOR WOMEN IS OUR CALL
 GIVE US WHAT WE ASK FOR
 HELP US MAKE A NEW LAW
 VOTES FOR WOMEN IS OUR CALL!

During the song, all the women march around the two men, pushing and shoving them until they run off. As they all march off, TOM ushers the last ones out. The women take Emmeline's soapbox with them.

TOM

I do wish they would all get back to their 'omes and stop making more work for me. I mean, everyone knows that women'll never get the vote. It's so unrealistic. [*He moves to the spot where Emmeline had stood on her soapbox, as if addressing a crowd.*] Don't get me wrong, mind you. It's not that I don't respect women, 'cos I do, but they 'ave their role in life just like us men and they should leave us to do what we're good at. Men are born rulers and we know what is best for the country. We can't 'ave women with their little tantrums and vapours trying to run the government – it wouldn't work. Blimey, if they get away with this, they'd be wanting women members of parliament next and, 'eaven 'elp us, even a woman prime minister. Now that is a frightening thought.

BERT and FRED re-enter.

BERT

You talking to yourself, Tom?

TOM

I suppose I am, Bert. It goes with the job, walking about at night all on your own. Give you a bit of a rough time, did they, those women?

FRED

Blinkin' women, ought to be taught a lesson, the 'ole bleedin' lot of 'em.

BERT

Yeah, yer right. I think I'll go 'ome now an give my missus a bit of a beltin' just in case she gets any of this nonsense in 'er 'ead.

FRED

That's the idea. Teach 'em who's boss and keep 'em in their place.

TOM

I don't think I could 'it a woman, you know.

BERT Go on! If yer don't knock 'em around now and again they think yer don't love 'em.

FRED You married, Tom?

TOM No, but I had been thinking about it.

BERT Take the advice of a married man, don't do it. Come on, Fred.

FRED and BERT exit, laughing and singing loudly.

FRED and BERT Votes for women is a bore
I don't wanna 'ear no more.

DORIS staggers on, obviously the worse for drink.

DORIS What's all this caterwauling, 'oo the hell is making all that noise? *[Sees TOM.]* Whoops, sorry comstable. *[She staggers back and nearly falls over.]*

TOM Mrs Lovegrove, is that you?

DORIS I think so.

TOM But you're

DORIS *[Puts finger to lips.]* Shush! Never set it be led that Mrs Doris Wilhelmina Lovegrove, rook to the citch, is a little bit ... whoops *[She staggers again.]* tipsy.

TOM More like drunk as a drayman, I'd say.

DORIS *[Going up to him and wagging her finger under his nose.]* And 'oo are you to say anything against a respectable woman – either of you. *[She sways away from him, then falls on his chest and starts to slide down.]*

TOM *[Pulling her up.]* I think we'd better get you back 'ome, Mrs L. Come with me. *[He starts to help her off.]*

DORIS Ooh, look at me, girls. I'm in the arms of the law. *[She laughs loudly at first then stops suddenly and puts her finger to her lips.]* Shush! They mustn't 'ear us coming.

TOM 'Oo mustn't?

DORIS The Prime Minister and 'is lot.

TOM What's it got to do with 'im?

DORIS Promise you won't tell anyone. *[She looks around suddenly and TOM reacts by doing the same.]* Promise!

TOM I promise if you come on 'ome like a good woman.

DORIS *[Pulling his head down to hers.]* I am going to chain myself to the railings at Number 10 Drowning Street.

TOM Oh, really? And just how are you going to do that? Have you got a chain?

DORIS I don't need one. *[She starts trying to undo her clothes but with little success.]* I am a liberated woman so I shall use my secret weapon. My stays!

TOM Don't you think it would be better to wait until you get a chain and padlock?

DORIS I could use your 'andcuffs. *[She suddenly snatches them off him and waves them in the air.]* To the barricades! *[She spins around and quickly becomes dizzy.]* Whoops, everything's going round and round. *[She starts to collapse but TOM catches her and, putting her over his shoulder, carries her off.]* Blackout.

ACT ONE – SCENE THREE

The kitchen, nighttime. LUCY is sitting reading by candlelight by the stove. Her tongue is out and she is concentrating hard, following the words with her finger. EMILY is watching her closely, entranced. TOWN sits at table smoking a pipe and GEORGE is playing solitaire.

- TOWN *[Taking pocket watch from waistcoat]* Cook's late, not like her. Always in by nine-thirty on the dot. Still, I think it's time we all went to our beds.
- LUCY I'll wait up a bit for 'er, Mr Town. I just want to finish this chapter.
- TOWN All right, Lucy. You might as well warm the pot, she likes a nice cup of tea after visiting her friend at the Duke's. I'm sure she won't be long.
- EMILY Can I stay, too?
- TOWN No, it's time you were in bed. You know you need your sleep if we are to get any work out of you at all tomorrow.
- EMILY Yes, Mr Town. *[She rises and exits.]*
- GEORGE I don't mind waiting with you, Lucy.
- TOWN Most certainly not, George, I cannot countenance leaving you two alone here. *[GEORGE, grumbling, gets up and goes upstairs to the landing, leaning by one of the doors.]* I'll see you in the morning, Lucy. Goodnight. *[He exits.]*
- LUCY Good night, Mr Town. *[She rises and starts warming the pot until he exits. She starts to sing quietly to herself.]*

No.6 Nobody is better than me

NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME
ALTHOUGH I DON'T EXPECT THEM TO AGREE
FOR I'M AS GOOD AS THE REST OF THEM
IN FACT I'M ONE OF THE BEST OF THEM
NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME!

- LUCY Well, it's right, innit? I mean lots of ordinary people have climbed to 'igh positions and lots of ordinary women 'ave married into the gentry. Well, some 'ave, anyway. Besides at least I can sound like a lady. I mean, it's not that difficult. *[She puts on a surprisingly good upper class voice.]* You see, my mother always told me I could mimic anyone and it is true. *[Changes to EMILY's voice.]* I'd like to be a suffragette. Well, I am a woman. *[Back to her own voice.]* It's easy, see. God, Lucy Ambleside, you're a 'andsome woman and no kiddin. You'd 'ave the gents falling over themselves to get at you .. if only you could get a chance to meet them. What you need, girl, is an invite to one of them posh do's where all the young gents go.. and why not? Yeah, I could carry it off if I could get there .. wait a minute.. the master gets lots of invitations to do's they never go to and they throw the invitations away sometimes. Now, if I could find one that didn't 'ave their names written on it I could write any name in. What would I call myself? Miss Lucinda .. Ball? No, though I fancy Lucinda. Miss Lucinda Belle Jackson. Yeah, that's it: Lucinda Belle Jackson. *[Putting on American accent.]* From the United States of America, visiting friends in Scotland, but in London for the season. *[In her posh voice.]* But with whom are you staying, deah? *[American voice.]* The Bullington-Harts. *[Posh voice.]* Oh, but they're such dreadful people, no one even sees them nowadays. *[Normal voice.]* I know, that's why I chose 'em. You're a bleedin' genius, that's what you are, gal. *[Yawns.]* Just got to wait for the right opportunity and then we'll see. Or maybe I could even get a try-out on the music 'alls. I could sneak out one evening and go and see one of them impresarios. I'm sure I could talk one into giving me a go. I can see it now, Lucy Ambleside, a star with all them stage-door Johnnies asking for my 'and in marriage. I can see it now.. *[She falls asleep in the chair with her book open on her lap. Time passes. There is a loud knock at the outside door and she wakes, startled..]*
- LUCY What was that? *[Another knock.]* It must be cook. *[She runs to door.]* Probably lost 'er key. *[She opens door, revealing TOM supporting a drunken DORIS.]*

TOM 'Allo, Lucy.

LUCY Tom, what are you doin' 'ere at this time and what's up wiv 'er? *[TOM brings DORIS into kitchen and lowers her into a chair. DORIS is humming to herself.]* She looks drunk. Is she?

TOM 'Fraid so. And that's not all.

LUCY What do you mean – not all?

TOM Well, if you make me a cup of tea, I'll tell you. It's cold out there tonight.

LUCY Make you a cup of tea at 11 o'clock at night?

TOM Well, of course, if you don't want to know, I'll be on my way. *[He turns to leave.]*

LUCY All right, Constable Thomas Snodgrasse. But you just behave yourself.. *[She gets on with making tea while DORIS is slumped across the table still humming quietly to herself.]*

TOM *[Moving across behind LUCY and putting his arms round her waist from behind.]* What about warming up a poor policeman wiv a kiss.

LUCY *[Disengaging his hands.]* And that's enough of that, I told you to behave yourself.

TOM You didn't mind before.

LUCY That was before, and this is now. Besides – what would cook say?

TOM Nothing. She's completely out of it. Legless and senseless.

LUCY *[Crosses to DORIS and lifts her up but she slumps down again.]* What happened?

TOM Well, as you know, she usually goes and visits Alice at the Duke's on 'er day off. *[They sit down at opposite ends of table.]* Today was Alice's sixtieth birthday and they decided to celebrate wiv a decanter of the Duke's best port... wivout 'im knowing, of course... and she invited me in for a drink to 'elp 'er celebrate.

LUCY And you found cook like this?

TOM No, she was fine then. That was about half-past eight.

LUCY *[Leaning forward.]* So what 'appened? *[He leans across the table and gives her a kiss.]* Oh!

TOM There, perhaps that'll keep you quiet till I tell you the rest. By the way – what about me tea?

LUCY *[Rising and neatly avoiding his clutching hands as she passes him to make the tea.]* Go on then.

TOM Well, later that night when I was patrolling in the park, I came across a suffragette meeting led by that Emmeline Pankhurst woman.

LUCY I like 'er. She's a strong woman. I've seen her preaching.

TOM She's a dangerous one, I know that. You don't want to 'ave anything to do with 'er.

LUCY I'll do whatever I want to do. Anyway, what's this got to do with cook?

TOM Well, after I'd chased 'em all off, I

LUCY What did you chase 'em off for? They've as much right to be there as you and me.

TOM I wish we was.

LUCY Was what?

TOM In the park.... you and me.

LUCY What for?

TOM Walking out together, you and me.

LUCY You must be joking. I couldn't be seen out with a policeman. None of me friends would talk to me ever again.

TOM You wouldn't need those so-called friends if you became my girl.

LUCY Your girl?

No.7 My girl

TOM *[Sings, softly]* MY GIRL WILL BE THE APPLE OF MY EYE
I'LL BE GLAD I FOUND HER
MY GIRL WILL BE THE ONE TO MAKE ME SIGH
WITH MY ARM AROUND HER
HER SMILE, HER LAUGH WILL HAUNT ME FROM THE START
AND I WILL KNOW THAT WE SHALL NEVER PART
MY GIRL, WILL YOU BE MY GIRL?

LUCY *[Argumentatively]* YOUR GIRL WOULD HAVE TO BE A CRAZY THING
WITH NO SENSE OR FEELING
SHE'D NEED MUCH MORE THAN JUST A WEDDING RING
TO FIND YOU APPEALING
SHE WOULD TURN AWAY WHENEVER YOU CAME NEAR
HOPING VERY SOON THAT YOU WOULD DISAPPEAR
YOUR GIRL, I'M NOT YET YOUR GIRL

TOM *[Sings, softly]* MY GIRL WILL BE SO GENTLE, WARM AND KIND
LIPS SO SOFT AND TENDER
SOME SAY THE WAY OF LOVE IS TRULY BLIND
SO SHE WILL SURRENDER
SHE'LL BE THE ONE MY ARMS WERE MADE TO HOLD
OUR LOVE WILL BE MORE PRECIOUS YET THAN GOLD
MY GIRL, I LOVE HER MY GIRL

LUCY YOUR GIRL WOULD FIND THAT LOVE WAS TRUE INDEED
YOUR WORDS SAY SO CLEARLY
TOM MY GIRL WOULD GIVE ME EV'RYTHING I NEED
THIS I KNOW SINCERELY

LUCY	COULD IT BE OUR DESTINIES WE SHALL ENTWINE? COULD IT BE THE FUTURE IS BOTH YOURS AND MINE? YOUR GIRL, LET ME BE YOUR GIRL YOUR GIRL YOUR GIRL	TOM	SOON MAYBE OUR DESTINIES WE SHALL ENTWINE SOON MAYBE THE FUTURE WILL BE YOURS AND MINE MY GIRL, YOU ARE NOW MY GIRL MY GIRL MY GIRL
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LUCY *[Sliding out of his arms.]* I told you to behave or you won't get no tea. So what 'appened with Mrs Lovegrove? *[She picks up the teapot and moves to table.]*

TOM Well, you might find this 'ard to believe but she came out of the darkness drunker than a drayman's horse. What is more, she was going to Number 10 Downing Street to chain 'erself to the railings.. And this is the best thing – she was going to do it with 'er stays!

LUCY You're makin' this up. Why should she do that?

TOM Apparently she said she was a suffragette and she was goin' to protest about votes for women, silly woman.

LUCY Mrs Lovegrove, a suffragette?

DORIS *[Suddenly sitting bolt upright, she starts to sing.]* Young and old suffragettes into battle, From each town and city in the land...

LUCY She'll wake the 'ole 'ousehold with that noise. What am I going to do with 'er?

TOM I've done my duty bringin' 'er 'ere and I can't even get a cup of tea. *[DORIS is suddenly sick at the side of the table.]*

LUCY If you want a cuppa tea, 'elp yerself, I've gotta clear this mess up before anyone else sees it. *[She gets a bucket and cloth and kneels by DORIS to clean the floor.]* Bleedin' suffragette!

DORIS *[Sitting bolt upright again, she starts singing.]* Young and old suffragettes into battle, From each town and city in the land... *[On the last line she falls forward and then tilts slowly to the side as she starts to fall off the chair.]*

LUCY *[Grabbing her and holding her up.]* Quick – 'elp me. *[TOM rushes across to grab DORIS from the other side.]* Now don't let go of 'er till I've finished cleaning up.

TOM Lucy, why don't you give this up and marry me. *[Doris vaguely comes to, and says 'Aah', perhaps thinking Tom is talking to her.]* I can support you on my wages and I do love yer. *[Doris repeats 'Aah' somewhat longer and louder.]*

LUCY If you think I'm gonna change my name to Snodgrasse, you've gotta be outa yer mind.

TOM Snodgrasse with an 'e' on the end.

LUCY I don't care if it's got an 'e or a she on the end, it's not gettin' my name on it.

TOM What about my tea then?

LUCY If you mention your tea once more, Tom Snodgrasse, I'll slap this 'ere dirty cloth right in your mouth. *[DORIS suddenly falls face down on the table, again taking TOM by surprise.]* And don't bang 'er 'ead down like that. She'll be gettin' a nose bleed next and that'll be something else to clean up.

TOM I didn't. She fell down of 'er own accord. Perhaps I can get my tea now and leave this suffragette to you.

DORIS *[Sitting bolt upright again she starts to sing.]* Young and old suffragettes into battle. *[She throws her arms around LUCY's neck.]* Comrades in arms.

LUCY *[Struggling with her.]* Tom, get over 'ere will yer before she ends up with 'er 'ead in this bucket.

TOM *[Crossing to her and trying to get DORIS to let go of LUCY.]* Don't you shout at me like that; we're not married yet, you know.

LUCY I wouldn't marry you if you were the last man alive. You can't do anythin' right.

TOM No, it doesn't seem so. *[He lets go of DORIS who is still hanging on to LUCY.]* I'd better get back on my beat. *[He moves towards street door.]*

LUCY You get back 'ere this minute, you good-for-nothin' constable, before I report you to your superiors. *[TOM exits closing the door quietly behind him.]* Tom, do you 'ear me? *[Panics as still in DORIS's clutches.]* Tom, are you there? *[The candle starts to flicker as it dies out and suddenly the place is in darkness.]* Tom, please where are you? *[Pause]* I need you. *[Pause]* I didn't mean what I said. *[Pause. She shouts.]* Tom!

DORIS *[Starts singing.]* Young and old suffragettes....

LUCY Shut up you stupid! *[Blackout followed by a crack and the sound of the bucket going over.]* Oh, bleedin' 'ell! I need a mop now. *[Blackout.]*

ACT ONE – SCENE FOUR

Below stairs. DORIS is preparing food for cooking watched by EMILY. The other servants are doing their chores.

EMILY But, Mrs Lovegrove, how long did it take to be a proper cook?

DORIS God luv us, girl, you want to know how long it takes? It took me eleven years of drudgery and abuse before I got my first post.

EMILY Eleven years?

DORIS Yes, eleven years and I was quick to pick it up and hard working. Not like you, Emily Latchett. You're idle, slow and useless.

EMILY But I do my best, Mrs Lovegrove.

DORIS Well, your best isn't good enough. If you want to become a cook – and I offer up a prayer for all those poor suffering stomachs – you've got to do ten times better than your best.

EMILY I'll try, Mrs Lovegrove. I know – if you was to teach me how to get things ready for you, I could get up half an hour earlier and you could lie in half an hour longer.

TOWN walks in.

DORIS Did you hear that, Mr Town? Lie in, me? Me who's always up on the stroke of five every day, come rain or shine, come sickness or health.

TOWN Forget this nonsense, girl, and get on with your work.

EMILY But Mr Town, I'm only trying to improve myself.

TOWN Don't answer back and remember your place.

EMILY Yes, Mr Town.

TOWN If you want to improve, watch Mrs Lovegrove. You won't find a better cook anywhere. I think we're all agreed on that.

DORIS Well, I certainly won't argue.

No.8 I am a very fine cook

DORIS [*Sings*] I AM A VERY FINE COOK
 VERY FINE COOK, THAT'S ME.
 I DON'T COOK BY THE BOOK
 I NEED NO RECIPE.
 I ALWAYS START WITH THE VERY BEST INGREDIENTS
 I ONLY WORK WHERE I FIND IT MOST CONVENIENT.
 ALL OF THE TOFFS ON THE BLOCK
 WANT ME TO COOK THEIR NOSH
 THEY LOVE OFFAL AND HOCK
 LONG AS THE NAME SOUNDS POSH.
 I NEVER WEIGH FOOD, I WASH AND TRIM AND THEN JUST GUESS
 THAT'S THE SECRET OF MY GREAT SUCCESS

ALL I STARTED AS A KITCHEN GIRL, LIKE YOU
 I SCRUBBED UNTIL MY FINGERS BLED, LIKE YOU
 I LISTENED CAREFULLY, PICKED UP ALL THE TIPS I COULD
 THAT'S HOW I LEARNED MY TRADE, THAT'S WHY I AM SO GOOD
 THAT'S WHY SHE IS SO GOOD

ALL SHE IS A VERY FINE COOK
 VERY FINE COOK, THAT'S HER
 SHE DON'T COOK BY THE BOOK
 JUST GIVES IT ALL A STIR

DORIS I ALWAYS MAKE SURE THAT ALL MY FOOD IS EDIBLE
IT IS QUITE INCREDIBLE, MEAT AND FRUIT AND VEGDIBLE
THERE IS NO FINER COOK THAN ME

I AM A VERY FINE COOK
WELL KNOWN AROUND THESE PARTS
LIKE THE OLD PRINCE OF WALES
FAMOUS FOR TASTY TARTS!

DORIS I BUY A PIG'S HEAD AND BOIL IT JUST LIKE MRS PEEK
ALL SHE LEAVES THE EYES IN SO IT WILL SEE HER THROUGH THE WEEK
DORIS I MAKE FINE SUNDAY ROASTS AND TASTY IRISH STEWS
ALL SHE MAKES HER SHEPHERDS PIES FROM SHEPHERDS' HOW-D'YE-DOS
DORIS MY PLUMS AND CUSTARD ARE FAMED FROM HERE TO BERMONDSEY
NO ONE KNOWS A FINER COOK THAN ME.

I STARTED COOKING AT AN EARLY AGE
SHE LEARNED THE SECRETS OF A KITCHEN SAGE
THEN AS THE YEARS WENT BY
SHE SOON CAUGHT HER MASTER'S EYE
HER DUMPLINGS LOOKED SO REAL,
HE HAD TO HAVE A FEEL

DORIS I AM A VERY FINE COOK
VERY FINE COOK, THAT'S ME
I DON'T COOK BY THE BOOK
I NEED NO RECIPE.
I ALWAYS MAKE SURE THAT ALL MY FOOD IS EDIBLE
IT IS QUITE INCREDIBLE
MEAT AND FRUIT AND VEGDIBLE
DORIS THERE IS NO FINER COOK THAN ME .
ALL NO FINER COOK! *[Music stops.]*

On the last word they all turn round and point at DORIS. TOWN claps his hands sharply and they all turn back and get on with their work. Blackout.

ACT ONE – SCENE FIVE

Veranda of a rich country house . It is night and the veranda is only lit by light spilling through large french windows. Inside, a ball is in progress. LUCY appears in some of her mistress's finery. She starts to dance alone to music (No.9 music only) that can be heard from inside. EDWARD WATERFLOWER appears behind her, in dinner suit, and stands watching. LUCY does not see him at first.

EDWARD *[In a slight Irish accent.]* And I thought fairies lived at the bottom of the garden.

LUCY *[Stopping suddenly and turning to him she speaks momentarily in her normal voice but then quickly changes to an American accent.]* Sir, you startled me. *[She looks at him holding one hand over her heart.]* I did not hear you.

EDWARD One has to creep up gently on a fay creature so as not to frighten her away. Tell me, are you a vision or are you real?

LUCY As real as you are.

EDWARD Then let me introduce myself before you disappear. *[He takes her hand and lifts it slowly towards his lips.]* The honourable Edward Waterflower at your service.

LUCY *[Pulling her hand away before it reaches his lips.]* You are too bold, sir.

EDWARD Perhaps then you would do me the honour of telling me your name?

LUCY I think not.

EDWARD And pray why not, mysterious lady?

LUCY Because we have not been formally introduced and I should not even be speaking to you. I must return to the ballroom before I am compromised. *[She starts to pass him to re-enter the ballroom but he stops her with his hand on her arm.]*

EDWARD Please tell me where you are staying in London so that I can send my calling card.

LUCY I am staying with the Bullington-Harts in the country but I shall be leaving soon.

EDWARD Then tell me your name so I know who I will be dreaming about.

LUCY You have a glib tongue, Mr Waterflower. My name is Lucinda Belle Jackson and I suspect you are dangerous and no young lady should trust herself alone with you.

EDWARD I would always treat a lady with the respect due to her, whether she be high born or .. *[Pauses briefly.]* low born.

LUCY What do you imply, sir?

EDWARD Why, only that we are what we are but that we can all aspire to be better.

LUCY I think I must leave.

EDWARD *[Restraining her.]* Please don't. *[He leads her away from the interior.]* I would share confidences with you.

LUCY *[Intrigued.]* What confidences?

EDWARD When I speak, hear me out and don't interrupt until I've finished. Do I have your promise?

LUCY I will hear you out but I will make no promises.

EDWARD That will suffice. I believe that you are a ladies maid posing as...

LUCY *[Interrupts.]* How dare you! *[She slaps his face.]*

EDWARD You said you would hear me out. Then you can slap my face again, if you so wish. Is that fair?

LUCY *[Icily.]* Continue your farce if you wish. *[She turns her back on him.]*

EDWARD ... a ladies maid posing as an American lady in your mistress's gown. You have a very fine accent, by the way.

LUCY *[Sarcastically and bobbing a curtsey.]* Thank you, kind sir.

EDWARD However, I am just as much a fraud as you are!

LUCY *[Turning back to him and slipping into her normal voice.]* Yer what?

EDWARD Ah! You must never let your accent slip, whatever happens. I am the son of a poor Irish farmer but all those fine folk in there believe I am a gentleman.

LUCY *[Back in American accent.]* So why are you telling me this?

EDWARD Because you and I, me darling lass, are kindred souls in search of a rich mate, are we not? So how about if we join forces and give each other a bit of support.

LUCY I don't need your help.

EDWARD Don't you, now? By the way, did you know that the Bullington-Harts you say you are staying with are in India at present?

LUCY *[Dismayed.]* Oh!

EDWARD Oh, indeed. Always check your facts. It's attention to detail that keeps people like us on top. The nobs can afford to be sloppy about things but we can't. So, it's an alliance, then? *[He holds out his hand.]*

LUCY *[Hesitating at first.]* Very well. *[They shake hands.]*

EDWARD When is your next day off?

LUCY Sunday week.

EDWARD I'll meet you in the park near the bandstand.

LUCY I don't know ..

EDWARD About three. *[He suddenly kisses her.]* That's to seal our bargain.

LUCY *[Raising her hand to slap his face.]* How dare you ..

EDWARD *[He grabs her wrist and suddenly turns towards the french windows and speaks to someone offstage.]* Ah, Sir Richard, how good to see you. *[Guiding her gently towards the french windows.]* Allow me to introduce a good friend of mine, Miss Lucinda Belle Jackson. *[To Lucy.]* This is Sir Richard Grantley-Smythe, baronet. *[They disappear inside.]*

Blackout.

ACT ONE – SCENE SIX

Below stairs. The staff are working at various chores and EMILY is helping DORIS. TOWN appears and looks over his hive of activity with a satisfied look on his face.

TOWN The beauty of our life below stairs is that everything is well ordered and familiar. We all have our place in our society and if we all do our designated job properly then that order remains. But if any one of us fails in their duties, anarchy reigns. Isn't that so, Mrs Lovegrove?

DORIS Yes indeed, Mr Town, you have such a wonderful clear way of putting things. *[Looks at him admiringly.]*

No. 10 Order in our lives

TOWN *[Sings]* EV'RYBODY HAS HIS PLACE
IT'S THE BEAUTY OF OUR RACE
SO EACH OF US KNOWS JUST WHERE WE STAND
FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP
EV'RY PERSON PLAYS HIS PART
OH, THIS ORDER IN OUR LIVES IS GRAND
THE MASTER AND THE SERVANT
THE RICH MAN AND THE POOR
EACH ONE KNOWS HIS PRECEDENCE
AND LOOKS FOR NOTHING MORE
IT'S WONDERFUL, MARVELLOUS
WE ALL KNOW WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR
THERE IS ORDER IN OUR LIVES

TOWN Don't you agree, Mrs Lovegrove?

DORIS Indeed I do, Mr Town.

TOWN/DORIS *[Sing]* THERE IS ORDER IN EV'RYTHING
FROM INSECTS TO MAN
AND EVEN STARS AND PLANETS
HAVE A HEAVENLY PLAN
THERE IS ORDER IN OUR UNIVERSE
FROM BIRTH TO DEATH
THE WATCHWORD IS ORDER
FROM OUR VERY FIRST TO OUR LAST BREATH

TOWN WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY
AS WE STRIVE TO LIVE THROUGH EACH DAY
NO NEED TO THINK WHERE WE ARE OR WHY
AS WE DO THE BEST WE CAN
WHEN OUR WORK IS HARD TO BEAR
WE MUST KEEP OUR TEMPER AND BE CALM
FOR ORDER IS THE KEY TO LIFE
OURS NOT TO REASON WHY
THE PATTERN IS SET OUT FOR US
UNTIL THE DAY WE DIE
IT'S WONDERFUL, MARVELLOUS
WE ALL KNOW WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR
THERE IS ORDER IN OUR LIVES

ALL THERE IS ORDER IN EV'RYTHING
FROM INSECTS TO MAN
AND EVEN STARS AND PLANETS
HAVE A HEAVENLY PLAN
THERE IS ORDER IN OUR UNIVERSE
FROM BIRTH TO DEATH
THE WATCHWORD IS ORDER
FROM OUR VERY FIRST TO OUR LAST BREATH
OUR LAST BREATH. *[Music stops.]*

DORIS *[To Emily.]* Well, don't just stand there, girl. The stove needs cleaning down.

EMILY Yes, Mrs Lovegrove. *[She scurries off to do her task.]*

TOWN Just one minute, everyone. I have an announcement to make, so gather round. *[Everyone does so as he continues talking.]* The mistress is very pleased with the way the dinner party went off last night and has asked me to thank you all on her behalf for your hard work.

GEORGE That's very nice of 'er but somethin' a bit more tangible might not come amiss.

TOWN And what exactly did you have in mind, George?

GEORGE Some extra beer would do. *[Everyone cheers and joins in with their comments.]*

TOWN *[Holding up his hand until they all go quiet.]* Fortunately for us, George, the mistress has thought of something that *all* of us can enjoy.

BEN What's that, Mr Town?

TOWN Well, young Benjamin, she is arranging for us all to go by train to the seaside for a day out.

Loud cheers from everyone as they all dance around each other.

GEORGE *[Aside.]* Huh! I'd have preferred beer!

TOWN *[Loudly.]* **However** *[He waits for them to quieten.]* However, until that happy day, we shall all carry on doing our appointed tasks to the very best of our ability.

BEN When do we go, when do we go?

TOWN On Sunday in two weeks' time. *[They all start chatting to each about what they are going to wear and do. TOWN claps his hands and they go quiet.]* Now about your business all of you and remember – *[Sings]*.

No. 11 Order in our lives

TOM THE WATCHWORD IS ORDER
ALL FROM OUR VERY FIRST TO OUR LAST BREATH
OUR LAST BREATH.

Blackout.

ACT ONE – SCENE SEVEN

A park bench. LUCY is seated primly as EDWARD approaches. He looks her over. She pretends not to notice him. He goes up to her and bows, doffing his hat.

EDWARD Excuse me, miss?

LUCY Yes?

No.12 Would you like to take a walk?

EDWARD *[Sings.]* WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE A LITTLE WALK WITH ME?
 WOULD YOU LIKE TO SIT AND TALK WITH ME?
 WOULD YOU CARE TO HOLD MY HAND?
 WOULD YOU SIT AND WHILE AWAY THE HOURS WITH ME
 GAZING AT THE PRETTY FLOWERS WITH ME
 WOULDN'T THAT BE GRAND?

She turns away, rises and walks away from him with her nose in the air. They are both playing a part.

EDWARD WOULD YOU CARE TO WANDER IN THE PARK WITH ME?
 WOULD YOU GO THERE AFTER DARK WITH ME
 WHILE THE MOON WAS HIGH ABOVE?
 WOULD YOU STAY AND LET ME START TO BILL AND COO
 WOULD YOU THINK THAT I WAS SILLY TOO
 IF I TALKED OF LOVE

LUCY YOUR SUGGESTIONS ARE A TRIFLE BOLD
 AND THE WEATHER IS A LITTLE COLD
 I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU THINK YOU ARE
 BUT BE SURE YOU WON'T GET FAR
 KEEP YOUR DISTANCE, THAT IS IF YOU CAN
 YOU ARE NOT MY KIND OF MAN

EDWARD WOULD YOU CARE TO SHARE A WOODEN BENCH WITH ME
 LET ME PUT MY HAND UPON YOUR KNEE
 TEACH YOU WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW?

LUCY OH DEAR SIR, IT'S CLEAR YOU'RE NOT A NICE YOUNG MAN
 DO I HAVE TO ANSWER TWICE YOUNG MAN
 THAT THE ANSWER'S NO?

EDWARD WOULD YOU LIKE TO MELT INTO MY ARMS TONIGHT
 LET ME FEEL YOUR LOVELY CHARMS TONIGHT
 WOULD YOU DARE TO TAKE THAT CHANCE?

LUCY OH, DEAR SIR, YOUR HAND I MUST DECLINE TO TOUCH
 FOR I SEE THAT YOU PRESUME TOO MUCH
 IN THIS BRIEF ROMANCE.

EDWARD ARE YOU SURE YOU WOULD NOT LIKE TO WALK?
 REALLY CERTAIN YOU DON'T WANT TO TALK?
 THERE IS NOTHING I'D RATHER DO
 THAN TO SPEND SOME TIME WITH YOU.
 PRETTY MISS, PLEASE LISTEN TO MY PLEA
 WON'T YOU TAKE A WALK WITH ME?

There is a pause as she looks at him archly, then away, then back at him and smiles.

LUCY VERY WELL, I'LL TAKE A LITTLE WALK WITH YOU
 I WILL EVEN SIT AND TALK WITH YOU
 WHISPER WORDS SO SOFT AND LOW
 YOU AND I WILL FIND WE HAVE A FRIEND INDEED
 THOUGH WE KNOW NOT WHERE THE END WILL LEAD
 AND WHETHER LOVE WILL GROW. *[Music stops.]*

LUCY *[She grabs his hand.]* Are you married? 'Ow old are you? Do you 'ave a good job with prospects? When can I meet yer mother?

EDWARD *[Laughing.]* Not playing the lady this time?

LUCY *[In her posh voice.]* La, sir, I cannot say what came over me, I must have had a mental abjuration.

EDWARD *[Laughing.]* I think you mean aberration, don't you?

LUCY Clever dick. *[She turns away from him.]*

EDWARD Oh Lucy, I wasn't laughing at you. I was laughing because you make me happy.

LUCY You was taking the mick.

EDWARD How can an Irishman called Edward take the mick?

LUCY *[Laughing.]* Is Edward your real name?

EDWARD Well now, if we were getting married your name would be O'Flynn and mine would be Michael.

LUCY Hello, Michael.

EDWARD Hello, Lucy.

LUCY And will we be getting married?

EDWARD I doubt it. You see, me darling girl, you're not rich and neither am I. We both need to find a rich mate.

LUCY But what happens to us when we have found our 'rich mate'?

EDWARD Then, my sweet Lucy, we shall be very very circumspect and continue to see each other.

LUCY So you'd expect me to become your mistress? That would be impossible if we really loved each other.

EDWARD On the contrary, if we really did love each other, that's why it would work.

LUCY I don't know.

EDWARD Well, think about it. I have to go to meet someone now. Here is my card. *[Gives her his card.]* Perhaps you could come to my lodgings in about an hour and I will instruct you in the arts of being a lady.

LUCY And a few other arts, no doubt.

EDWARD You have my word as a gentleman that nothing will happen between us without my willing consent.

LUCY *[Laughs at his jest.]* But you have warned me that you are not a true gentleman.

EDWARD Lucy, in my heart I am a true gentleman and I will always treat you with the respect you deserve. Goodbye for now and hope to see you soon.

He kisses her on the hand and exits. As he does so, TOM, in policeman's uniform, enters from the other side of the stage.

TOM Hello, Lucy, I wondered whether I'd find you here today. I know you like to walk in the park on your day off.

LUCY *[Hurriedly hides Edward's card under her hand on her lap. Then, in American voice.]* And who, pray, are you? Do I know you, young man? Have we been introduced?

TOM *[Taken aback.]* It's me – Tom.

LUCY *[Still in assumed voice.]* Tom? Tom? I think you must be mistaken, sir. I may be acquainted with a Thomas or two but certainly not a Tom.

TOM Come off it, Lucy, I can see it's you. That's unless you have a twin sister.

- LUCY My name, sir, is *not* Lucy: it's Lucinda – Lucinda Belle Jackson – and I certainly would not normally socialise with policemen. [*Then, reverting, to normal voice and laughing.*] But as it's you, Tom, I'll make an exception.
- TOM [*Kisses her on the cheek.*] I'm glad I met you today. I've been thinking about us since the night I brought Mrs Lovegrove home drunk. I said then that I'd like you to be my girl. I meant it then and I mean it now – I want to marry you, Lucy Ambleside.
- LUCY You're persistent, Tom, I'll give you that. But an 'andsome chap like you must've had other lady friends. Lots of girls like a man in a uniform...
- TOM Well, there was one. Maisy was her name. I was really quite smitten until her mother asked me round for high tea. And it turned into a real nightmare, I can tell you...

No. 13 High tea

- TOM [*Sings*]
- MAISY'S MOTHER ASKED ME 'OME TO TEA WHEN WE WAS WALKING OUT
MADE ME NERVOUS THINKING OF THAT TEA SEEIN' HOW I HAD ME DOUBTS
WHEN SHE TOLD ME TO BE THERE ALL SMARTENED
I KNEW THAT I MUSTN'T BE DISHEARTENED
SO DECIDED I MUST LOOK THE PART
AND I PUT ON ME VERY BEST SUIT
- HIGH TEA, HIGH TEA, WHAT HAS A BLOKE GOTTA DO?
BALANCE A CUP AND PLATE ON EACH KNEE
CHEW WITH YOUR MOUTH SHUT AND DON'T SLURP YOUR TEA
HIGH TEA, HIGH TEA, THE THOUGHT OF IT MAKES ME A WRECK
I'D RATHER A YEAR IN A PUB WITH NO BEER
THAN HAVE TO SUFFER HIGH TEA.
- OH, HOW RAPIDLY THE DAY COME ROUND, SOON I WAS AT THE GATE
BLACK BOOTS POLISHED AND ME SUIT JUST PRESSED
TRYING HARD TO LOOK FIRST RATE
KNEES WAS KNOCKIN' LIKE A BLOOMIN' HAMMER
SERVANT STANDING THERE, HE MADE ME STAMMER
"COME IN, SHUT THE DOOR BUT DON'T YOU SLAM 'ER"
THEN LEFT WITH HIS NOSE IN THE AIR.
- HIGH TEA, HIGH TEA, WHAT HAS A BLOKE GOTTA DO?
BALANCE A CUP AND PLATE ON EACH KNEE
CHEW WITH YOUR MOUTH SHUT AND DON'T SLURP YOUR TEA
HIGH TEA, HIGH TEA, THE THOUGHT OF IT MAKES ME A WRECK
I'D RATHER A YEAR IN A PUB WITH NO BEER
THAN HAVE TO SUFFER HIGH TEA.
- MAISY'S MOTHER COME AND SHOOK ME HAND, LEADING ME IN TO SCOFF
MAISY KISSED ME AND ME COURAGE ROSE, THOUGHT I COULD PULL IT OFF
BUT THE EXPERIENCE WAS MUCH TOO DARING
SMALL TALK AND JUGGLING WAS FAR TOO WEARING
I KNEW MARRIED LIFE WE'D NOT BE SHARING
I KNEW IT WOULD NEVER BE ME
- HIGH TEA, HIGH TEA, WHAT HAS A BLOKE GOTTA DO?
BALANCE A CUP AND PLATE ON EACH KNEE
CHEW WITH YOUR MOUTH SHUT AND DON'T SLURP YOUR TEA
HIGH TEA, HIGH TEA, THE THOUGHT OF IT MAKES ME A WRECK
I'D RATHER A YEAR IN A PUB WITH NO BEER
THAN HAVE TO SUFFER HIGH TEA.

TOM sits on bench alongside LUCY.

- LUCY So what 'appened to 'er, this Maisy?
- TOM Dunno. Never saw her again. In any case, it's you I think of you as my lady friend now.
- LUCY Oh, Tom. I'm very fond of you but if we did wed I'd have to leave service and I doubt we'd manage on just your wages, would we? In any case, getting married would interfere with my plans

TOM What plans are those, Lucy?

LUCY Ah, that's my secret. But you'll know if it 'appens. *[Puts on American accent again.]*
So I would appreciate it, young man, if you would kindly change the topic of
conversation.

TOM I think you mean 'topic'.

LUCY *[Aside to herself.]* Oh, not you as well!

TOM So how was Mrs Lovegrove after her tipsy evening?

LUCY Well, somewhat the worse for wear next day but it's given me a bit of an upper hand
– that and finding out about 'er fiddling.

TOM What?! Cook's a violinist?

LUCY *[Laughing.]* No, silly. I mean she and Mr Town are making a bit on the side, buying
more than necessary and.. *[Stops abruptly]* Oh, but I shouldn't be telling a policeman
about it, should I? Please don't say anything, Tom, it's only a penny or two 'ere and
there.

TOM Well, I *could* turn a deaf ear this time. But I'd certainly turn *two* deaf ears if you said
you'll marry me.

*Suddenly, a pickpocket runs on pursued by offstage shouts of "Stop thief!". TOM immediately says a quick
goodbye to LUCY and chases after him. LUCY retrieves Edward's card and looks at it thoughtfully, with
music quietly playing few bars – but slowly – of **Number 12** "Would you like to take a walk". After a while she
gets up and walks slowly and thoughtfully off in the same direction as Edward left. Blackout.*

ACT ONE – SCENE EIGHT

Backstage at the theatre. GERALD is sprawled in a chair sucking on an unlit cigar. The sound of music from the stage can be heard in the background. Waltz No. 9. MAUDE, the dresser, appears.

MAUDE Excuse me, sir, but there's a young woman wishes to see you. Stage-struck, like the rest of them. Saucy little minx, if you ask me.

GERALD I didn't. Can she sing and dance?

MAUDE Says she can.

GERALD You don't like her, do you? She must be pretty.

MAUDE I suppose some men might find her attractive.

GERALD Send her in.

MAUDE *[Calls off.]* In you come, girl. *[LUCY enters nervously.]* Now mind your manners and don't waste his time. He's a busy man.

GERALD Maude tells me you want to appear in my music hall. Think you're good enough?

LUCY Yes, sir.

GERALD Maude says you can sing and dance. That right?

LUCY Yes, sir, if you please, sir.

GERALD Where did you get your training?

LUCY My mother taught me when I was younger.

GERALD *[To Maude.]* Amateur night all over again, Maude. *[To Lucy.]* Audiences here are a tough bunch. Think you can satisfy them?

LUCY If you give me a chance, I'll prove I can.

Some stagehands wander in and take a great interest in Lucy.

GERALD Lift your dress, show us your legs. *[She lifts her dress over her calves.]* Higher. *[She lifts her dress to her thighs.]* Higher. *[She lifts it all the way up.]* Um, not bad. *[To Maude]* What do you think, Maude... with a good costume?

MAUDE *[Grudgingly]* We might be able to do something with her.

GERALD What's your name?

LUCY Lucy Ambleside, sir.

GERALD That's awful. It'll have to go. Do you have a song?

LUCY Yes, sir. I found it in a music magazine. *[Hands it to Gerald who glances at it and gives it to the pianist.]* It's about a French girl called Arlette.

GERALD Arlette! Now, that's not a bad stage name. Can you speak French?

LUCY I've picked up a few words, like everybody does.

GERALD Well, Arlette, let's hear this song.

LUCY Mais oui, monsieur.

GERALD Persuade me and Maude you're good enough and we might just give you a chance.

LUCY *[French accent.]* You are too kind, monsieur, to a poor French girl whose only aim in life is to please the fine gentlemen 'oo come to zis wonderful theatre.

The song introduction is played. GERALD leans back in his seat and MAUDE stands with her arms folded.

No.14 My name is Arlette

MY NAME IS ARLETTE, I COME FROM PARIS
AND EV'RYONE THINKS I AM SO DEMURE
FOR I SEEM SO SWEET AND NICE
THAT NO LADY WOULD THINK TWICE
OF LEAVING ME ALONE WITH HER YOUNG MAN OR HUSBAND.
MY NAME IS ARLETTE, MAM'SEL FROM PARIS
MY ACCENT IS MY PASSPORT, THAT IS SURE
WHEN THEY LAUGH AT MY GRAMMAR
I JUST SMILE AND SAY 'LA! LA!'
WHILE BLUSHING AND CONFUSÉD I JUST TURN AWAY..BUT...
I LOVE TO PLEASE AS MANY MEN AS I CAN GET AROUND TO.

LUCY *[Spoken]* Could you be one, monsieur?

LUCY *[Sings]* AND I LOVE TO TEASE UNTIL THEY ARE EXCITED AS THEY'RE BOUND TO.

LUCY *[Spoken]* Or maybe you, monsieur?

LUCY *[Sings]* FOR I AM THE MISS THE MEN ALL LOVE TO KISS
AS LONG AS I CAN KEEP IT SECRET
YES, I LOVE TO TEASE AND I LOVE TO SQUEEZE AND I LOVE TO PLEASE
MY MEN
CHERI...I LOVE TO TOY
WITH ALL THE CHAPS WHO FIND ME SO APPEALING

LUCY *[Spoken]* Every single one of them!

LUCY *[Sings]* WHEN I KISS A BOY
HE SOON FINDS OUT HIS HEART IS ON THE CEILING

LUCY *[Spoken]* That is guaranteed!

LUCY *[Sings]* YES, I'M NATURAL, A REAL FEMME FATALE
THE KIND WHO'S NEVER TAKEN SERIOUS
FOR I DON'T KNOW WHY, IT'S NOT TO ANNOY
BUT I LOVE TO TOY WITH MEN

MY NAME IS ARLETTE, I COME FROM PARIS
AND I CAN LOOK SO INNOCENT AND PURE
I AM QUIET AS A MOUSE
SO NO NEWLY WEDDED SPOUSE
WILL THINK I AM A DANGER TO 'ER 'ANDSOME 'USBAND.
MY NAME IS ARLETTE, MAM'SEL FROM PARIS
MY FACE WILL NEVER GIVE MY GAME AWAY
MY REPLY TO 'ARE YOU GOOD?'
IS 'NO! BETTER THAN I SHOULD!'
AND THEN I JUST SMILE AND SIMPLY WALK AWAY.

GERALD Well, what do you think, Maude?

MAUDE The men will like her *[Looks at stage hands who've been ogling.]* and that's good box office.

LUCY What did you think, sir?

GERALD I'm impressed by your accent... *[He rises.]* ... amongst other things.

LUCY I have always been a good mimic, sir. Will you give me a spot?

GERALD Come up to my office and we'll discuss your position here. *[He takes her arm and leads her off.]*

MAUDE And we know what sort of position he has in mind. I only hope she knows what she's letting herself in for. She could live to regret this evening's work. *[She exits. Blackout]*

ACT ONE – SCENE NINE

The kitchen in semi-darkness but for the soft light of a lamp throwing lots of shadows. The back door opens and LUCY creeps in quietly closing it behind her. As she starts to creep across the kitchen, a voice comes from the shadows.

TOWN *[Loudly.]* So you have decided to grace us with your presence at last, Lucy.

LUCY *[Jumping out of her skin.]* Mr Town, I didn't see you there.

TOWN *[Rising from a chair.]* Nor were you meant to, missy.

LUCY You scared me half to death.

TOWN Where have you been?

LUCY I had to go out. It was important. I knew I wouldn't be wanted until later on. I didn't think there'd be any harm in it. Especially as we're all going to the seaside tomorrow.

TOWN Any harm in it? *[Shouting.]* Any harm in it?! Have you any idea what you have done?

LUCY But mistress Amelia never goes to bed until at least three o'clock when they're entertaining.

TOWN Lady Amelia was taken ill at the party and the doctor was called. You were required but could not be found anywhere.

LUCY I'm sorry, I'll go straight up to her.

TOWN No, you will not. Sally is with her. As of now, she has taken your position as personal maid to Lady Amelia.

LUCY No! *[She starts to cry.]* I've said I'm sorry.

TOWN *[Shouting.]* Sorry?! Sorry?! *[Then quieter as he gets himself under control.]* You have totally destroyed the good order of my house. As butler, I am responsible for everything that happens in this house and you have dragged my good name in the mire of disrepute.

LUCY I didn't mean this to happen.

TOWN You are one brick in the edifice of good order on which this house and everyone in it relies but you are made of sand and your behaviour threatens us all.

LUCY It won't happen again, I promise.

TOWN Of that you can be sure. *[Calls out.]* Mrs Lovegrove!

DORIS *[Appearing suddenly, clearly having been listening outside.]* Yes, Mr Town?

TOWN You will escort this, this 'thing' to her room and make sure she takes only her own possessions and nothing else. *[The bells rings. {SOUND CUE}]* The master needs me, I must go. When she has packed, you will see her off the premises with no money or references.

DORIS But that's a bit harsh, Mr Town.

TOWN By George, Mrs Lovegrove, if I were being harsh I would have her lashed from our door with the coaching whip. *[He exits.]*

LUCY But, Mrs Lovegrove, with no money or references, I won't get any work and I'll starve to death.

DORIS That's as maybe, but you have brought it on yourself.

LUCY Get a message to Miss Amelia. She'll speak up for me.

DORIS Lady Amelia is very ill, a sudden fever. She cannot be disturbed.

LUCY But what am I going to do?

DORIS I don't know. You've made your bed and now you must lie in it.

LUCY I have worked in this house since I was nine and they throw me out for one mistake.

DORIS You know what life is like. We servants are not allowed to have a life of our own. But we're better off than many a man or woman out there in the streets. At least we have a roof over our heads, food in our bellies and clothes on our backs. Complete obedience is the price we pay and you know what happens if you break the rules.

LUCY You break these rules. I know all about the little fiddles you and Mr Town get up to. If I told them, they might take me back.

DORIS *[Ignoring the accusation.]* Who's going to listen to you? Anything you say will be treated as sour grapes. Now, are you coming to collect your things or shall I throw you out without them?

LUCY No, I'll collect them in case you steal the few things I do have left.

DORIS You have an evil tongue on you, Lucy Ambleside, and may you burn in hell for it.

LUCY *[Defiantly.]* Well, if I do, one thing's sure and that is that you'll be the one turning the spit!!

Before DORIS can say anything, LUCY runs upstairs with DORIS puffing behind her. Curtain.

INTERVAL

No.15 Entr'acte

ACT TWO – SCENE ONE

The seaside. There are some bathing huts, deckchairs and towels. The music starts. Towards one side of the stage TOWN and DORIS are seated on deckchairs with a large hamper. SALLY and ALBERT are also on deckchairs towards the other side. Some ladies and gents enter. The men are dressed in period bathing costumes except for TOWN who is dressed in his usual clothes. DORIS is wearing a somewhat gaudy dress and a sun hat with flowers on it.

No.16 On high days and holidays

MEN + DORIS *[Sing]* ON HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS
THIS IS WHAT WE LOVE BEST
SOME OF US HAVING FUN AND GAMES
SOME OF US HERE TO REST
ON HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS
SEASIDE IS WHERE WE HEAD
ICE CREAM AND ROCK
STROLL ROUND THE DOCK
THEN PAINT THE TOWN BRIGHT RED.

Some ladies in suitable costumes appear stage left from the bathing huts.

MEN THE LADIES COME OUT OF THEIR BATHING HUTS
WE TRY TO GLIMPSE A THIGH
LADIES THE MEN BUILD THEIR SANDCASTLES FIRM AND TALL
ALL LONGING TO CATCH OUR EYE
ALL ON HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS
HERE ON THE GOLDEN SAND
MEN FRESH FISH AND CHIPS
LADIES ROWING BOAT TRIPS
ALL LIFE IS GRAND.

Dancers [optional] enter stage right.

ALL ON HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS
WE HAVE A LOT OF FUN
RIDING THE DONKEYS, CHASING GIRLS
HOPING TO SEE THE SUN.
ON HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS
DECK CHAIRS LINED UP IN ROWS
LADIES WIND IN OUR HAIR
MEN BREATHING FRESH AIR
ALL THEN OFF TO SEE THE SHOWS

LADIES THE MEN STRUT AROUND IN THEIR BATHING SUITS
PERSPIRING IN THE HEAT
MEN THE LADIES PRETEND NOT TO NOTICE US
PREFERRING TO BE DISCREET

ALL ON HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS
THIS IS THE PLACE TO BE
CANDY AND POP, RUN 'TILL YOU DROP
DOWN BY THE – DOWN BY THE SEA. *[Music stops.]*

DORIS It's nice to see them all enjoying themselves, Mr Town.

TOWN It is indeed, Mrs Lovegrove, so long as they behave themselves.

DORIS Didn't you ever just enjoy yourself when you were on holiday? Just let rip making the most of the opportunity.

TOWN I don't recall I ever did. I entered service when I was a child and there are few opportunities for self-indulgence when you aspire to improve yourself.

SALLY Come on, Mrs Lovegrove, 'ow about 'aving a paddle?

ALBERT Yeah, they say the water's lovely.

DORIS My paddling days are over. You lot just go off and enjoy yerselves.

BEN Come on everyone, last one in the sea is a crab.

They all rush off, screaming and shouting, with ALBERT having his arm around SALLY. TOWN and DORIS are left alone.

TOWN Why do young people have to make so much noise when they are enjoying themselves? It would be nice to have a bit of peace and quiet.

DORIS Don't begrudge them their bit of fun, Mr Town. They don't get much of it in their lives, god bless 'em.

TOWN That's true, a servant's life is very hard for very little reward. But I didn't realise you felt so much for them. You don't show it very often.

DORIS And for the same reason as you: familiarity breeds contempt. But I think you care about them as much as I do.

TOWN I suppose I do. In a way, they are my family, the only family I have ever really had since my mother died. And you know how much I care for you. *[He touches her hand gently but she withdraws it as EMILY, SALLY and ALBERT run on. It is not clear whether she would have withdrawn her hand if left alone.]*

SALLY Mr Town, we thought we'd get some whelks with the money the master gave us. Would you two like some?

DORIS Lord luv us, girl, I wouldn't trust anybody else's cooking – especially from a stall. I've brought plenty of food for us all in the hamper, so you stay and eat with us.

SALLY and ALBERT go to their deckchairs.

EMILY I do wish Lucy was with us. She would really have enjoyed today.

DORIS Serves her right. She brought it on herself.

EMILY Well I still wish she was 'ere. I liked 'er a lot and she was 'elping me with things like reading and 'ow to speak proper. Does anyone know where she is or what she's doing?

DORIS No, we don't. And if I was you I'd forget all about 'er.

The rest of the servants run on through the audience, making lots of noise.

BEN The water's terrific, and I've found you a crab to cook. *[He runs towards her, holding out a crab.]*

DORIS Keep that thing away from me.

BEN changes direction and runs after the other women, who run away from him, squealing.

ALBERT What about some of that lovely food you brought then, Mrs Lovegrove? I'm starving!

SALLY Yes, please. Let's eat.

As DORIS passes food around...

ALBERT It's been lovely being with you today. I've really enjoyed myself.

SALLY So have I. It's a shame we can't show our proper feelings back at the house.

ALBERT I know. But at least I see you every day and we do steal a kiss now and then. That's got to be better than nothing.

SALLY Sometimes I think I must be in love. But 'ow can I know for certain? A doctor can't take my temperature or anything.

ALBERT No one can give you an answer to that, Sally. In the end, we all take a chance.

No.17**One brief moment**

ALBERT [*Sings*] WHO CAN TELL WHAT IS LOVE OR AFFECTION
 WHO CAN KNOW FROM THE START WHAT IS REAL?
 TOWN WHO CAN SAY WHAT WILL LAST FOR A LIFETIME
 OR EXPLAIN THE EMOTIONS THAT THEY FEEL?
 ALBERT WHEN A BOY MEETS A GIRL FOR THE FIRST TIME
 AND THEIR FRIENDSHIP GROWS STRONGER EACH DAY
 ALBERT & SALLY IN THEIR HEARTS THEY MAY THINK THEY'VE FOUND LOVE
 BUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SKIES START TURNING GREY?

ALBERT FOR TRUE LOVE'S A MYSTERY TO ALL OF US
 TOWN MASTER AND SERVANT ALIKE
 SOMETIMES IT HAPPENS LIKE A SUMMER BREEZE
 ALBERT SOMETIMES A LIGHTNING BOLT STRIKE
 ALL INCL. DORIS AND NO ONE CAN DODGE OLD CUPID'S ARROWS
 NO ONE CAN LOCK THEIR HEART AWAY
 FOR ALL LOVE NEEDS IS ONE BRIEF MOMENT
 TO BE WITH US FOR EVER AND A DAY

TOWN & DORIS EVER SINCE ADAM ATE THE FIRST APPLE
 AND DECIDED HE NEEDED A MATE
 ALBERT & SALLY EV'RY MAN AT LEAST ONCE IN HIS LIFETIME
 HAS IMAGINED ROMANCE WOULD BE HIS FATE.
 TOWN WITH YOUNG ADAM THE CHOICE WAS STRAIGHTFORWARD
 FOR IN HIS CASE IT HAD TO BE EVE
 ALL BUT FOR US THINGS ARE NOT SO SIMPLE
 AND WE FIND IT MUCH HARDER TO BELIEVE.

ALL FOR TRUE LOVE'S A MYSTERY TO ALL OF US
 MASTER AND SERVANT ALIKE
 SOMETIMES IT HAPPENS LIKE A SUMMER BREEZE
 SOMETIMES A LIGHTNING BOLT STRIKE
 AND NO ONE CAN DODGE OLD CUPID'S ARROWS
 NO ONE CAN LOCK THEIR HEART AWAY
 FOR ALL LOVE NEEDS IS ONE BRIEF MOMENT
 TO BE WITH US FOR EVER AND A DAY
 YES ALL LOVE NEEDS IS ONE BRIEF MOMENT
 TO BE WITH US FOR EVER AND A DAY

Blackout.

ACT TWO - SCENE 2

The park. LUCY is sitting on a bench with her valise and a few pathetic bundles by her side. She keeps looking up as if she is expecting someone. She looks tired and dishevelled. EDWARD enters and hurries to her.

EDWARD Lucy, I got your note. What's happened? You look a mess.

LUCY So would you if you'd been sleeping out.

EDWARD What do you mean?

LUCY I've lost my position, Edward. *[She starts to cry.]*

EDWARD Why? You're not pregnant are you?

LUCY No, of course not. You've always made sure of that, haven't you – in case it spoils your plans. Well, your plans will have to change now because I shall be coming to live with you. I have nowhere else to go.

EDWARD Now, well, that might be a little difficult.

LUCY A little difficult? Try being thrown out on the streets with no money and no references: that's a 'little difficult', too!

EDWARD My god! What on earth did you do? Did you steal or what?

LUCY No! All I did was take some time off without asking and they dismissed me.

EDWARD *[Pacing up and down.]* You stupid, stupid girl.

LUCY So, I'm stupid, am I? That's not what you say when we're in bed together.

EDWARD Why don't you shout it out loud so everybody in the park can hear you!

LUCY *[Shouting.]* That's not what you say when we're in bed ..

EDWARD claps his hand over her mouth.

EDWARD All right. You're upset. I understand.

LUCY Upset? I'm facing starvation and a life on the streets and you say I'm upset. I'm not upset .. *[She starts to cry.]* I'm terrified. *[She sits down.]*

EDWARD *[Sitting next to her and putting his arm around her.]* Don't worry. We'll work something out.

LUCY I've spent all my life protected from the world – first in the orphanage and then in the house. Everything I needed was there for me and, although I've had to work hard, I was safe in my own little world. But I need you now, Edward. Why can't I come and stay with you?

EDWARD You know I talked about finding a wealthy heiress and marrying her. Well, I have found her. Her money is tied up in trusts at the moment but she has enough coming in for me to live comfortably and one day she will get it all. Her uncle visits me at home regularly and I would find it difficult to explain your presence.

LUCY You could get me a room somewhere and visit me there.

EDWARD Unfortunately all my money is tied up in courting this lady and I have none to spare.

LUCY So, she is more important to you than I am?

EDWARD At this moment, yes.

LUCY *[After a pause.]* You bastard! You absolute bastard!! I trusted you and now when I need you, you just throw me out like yesterday's milk. You used me, Michael O'Flynn!

EDWARD *[Defiantly.]* Don't come that with me. Everybody uses someone. Every rank and class in society stands on the ones below it like a giant pyramid. They all use their position to get what they want.

LUCY *[Suddenly calm.]* So you don't love me?

EDWARD The strange thing is, my sweet, that in a funny sort of way I do. I am still fond of you.

LUCY *[Looks at him in disbelief.]* Fond of me? Love me 'in a funny sort of way'? You are just beyond belief! *[She starts to strengthen visibly.]*

EDWARD What are you going to do?

LUCY I don't know yet. Maybe starve to death. Maybe shout out our affair to the rooftops so your little goldmine finds out.

EDWARD You wouldn't.

LUCY Maybe I might or just maybe I will find my rightful place in life. I'll show you and everyone they haven't heard the last of Lucy Ambleside. *[She picks up her bags and starts to go.]*

EDWARD Lucy! *[She pauses.]* I'm sorry.

LUCY *[Turns and looks at him scornfully.]* You know, Edward, I preferred you as Michael O'Flynn. At least he was honest. *[She exits.]*

EDWARD *[Looking after her.]* How can she understand when I don't even understand myself. *[He sits on bench looking offstage as TOM enters from opposite side of stage to LUCY'S exit. He is dressed in military uniform.]* Love makes fools of us all. *[He buries his head in his hands.]*

TOM Good evening, sir. Everything all right?

EDWARD *[Looking up.]* Yes, thank you .. soldier.

TOM Sorry, sir, old habits die hard. I was a copper until I joined up.

EDWARD You're used to listening to people's problems then.

TOM Heard quite a few in my time. *[He sits on bench.]* Anything I can help with?

EDWARD *[Laughing.]* It's not really a problem, because I know the answer. It's just ... women.

TOM Oh them, yes. Like they say, can't live with them, can't live without them.

EDWARD But why do they have to be so ... confusing?

TOM *[Laughing.]* I know what you mean. But you can't help loving them even when they're ... ridiculous.

EDWARD Is that a word?

TOM Probably not, but there's nothing wrong with new words, is there?

EDWARD I suppose not. Ridiculous. I like it. It has a ring about it.

BERT and FRED enter.

BERT 'Ello, Tom, changed yer uniform then?

TOM Yes, decided to fight for king and country. You joining up?

BERT Not on yer Nellie. Couldn't trust me old woman alone at 'ome if I went off to war.

FRED Not 'alf. Yer gotta watch 'em all the time.

TOM Women, just the subject we were talking about. That and making up new words for 'em – words like 'ridiculous'.

BERT and FRED Ridiculous? What's that supposed to mean?

No.18 Ridiculous

TOM *[Sings briskly.]* RIDICULOUS DESCRIBES ALL WOMANKIND
THEY'LL DRIVE YOU CRAZY TILL YOU'RE RIGHT OUT OF YOUR MIND
RIDICULOUS, THE BEST WORD TO DEFINE
HOW THEY INFURIATE, MADDEN AND EXASPERATE
THEY BRING CONFUSION INTO YOUR LIFE AND TO MINE

BERT, FRED WHEN THEY SING 'YOUNG AND OLD INTO BATTLE'
WE SHOULD SEND THEM OFF TO NO MAN'S LAND
SO THE BOCHE HAVE TO SUFFER THEIR PRATTLE
SURRENDERING IN DROVES
WON'T THAT BE GRAND

TOM *[More gently.]* BUT A WOMAN CAN TURN A WINTER DAY TO SPRING
WITH HER BREATHLESS BEAUTY
HER SMILE HER LAUGH WILL MAKE YOU START TO SING
SONGS OF LOVE AND DUTY

BERT, FRED NO! DON'T LET SUCH FEELINGS WIN
HAVE A TOT OR TWO OF GIN
EDWARD DO TAKE ALL HER KISSES
BERT, FRED DON'T MAKE HER YOUR MISSUS
NO ONE WANTS A BALL AND CHAIN

TOM MEN AREN'T MONOGAMOUS, WE ARE THE ROVING SORT
BERT, FRED JUST LIKE A SAILOR WITH A GIRL IN EV'RY PORT
IF YOU MUST MARRY, THEN MAKE SURE SHE IS WELL-HEELED
EDWARD I SHALL BE SET FOR LIFE, LIVING OFF MY NEW WIFE
RIDICULOUS? NO! I'LL STILL PLAY THE FIELD!

ALL *[Enthusiastically.]* THOUGH WE CAN'T LIVE WITH WOMEN, WE CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT
THEY CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT
RIDICULOUS THEIR TOPSY TURVY THOUGHTS
WHILE WE ARE DOWN TO EARTH, SENSIBLE, RIGHT FROM BIRTH
MEN MAY HAVE WEAKNESSES BUT NONE OF US HAS FAULTS!
WE ARE SUPERIOR, NAT'RALLY CHEERIER,
MEN MAY HAVE WEAKNESSES
BUT NONE OF US, NOT ONE OF US, NO NONE OF US HAS FAULTS!

FRED *[Suddenly embarrassed.]* Yeah, well nice to see you again, Tom.

BERT *[Also embarrassed.]* You take care over there. Show those Boche what an Englishman is made of.

FRED Nice to meet you too, sir. *[Doffs his cap to EDWARD.]*

EDWARD The pleasure was all mine.

BERT *[Going off.]* Not a bad sort really.

FRED *[Going off.]* For a toff. *[They exit.]*

EDWARD *[Holding his hand out to TOM.]* Nice to meet you, Tom. Make sure you come home safe.

TOM *[Shaking his hand.]* I'll do my best. *[They wander off in opposite directions.]*

Blackout.

ACT TWO – SCENE THREE

The same day. Backstage at the theatre. LUCY is changing behind a screen. GERALD is seated nearby.

- GERALD So why are you telling me all your troubles?
- LUCY Because it means I can perform every night now.
- GERALD Well, the audience will certainly like you but we need to find you some more material. I'll arrange a meeting with the musical director.
- LUCY Thank you *[Pauses.]* There is one other thing. I need a place to stay and I thought there might be somewhere here in the theatre.
- GERALD Did you, now? Well, as it happens, there are a couple of rooms, if we can come to an, er, acceptable arrangement.
- LUCY And just what is an 'acceptable arrangement'?
- GERALD Well, I use the rooms myself sometimes when I'm working late.
- LUCY So you'd want me to move out when you need the room?
- GERALD Not quite what I had in mind.
- LUCY Just what did you have in mind? A little sharing arrangement, perhaps?
- GERALD If I'm doing you a favour then why not? *[A pause.]* Well?
- LUCY I think not. The way I see it I'm doing you a favour because you've seen how I can pull in the audiences. So if you aren't prepared to accept my terms, I can always take myself off to the Metropole.
- GERALD Hm. I see you're more determined than I took you for. Yes, you're right. The business hasn't been doing too well lately, and you could be the one to turn it round.
- LUCY Yes, I can make you famous and rich.
- GERALD Not quite, Lucy. *We* can make each other rich. I see it as a partnership. *[Holds out hand and they shake.]*

*Theatre backdrop comes in. A stepladder and chair are set. **The orchestra strikes a chord** and GERALD steps on stage.*

- GERALD Ladies and gentlemen, we present for your delight – your favourite French songbird. Arlette!

As he leaves, LUCY enters in a maid's outfit and, moving to centre stage, stands with her back to the audience and her hands over her eyes.

- VOICE from pit Don't be shy, luv, we all want to be friendly.
- LUCY *[Turning to audience holding a feather duster.]* La, sir, that is what the master always says. *[The intro to the song starts and during the number she uses the feather duster in many suggestive ways.]*

No.19 A parlour maid

AS I'M MAKING THE BED IN THE MISTRESS'S ROOM
WHILE SHE'S GONE FOR A RIDE IN THE FIELDS WITH THE GROOM
THE MASTER COMES HOME AND THE JOB TAKES 'TILL NOON
YES, EV'RYTHING'S HARD FOR A PARLOUR MAID.
WHEN THE YOUNG MASTER COMES FROM HIS CLUB ABOUT THREE
THEN HE GIVES ME AN ORDER FOR TIFFIN AND TEA
THE TEA IS EARL GREY BUT THE TIFFIN IS ME
THAT'S THE LIFE OF A PARLOUR MAID.

A PARLOUR MAID, A PARLOUR MAID
THAT'S THE LIFE OF A PARLOUR MAID
A PARLOUR MAID, A PARLOUR MAID
IT'S SO HARD FOR A PARLOUR MAID.

OUR FIRST FOOTMAN, ANGUS, A SIMPLE YOUNG SCOT
 HE IS OFTEN IN CHURCH AND HE PRAYS QUITE A LOT
 IT SEEMS WHAT HE PRAYS FOR IS JUST WHAT I'VE GOT
 YES, EV'RYTHING'S HARD FOR A PARLOUR MAID.
 AND THE YOUNG GROOM CALLED GERALD DON'T KNOW WHEN TO STOP
 HE WILL TICKLE YOUR FANCY WITH HIS RIDING CROP
 THEN GIVE YOU A RIDE 'TILL YOU'RE READY TO DROP
 THAT'S THE LIFE OF A PARLOUR MAID.

A PARLOUR MAID, A PARLOUR MAID
 THAT'S THE LIFE OF A PARLOUR MAID
 A PARLOUR MAID, A PARLOUR MAID
 IT'S SO HARD FOR A PARLOUR MAID.

THERE'S THE MASTER'S SON, ANDREW, A HEALTHY YOUNG LAD
 AND WHEN YOU'RE UP A LADDER HE CAN BE QUITE BAD
 BUT WHO CAN DENY HIM, HE'S JUST LIKE HIS DAD
 YES, EVERYTHING'S HARD FOR A PARLOUR MAID.
 BUT THE JOB'S NOT SO BAD, NOT SO BAD AS IT SOUNDS
 'COS IT DOES KEEP YOU FIT BEING CHASED ROUND THE GROUNDS
 THE NUMBER OF UPS IS THE SAME AS THE DOWNS
 IN THE LIFE OF A PARLOUR MAID.

A PARLOUR MAID, A PARLOUR MAID
 IT'S SO HARD FOR A PARLOUR MAID
 A PARLOUR MAID, A PARLOUR MAID
 THAT'S THE LIFE OF A PARLOUR MAID.
 WHO'D BE A PARLOUR MAID?
 LIFE OF A PARLOUR MAID!

LUCY bows and exits stage left. Immediately switch to backstage.. TOM is waiting there for her.

TOM Lucy! I just knew it was you. I recognised you on the stage, even with your French accent. I just had to see you.

LUCY Hello, Tom. So, you've joined up. You look very smart in your uniform, but then you always did.

TOM I'm off to France tomorrow with the regiment. If only I'd come to the music hall sooner, I would have found you in time. I've been searching high and low for you since you went. What happened to you?

LUCY They threw me out – just because I took time off without permission.

TOM Just for that? So where did you go?

LUCY The only place I could go – 'ere. But it's not been easy. Most men seem to regard any woman in the theatre as fair game. So I'm having to live on my wits.

TOM Well, I don't care what's 'appened to you or what you've been doing because I still want to marry you.

LUCY Tom, you're a nice man and an 'onest one. I don't deserve you.

TOM And I don't deserve you, either, so we're equal. But I'll do my best to make you 'appy if you'll say you'll marry me when I come back from France. I love you so much.

LUCY *[Putting her fingers to his lips.]* Shush! No more talk of marriage.

TOM Lucy, please.... *[Defiantly.]* I won't go, then.

LUCY Don't be silly. You'd be shot as a deserter and who would that help?

TOM But...

LUCY *[Interrupting.]* But we do have each other right now and we only have tonight before you go. So let's spend it together.

TOM Lucy, I...

LUCY Don't say any more. I must do my second spot now. You go back to your seat and I'll see you after the show by the stage door. Then we'll go to my place. Tonight will be ours to share for ever, no matter what happens to us.

TOM exits. GERALD appears and gestures towards the door.

GERALD Is he the reason you've always said no to me?

LUCY Yes, that was Tom. He's enlisted and is off to the front, so we're meeting tonight to say our goodbyes.

LUCY rushes off as we hear the intro to 'My name is Arlette'. Blackout.

ACT TWO – SCENE FOUR

The next morning. Below stairs again. Round the table drinking tea are TOWN, DORIS and TOM in army battledress. EMILY is moving around doing things in the kitchen and waiting on the table. DORIS is knitting. Other servants are busy at their jobs.

TOWN So you're off to France today, Tom?

TOM Yes, but last night I began to wish I hadn't volunteered. It don't seem right to me, Mr Town. This 'ere Kaiser bloke comes along throwing 'is weight about and, before you know it, we're at war.

TOWN Kings are a mystery to us ordinary folk but where they lead us we must go, Germans and Englishmen alike. That is in the order of things.

TOM That's as maybe, but it isn't your Kaiser or your king out on the battlefield and fighting 'and to 'and. It's ordinary people like you and me.

TOWN Don't you think it is a noble thing to die for king and country?

TOM Not at all, it's much better to **live** for king and country and help to make it more prosperous.

DORIS 'Ere, 'ere, Tom. Well said. We're all doing our bit. [Holds up her knitting.] All the women are knitting things for the soldiers. Even Mistress Amelia is organising parcels for them.

TOM Have you noticed, Mr Town, that, now there's a war on, the suffragettes have stopped being a nuisance and are supporting the war effort. Thank goodness – they were causing us no end of trouble.

TOWN I suppose they do have a point, though.

DORIS Why, Mr Town, I never thought I'd hear you say that!

TOWN I have read quite deeply on the matter and in my opinion we should consider giving votes to certain women.

DORIS What sort of women?

TOWN Titled women. Women of property. Intelligent women.

DORIS What about the rest of us?

EMILY Yeah, what about me, why can't I have a vote?

TOWN *[Glancing towards Emily.]* You see, Mrs Lovegrove, I think that makes my point.

EMILY What does 'e mean, cook?

DORIS What 'e means, dear, is that the chance of all women getting the vote is about as remote as you becoming a real cook.

EMILY Oh!

TOM *[After a short pause, and with a knowing glint in his eye.]* Anybody 'eard anything about Lucy since she went?

TOWN We don't talk about her here.

TOM But surely you must be curious about what 'appened to 'er.

DORIS Not really. She was a bad lot.

TOM *[Angrily.]* She certainly was not, Mrs Lovegrove!

DORIS Sorry, Tom. I forgot you've got a soft spot for her. But I always speak as I find and she certainly did let us down.

TOWN *[Hurriedly changing the subject.]* When do you embark for France, Tom?

TOM Tomorrow. *[A moment's silence, and again with a knowing tone.]* 'Ave you 'eard about this singer from France? Everybody's talking about 'er, so I went to see 'er last night. She was wonderful, really wonderful.

DORIS Yes, so I hear. She must be good to be so popu... *[TOWN interrupts firmly.]*

TOWN In this house, we don't go to the music hall, and I prefer not to talk about those who perform there.

No. 20 The stage is no place for a decent girl

TOWN *[Sings.]* THE STAGE IS NO PLACE FOR A DECENT GIRL
NOT IF SHE VALUES HER NAME
THE SORT OF WOMAN WHO GOES ON THE STAGE
IS THE SORT THAT GOES ON THE GAME

TOWN & DORIS ALTHOUGH THE MUSIC HALL IS ALL THE RAGE
ITS MORALS ARE FAR FROM CLEAR
SO ALL YOUNG LADIES SHOULD REMEMBER
THE STAGE IS NO PLACE FOR A DECENT GIRL

[Men servants have been listening and join in with TOM.]

TOM ON THE OTHER HAND WE LIKE A
MUSIC HALL QUEEN WHO LOVES TO BE SEEN
IN FOL-DE-ROL FURBELOWS

TOM & MEN A PRETTY YOUNG MISS WHO'LL BLOW YOU A KISS
WHILE STRIKING A SAUCY POSE
WITH THE CUT OF HER DRESS, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GUESS
WHAT PLEASURES MAY LIE IN STORE

TOWN & DORIS YES, THE STAGE IS NO PLACE FOR A DECENT GIRL.

THE STAGE IS NO PLACE FOR A DECENT GIRL
EV'RYONE WILL TELL YOU THE SAME

TOWN THEY'LL SAY AN ACTRESS WILL ALWAYS BE SEEN
AS SOMEONE WHO'S LIVING IN SHAME

DORIS THE LURE OF LIMELIGHT IS WHAT DRAWS HER ON
IN SEARCH OF APPLAUSE AND FAME

TOWN BUT ALL TOO SOON SHE WILL DISCOVER
THE STAGE IS NO PLACE FOR A DECENT GIRL

TOM & MEN BUT WE'RE GLAD TO SAY THAT SHE IS....
NO INGENUE BUT ONE OF THE FEW
WITH SKILLS IN PERFORMING ARTS
EACH MOVEMENT DESIGNED TO CAPTURE THE MIND
AND STIMULATE OTHER PARTS
WITH HER HEART ON HER SLEEVE, SHE'LL MAKE YOU BELIEVE
THAT SHE COULD BE YOURS ONE DAY

TOWN & DORIS WHICH IS WHY WE BOTH SAY THEY SHOULD ALL STAY AWAY
FOR THE STAGE IS NO PLACE FOR A DECENT GIRL

TOM I suppose I ought to get off now. Still a few things to pack.

DORIS Good luck, Tom. You take care of yourself and do write and let us know how you're getting on.

TOM I'll try, Mrs Lovegrove. Goodbye, Mr Town. *[Shakes his hand.]*

TOWN Goodbye, Tom, may God go with you.

TOM Bye, Emily. I'll bring you back a German helmet on my first leave.

EMILY Bye, Mr Tom. *[Blackout.]*

ACT TWO – SCENE FIVE

British street. Film of 1914–18 troops at war is projected onto a screen. A newsboy enters left and stands there.

NEWSBOY [*Loudly.*] Allied forces at Ypres hold out against enormous odds as the Germans try to smash through their lines. British losses heavy as newly arrived regiments thrown into the front line to stop the German push. Latest casualty lists.

A woman rushes on and buys a paper from him and they both exit. The film continues as a section of trench is pushed on stage. TOM marches on and takes up position as sentry. Music introduction to No.21 starts.

No.21 When I'm alone at night

TOM [*Sings*] WHEN I'M ALONE AT NIGHT
 AND MOONLIGHT IS SHINING BRIGHT
 I THINK OVER ALL MY MIGHT-HAVE-BEENS
 THINGS THAT I WISH I'D SEEN
 AND PLACES I WISH I'D BEEN
 THOSE DREAMS THAT ARE JUST IMAGINED SCENES.
 STILL, I HAVE ONE DREAM THAT MAY YET COME TRUE
 ONE GIRL, ONE LOVE, ONE HOPE IN ALL I DO YES
 LUCY 'S THE ONE I LONG FOR
 LUCY'S THE ONE I'M STRONG FOR
 SOON SHE WILL KNOW JUST HOW I FEEL.

 FOR LIFE IS A JOURNEY WE MUST MAKE
 THAT'S FULL OF THE CHANCES WE MUST TAKE

 NEXT TIME WE MEET I'LL ASK HER
 TALL ON MY FEET I'LL ASK HER
 WILL SHE AGREE TO BE MY BRIDE.
 I'LL TELL HER THERE'S NO HURRY
 THOUGH I WILL SURELY WORRY
 IF SHE TAKES AGES TO DECIDE.
 THOUGH I MAY NOT BE ALL SHE'S HOPING FOR
 I'LL VOW TO LOVE AND CHERISH EVERMORE YET
 WHO KNOWS WHAT LIES AHEAD
 HER ANSWER IS STILL UNSAID
 MY LUCY, OH LUCY, PLEASE BE MINE!

TOM stands looking out across no-man's land while the orchestra continues playing melody.

 FOR LIFE IS A JOURNEY WE MUST MAKE
 THAT'S FULL OF THE CHANCES WE MUST TAKE

 NEXT TIME WE MEET I'LL ASK HER
 TALL ON MY FEET I'LL ASK HER
 WILL SHE AGREE TO BE MY BRIDE.
 I'LL TELL HER THERE'S NO HURRY
 THOUGH I WILL SURELY WORRY
 IF SHE TAKES AGES TO DECIDE.
 THOUGH I MAY NOT BE ALL SHE'S HOPING FOR
 I'LL VOW TO LOVE AND CHERISH EVERMORE YET
 WHO KNOWS WHAT LIES AHEAD
 HER ANSWER IS STILL UNSAID
 MY LUCY, OH LUCY, PLEASE BE MINE
 LUCY, OH LUCY, PLEASE BE MINE!

Film of an attack continues with the sounds of gunfire and shells. As this starts to fade away, we hear the sound of the Last Post in the background. Blackout.

ACT TWO – SCENE SIX

Two months later. Backstage at the theatre. LUCY enters followed by GERALD. She is dressed in her outdoor clothes.

GERALD What do you mean, you're pregnant?

LUCY *[She stops and turns.]* It means I'm going to have a baby.

GERALD You can't.

LUCY Why not? That's what women do.

GERALD I mean you can't do this to me. Not now I've changed the theatre from music hall to revue and given you top of the bill. You can't let me down.

LUCY I'll work as long as I can and then I'll come back after I've had the baby. I've already saved enough money to manage.

GERALD So who's the father of this child? Tom, I suppose. What does he have to say about it?

LUCY Nothing. He doesn't know. And he may never know. *[Sobs suddenly.]* He's been posted missing in action. Chances are I'll never see him again. *[GERALD puts his arm around her to comfort her. She relaxes a little then quickly pulls herself together and wipes her eyes with her hand.]* Listen, Gerald. This job is even more important to me than ever. I can't give it up. You can get a second-rater to cover for me while I'm off having the baby and then, when I come back, the audience will love me even more. That way we'll both make a lot of money.

GERALD I suppose you're right.

LUCY *[Holds out her hand.]* Agreed then?

GERALD *[Shakes her hand and says, rather glumly.]* I suppose so. *[They both start to walk off.]*

LUCY *[Laughing.]* You're never happy unless you've got something to worry about, are you, Gerald?

They both exit. Blackout.

ACT TWO – SCENE SEVEN

Below stairs about mid-morning. TOWN is sitting in his waistcoat with a newspaper while DORIS is standing over EMILY who is mixing some ingredients in a bowl.

DORIS Lord love us girl, will you never get it right? It's got to have more of a crumbly texture, not like this.

EMILY But I did exactly what you told me.

DORIS It must be your 'ands. They're too warm for this. What you need is cold 'ands like these. *[She holds up her hands.]*

EMILY *[Sotto voce.]* That's not all that's cold.

DORIS What did you say, girl? Don't mumble.

EMILY Nothin' important. Would it 'elp if I added a bit more water?

DORIS A bit more water? This girl 'as no idea, Mr Town.

TOWN I think it's good of you to help her like you do but it seems you are wasting your time.

EMILY That's not a very nice thing to say, Mr Town. I try my best, don't I, Mrs Lovegrove?

No.22 Soon I will be a fine cook

EMILY *[Sings.]* I STARTED AS A KITCHEN GIRL LIKE YOU
I SCRUB UNTIL MY FINGERS BLEED LIKE YOU
I TAKE IN ALL YOU TEACH
PICKING UP THE TIPS I SHOULD
THAT'S HOW I LEARN MY TRADE
SO I CAN BE AS GOOD.
SOON I WILL BE A FINE COOK
VERY FINE COOK, LIKE YOU.
YOU DON'T COOK BY THE BOOK
P'RAPS YOU CAN TEACH ME TOO
YOU SAID TO START WITH THE FINEST VEG AND MEAT AND FISH
TOAST IT AND ROAST IT UNTIL I'VE MADE A TASTY DISH.
I NEVER MIND IF YOU TEASE
WANT YOU TO BE SO PROUD
I WANT YOUR EXPERTISE
BE SOMEONE IN THE CROWD
I'VE LEARNED A LOT NOW, I MIX AND BLEND AND THEN JUST PRAY
THAT I'LL BE AS GOOD AS YOU SOME DAY – ONE OF THESE DAYS!

DORIS Very flattering, Emily, but it's not just work, you know. It takes some natural ability.

TOWN And you either have it or you don't. *[There is a knock at the door.]* I wonder who that could be at this time? *[He looks at his watch.]*

DORIS Well, don't just stand there, girl. Answer the door.

EMILY *[Holding up her hands.]* But my 'ands?

DORIS Wipe them first. *[There is another more demanding knock at the door.]* Hurry up.

EMILY I'm going, cook. *[She wipes her hands on her apron as she runs to the door and opens it.]* Oh! It's a very fine lady, Mr Town.

TOWN At this door? *[He gets up and puts on his coat.]* Don't keep her waiting, then. *[EMILY stands by the door, eyes lowered, as LUCY sweeps in, dressed up to the nines.]*

LUCY *[Using her posh voice.]* Good morning, Mr Town, Mrs Lovegrove.

TOWN So it's you! *[There is a short silence as they all look at each other and then EMILY looks up.]*

LUCY Don't you recognise me, Emily?

EMILY Oh, Lucy! It's you!

LUCY Yes, it's me, Lucy Ambleside, one-time maid in this house.

DORIS I don't know how you dare show your face here.

TOWN You look like a woman of the streets.

LUCY Sorry to disappoint you but I have become rather more successful than that. I am the star of the new revue show at the Alhambra.

DORIS and EMILY both gasp in surprise.

TOWN Still no better than you should be. What do you want?

LUCY I came to see Emily, not you.

EMILY Me?

LUCY Yes, Emily. You.

DORIS What did you want to see 'er for?

LUCY I lead a very busy life at the theatre now and I'm going to have a baby.

TOWN I don't suppose you're married.

LUCY No, I'm not. But the child's father was Tom.

DORIS Tom? Policeman Tom?

LUCY That's the one. We had one night before he went to France...*[EMILY interrupts.]*

EMILY 'Ow romantic.

LUCY and he was posted 'missing in action' at Ypres.

EMILY Oh, no! So what do you want me for?

LUCY I want you to come and be my maid and later on help me look after the baby.

EMILY What? Leave 'ere?

DORIS That's impossible. She works 'ere.

LUCY *[Ignoring her.]* Yes, leave here and come with me. I'll treat you much better than they ever have. You will have a room of your own and some nice clothes. What is more, I will teach you how to speak properly.

EMILY And to read?

LUCY Yes, and to read. What do you say?

EMILY I don't know. It's such a surprise. What do you think, Mrs Lovegrove?

LUCY Don't ask her. They just want to keep you in slavery.

EMILY Well, she is teaching me to cook and she's quite nice really under that gruff exterior.

DORIS Emily!

EMILY But this is like that Cinderella story you once read to me, Lucy. And I'm being taken from the ashes by a sort of Prince Charming.

TOWN I would hardly consider her Prince Charming. You must think very carefully about this, Emily. You have a secure position here in a very respected household and if you give this up to work for a trollop....

DORIS Mr Town!

TOWN I am sorry but a trollop is what she is, whatever she says about the theatre. Everyone knows the kind of women who work in the theatre.

LUCY *[Giving him a cold hard stare.]* Perhaps a night at the theatre might turn you into a human being instead of a stuffed shirt lackey!

TOWN Leave this house at once!

LUCY I'm going, don't you worry. Well, Emily, make your mind up.

EMILY *[Looks backwards and forwards between them not sure what to do but then suddenly makes up her mind.]* I will go with you. When do you want me to start?

LUCY Right now. Go and pack your things.

EMILY *[Suddenly excited.]* I will. *[She runs towards her room, but skirts very carefully around TOWN and DORIS before she exits.]*

TOWN She won't get any references you know, leaving like this.

LUCY I managed without them and so will she. It looks like you will have to find another kitchen slave.

TOWN Don't you dare speak to me like that!

LUCY Who do you think you are? People like you and Mrs Lovegrove are no better than I am, despite all your pretensions. *[Sings]*

No.23 Nobody is better than me/Order in our lives

NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME
 ALTHOUGH I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO AGREE
 FOR I'M AS GOOD AS THE REST OF THEM
 IN FACT I'M ONE OF THE BEST OF THEM
 NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME.

TOWN THERE IS ORDER IN EV'RYTHING
 FROM INSECTS TO MAN
 AND EVEN STARS AND PLANETS
 HAVE A HEAVENLY PLAN
 THERE IS ORDER IN OUR UNIVERSE
 FROM BIRTH TO DEATH
 THE WATCHWORD IS ORDER
 FROM OUR VERY FIRST TO OUR LAST BREATH

TOWN	EV'RYBODY HAS THEIR PLACE IT'S THE BEAUTY OF OUR RACE SO EACH OF US KNOWS JUST WHERE WE STAND FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP EV'RY PERSON PLAYS HIS PART OH, THIS ORDER IN OUR LIVES IS GRAND THE MASTER AND THE SERVANT THE RICH MAN AND THE POOR EACH ONE KNOWS HIS PRECEDENCE AND ASKS FOR NOTHING MORE IT'S WONDERFUL, MARVELLOUS WE ALL KNOW WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR THERE IS ORDER IN OUR LIVES	LUCY	NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME THOUGH I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO AGREE NO, I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO AGREE FOR I'M AS GOOD AS THE REST OF THEM YES I'M ONE OF THE BEST OF THEM NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME NOBODY NOBODY NOBODY NOBODY NOBODY IS BETTER THAN ME!
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The song ends with TOWN and LUCY face-to-face, glaring at each other. EMILY re-appears with a bag and wearing a coat and a hat with flowers on it. She walks down between them.

EMILY I thought I'd wear me best Sunday 'at as it is a special occasion.

LUCY Come, Emily, we have no more time to waste here. *[She turns and exits for a quick change into Arlette dress, or it could be worn under coat.]*

EMILY Goodbye, Mr Town. I've been happy here and I'm grateful for the way you've always looked after me. Goodbye, Mrs Lovegrove. I'll remember everything you've told me and I really will keep trying to be as good a cook as you are. When Lucy has teached me to write, I'll send you a postcard to tell you how I'm getting on. Goodbye. *[She turns and exits, humming the tune to 'Nobody is better than me'.]*

DORIS Well I never! Some people don't know when they're well off. She may think she's going to a better life but she's taking a bit of a chance, associating with theatrical folk. *[Pauses.]* But, you know, I might just go to this revue of Lucy's one day simply out of curiosity. My friend at the Duke's tells me it's not as bad as you might think. *[TOWN and DORIS start to leave via the stairs.]*

TOWN Well, I suppose, to be fair, I should see it too, before condemning it outright. Though I'm quite sure seeing it won't change my opinion in the slightest. Royalty may think it's all right to go to the theatre but I still believe the stage is an institution we can well do without.

Blackout.

ACT TWO – SCENE EIGHT

The stage of the theatre. GERALD introduces Lucy as Arlette.

GERALD Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you have all enjoyed this evening's entertainment. But now the moment you have been waiting for, the climax to our show. I have great pleasure in introducing our one and only Arlette – the pretty songbird from Paris – who will perform her latest song for you and for our troops at the front. It's a stirring march that looks forward to the end of this dreadful conflict in a few months time and it's called "When our boys come marching home".

At the intro of the song, four SOLDIERS march on and take up positions on walkway. LUCY enters.

No.24 When our boys come marching home

LUCY [*Sings*]
WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME
WE SHALL BE READY TO MEET THEM
HOLDING OUR ARMS OUT TO GREET THEM
WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME

WHEN THE BATTLE'S ROAR IS DONE
THAT'S WHEN THEY'LL COME BACK IN GLORY
EACH ONE RECOUNTING HIS STORY
WHEN THE BATTLE'S ROAR IS DONE

THOSE WHO PULL THE BULLDOG'S TAIL
WILL GET A FEARFUL FRIGHT
THOUGH WE ARE A PEACEFUL BREED
WE ALL KNOW HOW TO FIGHT
SOLDIERS, SAILORS, FLYING CORPS
SIDE BY SIDE WILL WIN THIS WAR

SOLDIERS march to back of stage.

WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME
BACK FROM THE LAND OF THE STRANGER
BACK FROM THE BULLETS AND DANGER
WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME

Dance by [optional] chorus girls.

WHEN THE TIDE OF WAR HAS TURNED
HOME FIRES WE ALL HAVE KEPT BURNING
WILL GREET THE SOLDIERS RETURNING
WHEN THE TIDE OF WAR HAS TURNED

WHEN THE BATTLE'S ROAR IS DONE
FREEDOM'S THE PRIZE WE SHALL CHERISH
PRAYING IT NEVER WILL PERISH
WHEN THE BATTLE'S ROAR IS DONE

THOSE WHO PUNCH THE LION'S NOSE
GET MORE THAN BARGAINED FOR
BLIGHTY'S LION'S CLAWS AND TEETH
ARE FAR WORSE THAN ITS ROAR
PRIVATES, SERGEANTS, GEN'RAALS TOO
TO A MAN KNOW WHAT TO DO

WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME
WE SHALL BE READY TO KISS THEM
SHOWING HOW MUCH WE ALL MISS THEM
WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME AGAIN
WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME.

At the end of the song during the applause, GERALD comes on stage from the wings and speaks to LUCY.

GERALD [*Gestures towards wings.*] Look who's here.

LUCY [*Looking into wings.*] Tom?.. Tom!! Oh, Tom, I thought I'd lost you!

LUCY rushes into TOM's arms as he enters from wings – TOM being followed part way by a nervous DORIS and TOWN – and they embrace passionately.

DORIS *[Turning to speak to TOWN.]* Last time I saw anyone in Tom's arms it was me!

TOWN Mrs Lovegrove!! What are you saying?

DORIS I'll tell you later.

TOM *[Still holding Lucy in his arms.]* Lucy – now will you marry me... please?

LUCY *[Quietly, to Tom.]* Oh, Tom, yes... yes, please. But first there's something you should know... *[Turning to audience and speaking loudly.]* My lords, ladies and gentlemen, you may have noticed that Arlette has lost her French accent. Well, the truth is I'm not French at all. I'm one of you, and this man here, Tom, he's one of you as well. I am happy to tell you that I shall be retiring from the stage for a while to be with my new and very brave husband, Tom ... *[Goes back to Tom and they embrace again.]* ... and to have his baby.

TOM *[Quietly, to Lucy.]* A baby... our baby?

LUCY *[Also quietly, to Tom, not the audience.]* Yes, Tom, our baby.

As they embrace, GERALD steps forward.

GERALD However, ladies and gentlemen, our songbird will be returning to the stage as soon as she can to entertain you all, not as Arlette but as your very own Queen of Hearts, Lucy. But for now, I am going to invite everyone to join in and sing with us 'When our boys come marching home'.

No.25 When our boys come marching home

ALL + audience *[Sing]* WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME
WE SHALL BE READY TO MEET THEM
HOLDING OUR ARMS OUT TO GREET THEM
WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME

WHEN THE BATTLE'S ROAR IS DONE
THAT'S WHEN THEY'LL COME BACK IN GLORY
EACH ONE RECOUNTING HIS STORY
WHEN THE BATTLE'S ROAR IS DONE

THOSE WHO PULL THE BULLDOG'S TAIL
WILL GET A FEARFUL FRIGHT
THOUGH WE ARE A PEACEFUL BREED
WE ALL KNOW HOW TO FIGHT
SOLDIERS, SAILORS, FLYING CORPS
SIDE BY SIDE WILL WIN THIS WAR

WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME
BACK FROM THE LAND OF THE STRANGER
BACK FROM THE BULLETS AND DANGER
WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME AGAIN
WHEN OUR BOYS COME MARCHING HOME.

Curtain

Curtains open to reveal logo of Below Stairs projected onto theatre backdrop.

No.26 Finale

LADIES [sing] VOTES FOR WOMEN IS OUR CALL
 VOTES FOR WOMEN ONE AND ALL
 SING IT TILL WE WIN THE FIGHT
 SING IT EV'RY DAY AND NIGHT
 NOW WE ARE NO LONGER WEAK
 SUFFRAGE IS THE RIGHT WE SEEK
 JUSTICE IS OUR BEACON
 WE SHALL NEVER WEAKEN
 TILL WE WOMEN GET THE VOTE

ALL THERE IS ORDER IN EV'RYTHING
 FROM INSECTS TO MAN
 AND EVEN STARS AND PLANETS
 HAVE A HEAVENLY PLAN
 THERE IS ORDER IN OUR UNIVERSE
 FROM BIRTH TO DEATH
 THE WATCHWORD IS ORDER
 FROM OUR VERY FIRST TO OUR LAST BREATH

ALL ON HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS
 WE HAVE A LOT OF FUN
 RIDING THE DONKEYS, CHASING GIRLS
 HOPING TO SEE THE SUN.
 ON HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS
 DECK CHAIRS LINED UP IN ROWS
 WIND IN OUR HAIR
 BREATHING FRESH AIR
 THEN OFF TO SEE THE SHOWS
 THE MEN STRUT AROUND IN THEIR BATHING SUITS
 PERSPIRING IN THE HEAT
 THE LADIES PRETEND NOT TO NOTICE US
 PREFERRING TO BE DISCREET

LADIES
 MEN
 ALL
 LADIES
 MEN
 ALL

ALL ON HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS
 THIS IS THE PLACE TO BE
 CANDY AND POP, RUN 'TILL YOU DROP
 DOWN BY THE – DOWN BY THE SEA.

ALL WHEN WE'RE ALONE AT NIGHT
 AND MOONLIGHT IS SHINING BRIGHT
 WE THINK OVER ALL OUR MIGHT-HAVE-BEENS
 THINGS THAT WE WISH WE'D SEEN
 AND PLACES WE WISH WE'D BEEN
 THOSE DREAMS THAT ARE JUST IMAGINED SCENES.

LUCY SOLO STILL, I HAVE ONE DREAM THAT MAY YET COME TRUE
 ONE MAN, ONE LOVE, ONE HOPE IN ALL I DO

ALL AND THOUGH HE'S SO FAR AWAY
 WE KNOW HE'LL BE BACK ONE DAY
 THAT'S WHY WE ARE PRAYING 'BRING HIM HOME'

ALL BELOW STAIRS, IT'S ANOTHER DAY
 BELOW STAIRS, WE MUST EARN OUR PAY
 FOR WE HAVE OUR FOOD AND A ROOM HERE
 LET'S HAVE NO DOOM AND NO GLOOM HERE
 BELOW STAIRS, EV'RYTHING IS SURE
 BELOW STAIRS, WE CAN FEEL SECURE
 SO LIVE YOUR LIFE FOR TODAY
 LIFE IS GOOD, SO THEY SAY.
 FORGET YOUR WORRIES AND CARES
 WAY DOWN HERE BELOW, BELOW STAIRS!

THE END