

# *Whatever it Takes*

## ACT ONE

### Scene 1

October 1905: A bedroom in a stone cottage (Swallow Cottage) in Port St Claire, a small Cornish town. There is a sound of a baby crying. The curtain opens to reveal Mrs Margret Green (midwife) is handing over Mrs Theresa Penrose's new-born baby.

MARGARET: (smiling) Congratulations. You've got beautiful girl. And I think she was in a hurry to arrive.

THERESA: (smiling) Thank you. Hello, Katy, I'm your mummy. Welcome to the world. Oh, I think I'm ready to see my husband now.

MARGARET: Are you sure?

THERESA: Yes, I am. If you wouldn't mind letting him in, thank you.

MARGARET: (opens bedroom door) Mr Penrose, you can come in now. Congratulations you've got another girl.

WALTER: (enter) Thank you so much, Mrs Green. We can always rely on you (walks over to Theresa) You look exhausted, my dear.

THERESA: A little, but she wasn't quite such an effort as the other two.

WALTER: (looking at Katy) Wow, isn't she lovely, she looks just like you...

MARGARET: Sorry to interrupt, but shall I let your mother know? She'll be surprised. This little beauty wasn't expected till Thursday, was she?

THERESA: (laughing) Yes, that's a good idea. So, do you know where me mum lives?

MARGARET: Yes, Mrs Skinner is an old friend of mine. She'll be over here in no time at all. (looking at Walter, who can't take his eyes off the newborn) You'll be in good hands in the meantime. I'll be back to see you later, Mrs Penrose.

WALTER: Thank you once again. (Mrs Green exits, closing the door quietly)

THERESA: Thank goodness she wasn't far away. Katy really was impatient, and I can't imagine you as a deputy midwife.

WALTER: I'd be far too clumsy. (kissing Theresa) Oh, I do love you so much.

THERESA: I know, darling. And I love Paul's, Rosie's and now Katy's dad.

WALTER: It isn't going to be easy. The money is sure to be tighter than ever. At least there's plenty of work at the boatyard at present.

THERESA: We'll cope. We always have somehow. Come on, you haven't held your

new daughter yet. (Walter takes Katy gently from her mother and gazes at her in wonderment. Still carrying the baby, he sings)

WALTER: (Song) **No.1. What A Beautiful Girl**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

What a beautiful girl you are,  
Perfect, just like a newborn star.  
Yes, welcome to our family,  
Though we are poor and nothing's free.

Chorus

I'm sure you will bring us much pleasure,  
And you'll be an absolute treasure.  
It's going to be even harder now,  
But we'll just have to manage somehow.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

Love, we will never give you away,  
You're ours and this is where you'll stay.  
Once we were four and now, we're five,  
We'll be strong so we will survive.

Repeat Chorus

I'm sure you will bring us much pleasure,  
And you'll be an absolute treasure.  
It's going to be even harder now,  
But we'll just have to manage somehow.

3<sup>rd</sup> Verse

What a beautiful girl indeed,  
Not just another mouth to feed.  
But someone who will make us proud,  
And give us cause to shout out loud.....

Coda

Oh, what a beautiful, beautiful girl.  
Is our Katy.

(at the end of the song, there is a knock at the door and Theresa's mother, Martha appears)

THERESA: Hello, Mum. Look what we've got.

MARTHA: (coming over and taking the baby from Walter) Oh, she does remind me of you as a baby.

WALTER: I wonder what Paul and Rosie will think of her. I packed them off to Uncle Charlie's.

MARTHA: One thing's for sure. Neither of them has got a jealous streak. They'll love their new sister. Are you well enough to sit up, Theresa?

THERESA: I'm fine.

MARTHA: Well, Walter, I think your good lady and I've got a few things to talk about. The Miner's Arms will be open by now. Why don't you pop off and tell all your comrades the good news for an hour or so? I'll look after things till you get back.

THERESA: That's very kind of you mum, thank you. Yes, go on, love – but come back sober.

WALTER: Yes, thank you Martha. Are you sure you don't mind?

THERESA: Of course, I don't.

WALTER: Right. I won't be too long. I don't want to miss the reactions of Paul and Rosie. (Walter exits and Martha hands Katy back to Theresa)

MARTHA: I'll put a kettle on. Then we can talk about how I can help. (exit) (Theresa is looking thoughtfully at Katy. The lights dim and when Martha returns with a tray and tea the two women start talking very quietly)

## Scene 2

In The Miner's Arms - Walter (little drunk) is on his own except for the barmaid (Daisy Cox. Some of his drinking pals enter.

FRED: (a little curious) Oh look, there's Walter, he's beaten us to it.

LEN: That's strange, isn't it? He's usually the last in.

BILL: And is he a little bit drunk?

TOM: Yes, I think he is.

FRED: He must be celebrating.

BILL: (chuckling) Or he could be commiserating.

TOM: Hmm, well, I think we should go over to him because, if he's celebrating, then we could be in for a free drink or two. (Shouting) Hey! Walter. (Walter looks up, sees his friends, and beckons them on)

WALTER: (talks to Daisy the barmaid in a slurred voice): D-Daisy, can my friends have their usual on m-me - well courtesy of good old Theresa's mum, M-Martha. I've got some happy news to t-tell ya all.

DAISY: Of course, Walter. Two beers and one whisky coming up! And what about you? Do you want another of your usual?

WALTER: Y-yes please D-Daisy and one for ya as well. A t-toast is in order here. (a few minutes later all five are holding their glasses ready to hear the good news) Everybody, I'm a father again. It's another girl and we've named her K-Katy.

BILL: I thought she wasn't due to arrive yet.

WALTER: She wasn't.

DAISY: Anyhow, well done Walter.

PALS: Yes, well done. To Walter and Theresa. (all glasses raised)

DAISY: Another mouth to feed. How will you manage on your wages, Walter?

WALTER: We will manage somehow.

DAISY: Oh, what a life this is!

DAISY/CAST: (Song) **No.2. Oh, What A Life This is**

UNISON: Chorus  
Oh, what a life this is (hmm)  
Oh, what a life this is,

DAISY: 1<sup>st</sup> Verse  
Oh, what a hard life this is,  
If you ever should fall ill.  
The doctor you will have to see,  
But what if you've no money? It isn't free!

UNISON: Repeat Chorus  
Oh, what a life this is (hm)  
Oh, what a life this is.

DAISY: 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse  
Oh, such a poor life this is,  
Scotland is so beautiful.  
That is what the rich folks all say,  
Will I be able to afford it – one day?

UNISON: Repeat Chorus  
Oh, what a life this is (hm)  
Oh, what a life this is!

DAISY: 3<sup>rd</sup> Verse  
Oh, what a hard life this is,  
My job is to please you all.  
If I only provide the beer,  
Then I am still happy for you to be here.

UNISON: Repeat Chorus  
Oh, what a life this is (hm)  
Oh, what a life this is.

DAISY: 4<sup>th</sup> Verse  
Oh, such a poor life this is,  
But we all know how to live.  
We make the best of what we've got.  
We hardly ever get down! No, not us lot!

Instrumental/sporadic laughter

UNISON: Coda  
Oh, what a life this is (yes)  
Oh, what a life this is!

### Scene 3

Three years later at Swallow Cottage. Martha and Theresa are seated at a table drinking tea. Suddenly there is a loud bang.

THERESA: What on earth was that?

MARTHA: Goodness knows. You should be proud of your brood, Theresa. Paul has an old head on young shoulders. Rosie never stops singing. She's so lively. And little Katy has the sweetest smile I've ever seen.

THERESA: Yes, I know how lucky I am. They're a handful, but Walter does more than his share when he can. I couldn't manage without him.

MARTHA: It's a good job Charlie is close at hand. He is good with children. He was so disappointed when Lily was told she would not be able to have any of her own.

THERESA: Perhaps it was just as well. She was only thirty-five when the pneumonia took her, isn't she?

MARTHA: Yes, poor girl. Where are the little ones, by the way?

THERESA: In the woods with some friends. I told Paul to be home by five o'clock, so they won't be long now. Katy always seems to be getting colds. Your old remedies work most of the time. I can do without doctor's bills. (suddenly there is a loud knock on the door and a man's voice is heard calling)

LEN: (rushing in, in his working clothes and obviously distraught) Oh! My God! This is dreadful.

THERESA: What's wrong, Len?

LEN: There was an explosion at the yard.

MARTHA: So that's what we heard.

LEN: Three men were trapped and, oh God, one of them was Walter. (Bursting into tears) I don't think they had a chance.

THERESA: (plainly alarmed) What do you mean?

LEN: (with his head in his hands) There was nothing anyone could do....

MARTHA: Oh, no! (she takes hold of Theresa, who is shaking like a leaf, and they are sobbing loudly. Then Theresa slumps to the floor. Martha bends down to pick her up gently and turns to Len)

LEN: I'm so sorry, Mrs. Skinner.

MARTHA: (regaining her composure) Will you do something for me please?

LEN: Anything.

MARTHA: You know where my brother-in-law, Charlie, lives? (Len nods his head) Hurry there and tell him what's happened. Ask him to collect my grandchildren from the woods and bring them here. He'll know not to tell them anything.

LEN: Right. Those poor little mites. (he hurries out)

MARTHA: Come here (lifts Theresa into her chair)

THERESA: Tell me I'm dreaming. How am I going to tell them?

MARTHA: I'll deal with that. Charlie will be here soon. Then I'll take them back to my place, while he looks after you.

THERESA: Thank you, Mum. I need some time to think. What am I going to do? What can I do? (she starts to shake again, then pulling herself together gets to her feet slowly, starts to move around the room. She stops and, taking a deep breath, starts to sing soulfully)

(Song) **No.3. He Was My Man**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

Everybody knows that you always wanted me to marry Tim,  
He had charm, wit, and money – looks aren't everything.  
He loved me – you never knew why I didn't choose him,  
You always believed that one day I would wear his ring.

1<sup>st</sup> Bridge

But I wasn't in love with Tim,  
Our chance of happiness was slim,  
I did try honestly, I did.

Chorus

Mum, I must make you understand,  
Walter was my man – I knew from the start.  
Exactly what to expect when I took his hand,  
Wealth is not the key, but what lies within your heart.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

I'll always cherish the best times we had together,  
Like when our children were born - and our wedding day.  
A wonderful caring, loving husband and father,  
Now he's only in our dreams. That's where he'll have to stay.

2<sup>nd</sup> Bridge

True love must mean that two hearts beat,  
With Tim it was a one-way street,  
I did try, honestly, I did.

Repeat Chorus

Oh, Mum, I hope I've made you understand,  
That he was my man – I knew from the start.  
Exactly what to expect when I took his hand,

The key to happiness is found within your heart.

Coda

He was my man,  
Who no-one can.  
Ever replace,  
So, I must face.  
The lonely years.  
Without my man,  
He was my man.

(as the song ends, Theresa walks back to Martha who cradles her daughter in her arms)

MARTHA: You were right. He was your man. Such a good man. (Children's voices are heard) That must be Charlie. Wait here. I'll be back before too long. (Martha exits, passing the incoming Charlie at the door and taking the unseen children with her)

CHARLIE: (going quickly to Theresa's side) This is appalling, Theresa. Look, I've brought a bottle of brandy. (handing it to her) Take a swig of this. It'll steady your nerves.

THERESA: (taking the bottle and drinking) I can't believe it.

CHARLIE: I know. You can't be expected to come to terms with all this yet. Could your mum help with Paul and the girls and you can call on me at any time?

THERESA: Thank you, Uncle Charlie. (Pause) I shall have to get a job – but where and what? I've no experience.

CHARLIE: That problem will keep for a while. Meantime, if you need money don't be afraid to ask.

THERESA: You're so kind. I don't know how I can face the children.

CHARLIE: I'll stay here until Martha brings them back. Then we we'll decide what we can all do for the best. (he puts a consoling arm around Theresa)

**Scene 4**

Two weeks later. A drawing room at Poltro Manor, a large country estate. Lady Trewarren is standing in front of an open fire. There is a knock on the door.

LADY T: Come in. (a maid called Miss Polly Stevens enters with Theresa behind her)

POLLY: This is Mrs. Penrose, my Lady.

LADYT: Thank you, Polly (who exits) Please come here, Mrs. Penrose. Don't worry, I'm not an ogress. (Theresa walks nervously towards her) Now, I was very sorry to hear about the tragic death of your husband. It must have been a dreadful shock.

THERESA: I still can't believe it. He was a wonderful man.

LADY T: (taking a seat and motioning to another): Please sit down. (Theresa complies) You have three young children, I understand. Are you finding it very hard to manage?

THERESA: Yes, my Lady. That's why I'm desperate to find work so that my children don't suffer. They're missing their father so much as it is.

LADY T: I can well understand. (pause) Well, I am impressed by your determination. It's a pity that there is only a part-time vacancy here at the Manor but, if you do not find this unacceptable, I believe you would be well suited.

THERESA: As my children are between three and seven years old, it would be difficult for me to work a full day.

LADY T: (thoughtfully): That gives me an idea. My groom lives in a cottage on the estate and he and his wife are childless. She already looks after the two young sons of my cook, as and when the need arises. I'm certain that she would be happy to perform a similar service for you for a small price.

THERESA: (brightening up) Oh that would be marvellous. You are very kind.

LADY T: (laughing) I know the moneyed classes have a reputation for being tyrannical and indifferent to the needs of those who are less fortunate, but...

THERESA: (interrupting): I've never thought of that, my Lady.

LADY T: Sadly, in many cases, it is true, but I've seen too much poverty to be able to pass by, on the other side as the Good Book says.

THERESA: I'm sure I would be very happy here and I'm not afraid of hard work.

LADY T: There are already three maids who live in, but I'm looking for someone to look after the needs of the many guests we have staying at the Manor or just visiting. May I take it that you are interested?

THERESA: Yes, my Lady. And I can start whenever you like. For the time being I can plan for the children, but I would certainly welcome your suggestion regarding the groom's wife. My three youngsters will be no trouble they would enjoy the company of the other children.

LADY T: Fine. Come and see me again on Tuesday. That'll give me time to speak to their Mother. Then I can explain your duties and talk about wages and so on. Where are your children now?

THERESA: They are outside in the hall.

LADY T: I'd like to meet them (she picks up a small bell from a table and rings it; the maid reappears) Ah, Polly. Would you bring the children in please?

POLLY: Yes, my Lady.

LADY T: She might as well come in too. (Polly exits, returning almost immediately with Paul, Rosie, and Katy, who look in wonderment at the room and its contents. (standing up) Stay here, Polly. (Bending forward slightly) Well now, you look very smart. A credit to your mother.



THERESA: (clambering to her feet) This is Lady Trewarren, children. I'm going to work for her. What do you say?

CHILDREN: How do you do?

LADY T: (smiling at Paul): Do you look after your sisters?

PAUL: (shyly) Y-yes, madam. Rosie is always singing.

LADY T: (turning to Rosie): Are you? (Rosie nods shyly) Can you sing me that Pat-a-Cake nursery rhythm? (Rosie nods again more confidently)

THERESA: Not too noisy.....

ROSIE: (Song) **No.4. Pat-a-Cake**

Verse

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man  
Bake me a cake as fast as you can  
Pat it and prick it and mark it with "B"  
Put it in the oven for baby and me

LADY T: (applauding softly) I think you'll be very popular with everyone here. (turning to face Theresa) So I'll see you again on Tuesday – say, at eleven o'clock. What is your first name?

THERESA: Theresa, my Lady.

LADY T: A nice name. Goodbye for now. Polly will see you out.

THERESA: Say goodbye, children.

CHILDREN: Goodbye. (all exit, except for Lady Trewarren)

**Scene 5**

January 1909. The servant's quarters at Poltro Manor. Polly is sweeping the floor when Theresa enters. Polly leans the broom against the wall.

POLLY: How do you like working at the Manor?

THERESA: I'm happy here. How long have you been here, Polly?

POLLY: Nearly five years. I came just before the master died.

THERESA: What happened to him? I understand he wasn't that old.

POLLY: No. It was very sad indeed. He fell from his horse, which reared up and then kicked him in the head.

THERESA: How dreadful.

POLLY: By the time they got him to the hospital it was too late to save him.

THERESA: It must've been a terrific shock for her ladyship.

POLLY: Yes. They adored one another. Tragically, their only child was stillborn, so Lady T had no close family to console her.

THERESA: Who will inherit the estate eventually, then?

POLLY: Lord Trewarren's nephew, Oliver, but he still lives with his parents in France. I've only met him twice. He seemed very arrogant and standoffish - not a bit like his aunt. I don't think she likes him much.

THERESA: I haven't met any of the gentry before, but I was impressed by the way Lady T puts everyone at their ease. She never seems to look down on the servants or anyone else.

POLLY: We all know how lucky we are to be working for her. She is always fair, and nobody is afraid to pour out their troubles to her. If she can help, she will.

THERESA: I soon discovered that for myself.

POLLY: As long as you work well, she treats you almost like an equal. But one maid – that silly girl, Elsie – was shown the door, because she was caught stealing money and deserved to be thrown out.

THERESA: Yes, I agree with you, but tell me how did Lady T cope with her bereavement?

POLLY: After the first shock she was very brave and threw herself into her charity work. After a while she began holding musical evenings, which became very popular with her growing number of friends.

THERESA: Are there any more planned?

POLLY: Yes, there's to be one the week after next. She's raising money for the orphanage a few miles down the road from here; do you like music, then?

THERESA: Very much. I'll look forward to that indeed I will.

POLLY: (picking up the broom) Well, I must get on.

THERESA: Of course. I've been so busy asking you all these questions....

POLLY: (laughing): How else do you find out what's going on? One thing I can say – there're no awkward folk at the Manor. We all muck in and help one another.

THERESA: I'm beginning to feel at home already. Theresa starts to sing with cook (Miss Fran Collins) butler (Mr Joe Lawson), maid (Polly) enter

(Song) **No. 5. At The Manor**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

At the Manor.

When I first set foot in this house,  
I thought I would feel out of place.  
I walked around quiet as a mouse,

And tried so hard to hide my face.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

But now I hold my head up high,  
For I am treated with respect.  
By lady T; and all of my,  
Good friends here to guide and protect me.  
At the Manor.

JOE/ FRAN/ POLLY: (Song) **No. 6. Downstairs**

UNISON: 1<sup>st</sup> Chorus  
We are the downstairs crew,  
We'll tell you what we do.

JOE: 1<sup>st</sup> Verse  
Since we sadly lost,  
Her Ladyship counts.  
To make sure things go to plan,  
I will always be her man.

UNISON: 2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus  
Been here since time began,  
The Manor's greatest fan.

FRAN: 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse  
I have secret recipes,  
And they always seem to please.  
They love my poitrine d'agneau,  
Charlotte Russe is all the go.

UNISON: Chorus  
I/she make/makes sure no-one starves,  
I/she won't do things by halves.

POLLY: 3<sup>rd</sup> Verse  
With my duster and my broom,  
I just flit from room to room.  
I look after all the guests,  
Even though a few are pests.

UNISON: 3<sup>rd</sup> Chorus  
Oh, dear! All those affairs,  
We know it all downstairs.

Coda

Lady T has shown us that she cares,  
And in return we work hard here downstairs.

## Scene 6

February 1909. A bedroom at Poltro Manor. Theresa is busy making the bed up when the door opens and a guest, Henry Archer, enters.

THERESA: (momentarily startled) Oh! Sorry, sir. I've almost finished in here.

HENRY: There's no need to rush (he looks at Theresa appreciatively) – you are Theresa, I believe.

THERESA: Yes, Sir.

HENRY: You seem to have created an impression with Lady T. She is always singing your praises.

THERESA: (smiling): I'm flattered.

HENRY: (pauses while Theresa finishes off making the bed):I notice you are wearing a wedding ring.

THERESA: (sadly): Yes, but I was recently widowed.

HENRY: Oh, I didn't know. What a waste. You are a very attractive young lady.

THERESA: (embarrassed): Kind of you to say so, sir, but it takes more than how you look to keep body and soul together these days when you have a young family to care for. I'm sorry. I shouldn't be pouring out my troubles.

HENRY: (looking reflective): Money problems?

THERESA: Lady Trewarren is very generous, and I'm grateful to her, but I sometimes wish I could do more for the children.

HENRY: (edging a little closer to Theresa) Perhaps I could help.

THERESA: How sir? I have so little spare time.

HENRY: I live alone – not from choice, I assure you. The occasional company of a pretty, intelligent lass like you would certainly brighten my days.

THERESA: (uneasiness): If you'll excuse my impertinence, sir, I find it hard to believe there aren't many ladies who would be only too happy to share their time with you.

HENRY: (smiling): Now I'm the one being flattered. The fact is that the type of women who inhabit my social circle are either very plain or featherbrained (pause) or both.

THERESA: (Stepping back a bit) Where is this leading?

HENRY: You have been married, my dear. You must know a man's needs.

THERESA: Now quite alarmed, speaks sharply) Do you mean what I think you mean?

HENRY: I need someone I can talk to, laugh with and – yes, more than that.

I'm not a brute if that's what's worrying you.

THERESA: I've always thought you were a gentleman (recoils from him)

HENRY: Until now?

THERESA: I didn't say that (relaxing slightly) but this would be wrong.

HENRY: (takes her hand) Give it some thought. I promise to look after you. You're lovely and you should not be on your own. It goes without saying that you'll be well rewarded (he releases Theresa's hand and extracts a bulky purse from his pocket. When he opens it, Theresa gasps) Look, please take this now. (handing her some coins)

THERESA: (shaking her head) I'm not ready for this.

HENRY: Please take it as a tip for services rendered here. I don't want it back if you say no, but I hope you won't. I also have some rich friends who...

THERESA: (interrupting) ...I don't want to be passed around like a newspaper (then softening) I shouldn't have said that.

HENRY: Yes, you should. That's not what I want either. I insist on you keep the money, though. I'm sure you'll be able to give the children a treat.

THERESA: (Taking the money and sliding it into her pocket) Thank you, but I don't know...

HENRY: (interrupting) ...I understand. (pauses) You must've loved your husband very much. Don't you miss his lovemaking?

THERESA: Of course, but...

HENRY: I'm not rushing you. I don't want to just use you. I really do want to help. We would be helping each other. Well, I must go downstairs or they'll wonder where I am. I'll see you again tomorrow (turns towards the door and starts to walk slowly)

THERESA: Wait! (Henry stops and turns around) Maybe... I do need the money and I like to think I can trust you, sir. It doesn't seem right, but I do like you.

HENRY: You won't regret it (laughing softly) I think you had better stop calling me 'sir' when we are alone together. The name's Henry. You can come to my home. Nobody need see you. I can pick you up at the Manor gates.

THERESA: I would rather make my own way there on my bicycle as long as it's not too far.

HENRY: As you wish. I live at Riverside in Broad Street. You'll find it easily enough. Of all things, it has a purple door! When can you come?

THERESA: I finish at three o'clock tomorrow, but I shall have to persuade Caroline to look after the little ones for an extra couple of hours. I'm sure she won't mind.

HENRY: Come here. (she walks over to him, and he kisses her gently) Perhaps one day you'll come to me because you want to. (he raises an imaginary glass and

pretends to toast) Until tomorrow then. (Henry exits. Theresa sits down heavily on the bed and shakes her head)

THERESA: Whatever have I done? (Standing up again slowly, she starts to sing)

(Song) **No.7. It's Just Another Job**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

Why have I stooped so low?  
I should have just said no,  
And walked off in a huff.  
But I don't earn enough,  
To feed my children as they grow, so.

1<sup>st</sup> Chorus

Believe me I know well what hell is,  
If I'm to fill their empty bellies.  
The simple truth I have to tell is,  
Though I'll often squirm and sob.  
It's just another job to me.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

A widow's life is bleak,  
There is no lucky streak.  
So, what was I to do?  
No time to think it through,  
Maybe you'll feel that I was weak, but...

2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus

Please don't think I'm being cynical,  
Or my attitude's too clinical.  
So, my kids can reach their pinnacle.  
I'll see Henry. George, Frank, Bob?  
It's just another job to me.

Coda

One day soon I will be free,  
From this promiscuity.  
Till then it's just another job to me.

(as the song ends, Theresa moves centre stage and looks upwards, holding her hands high) Please forgive me, Walter. Forgive me.

## **Scene 7**

March 1914. At Swallow Cottage. Theresa is knitting. Paul is busy scribbling.

PAUL: (looking up) They are looking for part-time workers at Wheal Coates.

THERESA: That's the tin mine, isn't it?

PAUL: Yes, Mum. So, I told one of the miners that I was interested. (Theresa puts her knitting down abruptly)

THERESA: You did what?

PAUL: Everybody knows there's going to be a war and all the men will join the army. If I pretend to be fifteen – and I'm tall enough – I can earn some money for you.

THERESA: That's a lovely thought, Paul, but you're not strong enough yet.

PAUL: Yes, I am.

THERESA: I don't want to lose you like I lost your dad. There have been two or three accidents at that mine in the last few years and the men threatened to strike if the bosses didn't introduce more safety measures.

PAUL: I know – and they did.

THERESA: From your teacher's reports, I think you are likely to get a much better job when you leave school – perhaps on the local paper.

PAUL: Yes, but that won't happen yet. I've made up my mind. (he pushes his pen and paper aside and stands up)

(Song) **No.8. Man of The Family**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

Oh, Daddy, you weren't old enough to die,  
But you are somewhere up there in the sky.  
Probably having a good time with Uncle Phillip,  
When we need you here with us, not just in spirit.

2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus

It is down to me now, as you can see,  
I'll have to be the man of the family.  
I'm so young; will I be able to cope?  
I suppose I will, I only have to hope.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

Oh, Mummy, I'll try not to let you down,  
Even if sometimes I may be a clown.  
I want to do everything I can to repay,  
Your love and all those things you do for us each day.

3<sup>rd</sup> Chorus

I'll prove I'm not too young to take the strain,  
And we'll be happy together again,  
It's just down to me now. I'm proud to be.  
Yes, proud to be the man of the family.

(as the song ends, Rosie arrives home from school breathlessly)

ROSIE: Hello Mum. Was that you singing Paul?

THERESA: Yes, dear. We seem to have a musical family.

PAUL: (regaining his seat at the table) I was telling mum that I'm going to work at a tin mine.

THERESA: And I'm not too keen on the idea. It's too risky.

ROSIE: (sounding very grown-up) He's like me – he knows what he wants.

PAUL: It's only fair that I should pay my way.

THERESA: We are managing...

PAUL: But it shouldn't all be down to you, Mum.

ROSIE: You can't blame him, Mum. You've brought us up to be inde... inde...

PAUL: Independent.

ROSIE: Yes, that's right.

PAUL: I promise you I'll give up if I find it too hard or dangerous.

THERESA: I'll think about it.

ROSIE: I've got some news too. (Sits down next to her mother)

THERESA: (resuming her knitting) Don't tell me you want to be a suffragette!

ROSIE: (giggling) Not yet. I'm going on the stage.

THERESA: Heaven help us!

ROSIE: I'm singing solo in the school choir now. Would you like to hear what I'll be singing in the concert at Easter?

THERESA: That would be nice.

(Rosie stands up)

ROSIE (Song) **No. 9. Don't Let it Rain Today**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

Christmas has come and gone by,  
The spring is upon us once more.  
Birds are singing in the sky,  
The warmer weather is in store.

Chorus

We're all here together,  
Oh, my if it could only stay.  
Lovely like this forever,  
Please, don't let it rain today.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

If those clouds return to cry,  
It will ruin this happy mood.  
Don't bring back the darkened sky,  
Let spring stay with us all for good.



Repeat Chorus

We're all here together,  
Oh, my if it could only stay.  
Lovely like this forever,  
Please don't let it rain today.

Repeat Chorus

We're all here together,  
Oh, my if it could only stay.  
Lovely like this forever,  
Please don't let it rain today.

(Theresa and Paul applaud enthusiastically)

THERESA: I'm looking forward to the concert. It'll be a pleasant change from all this talk of war.

PAUL: Where's Katy?

THERESA: I'll give you three guesses and you won't need two of them.

PAUL/ROSIE: She's writing another fairy story.

THERESA: She has a lot of imagination for an eight-year-old. (putting down her knitting gain) Well, I must get tea on the go before I'm overwhelmed by all this talent. You'd better hop upstairs and see if Katy's all right.  
(Paul and Rosie dash out. Theresa puts her head in her hands and sighs) I never know what's going to happen next with this lot.

**Scene 8**

August 1914. It's the day before the outbreak of war. A bedroom at Poltro Manor. Henry is rummaging in a drawer in the bedside cabinet. There is a knock on the door and Theresa enters.

THERESA: (looking worried) I kept praying it wouldn't happen, but it will now, won't it?

HENRY: It was inevitable (he walks over and takes Theresa in his arms) I don't know how to tell you this (Theresa breaks away from him and looks at him inquiringly) I've joined the army this morning.

THERESA: Oh, no!

HENRY: I felt I had to, especially when Bob and George told me they had already enlisted.

THERESA: (looking very upset) When will you have to go?

HENRY: Tomorrow, I'm afraid – to Yorkshire (looking unhappily at Theresa) I shall miss you so much. You can still see Nigel. He failed his medical.

THERESA: You know very well I don't want anyone else. That was my big mistake. I should've stuck to my guns...

HENRY: (with a phoney laugh) An unfortunate choice of words in the present circumstances.

THERESA: Yes. The others didn't respect me the way you did. I have never resented you. And you must have realised how I feel now.

HENRY: (taking hold of Theresa again, more gently) If I weren't going away, I would ask you to let me make an honest woman of you. (Theresa gasps) I feel an even greater need of making myself an honest man.

THERESA: I never knew you felt that way. You obviously liked me, but...

HENRY: Of course, I love you. I think I always have, but I was too stupid to see it until now. Anyway, I thought that privately you despised me.

THERESA: What a time to find out ... oh, Henry, (pulling him towards her and kissing him passionately) what am I going to do now?

HENRY: I want to write to you, but that'll be difficult.

THERESA: No, I want you to write – often. The children have heard about you and other guests at the Manor, but they have no idea what has happened between us – and they never will. There is no problem though because I always open the mail.

HENRY: This is all too painful for words. What will you do?

THERESA: I shall have to find full-time work, but where and what? It's so hard for a woman. I'm so angry now that the suffragettes have suspended their campaign for the duration of the war, just when they were really making an impact. When will men stop treating us like lesser mortals?

HENRY: (screwing his face up) Ouch!

THERESA: (gripping his arm) I'm talking about employment. I'm determined to get a proper job even though it'll mean leaving the Manor, where I've been so happy.

HENRY: I wish you all the luck in the world. You deserve it. We must hope this skirmish is soon over. (sighing) I shall have to go, darling...

THERESA: I like the sound of that word.

HENRY: I've got a lot of things to do and my train leaves early in the morning.

THERESA: I never could bear long goodbyes.

HENRY: We shall meet again and then - who knows?

THERESA: Go, my dear, before I burst into floods of tears and embarrass you.  
(Henry throws his arms round Theresa again, kisses her quickly and turns to go, pausing at the door)

HENRY: Au revoir, my love. (exits)

THERESA: (taking to the closed door) If Paul and Rosie are so certain where they're going, why am I so weak and unsure of myself? I need to show them I'm worthy of being their mother. Whatever it takes.

(Song) **No.10. A Woman's Place**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

What is a woman expected to do,  
When life - is disrupted by war?  
We must convince them it's no longer true,  
That women can't leave their front door.

1<sup>st</sup> Chorus

When men are away, there's war work to be done,  
On the land, in the schools and the factories too.  
We won't mind the toil if it helps beat the Hun,  
We will prove we can match what our men folk now do.  
There's one simple fact to face,  
War work is a woman's place.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

We're not in this world to be patronised,  
Domestic slaves chained to the sink.  
It's just about time that men were advised,  
They've got to change the way they think.

2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus

When men go to fight there are jobs to be filled,  
On the buses and trams, in the parks, on the streets.  
We'll step in the breach, for hard work never killed,  
And when our men come back, we will be here to greet.  
But we will have made our case,  
Every where's a woman's place.

3<sup>rd</sup> Verse

What is more you'll see that your homes are clean,  
There's no neglect, the children thrive.  
With work here, work there and work in between,  
We're still happy to be alive.

3<sup>rd</sup> Chorus

But when you look back at what women achieved,  
Will you come to accept we're no inferior breed?  
And give us the rights we have never received,  
So that, from our shackles we can at last be freed?  
A woman's place is in the home .....  
And anywhere she wants to roam!

**(curtain come down while the entire cast is gathering behind. In the interim martial music can be heard quietly)**

**Scene 9**

A few days later. A crowd of people is gathering the square. There is a lot of animated conversation.

1<sup>st</sup> MALE: I can hardly believe this is happening.

1<sup>st</sup> FEMALE: To think we were playing tennis only last week.

2<sup>nd</sup> FEMALE: Suppose they bring in conscription?

2<sup>nd</sup> MALE: They won't need to.

3<sup>rd</sup> FEMALE: They say it'll be over by Christmas.

4<sup>th</sup> FEMALE: I wish I can feel that confident.

3<sup>rd</sup> MALE: Will you volunteer then?

4<sup>th</sup> MALE: I don't know, Kitty is expecting. I don't want to be away.

3<sup>rd</sup> MALE: Nor would I, my friend.

4<sup>th</sup> MALE: Hey... listen!

CAST: (Song) **No. 11. The Sound of Marching Feet**

Intro

FEMALE: What's that we here?

MALE: It's coming near

(the sound of marching feet)

UNISON: 1<sup>st</sup> Verse

Warm summer days that we have known,  
Like hopes of peace will soon have flown.  
The sound of birdsong ever sweet,  
Gives way to sounds of marching feet.

FEMALES: 1<sup>st</sup> Chorus

Left right, left right, left right,  
As our men march away.  
In foreign lands to fight,  
And we alone must stay.  
Left right, left right, left right.

UNISON: 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

We'll miss the music in the park,  
Those lovers' meeting in the dark.  
Instead, we'll hear the drummers' beat,  
Accompanying those marching feet.

MALES: 2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus

Left right, left right, left right.  
With our backs to the wall,  
We'll fight with all our might.  
We're answering the call,  
Left right, left right, left right.

UNISON: 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

But when the victors have been crowned,  
And fighting men are homeward bound.  
The day will come when we can greet,

The welcome some of marching feet.

UNISON: Coda  
Left right, left right, left right,  
Left right, left right, left right.....

MALE: HALT !

## CURTAIN

### ACT TWO

#### Scene 1

February 1919. A bedroom at Swallow Cottage. Theresa, Paul and Rosie are grouped round the bed in which Katy is dying, a victim of the post-war influenza pandemic. They are all crying softly.

THERESA: The doctor is on his way but ... it's too late now. Why couldn't it have been me? I've had a life.

ROSIE: Don't say that, Mum. We didn't want anyone to die.

PAUL: (very distressed) We were lucky to pull through. At first, I was more worried about Rosie, (angrily) it's diabolical! As if four years of slaughter isn't enough grief.

ROSIE: What a waste of life. I can't believe that God would choose to take such a lovely girl – with so much talent and full of life. Perhaps He doesn't care. (now fervently) Perhaps He doesn't exist.

THERESA: Don't say that, Rosie. I know you're angry. So am I, but we must believe in something.

PAUL: Nothing makes any sense to me.

THERESA: Only this morning the headlines were saying: "Flu pandemic on the wane". What irony ..... (the sound of a faint cough interrupts her. She bends over to listen to Katy, kissing her forehead. Then she feels for Katy's pulse and looks distraught)

ROSIE: How is she, Mum?

THERESA: (putting her arms around her daughter and sobbing inconsolably) It's all over.

ROSIE: It isn't fair. It isn't fair.

THERSEA/ROSIE: (Song) No. 1. Why?

THERSEA: 1<sup>st</sup> Verse  
She was far too young to be taken away,  
She had her whole life ahead.  
You were playing as youngsters just yesterday,  
And now she is lying there dead.

1<sup>st</sup> Chorus

No, it isn't fair, it isn't right,  
Oh why, oh why did she have to die?  
She was such a beautiful daughter,  
Please God, oh why did you choose her, why?

ROSIE: 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

Once there were five of us in the family,  
We lost Dad then there were four.  
We did not deserve to come down to three,  
It won't be the same as before.

2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus

No, it isn't right, it isn't fair.  
Oh why, oh why, did she have to die?  
She was my very lovely sister,  
Please God, oh why did you take her, why?

UNISON: Coda

She must be in her loving Dad's arms right now,  
Yes, we're sure her soul is with him somehow.  
They are both gone, but why?  
Why?

(Paul joins the other two in a huddle)

THERESA: I don't know how I'll face tomorrow.

PAUL: We'll all face it together, Mum.  
(Rosie moves to the bed, kisses her dead sister, and pulls the sheet over her face)

THERESA: My poor little Katy.

PAUL: I'll have to let Grandma know.

ROSIE: And I'll go and see Uncle Charlie – but only if you will be all right until I get back, Mum. I promise I won't be long.

THERESA: Of course, dear. I have got things to do, and the doctor should be here any minute. (straightening up) I must pull myself together. (Rosie and Paul leave. Theresa dries her eyes with a handkerchief, lifts the sheet and slumps over the bed)

**Scene 2**

May 1919. At Poltro Manor. Polly is greeting guests at the door. Theresa arrives with Rosie and Lady Trewarren comes over to speak to them immediately.

THERESA: Good evening, my Lady.

LADY T: I'm pleased to see you, but you look very pale and tired. This must have been a dreadful ordeal for you.

THERESA: Yes, but Paul and Rosie have given me the strength to go on.

LADY T: And this is Rosie (turning towards her) The last time you were here you stood about that high (holds her hand about three feet from the floor) It seems like yesterday. You've become a beautiful young lady – and I was right, you're still a credit to your mother.

ROSIE: Thank you. I'm so looking forward to singing, but I hope I don't panic and forget the words.

THERESA: You'll be fine. Can you find your own way home? I want to look in on Grandma.

ROSIE: Yes, Mum.

LADY T: I'll see she gets an escort if she needs one, although I've got a feeling Rosie is well able to look after herself.

THERESA: You are very kind, my Lady – as always. (looking at her watch) Well, I must be on my way. (she turns to go and sees Henry looking at her from across the room. she walks casually over to him)

HENRY: (whispering) I take it that's Rosie - lovely like her mother. How are you coping? There must be something I can do to help.

THERESA: Maybe later. The trouble is I keep thinking I'm being punished for what I did with you.

HENRY: (interrupting) No! Influenza chooses its victims at random. If anyone should have a conscience it's me.

THERESA: If only I could consider it as water under the bridge.

HENRY: But it isn't. I want you to marry me, Theresa.

THERESA: What about Paul and Rosie?

HENRY: We'll have to tell them sometime.

THERESA: (startled) Not about.....?

HENRY: No, of course not.

THERESA: I'd better go now. One or two people are giving us old-fashioned looks. I'll see you tomorrow.

HENRY: Good. Meanwhile I'll keep an eye on Rosie for you. (Theresa nods and smiles then exits. The butler is busy serving drinks to the guests. There is buzz of conversation a few minutes later as Lady Trewarren returns to the middle of the room)

LADY T: Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention, please? I am sure you will have noticed (pauses) unless you are visually impaired – that we have a very attractive young lady here whom you have not previously met (turning to a slightly nervous Rosie) Well, she is not here just to be decorative. She has the gift of a lovely voice too, as you are about to discover. Ladies and gentlemen, may I introduce Miss Rosie Penrose. (as Rosie moves forward,

she is greeted with warm applause. one of the guests sits down at the piano in the corner of the room and accompanies Rosie)

ROSIE: (Song) **No. 2. The First Thing**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

When I go to sleep at the end of the day,  
My dream always seems to be the same.  
I'm a little confused it won't go away,  
Why is my mind playing this strange game?

Chorus

The first thing that appears in my hands,  
Is this small bright, beautiful, pink moon.  
I walk down some steps onto dark blue sand,  
Then I'm in this lovely green sky in a balloon.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

Does this recent recurring dream of mine,  
Mean that true love has at last found me?  
Perhaps it's the new boy at number nine?  
Or somebody I have yet to - see?

Repeat Chorus

The first thing that appears in my hands,  
Is this small bright, beautiful, pink moon.  
I walk down some steps onto dark blue sand,  
Then I'm in this lovely green sky in a balloon.

3<sup>rd</sup> Verse

Yes, I feel something good is going to happen,  
I am not sure whom, when, what or where.  
It seems like I'm in a magical heaven,  
Surely, he must be somewhere out there.

Coda

The first thing every morning when I awake,  
Deep inside I hope the answer is – you.

(during the song, one of the guests, George Wallis, is feasting his eyes on Rosie. At the end of her performance, the audience applauds enthusiastically and she acknowledges this in obvious delight. George, who has plainly been drinking, spots an opportunity of introducing himself to Rosie when she retreats to a quiet corner, so he ambles rather unsteadily towards her)

GEORGE: That was a lovely song, beautifully sung.

ROSIE: (eyeing him warily) Kind of you to say so.

GEORGE: This is almost like a stag party – with not enough ladies. The room seems so much more inviting with you in it.

ROSIE: (recoiling slightly from the smell of alcohol) Thank you.

GEORGE: There is an even better room upstairs and it's quieter. We wouldn't be disturbed. Would you like to entertain me personally?



ROSIE: (moving further backwards) Come to the door. (George follows eagerly. When they're out of earshot of the other guests, Rosie turns to him and, as he sidles up to her, treads hard on his toes. He stifles a cry of pain and stands back in astonishment) I'll have you know, sir, I'm only sixteen and I'm not remotely interested in your disgusting suggestion. Nor would I be if I were your age. Now kindly get out of my way before I tread on your other foot.

GEORGE: (blurts out) Well, you've had your chance. It's a pity that Theresa no longer Works at the Manor. She knew what side her bread was buttered (as he limps back into the room without looking back)

ROSIE: (holding her head in her hands) Oh, my God! She couldn't. Why? (regaining some composure) Of course – it makes sense now. That's how she was able to give us all those little treats. We were too young to understand. Poor mum. (she straightens herself and walks back into the room forcing a smile, but blunders into the back of Henry, who quickly turns and studies her) I'm so sorry.

HENRY: Rosie. Whatever's the matter? You look as white as a ghost.

ROSIE: (angrily) That man! He tried to lure me into a bedroom – and he's drunk!

HENRY: Who are you talking about?

ROSIE: (pointing to George's back) Him!

HENRY: Right. Calm down, my dear, and sit down (Rosie complies) I'll have a word with him in a minute. He won't bother you anymore.

ROSIE: He made it plain what he wanted.

HENRY: Subtlety is not George's strong point.

ROSIE: (feeling a lot better, but still shocked by George's revelation): I saw you talking to my mother earlier. Do you know one another?

HENRY: Yes, I knew her when she worked at the Manor before the war. She was a good hard worker.

ROSIE: She was happy here, but talked herself into a job at the Post Office in 1916 when the supply of suitable men dried up.

HENRY: Are you singing again or are you too upset?

ROSIE: It'll take more than that uncouth lout to put me off.

HENRY: (smiling) I don't think many men will try to take advantage of you. Well, if you're sure you are fully recovered; I'll leave you to take the floor. I can give you a lift home if you like... (noting Rosie's hesitation) You'll be safe with me, but if you prefer to go on your own, I'll understand.

ROSIE: I shall be all right, but I know I can trust you because my mother chooses her friends well.

HENRY: While you get ready for your next song, I'll have a not very quiet word with George. (both go their separate ways, Rosie rejoining Lady Trewarren and

Henry storming over to confront a chastened George) What the hell did you think you were doing? Don't you know who Rosie is?

GEORGE: (shaking his head): No. (self-pityingly) She stamped on my foot.

HENRY: She should have stamped on your head, you maniac. That's Theresa's daughter.

GEORGE: What! I had no idea. Sorry, Henry. I've put my foot in it, haven't I?

HENRY: Yes, and it got the treatment you deserved. You'd better hope there's no harm done.

GEORGE: (softly) I wouldn't count on it.

HENRY: What did you say?

GEORGE: Er, nothing important.

LADY T: (signalling to the butler who walks over to her and whispers): Keep an eye on Mr Wallis for me, Lawson. I think he is making a nuisance of himself.

BUTLER: Yes, my Lady. (Lady Trewarren moves to the centre of the room)

LADY T: Ladies and gentlemen, the lovely Rosie is going to sing for you again. She's going to be performing a well-known song called *We're Going to Build a Brand-New World*. She also tells me she would like everyone here to join her in the chorus and coda please. Thank you. (as Rosie reappears, all the guests applaud)

ROSIE: (Song) **No. 3. We're Going To Build A Brand-New World**

ROSIE: Intro  
At last, the nightmare has vanished,  
We've come to the end of the tunnel.  
Now that our fears have been banished,  
We have to believe that the sun will.  
Shine and shine and shine and shine,  
The time has come to put the past behind us.  
But when tomorrow comes how will it find us?

UNISON: Chorus  
We're going to build a brand-new world that's fit for heroes,  
We're going to build a peaceful world where no more fear grows.

ROSIE: 1st Verse  
There'll be no need for sword or gun,  
A steady job for everyone.  
We'll welcome every single day,  
And then we'll dance the nights away.

UNISON: Repeat Chorus  
We're e going to build a brand-new world that's fit for heroes,  
We're going to build a peaceful world where no more fear grows.

ROSIE: 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse  
With lessons learned from history,  
Our brand-new world will keep us free.  
From all those things that bring us pain,  
And so, let's all sing once again...

UNISON: Coda  
We're going to build a brand-new world that's fit for heroes,  
We're going to build a peaceful world where no more fear grows.  
We're going to build,  
We're going to build,  
We're going to build a brand-new world.

(As the song ends everyone applauds)

### Scene 3

The following afternoon at Swallow Cottage. Paul is seated reading the Port St Clare Gazette. Rosie enters the room cautiously.

PAUL: (looking up) Hello, love.

ROSIE: (looking thoughtful) Are you busy?

PAUL: I'm reading about the problems in tin mining these days. Now I'm working full time I need to have an eye to the future.

ROSIE: Are you worried about your job?

PAUL: Not immediately, but I can see the signs. That's why I've been writing articles for the local paper on the subject... and today I received a letter from the editor telling me he wanted to print my latest effort.

ROSIE: Well, done, Paul. Will you get paid for it?

PAUL: Yes, but... (puts down his newspaper)

ROSIE: What?

PAUL: I really want to write on a lot of topics. One of my mates at work acts as a correspondent for the paper covering stories from the area where he lives. I'd like to do something like that. Perhaps I've got a foot in the door. (noticing that Rosie hasn't answered and is looking rather absentminded) Is something wrong, Rosie?

ROSIE: (sighing heavily) I've been wondering whether to tell you.

PAUL: Tell me what?

ROSIE: You're not going to like this, but you have a right to know.

PAUL: I don't like the sound of this .... but I'll keep my hair on.

ROSIE: (sitting down heavily): It's about mum. I found out at the Manor last night that she used to be (snivelling) to be ... a prostitute.

PAUL: (astonished) Who on earth told you that pack of lies?

ROSIE: No, it's true. The man who told me didn't know who I was. He tried to get fresh with me and I told him where to get off.

PAUL: (very angry) Who was it? I'll break his bloody neck.

ROSIE: No! Somebody has already dealt with him.

PAUL: So, he tried to get his revenge by saying something he knew would upset you.

ROSIE: I wish that were true. He actually said it was a pity that Theresa no longer worked at the Manor because she knew which side her bread was buttered.

PAUL: (stunned) Why would she do such a thing? I can't believe this.

ROSIE: A very nice man calmed me down. I had seen him talking to Mum as she was leaving the room and he told me he knew her from before the war when she worked at the Manor. It startled me thinking. Why did she?

PAUL: There was no reason.

ROSIE: I'm sure there was. She didn't do it for herself though. Did we ever wonder how she was able to afford those coach trips to Newquay... and even Saint Ives? We always had good clothes, but how often did she buy anything really special for herself?

PAUL: Of course. She did it for us. How do you think that makes me feel?

ROSIE: Me too. We owe her so much. We must make absolutely certain she will never discover what we found out. We do owe her that, don't we?

PAUL: Yes, we do. Now we can see why she was so determined to find a better paid job when she was so happy at the Manor. She was desperate to break free from what must have been torment.

ROSIE: I'm glad I told you. It would have been so hard keeping a secret like that (pauses) Mum will be home soon. We'd better look a bit more cheerful.

PAUL: I won't know what to talk about.

ROSIE: Leave that to me. I've got some news for her ... and, come to think of it, for you too. (there is the sound of voices and somebody saying 'Goodbye', then Theresa strides into the room)

THERESA: Who's going to put the kettle on?

PAUL: (getting to his feet) I will. (relieved at the excuse to leave the room, which he does)

THERESA: What have you been doing today, Rosie? Anything exciting?

ROSIE: I've been practising a couple of new songs. Soon I shall have to start earning some money, but I want to do it my way. (Paul reappears)

PAUL: It's brewing.

THERESA: (misunderstanding) Rosie! You're not thinking of working at the brewery?

ROSIE: (laughing aloud) No! I was about to tell you that I've met the assistant stage manager at the Little Theatre. His name is Albert Bravery and I like him. He has been telling me all about the shows they put on. (breathlessly) I'm going to be on that stage one day – soon, I hope.

THERESA: (laughing) Whoa! It won't be that easy.

ROSIE: I'm going to be a star.

PAUL: You may have to do a lot of twinkles first. (Rosie pulls a face at Paul)  
Sorry. I'll go and get the tea (exits)

THERESA: (to Rosie) He's pulling your leg, but there's a lot of truth in what he says.  
(as Paul re-enters with a tray of tea and biscuits, Theresa stands back to look intently at her daughter and starts to sing)

(Song) **No.4. Don't Fly Too High**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

Don't fly too high,  
You know the sky.  
Will still be there tomorrow.  
If fate's unkind,  
You may soon find,  
Life only brings you sorrow.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

Don't try too soon,  
To reach the moon.  
It's way off in the distance.  
Life's not a race,  
An easy pace,  
The essence of existence.

Chorus

Someone once said it was better,  
To travel than to arrive.  
If that's true of the theatre,  
You may struggle to survive.

3<sup>rd</sup> Verse

Love, it's no crime,  
To take some time.  
You can afford to borrow.  
Don't fly too high,  
You know the sky,  
Will still be there tomorrow.

Coda

Don't fly too high,  
You know the sky.

Will still be there tomorrow.

#### **Scene 4**

An afternoon in August 1919 at the local repertory theatre called the Little Theatre. Rosie enters and looks around at the pictures of actors and actresses on the walls. A young lady walks through and Rosie calls to her.

ROSIE: Excuse me. Is Albert around?

FEMALE: Albert? Oh, you mean the stagehand.

ROSIE: (in puzzlement) Stagehand? (then guessing the truth) Er, yes.

FEMALE: I'll let him know you're here. Oh, and can I have your name please.

ROSIE: Yes, sorry - I'm Rosie, thank you. (the female exits and after a few seconds, while Rosie continues to take note of the surroundings, Albert appears. His face lights up until she shouts at him with barely disguised derision)  
Assistant stage manager – huh! I suppose you took me for a fool. Well, I'm not!

ALBERT: I was stupid to tell you that.

ROSIE: No, you thought you were clever. You thought wrong. You can try your tricks on some other gullible female.

ALBERT: (crestfallen) I'm sorry, but ....

ROSIE: Save your excuses. I like people I can trust. That plainly doesn't include you. Where's the manager's office?

ALBERT: (pointing to a door) Over there, but...

ROSIE: Get out of my way (pushes past him)

ALBERT: You can't go in there.

ROSIE: Watch me. (knocks on the door)

OSCAR: Come in. (Rosie walks in haughtily and faces a man seated at a desk)

ROSIE: Are you the manager?

OSCAR: (somewhat taken aback) Yes, I'm Mr. Smart. But may I ask, who are you? And how dare you barge into my office like this unannounced!

ROSIE: My name is Rosie Penrose and I'm an actress.

OSCAR: (smiling) So are half the female population – or so they think.

ROSIE: I haven't come here to exchange banter. I'm serious. If I intend to play leading roles – and I do – I know I've got to start somewhere, and I live locally, so here I am.

OSCAR: I'll give you ten out of ten for nerve. Do you have any idea how many girls like you come here pestering me for the chance to audition, most of them with no talent whatsoever?

ROSIE: (now slightly less aggressive) Then they're not like me. They only think they can act. I know I can – and I'll prove it given even half a chance.

OSCAR: I ought to be throwing you out of my office for downright impertinence. (pauses) However, I must admit you make a change from the usual simpering sycophants who come through that door.

ROSIE: (beginning to suspect that she overstepped the mark) I'm not normally that rude.

OSCAR: (looking at her speculatively) Well, as it happens, we shall be auditioning for a new show next week. By the way, can you sing?

ROSIE: Yes. (sings up and down the scale for an octave)

OSCAR: Hm, I'm not promising anything but, if you come along on Tuesday at three o' clock, you'll get a chance to show what you can do.

ROSIE: Thank you, Mr. Smart. (Oscar rises and escorts Rosie to the door, which he leaves ajar. Rosie's mood changes from delight to anger when she runs into Albert again)

ALBERT: Don't go, Rosie. You know how fond of you I am.

ROSIE: Funny way of showing it.

ALBERT: I'll never lie to you again. (which brings Oscar unnoticed to the door to see what the noise is all about)

ROSIE: (raising her voice rather theatrically) No, you won't. You won't get the chance. I never want to see you again.

ALBERT: (raising an arm in an attempt to bar Rosie's way) You can't mean that.

ROSIE: I can, and I do. Now let me pass, please. (Albert reluctantly obeys and she sweeps by him)

ALBERT: I love you, Rosie. (Rosie stops momentarily, then flounces out, leaving Albert to walk away dejectedly. Oscar has been standing by his office door and now holds his hand to his mouth to stifle a laugh)

OSCAR: Bloody hell! She can act!

## Scene 5

May 1920 at Swallow Cottage. Rosie enters carrying the morning post, which she puts down on the sitting room table without opening any letters. She paces up and down and then stops to look in the mirror on the wall, examining her face minutely)

ROSIE: Well, I may not be a beauty queen, but I could look a lot uglier. Albert always said I was lovely (lost in thought for a brief moment, then scowling) but he's history! (stamps her foot) What can I do to get out of this rut? This town is too small for me. (turning away from the mirror, she starts to sing)

(Song) **No. 5. Auditions, Auditions**

### 1<sup>st</sup> Verse

I've played wicked and pure,  
Uncouth... hah! And demure,  
Wanton and with virtue intact.  
I have laughed and I've cried,  
I have tried – how I've tried,  
Why can they not see I can act?

### 1<sup>st</sup> Chorus

Auditions, auditions,  
Oh, where do they get us?  
Walking on parts and the chorus,  
We give a performance.  
And then they forget us,  
Indeed, they seem to ignore us.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

I have whispered and screamed,  
I have plotted and schemed.  
And brought real emotions to bear.  
On some challenging roles,  
To achieve all my goals,  
And yet I still wait in despair.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus

Auditions, Auditions,  
Oh, where do they get me?  
In the back row where I started,  
A fleeting appearance.  
I know will upset me,  
Once more I'll feel so downhearted.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Verse

I've been damned with faint praise,  
But I've spent all my days,  
Determined to prove I'm a star.  
They are too blind to see,  
The great talent in me,  
In tragedies – and in ha! ha!

(she stops to pick up the post and tears open one envelope and extracting the letter. After reading a few words, she throws it down in disgust and finishes



the song)

**No. 5. Auditions, Auditions** (continued)

3<sup>rd</sup> Chorus

Another audition!  
Oh, this is the last straw,  
I will not let them get me down.  
No more hesitation,  
I'll head for the stage door.  
I'm going to see London town.

(Paul enters)

PAUL: (looking at his sister severely) Oh, Rosie. I've just seen a funeral procession and the mourners looked more cheerful than you. What' up now?

ROSIE: Nothing new. Just frustration.

PAUL: (going over to give her a cuddle) Poor out your heart to big brother. I've got large ears.

ROSIE: (unable to avoid laughing): I had noticed. (then seriously again) It's just that I'm no further forward than I was six months ago. (she opens a cupboard drawer and starts rummaging) I can't find my green comb – you know, the one Katy gave me. (suddenly pulling out a large envelope) What's doing in here? This is Katy's writing ( she hesitates before deciding to open the envelope. This reveals several sheets of paper, and she begins to read to herself)

PAUL: What are you reading?

ROSIE: Wait a minute. (carries on reading and then exclaims) This is wonderful. What a find! We both knew she could write, but this is a far cry from those little fairy tales.

PAUL: What's it about?

ROSIE: You'd better read it yourself (passes it to him)

(there is a loud knock at the door and Paul looks out of the window)

PAUL: That's Uncle Charlie. Go and let him in while I disappear and plough through this Happy Endings story. Make my excuses. (both exit separately and Rosie quickly reappears accompanied by her uncle)

CHARLIE: All alone?

ROSIE: Mum should be home soon. Paul's working on something. He'll join us in a few minutes.

CHARLIE: Good. How are things at the theatre?

ROSIE: Don't ask. It's fun in a way, but I'm not being stretched. Dorothy is good in the lead role and I like her personally, but I'm sure I could do better. They

haven't even cast me as her understudy.

CHARLIE: (kindly) I worry about you sometimes, my dear. Show business can be very rewarding, but it isn't often anything falls in your lap. Don't misunderstand me; I sincerely hope it works out for you. Whatever happens you'll never be a failure, but don't let disappointment cloud your outlook on life. Ambition is two-edged. It can take you to the highest pinnacle or destroy your happiness if you let it. True satisfaction lies in knowing you've done your best. Nobody can ask for more. You'll always be a star to everyone who knows you.

ROSIE: (smiling) What a lovely thing to say. I won't give up, but I shall remember your words, Uncle Charlie. (Charlie bends down to kiss her on the cheek, then holds her at arm's length and starts to sing)

CHARLIE: (Song) **No.6. Stagestruck**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

You always wanted to be centre stage,  
Your name emblazoned on ev'ry front page.  
Stardom was your sole ambition,  
Which became a sacred mission.  
Stagestruck.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

You didn't listen to the good advice,  
From friends and family, you've paid the price.  
Being famous was what mattered,  
Now your long-held dreams are shattered.  
Yes, stagestruck.

3<sup>rd</sup> Verse

You may not see your name go up in lights,  
Or reach the so long hoped-for dizzy heights.  
But you are still a fighter,  
And your future can be brighter.  
Why be stagestruck?

Coda

Although Shakespeare's roles may not be meant for you,  
There's so much in this world that you can do.  
You have the personality,  
The beauty and vitality...  
To play the most important of all parts,  
Just be yourself and win a million hearts.  
Yes, play the most important of all parts,  
Just be yourself and win a million hearts.

(Rosie turns round as Paul enters the room)

PAUL: Hello, uncle, how are you?

CHARLIE: I can't complain – though I usually do.

PAUL: I think I heard Mum. Yes, here she comes. (Theresa enters)

THERESA: Full house I see.

CHARLIE: I just popped in to see how you all are. I've got a meeting at the club in half an hour, but I'll look in later. Good luck, again, Rosie. (exits)

THERESA: I'll just change into something cooler; it's very warm for May. (exits)

ROSIE: (eagerly) Well, what did you think of it?

PAUL: Brilliant. It would make a great play.

ROSIE: You could do that.

PAUL: Mm. You didn't have time to finish it, so you are in for another surprise. Katy wrote it specially for Mum's birthday but, poor girl, she never had the chance to give it to her.

ROSIE: Oh, Mum would have been thrilled (pauses) but, if we tell her now, I'm afraid it may stir up old memories and upset her all over again. It's not much more than a year.

PAUL: We have to tell her, Rosie. It was Katy's present and however she reacts now she will treasure it as a memento.

ROSIE: Of course, you're right.

PAUL: I've been thinking. It shouldn't be too difficult to dramatize. Then you could use your charms and powers of persuasion on Oscar Smart....

ROSIE: (clapping her hands) Yes, why not? By the way, I intend to go to London to try my luck in the West End, but now I'll have to wait until we can get our show on the road. After that you won't see me for dust. But Mum's not to know about this just yet so please don't tell her, Paul.

PAUL: You can rely on me, Rosie. (Theresa reappears in a change of clothing)

ROSIE: Sit down, Mum.

THERESA: (looking at her daughter quizzically) You've got that look in your eye. What have you been up to now?

ROSIE: Nothing that will bring disgrace to the family name. Go on sit down. (Theresa obeys) I've found something we think you should read. Katy intended you to have a present on your birthday so she hid it in a drawer in the meantime. It is a story called 'Happy Endings' dedicated to you and we will leave you to read it. (Paul gives the story to his mother who takes it with shaking hands)

PAUL: You wouldn't expect anything written by Katy to be less than outstanding, Mum, and this is beautifully written. (seeing his mother is tearful) Don't cry.

THERESA: These are tears of happiness, Paul. I shall never let this out of my sight.

ROSIE: We'll leave you to read it later in peace and quiet.

THERESA: Yes, thank you dear (leaning back and shaking her head as Rosie starts to go towards the door motioning Paul to join her) Wait. I was wondering how to break news of my own to you, but this has turned my world upside down. (Rosie and Paul return and take their seats)

PAUL: What do you mean?

THERESA: I don't know what you'll think of me.

ROSIE: Yes, you do. We both love you.

THERESA: (speaking very slowly) Do you remember, Rosie, that evening at the Manor when you went to sing? (Rosie nods) You met a man who was kind to you when someone was being objectionable.

ROSIE: Yes. You told me later that his name was Henry and you had known him for some years.

THERESA: That's right. I've seen him quite a few times recently and .... (beginning to stammer) this... afternoon (hesitating) Oh, damn it, why can't I tell you straight out?

PAUL: He's asked you to marry him.

THERESA: (wide-eyed) How did you know that?

ROSIE: He guessed ... and so did I. We both couldn't help noticing how much happier you have seemed over the last few weeks....

PAUL: And I couldn't think of anything else you'd have had difficulty telling us. (Smiling broadly) unless, of course, you had robbed a bank!

THERESA: (quickly) I didn't say yes.

PAUL/ROSIE: Why not?

THERESA: (relieved and astonished) You mean you aren't shocked?

PAUL: I think I can speak for Rosie as well as myself (Rosie nods) Everything you have ever done has always been with our happiness in mind. Don't you know how grateful we are? Life has been very hard for you since dad died. If Henry can make you half as happy as you made us, why would we want to stand in your way?

THERESA: I don't deserve you two.

ROSIE: That's true – but only when we've been a pain in the neck.

PAUL: Well, you haven't told us whether you want to make Henry happy too.

THERESA: Yes, I do. He is a very kind and thoughtful man and...

ROSIE: I'll second that.

THERESA: When your dad died, I never thought for one moment that I could ever love

another man and I shall always keep his memory close to my heart. For some time now I've fought against my feelings for Henry, and I'm amazed he has been so patient with me.

PAUL: Then put him out of his misery. (pauses) By the way I have met him once – although he didn't know who I was – and I share Rosie's opinion.

THERESA: (wiping her eyes) What a day this has been.

ROSIE: A good day all round. When you've read Katy's story, Mum, we want to get it copied for reasons we'll keep to ourselves for the present. Come on Paul, we've got things to do. (Rosie and Paul exit, leaving Theresa to jump up from her chair and dances around the room)

## **Scene 6**

August 1920. At the theatre which is in darkness except for the light in the manager's office. Rosie arrives quietly with Paul who is carrying a large notebook.

PAUL: Do you think he'll buy it?

ROSIE: I'll pin him to his desk until he does.

PAUL: (laughing softly) I almost feel sorry for him.

ROSIE: You've done a great job, Paul. Now you can leave me to do the rest. I'll make my own way home and I won't be late.

PAUL: (handing over her notebook) Right, I'll be off. (Paul exits and Rosie heads towards the office and knocks on the door)

OSCAR: Come in, Rosie.

ROSIE: (entering) How did you know it was me?

OSCAR: Well, I've had a very good day so far and I knew somebody would have to spoil it.

ROSIE: It's a good thing I know your sense of humour, or I might have been tempted to hit you on the head with this poker (holding out her hand and staring at it) that I forgot to bring with me.

OSCAR: (laughing) Please sit down, Rosie. (Rosie obeys) Nothing would surprise me. (pauses) To what do I owe the honour?

ROSIE: I won't beat about the bush. I happen to believe you know a good play when you see one.

OSCAR: (only showing vague interest) Go on.

ROSIE: Read this (handing him the notebook) Paul, my brother, who works for the Gazette, has written a synopsis for you, but I shall be amazed if you don't want me to keep quiet for half an hour while you bury yourself in the whole play.

OSCAR: You couldn't keep quiet that long. Help yourself to a drink from that cabinet (pointing) and pour me one too. I don't mind what it is. If this (holding up the notebook) is as good as you're kidding me, I won't notice the flavour. (Rosie rises and walks over to the cabinet and, pouring out some wine into two glasses, returns with them to the desk and sits down again. Silence reigns for a minute or two while Rosie studies the photographs on the walls. Oscar starts to read)

OSCAR: (continuing) Hm. Interesting (now to himself) That's clever (leaning forward in his seat) Ha! Neat twist.

ROSIE: I think.....

OSCAR: (interrupting)... I've still got twenty-three and a half minutes.

ROSIE: Sorry.

OSCAR: (after another minute reading silently) I've read enough for now.

ROSIE: Well?

OSCAR: I was getting ready to let you down lightly... (Rosie bites her lip in disappointment) ..... but I can't.

ROSIE: Oh!

OSCAR: Because I have to admit this is damned good.

ROSIE: (hitting the desk with her fist) Yes, it is.

OSCAR: Did your brother write this?

ROSIE: The play, yes, but it was based on a story my sister wrote before she died suddenly just over a year ago.

OSCAR: That's dreadful. I'm sorry I was so flippant.

ROSIE: You couldn't have known.

OSCAR: She deserves recognition ... and we haven't finally decided what to include in the season's programme. We could stage this next July. (pauses) I can see Dorothy as a brilliant Veronica Dee.

ROSIE: What! That part was written for me.

OSCAR: You! Oh, I don't know about that.

ROSIE: I want that part whatever it takes.

OSCAR: You haven't had all that much experience.

ROSIE: Whose fault is that?

OSCAR: (musing) I don't know ...(Rosie stands up and slowly begins to strip herself of her outer garments) What are you doing?

ROSIE: Proving I can act Dorothy off the stage.

OSCAR: Is this what you really want?

ROSIE: I want that part. (Oscar gets up and walks over to switch off the lights – leaving the stage in darkness. There are sounds of movement, but no dialogue)

**short interlude**

(the lights go back on, and Oscar and Rosie have resumed their seats at the desk)

ROSIE: When do we start rehearsals?

OSCAR: Next March.

ROSIE: I won't let you down.

OSCAR: (looking at her whimsically) I know. I was going to give Dorothy the part of Anna. It was obvious you'd be perfect for the lead.

ROSIE: (explosively) Why, you ...

OSCAR: (interrupting with a raised hand) Don't spoil everything. You've got what You wanted.

ROSIE: (standing up and heading haughtily for the door) So did you it seems.

OSCAR: By the way (Rosie stops at the door) I've appointed young Bravery as my assistant. He could soon be in line for better still. I've accepted the top job at a Birmingham theatre – starting next September.

ROSIE: Why? Is their casting couch more comfortable? (she turns round again and before slamming the door...) That's the last time I fall for that trick. (feeling angry, Rosie starts to sing)

(Song) **No.7. Whatever it Takes**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

I know where I'm going,  
My adrenalin's flowing.  
And nothing will stop me now,  
Those people who doubt me.  
Know nothing about me,  
You wait till I show them how.

1<sup>st</sup> Chorus

Whatever it takes, whatever it takes,  
I'll get to the top of the tree.  
This just isn't the time to step on the brakes,  
I need action – immediately.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

The future is calling,  
So why am I stalling.

What is the point of delay?  
I won't let faint hearts block.  
Opportunity's knock,  
No-one shall stand in my way.

2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus

Whatever it takes, I'll play for big stakes,  
To win by the throw of the dice.  
And if my heart breaks, whatever it takes,  
There's nothing I won't sacrifice.

Coda

I'll strive to achieve what I'm after,  
And though it may end in tears or laughter.  
I won't give in, I won't give in,  
Whatever it takes.

**Scene 7**

January 1921. A squalid poorly lit bed sit in London. Rosie is lounging on a well-worn settee, reading a book which she puts down when the doorbell rings. She gets up to go to the door.

ROSIE: (talking to herself) If that's him he can go to hell (she only opens the door half way then yells out) I don't want to see you. Go home, to your wife.

KEVIN: But Rosie ...

ROSIE: It's over. Take your foot out of the door. Go away and don't come back.  
(she slams the door and returns to the settee, picking up the book, starting to read, then impatiently putting it down again) Why do I always pick the wrong men? Why do they all pour out their troubles to me? And what do I get out of it? I didn't come to London for this. (she jumps up again and paces the floor briefly starting to sing)

(Song) **No.8. Right For Me**

1<sup>st</sup> Verse

Ah, I know he didn't love me,  
And I know I didn't love him.  
I've only given him what he needs,  
But no way will I be a victim.

1<sup>st</sup> Chorus

Now, what is wrong with wanting fame?  
The casting couch is just a game.  
Surely there isn't any real harm done,  
People will say, 'she made it – she's someone.'

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

Money is only half the story,  
I want to taste the fruits of glory.  
It's the means to an end for us,  
What is wrong with a little lust?

Coda

It was all right for Mum, so it's all right for me.



(instrumental while Rosie paces the floor thoughtfully)

2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus

Oh, but mum didn't search for fame,  
And yet she had to play this game.  
So that we all had good food, clothes .... and fun,  
She kept us alive – and she's not someone.

(instrumental)

Coda

So just how far have I got in my life?  
No, I can't carry on with men like Kevin,  
I'm still an unknown and he had a wife.  
Yes, I want to be home (pause) home sounds like heaven,  
That's right for me!

(as the song ends, Rosie starts packing things into a heavy, slightly dilapidated suitcase)

## **Scene 8**

A few days later in the kitchen at Swallow Cottage. Theresa is ironing. Paul is writing at the table.

THERESA: How are you getting on at the Gazette?

PAUL: They appear to be very satisfied with me. I've got much more opportunity to spread my wings now.

THERESA: I can't tell you how glad I was when you left the tin mine. It made me nervous.

PAUL: I know but I've no regrets. It was quite an experience. I learned a lot about life – but I always wanted to be a journalist.

THERESA: And now a playwright, no less!

PAUL: (grimacing) Ha! I expect that'll be my first and last effort. Katy did all the work. I only dotted the I's and crossed the T's.

THERESA: We haven't heard from Rosie for nearly three weeks. I'm worried that things aren't working out for her in London.

PAUL: Rosie's indestructible. Anyhow, she's bound to be home soon. You remember she put off her trip to London until she knew when the rehearsals for our show would be starting. That's in a nearly two weeks' time.

THERESA: Yes, that's true.

PAUL: Have you and Henry named the day yet? I thought you were all ready to sign on the dotted line weeks ago.

THERESA: He insisted on having Riverside completely redecorated ... and on buying a new bedroom suite. I know he can well afford it, but I'm marrying him for himself and not his furniture.

PAUL: He's worth waiting for.

THERESA: Yes, he is. (pauses) Well, that's the ironing done. I've just remembered, I promise to take some of my ginger cake over to Grandma. I won't be long. Will you put the ironing board away for me, please?

PAUL: Yes, Mum. (Theresa exits. Paul removes the ironing board and returns to his writing. Suddenly, Rosie makes a very noisy appearance, toting the heavy suitcase, which she dumps to the floor)

ROSIE: Hello, Paul. Can you put this lot in the bedroom for me, please?

PAUL: (slightly confused) Rosie! We didn't expect you home until the end of next week.

ROSIE: Is mum here?

PAUL: No, she's just gone out to grandmas, but she won't be long.

ROSIE: Oh good, I've got a few things to tell you. I'm exhausted. The train was nearly two hours late.

PAUL: Don't I get a kiss, then? (Rosie wraps her arms round him and kisses him)  
That's better. I'll take this away (picking up the case) and then you can tell me what you've been up to. (exits with the suitcase, returning immediately)

ROSIE: (sitting down) London was a mistake.

PAUL: (sitting down next to her) Tell me.

ROSIE: (talking quickly and nervously) I got involved with one of the casts, only to find he was married. Then he wouldn't leave me alone. Two of the girls both wanted the same part in a play I was auditioning for, and they ended up tearing each other's eyes out on the dressing room floor. Very messy.

PAUL: I can imagine. But didn't they give you a chance to perform?

ROSIE: Plenty of promises, but not one worthwhile role. One of the directors told me I had a future, but I didn't like the way he kept on looking at me. Paul I just couldn't stand to be there one more day.

PAUL: You'll get there one day, Rosie.

ROSIE: Mum and Uncle Charlie, both warned me, but I wouldn't listen.

PAUL: (looking worried) You're not going to pull out of rehearsals for Katy's story? You can't do that.

ROSIE: No, of course not, but it won't be the same. (then suddenly) Please, please don't say anything to mum about any of this, Paul.

PAUL: You can tell her what you want to when you want to, but I need to see you in sparkling form when she comes in.

ROSIE: (standing up and looking critically at herself in the mirror) I'd better go and

repair the damage first. (Rosie exits and almost immediately Theresa returns)

PAUL: We've got a visitor – or rather the return of the prodigal daughter.

THERESA: (excitedly) Rosie? Where is she?

PAUL: She'll be down in a minute.

THERESA: What a lovely surprise. Is she all right?

ROSIE: (breezing in and throwing herself into Theresa's arms) I'm fine. How are you and grandma?

THERESA: I'm as fit as a fiddle and Grandma is well also. Why didn't you let us know you were coming?

ROSIE: (disentangling herself) On the spot decision. I just decided I needed a break from the bright lights. It's lovely to be home.

THERESA: The cottage may not be home for much longer, dear.

ROSIE: (puzzled) Why, what's wrong?

THERESA: Nothing at all. Riverside will soon be ready to welcome Henry's new bride and her pigeon pair – if they want to come.

PAUL: Oh, so you do know the date.

THERESA: Not precisely, but we are aiming at April.

ROSIE: I'm so happy for you, Mum, though it'll seem strange to leave the cottage we were born in.

THERESA: Mind you, I've no doubt you'll both leave the nest when love comes knocking on your door.

ROSIE: That may not be for quite a while. I'm too busy to bother with men and I don't think Paul has any ambitions in that direction.

PAUL: Oh, I don't know. I rather like the look of the advertising manager's secretary.

THERESA: You're a dark horse.

ROSIE: (in mock distress) Don't say you are going to desert me for another woman. (at that moment, the sound of a man singing in the street outside can be heard, and there are also a few passersby who join in the chorus. Rosie goes to the window and peeps through the curtains. She remains there until the song ends)

ALBERT/CAST: (Song) **No.9. Since You Went Away**

ALBERT: 1<sup>st</sup> Verse  
Since you went away,  
I've tried to come to terms with life without you.  
Since you went away,

I've tried my hardest to forget about you.  
I thought I'd be stronger,  
But as the nights grow longer,  
I just can't hide the pain,  
I just can't hide the pain.

Chorus

So come back I pray,  
To help me mend the heart.  
That's so sadly broken,  
So come back and stay.  
And let me hear the words,  
So long unspoken.  
Since you went, oh...  
Since you went away.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

When night turns to day,  
I see the lonely years stretched out before me.  
Since you went away,  
There's no one here to tell me they adore me.  
Where's my happy ending?  
There's no use in pretending,  
I'll never love again,  
I'll never love again.

UNISON: Repeat Chorus  
So come back I/he pray/prays,  
To help me/him mend the heart.  
That's so sadly broken,  
So come back and stay.  
And let me/him hear the words,  
So long unspoken.  
Since you went, oh...  
Since you went away

ALBERT: Bridge  
What did I do that drove you from my side?  
For you my arms are always open wide.

UNISON: Repeat Chorus  
So come back I/he pray/s,  
To help me/him mend the heart.  
That's so sadly broken,  
So come back and stay,  
And let me/him hear the words.  
So long unspoken,  
Since you went, oh...  
Since you went away.

(Rosie returns to her chair looking thoughtful)

ROSIE: That was Albert.

PAUL: So – your friend from the theatre.

ROSIE: Not anymore.

PAUL: Now I understand. He's been leaning on that wall opposite several times recently. I wondered who he was and why we were being entertained.

THERESA: You haven't made it up with the lad yet, then...?

ROSIE: I haven't seen him. (she appears to be lost in thought and Paul is giving her a knowing look)

THERESA: (looking lovingly at her children) Well, I suppose you are both starving, so I'll see if I can find a few crumbs in the pantry. (exits)

PAUL: (to Rosie) Come on, let's give her a hand. (both exit)

### Scene 9

July 1921 at the theatre. Rosie and the rest of the cast have just taken the final curtain call on the first night of Katy's and Paul's play and are all milling around and chattering excitedly. They begin to disperse to their dressing rooms, a number of them singling out Rosie for kisses and handshakes as they leave.

ROSIE: (talks to herself): They loved it. They loved me. (she stands quietly for a moment, then begins to recite the speech with which she had ended the play)

For all of us today,  
And those yet to be born.  
Through all the toil and woe,  
Everyone should know.  
That we are guaranteed a happy ending,  
Yes, there should always be a happy ending.

(as she finishes, there is the sound of a repeated single handclap. Rosie turns to see the figure of a crestfallen Albert in the far corner of the room)

ALBERT: (emotionally) I won't trouble you again, but I had to tell you that was a star performance. Superb. Straight from your heart.

ROSIE: (smiling) Thank you, Albert.

ALBERT: I know you can never forgive me for my deceit, but I wanted one last chance to apologise. Now I can leave you in peace.

ROSIE: (putting her finger to her lips and walking towards Albert) It's I who should be apologising to you. After all, you were only trying to impress me. I can't learn a thing from you about ego. For the last two years I've done nothing but try to convince people how brilliant I am ....

ALBERT: But that wasn't a lie.

ROSIE: When I came back from London six months ago, I heard you singing outside the cottage. (Albert buries his face in his hands and Rosie reaches up to put them back at his side) I felt ashamed of how I'd treated you. Yet I couldn't

bring myself to tell you until I had proved that I was a success.

ALBERT: Oh, Rosie.

ROSIE: I remembered your last words to me as I was putting on that pathetically inept performance as a wronged woman. I wanted to turn back but my stupid pride wouldn't let me. (pauses) You said, "I love you, Rosie".

ALBERT: I still do.

ROSIE: (putting her arms round him and speaking more light-heartedly) After all, what you told me then is no longer a fib. And, Albert, I love you too.

ALBERT: (hardly believing what he had just heard) I never dared think I would ever hear you say that. (pauses) Look, they're all coming back. You'll want to be with your family. May I see you tomorrow?

ROSIE: Yes, my love – and every day from now on. (the cast of the play filter back and Albert moves away looking elated. Theresa (wearing two wedding rings) Henry, Paul, Uncle Charlie, and Grandma all arrive and surround Rosie to congratulate her warmly. Then Rosie is left with Theresa and Henry)

HENRY: You should be very pleased with yourself, Rosie.

ROSIE: Perhaps, but more relieved than anything. I'm so grateful to Katy and Paul.

THERESA: Before I forget, (handing Rosie an envelope) this arrived in this morning's post and, as it was postmarked London, I thought it might be important. (Rosie, opens it and starts reading silently)

ROSIE: (shaking her head) How ironic! This is from one of the directors I auditioned for and he's offered me an important role in his theatre's next production in the West End.

THERESA: Wonderful. I'm so delighted for you, Rosie. (pauses) I shall miss you, though. We all will.

ROSIE: (quietly) No, you won't.

THERESA: Of course, we will, darling.

ROSIE: (emphatically) No, you will not. I'm not accepting his offer.

THERESA: (astonished) But this is what you've been wanting for so long.

ROSIE: No, it's what I thought I wanted. I remember saying that I would be a star whatever it took. Now, I realise it would take too much.

HENRY: What do you mean?

ROSIE: When I was stuck on my own in that dingy bed sit, there was a well-stocked bookcase and I had plenty of time to read. I found a quotation – from Longfellow, I believe. He said that (slowly enunciating each word) 'Most people would succeed in small things if they were not troubled by great ambitions.' (pauses) Now I know what he meant. Mum, you told me not to

fly too high. You were right.

THERESA: You could go on to greater achievements.

ROSIE: At what cost? I love Cornwall. I love you all. (Pauses) And now I know I'm in love. I have proved I can act, there will be plenty of opportunities for me at this lovely Little Theatre. Perhaps one day I may decide to reach for the stars again. For the present I have you and Henry, my – er- sometimes insufferable, but oh-so-wise brother, Paul and .... I've made my peace with my darling Albert. So why would I want to risk throwing all that away just to fuel an inflated ambition?

THERESA: So long as you're happy, that's all that matters.

HENRY: You are a remarkable young lady, Rosie. I recall Lady Trewarren's observation that you were a credit to your mother. That says a great deal about both of you. (Theresa places one arm round Henry and the other round Rosie)

ROSIE: This is all about happy endings. (she starts to sing)

ROSIE/CAST: (Song) **No. 10. There Should Always Be A Happy Ending**

ROSIE: 1<sup>st</sup> Verse  
Many people struggle all their lives,  
Like our ancestors have done for centuries.  
Husbands short of money, worn out wives,  
Too bored to find out what an adventure is.  
But I'm one of the lucky ones who walk upon this earth,  
Blessed with a talent that I can gratify.  
It seems your fate depends on an accident of birth,  
So, few can achieve their dreams before they die.

(Theresa pulls Henry towards her)

Chorus  
For all of us today,  
And those yet to be born.  
Always, there is a heartfelt plea I'm sending.  
Oh, there should always be a happy ending,  
Yes, there should always be a happy ending.

2<sup>nd</sup> Verse  
It was her ambition from the start,  
To make a great success of a leading role.  
Sister, brother, mother played their parts,  
Without all their love I couldn't have reached her goal.  
Yes, I'm one of the lucky ones who walk upon this earth,  
Free from the sorrow that other mortals face.  
The play my family wrote meant that I could show my worth,  
Happiness should be for the whole human race.

UNISON: Repeat Chorus  
For all of us today,  
And those yet to be born.  
Always, there is a heartfelt plea I'm/we're sending.

Oh, there should always be a happy ending,  
Yes, there should always be a happy ending.

2<sup>nd</sup> Chorus

For all of us today,  
And those yet to be born.  
Through all the toil and woe,  
Everyone should know.  
That we are guaranteed a happy ending,  
Yes, there should always be a happy ending.

**CURTAIN**

*End of the Show!*

***CURTAIN CALLS***

Repeat Whatever it Takes

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Based on an idea by Zoe Hunter

Story written by Les Roberts and Zoe Hunter

Songs written by Zoe Hunter

What a Beautiful Girl  
Oh, What A Life This is!  
The First Thing  
Don't Let It Rain Today

Songs written by Leslie Roberts

Whatever it takes  
It's Just Another Job  
A Woman's Place  
Don't Fly Too High  
Auditions, Auditions  
We're going to build a Brand-New World  
Stagestruck (track No. 9 - Swimming Against the Tide)  
Since You Went Away  
At The Manor  
Downstairs  
The Sound of Marching Feet

Songs written by Leslie Roberts and Zoe Hunter

Right For Me  
Why?  
He Was My Man  
Man Of the Family  
There Should Always Be a Happy Ending