

“LOVE ON THE DOLE”

**a novel by Walter Greenwood
adapted by Kevin Fegan for The Lowry**

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“LOVE ON THE DOLE” BY WALTER GREENWOOD

ADAPTED BY KEVIN FEGAN FOR THE LOWRY

LIST OF CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Chorus

Helen Hawkins

Harry Hardcastle

Larry Meath

Sally Hardcastle

Ted Munter

Bill Simmonds

Sam Hardie

Jack Lindsay

Tom Hare

Mrs. Hardcastle

Mr. Hardcastle

Ned Narkey

Sam Grundy

Sam Grundy's young woman

Mrs. Nattles

Mrs. Bull

Insurance Man

Mrs. Dorbell

Ma Jike

Girl With Flower in Her Hair

Charlie

Foreman

Kate Molloy

Clerk 1

Clerk 2

Delegate 1

Delegate 2

Police Inspector

Old Man in hospital

Landlord

Woman 1

Woman 2

Woman 3

Woman 4

Woman 5

Woman 6

Clerk 3

Workers

Girls in street

Riot Police

Hospital patients

**“LOVE ON THE DOLE” BY WALTER GREENWOOD, ADAPTED FOR THE
LOWRY BY KEVIN FEGAN**

SCENE 1

HARRY AND SALLY ARE ON THEIR WAY TO WORK.
IT IS HARRY’S FIRST DAY AT “MARLOWE’S
ENGINEERING”.

THE MEN FORM ARE ON THEIR WAY TO
MARLOWE’S WHILE THE WOMEN ARE ON THEIR
WAY TO THE COTTON MILL. A FACTORY SIREN
SOUNDS IN THE DISTANCE.

CHORUS

We’re the fortunate ones today
selected from the queue,
any work is good work
when you’re one of the chosen few.
On beautiful new machines
to help us pay our bills,
it’s men’s work at Marlowe’s,
women’s work at t’ mill,
REPEAT.

SCENE 2

AS THE MALE AND FEMALE WORKERS CROSS
PATHS, HARRY AND HELEN MEET, AND SALLY AND
LARRY MEET.

HELEN Hello.

HARRY Hello.

LARRY Hello.

SALLY Hello.

HARRY (TO HELEN) Harry.

SALLY (TO LARRY) Sally.

HELEN (TO HARRY) Helen.

LARRY (TO SALLY) Larry.

HELEN Do you work at Marlowe's?

HARRY I'm going to be an engineer.

HELEN Apprentice?

HARRY For the next seven years.

I'll be learning the trade,
it's great work for someone my age.

HELEN Any kind of work's great these days.

I work with your sister.

HARRY At the mill?

HELEN Looks like she's taken a shine to that mister.

SALLY Will you keep an eye out for my kid brother?

LARRY If you keep a look out for me?

SALLY I've seen you already, on your soap box,

down by the docks;

I heard you mocking the bosses,

aren't you putting your own job at risk?

LARRY Some things have to be said, I'm no liar.

SALLY I don't know about politics;

but I do like a man with fire in his heart.

LARRY Come along to the next meeting?

SALLY We'll see, don't want to make it too easy for you.

LARRY No, but don't go making it too hard neither.

LARRY GOES TO WORK. SALLY URGES HELEN TO
LEAVE SO THEY WON'T BE LATE.

HELEN Bye then.

HARRY Bye.

HELEN See you sometime?

HARRY Yeah.

HELEN When?

HARRY What?

HELEN When will I see you again?

HARRY Dunno. Soon.

HELEN Do you get Saturday afternoons off?

HARRY Yeah.

HELEN Me too.

HARRY Good for you.

HELEN So what will you be doing?

HARRY Nothing.

HELEN Me neither. What say we do nothing together?

HARRY Aye, s'pose. Oh no, I forgot -

HELEN Good, it's a date.

HARRY What about me mates?

HELEN LEAVES WITH SALLY.

HARRY Wait on, I don't know where you live?

Oh hell, what in the world

have I got myself into?

I don't even know if I like girls.

HARRY GOES TO WORK. THE COTTON GIRLS EXIT.

SCENE 3

HARRY APPROACHES STOREMAN, TED MUNTER,
FOR INSTRUCTIONS.

TED MUNTER Clock on o' morning
and clock off o' night,
don't clock at dinner
and you'll do all right.
Now, oppit.

TED GIVES HARRY A BRUSH AND LEAVES.

HARRY What am I supposed to do with this?

BILL SIMMONDS Where's that new apprentice?

HARRY Can I have a go on a machine?

BILL No, you bloody can't. Here's a brush,
I want this shop floor clean and tidy.

HARRY What d'you mean?

BILL You heard, now sweep.
And don't let me catch you sleeping on the job.

SAM HARDIE Here y'are, mate, go t' stores for me for a long weight.

HARRY What does it look like?

SAM Never you mind, storekeeper'll know what I mean.
Go on, you'll never get owt done at this rate.

HARRY APPROACHES STORES.

TED Not you again?

HARRY I've come for a long weight.

TED Oh aye, you'd best stand ov'r there.

HARRY WAITS. JACK LINDSAY PASSES.

JACK LINDSAY What y' standing there for?

HARRY A long weight.

JACK They mek y' wait for that sommat awful.

JACK WAITS WITH HARRY. BILL PASSES.

BILL Still waiting?

HARRY Aye.

BILL Did y'ever? They aint give him that long weight yet?

Some folk are very inconsiderate.

BILL JOINS HARRY AND JACK.

HARRY Is this some sort of joke?

TED Are you still there?

You've had your long wait,
now get out of my hair.

PENNY DROPS FOR HARRY. THEY ALL LAUGH AT
HIM. HARRY RUNS OFF TO LARRY.

SCENE 4

MARLOWE'S.

HARRY They're all taking the piss,
I thought being an apprentice
meant I'd be privy to the mysteries
of the trade, like a secret society;
they won't even let me near a lathe.

LARRY Seven years to learn your trade, lad,
it's a graft, Harry, all Marlowe's
want is cheap labour,
keep you on low money for years,
you'll learn next to nothing here.

HARRY I thought I was training to be an engineer?

LARRY Machine-minders, that's all we are.

HARRY Better than the dole.

LARRY Aye; but don't get too comfortable,
they say the plug's out the bath,
won't be long before we're all flushed down the hole.

HARRY Look at me, I wanted to go home all dirty
with eyes like piss-holes in the snow,
after me first day at Dicky Marlowe's;
I've not so much as muckied me hands.

LARRY Ee, lad, you've a lot to learn, I'll be damned.

EXIT LARRY.

SCENE 5

MARLOWE'S.

HARRY LOOKS FOR HIS REFLECTION IN
SOMETHING AND DAUBS GREASE ON HIS FACE
WHILE THE OTHER OLDER APPRENTICES GATHER
UNSEEN TO WATCH HIM. THEY DISTURB HIM WITH
THEIR SNIGGERING.

BILL You're such a big girl's blouse, Harry.

HARRY Leave me be.

TOM Harry Hardcastle sleeps with his sister.

HARRY I do not.

We only have the one bed so we have to share it.

BILL 16 years old and still sleeping with his sister.

TOM I wouldn't mind sleeping with her.

HARRY You keep your filthy mouth shut about my sister.

SAM What shall we do with him?

HARRY Leave me be.

TOM If he wants to paint himself so much we should help him.

Get his overalls off!

HARRY No, get off me, leave me alone!

THEY REVEAL HIS KNICKERBOCKERS UNDER HIS
OVERALLS AND LAUGH.

BILL Ha! Knickerbockers! "Who wears short-shorts? He
wears short-shorts!"

TOM Take his pants down!

HARRY You do and I'll blind you, Tom Hare!

THEY PIN HIM DOWN ON HIS STOMACH.

SAM Fetch us a pot of red paint and a brush.

TOM FETCHES THEM

SAM Go on then, brighten up those cheeks, let's have a big
red moon over Hanky Park.

TOM OBLIGES. HARRY SQUEALS.

SAM That's it, all over him. Turn him over so he's nice and
toasty.

THEY TURN HIM ONTO HIS BACK.

SAM Now slap it on his block-and-tackle.

TOM I've heard his sister likes a bit of red.

THEY LAUGH AND ABANDON HARRY TO HIS
HUMILIATION. HARRY COVERS HIMSELF UP.

JACK LINDSAY APPROACHES AND OFFERS HIM A
CIGARETTE TO CONSOLE HIM.

JACK Here, have one of these.

HARRY I'm gonna kill that Tom Hare.

JACK Come on, it's all over.

HARRY ACCEPTS THE CIGARETTE.

HARRY I wasn't skriking 'cause I was afeared, it hurt.

JACK They'll leave you alone now, you're one of us.

HARRY Don't wanna be one of yous any more.

JACK We've all been through it when we first started.

HARRY I'll get some fags at t' weekend, give you some back.

JACK I don't want your ciggies. Come on, let's get back to the
grind.

MUSIC. EXIT ALL.

SCENE 6

AT NO.17, THE HARDCASTLES' FAMILY HOME.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

HARRY (THROWING A WAGE PACKET TO HIS MUM) Here
y'are, mam, wages.

MRS.H Y'are a good lad.

SALLY Choirboy, what do you want a prize?

MR.H Hey, you two, act your age,
not your shoe size.

MRS.H There's a shilling spends.

MR.H A full shilling?

SALLY First time you've ever been the full shilling.

HARRY Shut it.

SALLY It'll all go on the girlfriend.

HARRY It will not. A shilling's not a lot:
two packets of Woodbines,
two for t'pictures –

SALLY See?

HARRY Two penn'orth of sweets
And a thrupenny bet at Sam Grundy's.

MRS.H You shouldn't be gambling on horses,
you're too young.

HARRY You won't say that when I've won.

MR.H He's right, they wouldn't say he were too young
for t' trenches, come the next war.

HARRY That's a sobering thought.

MRS.H Enough of that talk.

SALLY PUTS ON HER COAT.

MR,H And where d'you think you're goin'?

SALLY Out.

MR.H Out where?

SALLY There and back to see how far it is.

MRS.H Don't be cheeky to your father.

SALLY It's Sat'day.

HARRY Is that a Larry-day, Ned-day or a Sam-day?

SALLY Shouldn't you be upstairs playing with your toys?

HARRY Nice to have a choice, our Sally.

MRS.H I hope you're not jazzin' it with three different boys?

SALLY It's not my fault I'm so popular.

MR.H Can't you control your own daughter?

HARRY Tart.

MRS.H I'll wash your mouth out with soap and water.

SALLY What's the matter, you little scruff?

Has Helen got smart and chucked you?

MRS.H That's enough. Fightin' like cat and dog y'are.

SALLY Take a tip from me:

get yourself a job with a uniform, Harry;

I hear the army are looking for recruits.

EXIT SALLY

SCENE 7

NO. 17

HARRY Sally's right, mam, I need a suit.

Look how badly dressed I am,
I've nothing to wear for Sunday best.

MR.H Neither have the rest of us.

You'll have to make do,
it's takin' us all our time just to survive.

MRS.H You'll have to try t' pawnshop.

HARRY I'm not havin seconds no more,
I want a new one,
shaped at the waist,
not straight down like a sack;
blue serge, someat wi' a bit o' taste.

MR.H Hark at him, "blue serge" –
you planning a wedding or what?

MRS.H You'd better not be.

MR.H Do you know how much a new suit costs?

HARRY Three pounds and three shillings interest.

MR.H I don't believe this.

HARRY That's three bob ev'ry week for twenty-one weeks.

MR.H He must think money grows on trees.

HARRY Others do it. All the lads 'ave got new suits.

MR.H I'm havin' no millstone 'round my neck.

What we can't pay for, we'll do without.

Owe nowt t' nobody and stare ev'rybody in t' face.

HARRY How the hell can I when I look like
someat you'd find in t' municipal waste?

MRS.H There's nothing shameful about being poor.

HARRY It's not much to ask for?
I work all week and nothing to show for it.

MR.H Ha! I've worked all me bloody life, lad,
and what have I got?
Worked ev'ry hour God sent
an' worse off than when we were first wed.

MRS.H Sal's on short-time, you dad's on odd days at t' pit –

HARRY Well, I'm sick of it.

MR.H You young-uns expect so much these days,
we expected nowt so when we got owt
it were a bonus.

HARRY I don't want to know.

MR.H Hell's fire, I come home for a bit of peace and quiet,
what a to-do?

HARRY (LEAVING) I'm havin' a new suit.

MR.H Does he not think we have feelings?
It's not about credit,
How's a man supposed to deal
with not being able to clothe his own?

MRS.H They're fully grown, they need to find their own way.

MR.H He isn't fit to be seen any day of the week,

let alone Sunday. And him the only one
in the house working full time and giving
up every penny to keep this family going.
We'd be failing in our duty, missis,
if we didn't get him the blasted suit.
EXIT MR AND MRS. HARDCASTLE.

SCENE 8

HANKEY PARK

HARRY&CHORUS I love Saturday afternoons.

I love it at mid-day when the sirens announce
to the world the rest of the weekend is free.

No work 'til Monday.

12,000 men and women spilling

out of the factory gates onto

buses, trams, bikes and charabancs,

the streets full to overflowing

with people going about their business.

Most of all, I love Sat'day 'cause it's pay-day.

The kitchen cupboards are full,

the kids are in the shops spending their ha'pennies,

the cats are sniffing round the handcarts

selling cooked ribs and fish,

the lads are in the boozers or the bookies

with the one o'clock edition

and I'm walking the streets, jingling

the bit o' money in me pocket, listening

to the kids, playing in the road, singing

"Raspberry, gooseberry, apple jam tart,

tell me the name of your sweetheart".

EXIT

SCENE 9

HANKEY PARK.

SALLY BUMPS INTO NED NARKEY COMING OUT OF
THE "DUKE OF GLOUCESTER" PUB.

NED What d'you mean keeping me waitin'?

SALLY Eh?

NED Why didn't you come into the pub an' tell me you was
here?

SALLY Who d'you think you're talking to?

NED I've been expecting you all afternoon.

SALLY I don't remember promising anything.

NED You kept me waitin'.

SALLY And a fine place you've been waitin' in, this old
whorehouse of a pub.

NED I'm not a man to be kept waitin'.

SALLY Just who d'you think you are?

NED I'm Ned Narkey and I'll batter any man says I'm not.

SALLY You're drunk and ignorant.

NED You think you're the Queen of Sheba. I've had enough
of your frisky ways. Let me tell you, I can get tarts ten a
penny that don't keep a fella waitin'.

SALLY You're a dirty dog, Narkey, and I'm sick of you and the
company you keep. Allus you want out of a girl is one
thing. But you'll never get it out o' me, d'you
understand?

NED Aw, come on, Sal, I was only kiddin'. You know me.

SALLY I know you all right.

NED We've had some fun dancin', haven't we?

SALLY Not any more.

NED Come dancin' with me t' Flecky Parlour.

SALLY I've changed me mind.

NED Suit yourself then, you aint the only tart around here as
can dance.

SALLY And I don't want to see you ever again, d'you hear me?

NED We'll see about that.

SCENE 10

HANKEY PARK.

SAM GRUNDY ARRIVES IN HIS CAR WITH A YOUNG WOMAN IN THE BACK SEAT. HE LEANS OUT TO CALL SALLY. NED IS STILL HANGING AROUND, WATCHING SALLY.

SAM Hey, Sal, warabout a little ride, eh?

SALLY IGNORES HIM. HE BEEPS HIS HORN.

I'll get you back early. Go on, what d'you say?

SALLY CONTINUES TO IGNORE HIM

Don't mind her, I'd soon get rid if a proper young woman was to come aboard?

YOUNG WOMAN You take that back?

SAM Shut up.

Come on, Sal, you knows I'd do anything for you.

SALLY Anything?

SAM You name it?

SALLY What I want from you, Sam Grundy...

SAM I'm all ears...

SALLY ...Is for you to stay away from me!

SAM You should never look a gift horse in the mouth, Sal.

You might have to come running to me one day.

SALLY Aye, I'll come running to lay flowers at your grave.

SAM You'd never have to work again?

SALLY You'd keep me in that fancy house of your in Wales, I

s'pose?

SAM It's yours for the askin'.

SALLY Oh aye, until the next mistress who takes your fancy comes along; then I'd be out on me ear like all the rest.

SAM You're the one for me, Sally Hardcastle; if I had you, I'd have no need of others.

SAM DRIVES OFF AND EXITS.

SCENE 11

HANKEY PARK.

LARRY MEATH IS ADDRESSING A SMALL CROWD.
SALLY IS DRAWN TO HIM. NED IS STILL WATCHING
SALLY FROM A DISTANCE.

LARRY Comrades, they say prosperity is in sight; they say trade is turning the corner. Don't let them fool you. Yes, they're takin' on new apprentices; but who are they layin' off? The older apprentices, that's who. New apprentices are cheap, they can afford to take them on until they're entitled to the man's rate and then sack them. It is a cynical manipulation of our youth. Mark my words, our streets are filling up with disaffected young men with nothing to look forward to but long-term unemployment. Well, it can't go on. It musn't go on. They cannot discard an entire generation without suffering the consequences. All this youthful energy has to go somewhere. If there's not another war in Europe first, there will be riots on our streets, civil war on our land.

SOME MUTED APPLAUSE AS LARRY DESCENDS
FROM HIS SOAP-BOX, OTHERS WHO WANT TO
CHALLENGE HIM; BUT HE HEADS STRAIGHT FOR
SALLY.

LARRY Hallo, Sally. Don't tell me I've made a convert?

SALLY It all sounds a bit depressing.

LARRY It's a depression all right, but it doesn't have to be depressing.

SALLY I don't know anything about politics.

LARRY It's not all politics at the Labour Club.

SALLY Glad to hear it.

LARRY Why not join us? There's the Sunday rambles into Derbyshire, bet that'd interest you?

SALLY I won't know anyone.

LARRY You know me. I'd take good care of you. They're a very sociable crowd, I'm sure you'd like them? What about tomorrow?

SALLY Tomorrow? I've nothing to wear.

LARRY Come as you are; bring a coat, we'll fix you up with some wellies.

SALLY All right, I will. Thank you.

EXIT SALLY, LARRY AND NED.

SCENE 12

MUSIC. HARRY AND HELEN ARE UP DAWNEY'S HILL, LOOKING DOWN ON SALFORD.

HARRY Imagine it: men regarding my sister with desire?

HELEN Why not? She's very pretty is your big sister.

HARRY Is she?

HELEN Don't be silly.

HARRY I've never thought of her as a woman before.

HELEN Do you think of me as a woman?

HARRY I don't like the thought of you in that house of yours.

HELEN Me brothers are all right, it's me mam and dad.

HARRY What d'you mean?

HELEN When they roll in drunk from the pub, I can hear them, you know?

HARRY No. Hear them what?

HELEN You do know. Hear them... doing it.

HARRY Urgh! That's disgusting. I couldn't imagine my mam and dad – I don't think they've ever done it.

HELEN They must have done it... at least twice.

HARRY Oh aye, s'pose.

HELEN I love it up here on Dawney's Hill. If you turn your back on the two cities, all you can see for miles is open countryside.

HARRY I can't stand it any more, Helen. When I was in town earlier, the second hand clothes dealer shouts ov'r to

me, "Any old clothes, mate?" I says, "Aye, take all of 'em." Look at me, Helen; who'd want to be seen out wi' the likes o' me?

HELEN You know I don't mind.

HARRY Well, I do. I want a new suit. I want to buy you nice clothes.

HELEN Why, what's the matter with my appearance, Harry?

HARRY I'm not sayin' that. I want us to go on holiday.

HELEN Blimey, don't want much, do you?

HARRY Why shouldn't we have those things?

HELEN Oh, Harry, don't let such thoughts run away with you.

HARRY I've never even been on a train. There's been trains for a hundred years. All we can do is sit up here and watch them heading off to the coast.

HELEN Me neither; but where would the likes of us get the money for a holiday.

HARRY "The likes of us", doesn't that say it all? I'll get the money, you see if I don't.

HELEN I don't care if you never have nowt, s'long as we're happy; that's all that matters.

HARRY Happy? Who d'you know that's happy?

HELEN Would you rather be wi' your street-corner mates than me, is that it?

HARRY Don't be daft.

(PAUSE) We can see t' lads later at t' pictures.

HELEN Do you mean it?

HARRY Only teasing. Don't take everything so personal.

HELEN Oh, Harry, I do love you.

HARRY D'you, Helen?

HELEN I do, really.

HARRY Give us a kiss.

HELEN Someone might be watchin'?

HARRY Up here?

SHE KISSES HIM.

Do it again.

THEY KISS AGAIN.

SCENE 13

HANKEY PARK.

MRS. NATTLES IS ON HER DOORSTEP AS MRS.
HARDCASTLE PASSES.

MRS. H I've a mind to call on you later, Mrs.Nattles, if you'll be
in?

MRS.N Is it business, lass?

MRS.H Can you arrange a club check from old Grumpole, the
money-lender?

MRS.N I can. How much will you be wantin'?

MRS.H Our Harry wants a new suit.

MRS.N That'll be three pounds plus interest.

MRS.H I figured as much.

MRS.N I can certainly help you out Mrs. H, your old man's good
for the credit.

MRS.H Hang fire, I'm off first to Ma Jike's to consult the oracle.
I'll not be borrowin' anythin' 'til I get the all-clear about
our family fortunes.

MRS.N Wait there, I'll come with you and see if the investment is
sound.

MRS.H WAITS WHILE MRS.N FETCHES HER COAT.

SCENE 14

HANKEY PARK.

NEARBY, AN INSURANCE MAN CALLS AT
MRS.BULL'S. HE KNOCKS AND OPENS DOOR.

INSURANCE MAN (CALLING) Prudential, Mrs. Bull.

MRS.B (OFF-STAGE) Call next week, lad, I'm busy.

INS.MAN I'm sorry, Mrs.Bull, but y' missed payin' last week.

MRS.BULL COMES TO HER FRONT DOOR.

MRS.B I'm busy layin' out in t' back room. Have you no respect?

INS.MAN Sorry Mrs.B, but you'll get me in trouble, keep missin'
like this.

MRS.B Trouble? Tha don't know meanin' o' t' word. Tha'll thrive
on it when tha gets as owd as me.

INS.MAN If you default on your life insurance, missis, who's gonna
lay you out when you're dead and gone?

MRS.B They'll bury me for stink, if not for love, life insurance or
no. I've a body here in t' back room on account of how
nobody else'll have him.

INS.MAN I can't let it go another week.

MRS.B It's like this, lad. I broke wi' me teetotal last night and
supped your money. Now Mrs.Cranford's baby's due on
Tuesday, I shall get me usual for midwifery. And I can't
see Jack Tuttle lastin' til the end of the week so there's a
bit extra there for layin' out. Like I say, call next week, I'll
have your money. Now get out o' me sight before I lay

you out wi' me stick!

SHE CHASES THE INSURANCE MAN AWAY AS

MRS.NATTLES AND MRS.HARDCASTLE PASS.

MRS.N Evenin', Mrs.Bull.

MRS.B Evenin' ladies, and where are you two off in such a hurry?

MRS.N Mrs.H is off to Ma Jike's to consult the oracle.

MRS.B Ooh, count me in, I'll just grab me shawl.

MRS.B DOES A DOUBLE-TAKE ON THE THOUGHT OF LEAVING THE DEAD BODY ALONE.

(TO HERSELF) Ah well, no harm done, it's not like he's goin' anywhere, is it?

(CALLING) Wait for me!

MRS.B CATCHES UP WITH THEM AT MA JIKE'S.

SCENE 15

MA JIKE'S HOUSE.

MRS. DORBELL IS WITH MRS. JIKE AS MRS.
HARDCASTLE, MRS. BULL AND MRS. NATTLES JOIN
THEM.

MRS.NATTLES And how are you today, Mrs.Dorbell?

MRS.DORBELL Cough, cough, coughing all night long, not a wink o'
sleep.

MRS.N I might have something to help you wi' that.

MRS. NATTLES PRODUCES A LARGE BOTTLE OF
WHISKEY FROM UNDER HER COAT AND OPENS
THE CORK WITH HER TEETH.

D' you have a couple o' glasses, Ma Jike?

MA JIKE I do.

MA JIKE FETCHES 5 GLASSES. MRS.NATTLES
TAKES ONE GLASS AND POURS A SHORT
MEASURE, CHECKING THE LINE ON THE GLASS.

MRS.D Bless you, missis.

MRS.N A drop o' hot water?

MRS.D It'll be fine as it is.

MRS.N (HANDING THE MEASURE TO MRS.DORBELL BUT
KEEPING HOLD OF IT) That'll be thrippence to you,
Mrs.D.

MRS.B Ah, never the one to miss an opportunity to make a few
pence.

MRS.D GIVES MRS.N A THREEPENNY BIT.

MRS.N When a woman's left a widder, her's got to do someat t' survive.

MRS.B An' you an agent for the owd money-lender? I bet you've a tidy pile of commission hid away somewhere?

MRS.N I allus try t' oblige me neighbours, same as you, Mrs.Bull.

MRS.B Here y'are, gie us threepenn'orth. Might as well, I've had a bellyful o' sorro' and I'll be a long while dead.

MRS.N (OFFERING THE BOTTLE) Mrs.H?

MRS.H Not for me.

MA JIKE 'Ere, have a pinch o' Birdseye.

MRS.H (ACCEPTING THE SNUFF) Thank y' kindly.

MRS.B I don't know what's comin' over folk these days. I remember a time hardly a day passed without there was a confinement or a layin' out t' be done. Young uns aint 'avin' childer as they should. When I was a gel, a woman wasn't a woman til she'd bin in t' childbed ten times, not countin' miscarriages. How d' they expect a body t' make a livin' when childer goin' t' school know more about things than we did after we'd bin married years?

MRS.D Things aint bin same since gentlefolk left th'Owld Road. When them charity ladies came round in their carriages, enquirin' for them as was hard up, my owd ma used t' fetch us in from t' street. She'd say, "Off wi' them pinnies

an' clogs an' stockings," and send us back out into street, deliberately half-naked. That way, charity ladies 'ld take our names for a new rig out. Many a bright shilling them clothes fetched at t' pawnshop, I can tell ya. Y' don't see nowt like that nowadays. If you've got nowt, y' get nowt an' nobody cares. Oh aye, it was a sad day for the likes of us when t' carriage-folk left th'Owld Road.

MA JIKE Is it cards or tea-leaves?

MRS.H Cards.

MA JIKE Good, 'cause the kettles empty. Have you brought someat personal o' your Harry and Sally's?

MRS.H I've a lock of our Sally's hair an' an owd pair o' Harry's gloves.

MA JIKE Champion. Shuffle t' cards an' cut 'em three times, then place Harry's gloves on top o' t' pack.

MRS.H OBLIGES. MA JIKE TAKES THE CARDS AND BEGINS TO LAY THEM OUT.

MRS.B Well? Is there a fortune t' be 'ad for young 'Arry?

MA JIKE Look at that Queen of Hearts. She's towerin' over proceedings.

MRS.H Will 'e keep this job, that's what I want t' know?

MRS.N Can she get 'im this new suit?

MA JIKE 'E 's t' be lucky in love.

MRS.B What use is that to a man? 'E needs work, money,

a good 'ome.

MA JIKE Shuffle 'em again an' cut three times, then place your Sally's lock of hair on t' cards before I lay 'em out.

MRS.H OBLIGES AND MA JIKE LAYS THE CARDS.

MA JIKE I don't like that ten o' spades. Tell her t' watch out for a big fella, bad news.

MRS.B Ned Narkey, I've seen him sniffin' round your Sal.

MA JIKE There is a Jack. She's t' know love; but not for long.

MRS.B You tell me the woman that doesn't apply to. They're a bad lot, men. Travellers, the lot o' them. Women like a good nest.

MA JIKE There's an awful lotta Diamonds.

MRS.H Is that good?

MA JIKE She'll come into a fortune, for sure.

MRS.H A fortune? Our Sally? Why can't Harry have the fortune and Sally have the love, that's the way it's s'posed t' be?

MA JIKE But warn young Sally, there's a price t' pay for her fortune.

MRS.B Aye, that'll be sixpence in Ma Jike's pocket.

MRS.H (HANDING OVER A SIXPENCE TO MA JIKE) Here y'are, Ma, for your trouble.

MRS.D If I 'adn''t a spent up on Mrs.Nattles' medicine for me cold, I should 'ave liked my fortune told.

MRS.B I can tell it for thee, lass an' I'm no fortune-teller. Tha'll keep on drawin' thy owld age pension and then tha'll die.

I'll lay thee owt an' parish'll bury y'.

MRS.H

(TO MRS. NATTLES) We'll have that cheque for t' suit.

I've seen no disasters on t' horizon. Thank y' Ma Jike.

EXIT ALL.

SCENE 16

MARLOWE'S ENGINEERING.

HARRY IS WITH TOM AND BILL AS LARRY PASSES.

HARRY Aye. Aye, Larry.

LARRY Hallo, Harry. Still like the job?

HARRY Not half. It's great. They're letting me on a lathe this afternoon.

LARRY Good for you, lad.

LARRY WALKS OFF. NED WATCHES HIM FROM A DISTANCE.

TOM What's that about a lathe?

BILL He's a queer sort o' bloke, if y' like. I seen him up Clifton way when I was out ferritin' along t' cut bank. Aye, an' there he was, large as life, lyin' on his belly in t' grass, watchin' birds through them glasses o' his. Fancy a fella seein' owt in watchin' bloody birds. He's barmy, if y' ask me.

TOM Jus' depends on what kind o' birds he's watchin'? Them as wear skirts is more in my line. An' there's some hot uns down cut bank. Maggie Elves. Ha! She'll let y' do owt for a tanner.

HARRY Don't you ever think about nowt else?

TOM Ay, Harry, lad, y' want t' go out wi' Maggie for a night, it'd do y' good. Only a tanner, then y' could call y'self a man.
(TO BILL) He knows nowt about tarts, does he?

HARRY She must be hard up t' ave owt t' do wi' likes of you.

TOM Ha! Any tart'll let y' do what y' want if y've enough money.

BILL The kind as 'd look at you, might; they aint partic.

TOM (TO HARRY) Y've not done it wi' Helen Hawkins yet then?

HARRY Leave Helen out o' this. You're not fit t' speak her name.

TOM & BILL Ooooh!

HARRY WALKS AWAY.

TOM 'Ark at 'im, all lovey-dovey.

TOM AND BILL RETURN TO WORK.

SCENE 17

MARLOWE'S.

HARRY SPOTS NED HEADING FOR LARRY AND
MANOEUVRES HIMSELF TO OVERHEAR THEIR
CONVERSATION.

NED That there crane o' mine needs fixin' again. You'd better
get it seen to, you made a right muck of it last time.
Mechanics! I've seen better wi' skirts on.

LARRY If there's anything wrong with the crane, you know
where to lodge the complaint; it'll be passed on to me
when I've time.

NED Don't come the bloody gaffer wi' me, Meath. You aint
kiddin' no tart when you're talking t' me.

LARRY What are you talking about?

NED Come off it, you know who I mean. You've bin stuffin'
her up wi' all your high-falutin talk and she swallows all
y' say.

LARRY Who are you referring to, Ned?

NED Referrin'? I'll give y' referring'. The bloody edge you put
on makes me sick. Who the 'ell d'you think y'are?

LARRY Don't you think you're making a bit of a fool of yourself,
Ned?

NED What y're gonna do about it?

LARRY It doesn't concern you.

NED Don't concern me? Me, as asked her t' marry me?

Turnin' me down for a lilly-livered conchie like you. I fought for bastards lie you. I was over there while yellow-bellied rats like you was sleepin' wi' owld sweats' wives an' landin' soft jobs for y'selves.

LARRY I realise you fought in the war –

NED I got a medal!

LARRY I know. And we're all very grateful. But if I was you, I'd consult Sally before you go making any more arrangements for her.

NED I'm warnin' you. If y' don't want that there dial o' yours smashed in, keep away from Sal Hardcastle.

LARRY As for your threats, you'd have time to regret them in jail.

NED You've got it comin' t' you, so help me. Y'll open that trap o' yourn once too often.

LARRY WALKS AWAY.

NED BUMPS INTO HARRY.

NED Get out o' me way.

HARRY (BLURTING IT OUT) I want you t' leave my sister alone.

NED Wot did you say?

HARRY (TOO LATE TO BACK OUT) I said, I don't want you causin' no trouble for our Sal.

NED LIFTS HARRY OFF THE FLOOR AND GETS RIGHT IN HIS FACE.

NED It's a man's world out there, boy; think on before you go shootin' your mouth off.

NED DROPS HIM AND WALKS OFF.

SCENE 18

MARLOWE'S.

HARRY COLLECTS HIMSELF AND RETURNS TO
WORK AT A LATHE. TOM APPROACHES HIM.

TOM 'Taint fair, you bein' shoved on a lathe in front o' me. I'm
gonna see somebody about it. I've bin 'ere longer 'n
you.

HARRY Y' shouldn't lark about so much.

TOM Look who's talkin'. Who's decision was it, that's what I
wanna know?

HARRY Don't ask me.

TOM I bet it was Larry Meath or Ned Narkey put you up for it?

HARRY What 're you sayin'?

TOM Everybody knows your Sal's jazzin' wi' both of 'em, and
more besides probably. Did you a little favour, did she?

HARRY You take that back!

TOM Call me a liar if I'm wrong.

HARRY (PUNCHING HIM) Liar!

TOM FALLS TO THE GROUND COVERING HIS
BODY.

TOM Get him of me! He's gone mental! Oh, me nose's
bleedin'!

THE OTHER APPRENTICES PULL HARRY AWAY.

EXIT ALL.

SCENE 19

HANKY PARK.

MUSIC. A CROWD GATHERS AROUND A
BACKYARD DOOR.

“THE THRIPENNY TREBLE”

CHORUS

Psst, thripenny treble, pass it on.

Psst, there's a winner, pass it on.

Who can it be 's won a thripenny treble?

For a win like that, I'd sell my soul to the devil.

Who's the bookie?

It'll break the bank, they say.

Will he get his money?

Will the bookie pay?

Whoever's won, I'll still be his friend.

And me.

And me, if he's quids to spend.

He's my old schoolmate, I'm sure?

We lived next door.

We support the same team.

We were pals in the war.

He's a distant cousin.

We were flogged with the birch.

We shared a cell in prison.

We go to the same church.

We drink at the same bar.

I fixed his horse and cart.

We're a local charity, would you make a donation?

My child is sick, will you pay for medication?

Invest it in shares, I'll double your cash.

Buy my invention for recycling trash.

You show me yours and I'll show you mine,

treat me right, I'll show you a good time.

Wish it was me who was rolling in money.

Lend us a quid, I'll be your best friend,

let's go shopping and spend, spend, spend.

SCENE 20

HANKEY PARK.

FROM BEHIND THE DOOR, SAM GRUNDY MOUNTS STEP-LADDERS TO ADDRESS THE CROWD. HIS ASSISTANT/MINDER, CHARLIE, STANDS IN FRONT OF THE DOOR.

SAM "The Sky's the Limit" wi' Honest Sam Grundy! As some of yous have heard, there's a thripp'ny treble winner amongst you. Now there's fellas as call themselves bookies as 'd only pay you a fiver limit on your bet an' no more. But Honest Sam's gotta motter and he lives by that motter: "The Sky's the Limit"! So when I heard we had a winner and his winnings amounted to twenty-two English pounds, I said to Charlie 'ere, didn't I Charlie? I said, "Fetch me the cash box, toot sweet, we've to deliver some good news." 'Cause I enjoy a winner as much as the next man.

TED MUNTER (CALLING) Good owd Sam!
(TO HIS NEIGHBOUR) I knew him when he 'ad no arse in his pants.

SAM Fetch me a chair, Charlie, and let's meet the hero.
CHARLIE FETCHES A CHAIR AND PLACES IT IN FRONT OF THE DOOR. HARRY STEPS FORWARD IN HIS NEW BLUE SUIT.

SAM Here he is, young Harry Hardcastle. By gum, you look a

proper dandy in that new suit. You'll be able to pay cash for that now and more besides. Now you had a bet wi' me, young fella-me-lad, didn't you?

HARRY Yes, sir.

SAM And how much were this bet?

HARRY Thrippence.

SAM Speak up, lad, there's nowt t' be ashamed on. There aint a body here as wouldn't gie ten pounds t' be in your shoes. So turn t' crowd, son, and speak up, how much were the bet?

HARRY Thrippence.

SAM An' how much d' you reckon t' draw for your thrippence?

HARRY Twenty-two quid.

SAM They still can't hear you at the back, lad. How much have you won?

HARRY Twenty-two quid!

CROWD CHEER.

SAM Twenty-two quid for thrippence. So you thought you'd break the bank, eh lad? How many bookies 'd pay out that much? Well, you all know Honest Sam's motter. What's Honest Sam's motter, Harry?

HARRY "The Sky's the Limit"!

SAM "The Sky's the Limit"! Hold out your cap, Harry, lad.

AS SAM COUNTS TWENTY TWO SINGLE POUND NOTES INTO HARRY'S CAP, THE CROWD JOIN IN

THE COUNTING. AT TWENTY TWO, THE CROWD
ERUPTS AND EVERYONE WITH A CAP OR HAT
THROWS IT INTO THE AIR.

SAM

That's Honest Sam Grundy for you. What can't speak,
can't lie. Remember, next time you place a bet, place it
wi' Honest Sam Grundy. The Sky's the Limit!

CROWD DISPERSES. CHORUS CARRY HARRY
SHOULDER-HIGH, WHISPERING "Psst, thripenny
treble, pass it on, Psst, there's a winner, pass it on".

CHORUS CARRIES HIM TO NO.17, WHERE HIS
FAMILY ARE WAITING FOR HIM.

SCENE 21

AT NO.17

HARRY (OFFERING HIS WINNINGS) Here y'are, dad, I want you and mam t' 'ave half.

MR.H Keep your money, lad, we've no need of it at our age.

MRS.H Pay off the suit, Harry, that's all we'd ask.

HARRY Sally, I want you t' 'ave this.

SALLY Five pounds! Thanks, 'Arry, y' not a bad sort for a younger brother!

HARRY Sam Grundy says I was to treat you to some new clothes.

SALLY Did he now? He's very generous wi' other folks' money, I must say.

HARRY I told 'im you could buy some new clothes t' go out walkin' wi' Larry Meath.

SALLY GIVES HIM A BIG SISTERLY KISS.

SALLY You aint nobody's fool, eh 'Arry!

MRS.H (TO MR.H) I don't understand it? Ma Jake said our Sally was t' be fortunate one when it comes t' money, not our Harry.

HARRY What am I t' do wi' t' rest?

MR.H Harry, lad, you're only young once an' I've never 'ad enough money t' take you and Sally away. So if I was you I'd take that lass o' thine away on holiday. Me an' your ma 'ad only one single holiday in our lives; but it

were worth it and neither on us 'll ever forget it.

MRS.H Go on wi' y'.

SALLY Oh, pa, why don't you kiss her, she's blushin'.

MR.H Aye, lass, me an' y' ma had a gradely time.

HARRY But where would we go?

MR.H Do we still 'ave the address o' that boarding house at Blackpool?

MRS.H It's in me treasure box.

MR.H It's a grand place. There's a little harbour, glorious country walks an' it's a rugged coastline.

HARRY We could get the train.

MR.H You'll spend your money on someat or other, lad, so y' may as well spend it on someat y'll remember.

HARRY D' you reckon Marlowe's 'd gie me time off work?

MR.H Five days, unpaid, you're allowed.

HARRY (TO SALLY) And Helen?

SALLY Same.

SCENE 22

NO.17

HELEN APPEARS, UNSEEN, AT FIRST, BY HARRY.

CHORUS JOINS HARRY, DREAMING OF

BLACKPOOL.

HARRY&CHORUS Blackpool?

Free as a bird,

alone, at last,

with Helen,

ice-creams on the prom

and kiss-me-quick hats,

up the tower

and ballroom dancing,

then off to the pleasure beach,

a fairground marksman

win her a cuddly toy,

a penny in the laughing clown

and she'll be ready for the big dipper.

HELEN RUNS INTO HIS ARMS. MUSIC.

SCENE 23

BLACKPOOL.

MUSIC. DANCING.

HARRY AND HELEN, SALLY AND LARRY, NED AND KATE, MR & MRS HARDCASTLE, SAM GRUNDY AND ONE OF HIS WOMEN, MRS BULL, MRS NATTLES, MRS DORBELL AND MA JIKE AND THE CHORUS ARE ALL DANCING.

MUSIC AND DANCING STOPS. ENTER THE GIRL WITH A FLOWER IN HER HAIR.

FLOWER-GIRL	What is love?
SALLY	Love is someat you risk.
LARRY	Love is someat you dream of.
NED	Love is someat you take.
KATE	Love is someat you have to have.
SAM	Love comes at a price.
SAM'S WOMAN	Cheap at the price.
MRS.H	Love is someat you have to earn.
MR.H	Love is someat that costs you dearly; but it's worth it.
MRS NATTLES	I lent my love once and never got it back. I never lent it again.
	MRS DORBELL, MRS BULL, MA JIKE AND MRS NATTLES SING THEIR LITTLE DITTY ON LOVE
MRSD,B,N&MA	"We'll laugh and sing an' we'll drive away care; Ah've enough for meself an' a likkle bit t' spare.

If a nice young man should ride my way,

Ooow, ah'll make him as welcome as the flowers in May.

EXIT ALL EXCEPT HARRY AND HELEN AND

CHORUS.

SCENE 24

BLACKPOOL. THE BOARDING HOUSE.

HELEN AND HARRY LAY ON THE BED.

HARRY I say, Helen, just fancy, all week long an' no work t' go to.

HELEN Can you hear the sea?

HARRY Imagine livin' 'ere? To think there's people livin' ordinary lives in a place where others come on holiday.

HELEN It's beautiful 'ere, even when it rains. It's like what y' see on pictures.

HARRY Look at us, livin' it up in a fancy boarding house? I told y', didn't I? I told y', I'd take us away on a proper holiday.

HELEN It's so clean and so private. I can't tell you what it means t' be able to shut the door and know that no one 'll be able to come in.

HARRY It's champion.

HELEN To have a bed all to meself.

HARRY Hey, where d' you think I'm sleepin'?

HELEN You know what I mean? I don't mind sharing wi' you.

HARRY Thanks very much.

HELEN This is all I want, a little room to ourselves. I could be sick when I think about home. I hate sex, I hate it when I can hear them at it, and me in the next room wi' me brothers.

HARRY Forget about home, Helen, Let's make most of it while

we can. It's different for us.

HELEN You'll allus love me, won't you, Harry? Things don't seem so bad when I've got you.

HARRY I love y', Helen; I do love y'. An' as soon as I'm out of me time, we'll be married.

HELEN Really?

THEY KISS.

HARRY It's funny we ain't never thought of getting married afore? Fancy us livin' in different houses when there's nowt t' stop us from getting' a home of our own.

CHORUS The waxing moon climbs higher. Brilliant beams bathe land and sea. No sound save the cool swish of the waves. Rabbits kick their heels, sheep graze, bats are flitting and owls are on the wing. The road to love winds between white-walled cottages and high thorn hedges heavy with honeysuckle.

INTERVAL

SCENE 25

HANKY PARK.

HELEN I knew this 'd 'appen, I jus' knew it.

HARRY What's up, Helen?

HELEN We should never 'ave done it. I told you, but you wouldn't listen.

HARRY Done what?

HELEN I've bin 'feared for a fortnight, ever since we got back. I've bin t' doctor's at dinner-time, he told me.

HARRY You're not...?

HELEN I am an' I want t' know what you're goin' t' do about it?

HARRY I'll take care of us, don't you fret.

HELEN We don't 'ave anywhere t' live. We can't live wi' my mam and dad, there's too many of us as it is.

HARRY My mam an' dad 'll 'ave us.

HELEN How can they?

HARRY Just until we save enough for a place of our own. They like you, they told me as much.

HELEN They won't like me now.

HARRY It's me 'll take t' blame.

HELEN Why shouldn't you? It's your fault.

HARRY You're upset.

HELEN Oh Harry, what shall we do?

HARRY We've got a good six months to save up. I shall ask tomorrow if there's any chance o' me workin' extra

hours?

HELEN I wish we 'adn't 'ave spent all that money. How much is there left?

HARRY Ten shillings. We'll get married, straight away, before you're showin'.

HELEN Everybody 'll know anyway, it won't make a blind bit o' difference.

HARRY I'll pawn me suit.

HELEN Don't be so daft, what would y' get married in?

HARRY (LOSING IT) I'm tryin' t' be positive.

HELEN What a mess! What a bloody mess.

EXIT.

SCENE 26

AT NO.17.

MR.H How could you be so bloody stupid?

HARRY DOESN'T ANSWER.

(TO MRS.H) Did you know about this?

MRS.H How could I? They're not long back.

MR.H I said go t' blackpool for the time o' your life, not t' fetch a ball and chain for t' rest of your life.

MRS.H Is that how you see your family?

MR.H I might have known you'd not 'ave a brain any bigger than your dick?

MRS.H Stop it.

HARRY I'll 'ave t' marry her.

MR.H Bloody great, a shotgun weddin' an' Hawkins' mafia t' look forward to as in-laws!

HARRY There'll be no weddin'. (PAUSE) We've booked Registry.

MR.H Did you hear that? Where d'you think you're gonna live?

HARRY We'll get a place of our own before t' baby's born. I thought, 'til then, we could stay 'ere?

MR.H Oh aye, why not? Any amount o' spare room t' be 'ad in this royal palace. Perhaps we could get our Sal to ask Larry Meath if he'd like to move in an' all, more the merrier.

(TO MRS.H) I s'pose she'll be next un in t' family way?

MRS.H She's not that kind o' girl.

HARRY Dad, please, we've nowhere else t' go?

MR.H You should've thought o' that. You've made your bed wi' your fornicatin', you can lie in it. Go an' stay wi' her folks, low-life lot that they are, they'd 'ave you.

HARRY No.

MR.H We're in enough trouble wi'out you bringing your slut 'round 'ere –

HARRY That's my wife-to-be you're talkin' about, I'm not 'avin' you callin' her, d'you hear me?

MR.H Are you threatnin' me in my own house?

MRS.H Harry, he doesn't mean it. He's all worked up 'cause they've finished him completely at t' pit.

HARRY I'm sorry 'bout that; but you'll need me and Sal more than ever now, won't you?

MRS.H Sally'll be off t' live wi' Larry soon enough, they're plannin' their weddin' this year. Perhaps they can bring it forward. It'll work out somehow.

EXIT.

SCENE 27

HANKY PARK.

LARRY It's not marriage that's the problem, Sal, it's poverty. How on earth can we live decently on 45 shillings a week?

SALLY There's a lot would envy you on 45 shillings. People get by on a lot less.

LARRY Aye, "get by". I want more for us. I want some of the things that make life worthwhile. I want books, music, holidays –

SALLY We'll 'ave two wages comin' in when we're together an' I don't 'ave to hand mine over to t' family. We'll be able t' afford a few luxuries.

LARRY It's all work an' bed an' work again.

SALLY We've got each other.

LARRY I know an' there's nothing I desire more.

SALLY We don't smoke, nor drink, we enjoy simple pleasures like walkin' on t' hills.

LARRY It's true I love the ordinary things; but I want us to have the extraordinary as well.

SALLY I don't know what you mean?

LARRY I want us t' travel, not just London, abroad, Russia –

SALLY Russia?

LARRY I want t' change things for ordinary people. I want t' be a politician and stand up in the Houses of Parliament, not

just to make fine speeches, but to make a difference.

Somebody needs t' tell them what's really happening in the likes of Hanky Park, and that someone could be me.

SALLY Oh Larry, don't you see? Wantin' what you can't 'ave is to take for granted what you already do 'ave.

LARRY I can't have everything, is that it?

SALLY It aint what you do, it's how you do it. It aint where you live, it's who you live with. We'll be old soon enough and t' best part of our life gone. Dreamin' about things y' can't 'ave don't get you anywhere, does it Larry?

LARRY The misery of dreams.

SALLY You never ask me what I want?

LARRY I'm sorry.

SALLY God, you don't realise what I'd do for you. Don't be sorry, grasp it before it's too late, I won't wait forever. Get us a house now an' I'll come an' live with you. Who needs t' get married? Who cares what folks say?

LARRY What about your mam an' dad? How could I face them?

SALLY If I move out, it'll be easier for Harry an' Helen and mam an' dad. If I can face them then so can you.

EXIT

SCENE 28

HANKY PARK. HELEN IS WAITING OUTSIDE THE REGISTRY OFFICE. NO SIGN OF HARRY. SHE SETS OFF TO LOOK FOR HIM.

SHE FINDS HIM SEATED ALONE, HIS HEAD BURIED IN HIS HANDS.

HELEN Harry? Harry, what you doin'? I've bin waitin' at t' Registry. We'll miss our appointment if we don't go now.

HARRY It's all off.

HELEN What d'you mean? D'you not love me any more?

HARRY I'm out o' collar.

HELEN Laid off? From Marlowe's? But what about your apprenticeship?

HARRY I went in t' ask for extra hours. Gaffer says they've taken on a new batch of apprentices, I'm to finish by the end o' t' week. He says, did you not see it comin'? Like it were just another thunderstorm or somethin'.

Helen, we'll all end up in t' workhouse. We can't go through wi' it.

HELEN We 'ave to. There's nowt t' stop us. You'll get your dole and I'm still workin'.

HARRY Do you think I'd sponge on you? What th' devil d'you take me for? I can't 'ave you keepin' me and the baby. No, Helen, no, I can't do it.

HELEN Stop wi' you self-pity, Harry Hardcastle. This is as hard

for me as it is for you.

HARRY You should never 'ave taken up wi' me.

HELEN We'll be together, that's what I've allus wanted.

HARRY I love you.

HELEN Fine way this o' showin' it.

HARRY Is this love's young dream? I'm s'posed t' be a man now.
Look at me. Don't they realise I've a wife, baby on the
way; I need work, a place of me own?

HELEN It'll come, you see if it won't. You never know what's in
store? It could be a blessin' in disguise.

HARRY I'll find a job and a place for us, I swear. You'll go short
o' nowt for the baby, so help me. I'll stand a better
chance o' getting' work wi' me bein' married.

HELEN Come on then, let's get it done.

EXIT

SCENE 29

HANKY PARK. STREET.

HARRY AND JACK ARE ON THEIR WAY TO SIGN ON.

JACK Aint this a bit of a lark, eh?

HARRY What?

JACK Y' silly sod, I mean lyin' abed listenin' t' bloody buzzers when rest o' folk 're sloggin' at it. I feel as though I'm playin' wag.

HARRY I'm gonna go round lookin' for work when I've signed on, are you comin'?

JACK Cuss work an' cuss them as invented it. It's bin nowt but work ever since I was owld enough t' peddle newspapers. I'm gonna have a week or two's grass first. Besides, there aint no bloody work, everyone knows that. Y'only waste shoe leather lookin'.

HARRY S'pose she gets fed up wi' me if I'm out o' collar long?
S'pose she finds another bloke what's workin'?

JACK Y' could allus jump in t' cut, y' wunt be t' first.

HARRY AND JACK GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS.

EXIT JACK.

SCENE 30

TRAFFORD PARK

HARRY (TO HIMSELF) Right, I'll start at one end of Trafford Park and I'll not stop until I come out t'other end.

MUSIC. HARRY SETS OFF ACCOMPANIED BY THE CHORUS. SIGN AFTER SIGN READS: "NO HANDS WANTED" BUT HE KEEPS ASKING.

"NO HANDS WANTED"

HARRY&CHORUS I'm sick of handouts and hand-me-downs,
living hand-to-mouth,
one hand tied behind me back,
handcuffed, handicapped,
crying in my hanky,
it's out of hand.

These hands were made to work,
I can turn my hand to anything,
I'm a handyman.

Give us a hand? Give us a hand?

Many hands make light work,
hand in glove, hand over fist,
our hands full 'til the job's done.

Let's shake hands on it,
a gentlemen's agreement.

Please sir, do you need any hands?

FOREMAN Do we hell as like. Can't you read? "No hands wanted".

Go on, sod off and don't bang the door or I'll be after
kickin' your backside.

HARRY&CHORUS No hands wanted, no hands wanted,
it's a different story when you're wanted for
hand-to-hand combat or chucking hand-grenades;
then it's all hands on deck,
hands up all those who'll volunteer?
Hand-made, handsome and hand-picked
for the slaughter.
On the one hand, go, give us a hand;
on the other hand, stop, no hands wanted.
Give us a hand? No hands wanted.
Give us a hand? No hands wanted.

SCENE 31

OUTSIDE MARLOWE'S.

HARRY RETURNS FROM TRAFFORD PARK AND
MEETS UP WITH JACK, SAM AND TOM, ALL
UNEMPLOYED.

JACK (DEMONSTRATING HIS TECHNIQUE) Watch that
bloke there, Harry... he'll be chuckin' his tab-
end away in a minute.

There it goes! Pretend you're fastenin' your boot-lace...

TAKES A PUFF

Hmmmm, tastes good.

SAM All we've got t' do is t' sneak into a bank, land the clerk a
good un over the head and help ourselves.

JACK Aye an' end up in prison.

HARRY We might as well be in prison. All the doors are locked
out 'ere: doors t' work, doors t' shops, doors t' home of
your own, doors t' future... Where can a man go who
hasn't any money?

THEY PASS TED MUNTER SHOVELLING.

HARRY Hey Ted, gie us a go wi' your shovel?

TED Aw reet, here y'are.

HARRY TAKES OVER SHOVELLING BUT SOON
TIRES OF IT.

TED You're out o' fettle, Harry lad, gie it us back afore y' get
me t' sack.

A GROUP OF GIRLS PASS. TOM MAKES
SUGGESTIVE GESTURES TO THEM. THEY GIGGLE
AND MOVE ON.

SAM I wisht I'd yon big un in t' bed for hafe an hour.

TOM Wait 'til I get a job, I'll be after first old tail I see. I wish
they'd a took me in th'army. That's the life. Nowt t' worry
about an' a fresh tart whenever y' feel like it.

SAM It's all right for them as is married on t'dole.

HARRY How d' you mean/

SAM Well, you can take your missus t' bed in th'afternoon. No
wonder some of 'em don't want work.

HARRY I hope you're not talkin' bout me?

JACK (TO SAM) You should get married then.

SAM I'd send me tart out t' work while I stopped at 'ome in
bed. Bed, baccy, a tart and a bit o' money, that's the life
for me.

JACK What tart would 'ave you?

BILL SIMMONDS JOINS THEM, FLUSH WITH
CIGARETTES.

BILL Take one. Take a few. There's plenty more where they
came from.

TOM Where's that then?

BILL Wouldn't you like t' know? Come wi' me tonight an' I'll
show you.

TOM I'm game.

BILL Anyone else?

JACK I don't fancy jail.

BILL Sam?

SAM I daren't.

BILL What about you 'Arry; you need it more than most?

HARRY I don't need it that much.

TOM Can't we go now?

BILL Don't be a bloody fool. We gotta wait while t' place
 closes. Wait y' sweat.

EXIT

SCENE 32

OUTSIDE THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER PUB.

KATE He don't mean it, he loves me, he's told me he does.

SALLY Knockin' you about an' you carrying his child? Is that what he calls love?

KATE It's the drink.

SALLY Whatever it is, you're a fool to let him muck about wi' you. An' you still want to marry him?

KATE He's different when he's sober.

SALLY If he won't marry you, he's got t' give you someat towards its keep.

KATE Y' won't do nowt rash, will y'?

NED STAGGERS OUT OF THE PUB. HE DOESN'T SEE THEM. SALLY TAPS HIM ON THE SHOULDER.

SALLY I want a word wi' you.

NED I thought you wasn't speakin' t' me ever again? What's up?

SALLY You know what's up. You and Kate Molloy.

NED SEES KATE.

NED What's she doin' 'ere?

SALLY Well, what about it?

NED Worrabout what?

SALLY Kate's in t' family way and you're t' father.

NED Come off it, I aint th'only one as 's bin wi' her.

KATE You know there aint nobody but you, Ned; it's yours, I

swear.

SALLY You dirty dog. You are a specimen.

(TO KATE) You heard what he said, do you still want t' 'ave owt t' do wi' him?

NED You shut your trap or I'll shut it for you.

SALLY An' the likes of you would too, wouldn't you? We can all see what you've done t' Kate.

NED (TO KATE) What you bin sayin'?

KATE Nothin' 'onestly, I swear.

SALLY You aint a man, knockin' her about. Takin' t' best out of a girl an' blamin' it on somebody else.

NED Y' gawmless lookin' bitch. Why didn't y' do as I told y'? Ma Haddock would ha' shifted it for y'.

KATE You said you'd marry me?

SALLY If it's his kid, he has t' see you right.

NED Y' interferin' bitch. I'll get even wi' that bastard y' sweet on.

SALLY You touch him if you dare an' I'll 'ave the law onto you.

NED No tart's gonna make a runt out o' me. If I can't 'ave you, no one will.

KATE You said you loved me?

SALLY (TO NED) You'll be pleased t' know we're getting married.

NED (TO SALLY) You be sure t' tell him I aint done wi' him yet.

(TO KATE) Get 'ere, you, you're comin' home wi' me.

EXIT.

SCENE 33

DOLE OFFICE

HARRY IS AT THE DESK TO SIGN ON AS USUAL.

CLERK 1 There's nowt for you.

HARRY Y' what? What did y'say?

CLERK 1 Are y' deaf? There's no money for you.

HARRY There must be some mistake.

CLERK 1 No mistake. They've knocked y' off t' dole.

Sign on of a Tuesday in future if y' want your health insurance stamp. Who's next?

HARRY I want me money. I'm out o' collar an' I want me dole.

CLERK 1 No point arguin' wi' me, 'taint my fault.

HARRY I demand to know why?

CLERK 1 You'll have to see the Manager.

HARRY You bet I'll see the Manager. Where is he?

CLERK 1 Ask at Enquiries.

Who's next?

HARRY GOES TO ENQUIRIES.

CLERK 2 Sorry, the Manager's busy. Perhaps I can help you?

Name?

HARRY Hardcastle, Harry Hardcastle.

CLERK 2 TAKES OUT HIS FILE.

CLERK 2 What is it exactly you're not clear about?

HARRY I've no work, though not for the want of tryin', I've a wife and a baby on the way, we're sharing me sister's

bedroom at me mam an' dad's 'cause we can't afford a place of our own, and me dad's out o' work an' all, now you've stopped me dole and I'm not clear, exactly, about what we're to live on? Fresh air? 'Cause there's not much o' that round 'ere?

CLERK 2 Your father's claiming dole.

HARRY What of it? The pit's closed, he worked there all his life.

CLERK 2 And your sister, Sally Hardcastle, she's a weaver at the cotton-mill.

HARRY Aye, when she can get the work.

CLERK 2 And your wife, Helen, she's working as a weaver too.

HARRY Part-time, while she's fit, which won't be for much longer.

CLERK 2 The Public Assistance Committee have ruled that your household's aggregate income is sufficient for your needs. Therefore your claim for transitional benefit is disallowed.

HARRY Can I have that again, in English?

CLERK 2 Your father's dole, your sister's wages and your wife's wages combined are enough to keep you all.

HARRY Is this what they mean by that new Means Test?

CLERK 2 Everyone's subject to the same scrutiny.

HARRY I want to appeal.

CLERK 2 There is no appeal.

HARRY Then I want t' smash this place up.

Email: kev@kevinfegan.co.uk tel: 07904111671 (c) Kevin Fegan

CLERK 2

Please don't make me call the police.

HARRY LEAVES, TOO DISGRACED TO GO HOME.

SCENE 34

MUSIC. HARRY MEETS BILL SIMMONDS AND TOM HARE WHO PLY HIM WITH DRINKS FROM THEIR THIEVING. THEY LEAD HIM TO "THE TUPPENNY LEANOVER" TO SLEEP IT OFF.

CHORUS

When you're as low as you can get
and you're drowning in debt,
when you're down on your luck,
feel like throwing yourself in the cut,
remember, it's never as bad as it seems,
'cause there's always the tuppenny lean.
No job? No bed?
Nightmares in your head?
Wife and kids left you, all alone?
too pissed-up to make it home?
Stopped your dole? Nowhere to go?
Come and see us, we've a length of rope,
a length of rope to take the strain,
a length of rope to ease the pain.
It's never as bad as it seems
'cause there's always the tuppenny lean.
Workhouse won't take you?
Behind on your rent?
For tuppence you can lean
'til your heart's content.

For a tuppenny lean,
you can dream all night,
not a care in the world,
not a worry in sight.

For a tuppenny lean,
take the weight of your feet,
you can hang your hat,
sleep it off in the street.

When you're as low as you can get
and you're drowning in debt,
when you're down on your luck,
feel like throwing yourself in the cut,
remember, it's never as bad as it seems,
'cause there's always the tuppenny lean.

SCENE 35

SALLY FINDS HIM AT THE TUPPENNY LEANOVER.

SALLY What 're you doin' 'ere wi' this lot?

HARRY Leave me be.

SALLY Have you bin drinkin'?

HARRY What if I 'ave?

SALLY And where, in God's name, did you get the money for drink?

HARRY They might be liars and thieves, but they're good mates.

SALLY You should take more care over the company you keep.

HARRY This is where I belong.

SALLY You belong with your wife an' family.

HARRY They don't want me, I'm a burden.

SALLY Enough o' your self-pity. We 'ave t' look after each other.

HARRY Helen shouldn't be goin' out t' work t' keep me. I should swop places wi' her.

SALLY That would be fine, but you can't weave, 'Arry, an' weavin' is where the work is at the moment.

HARRY The women shouldn't be keepin' the men, it's not right.

SALLY Needs must.

HARRY I'm gonna take care o' you, Sal. I'm gonna take care o' me mam an' dad.

SALLY Don't you go getting' no bad ideas into your head from them so-called mates o' yours. You concentrate on bein' a good 'usband and father for Helen and t' baby.

HARRY Me, a father? Can you believe it?

SALLY Frankly, no, you're my little brother.

HARRY I'm gonna take care of everybody in Hanky Park.

SALLY LEADS HIM HOME.

SCENE 36

AT MRS. NATTLES.

MRS.DORBELL ARRIVES.

MRS.D Are y' in, missus?

MRS.N Is that you, Mrs.Dorbell?

Take y' shawl off, spread it in front o' th' fire.

MRS.D What weather, ne'er stopped rainin' for a week.

MRS.N TAKES OUT THE WHISKEY.

MRS.N The usual?

MRS.D Haven't slept a wink all night, cough, cough, coughing.

MRS.D TAKES HER WHISKEY AND HANDS OVER
HER THREEPENCE.

MA JIKE AND MRS.BULL JOIN THEM.

MA JIKE How 're we this mornin', girls?

MRS.D I'd be all right only for a twinge o' rheumatic.

MRS.B There's a rare lot on 'em in t' cemetery as'd be glad of a
twinge or two.

MA JIKE The Lord loves a cheerful soul.

(OFFERING HER SNUFF) Pinch o' Birdseye, anyone?

MRS.N Three penn'orth, Mrs.Bull?

MRS.B Don't mind if I do. Good t' see all this unemployment's
not affectin' some folk.

MRS.N I don't know what you mean?

MRS.B Commission on your money-lendin' for owld Grumpole,
bet times 'ave never bin so good?

MRS.D Thank God, unemployment or no, they can't touch me
owld age pension. What a blessin'.

MA JIKE I've never seen such a queue outside t' pawnshop.

MRS.D Things is bad.

MRS.N There's nowt like worry for poppin' folk off; I s'pose trade
isn't exactly slack for you either, Mrs.Bull?

MRS. HARDCASTLE JOINS THEM.

MRS.N Three penn'orth, Mrs.H?

MRS.H I'd best not. I jus' called t' see if you'd pawned me
weddin' ring, Mrs.Nattles? Thank God, he's not noticed
this is a brass un, I'm wearin'. He'd murder me if he
found out.

MA JIKE A ring's a ring to most men.

MRS.N Now then, I know y' wanted hafe a crown on t' ring; but I
only asked pawnbroker for two an' five. Y' see, if I'd 'ave
got you hafe a crown, you'd 'ave threepence interest t'
find. But bein' as it's under hafe a crown, he can't charge
more 'n a penny. So, two an' five minus threepence for
me trouble, leaves two an' two. (HANDING OVER HER
MONEY) There y'are, lass, two an' tuppence.

MA JIKE How's that young man o' Sally's?

MRS.H It's a bit of a worry this demonstration they're plannin'.

MRS.B Taint no use talkin' socialism t' folk. It won't come in our
time, though I allus vote Labour an' allus will.

MRS.D Me mam an' her mam was allus blue or red, dependin'

on which o' two gave most coal.

MRS.B Y' owld scut, y' d sell y' soul for a bag o' coal.

MRS.D I never bothers me 'ead about what don't concern me. I understand nowt about politics, an' there's nowt I want t' understand, but I do understand a bag o' coal.

MRS.H I don't know what's gonna come of us all?

EXIT.

SCENE 37

AT NO. 17. HARRY AND HELEN ARE LEAVING.

MRS.H What 're you doin' wi' them bags, 'Arry?

HARRY We're leavin', mam.

MRS.H Leavin'? What for?

 (TO MR.H) What have you bin sayin' t' them?

MR.H Don't look at me.

HARRY It's our decision. I can't bear puttin' on you any longer.

 An' it's not fair on Sal, sharing her room wi' us.

MRS.H Don't be daft, there's much bigger families than us on t'

 street, crammed into two-up two-downs.

 (TO MR.H) Tell him, will you?

MR.H Y' don't 'ave t' go for my sake.

HARRY It's worse now I'm not even bringin' dole into house.

MRS.H Where will you go?

HELEN Mrs.Dorbell has a room for us.

MRS.H Have y' seen the room? It's no bigger than a broom

 cupboard.

HELEN We can manage t' rent on my bit o' money.

MRS.H Folk 'll be sayin' we don't look after our own.

MR.H Forty year I worked at Agecroft. Underground at twelve

 year old.

MRS.H Come back for a decent meal, lass. You need t' look

 after yourself in your condition. She'll not feed you there,

 that's for sure.

HARRY I might take you up on that.

MRS.H It's the baby I'm worried about. I wish you wouldn't go,
you can still change your mind.

HARRY We'll be all right, mam.

MRS.H When Sal's left, you can 'ave her room.

HARRY Thanks, mam.

HELEN Thank you for takin' us in, Mrs. Hardcastle.

MR.H Look after that grandson.

HARRY Come on, Helen, we've done 'ere.

EXIT

SCENE 38

CITY HALL.

A MARCH AGAINST THE MEANS TEST. ONE OF THE DELEGATES IS ORGANISING THE PROCESSION.

DELEGATE 1 (MEGAPHONE) We must be organised. Stick to the route. Don't give them any reason to interfere with the procession. Stay calm. The Mayor will be there to receive us at City Hall. Can the other leaders of the delegation come to the front of the procession?

THE PROCESSION MOVES ON. LARRY JOINS THE OTHER DELEGATES AT THE HEAD OF THE PROCESSION. HARRY WATCHES AS NED HAS A WORD WITH THE POLICE. NED POINTS TO LARRY. THE POLICE CLOSE IN ON LARRY.

THE PROCESSION STOPS AND A CROWD GATHERS AROUND LARRY AND THE OTHER DELEGATES. LARRY TAKES THE MEGAPHONE.

LARRY Imagine a tree growing in a field. Call that tree "raw material". Now if a factory owner wants that tree making into a table, how does he do it? Does he place his money in front of it and say, "Change into a table"? No, no matter how much money he had. Does he do it himself? No. What he does is he hires working people to do it for him: a woodman to chop the tree down, a carter to haul it away, a sawyer to saw it up and a joiner

to fashion the planks into a table. That table is a commodity. Raw material plus labour equals commodities. Millionaires are people who possess millions of pounds worth of working people's labour. Their money is the fruit of our labour. Without us, they'd have nothing. The dole is our right. We say 'No' to the Means Test. Hands off our dole.

A POLICE INSPECTOR APPROACHES THE DELEGATION.

INSPECTOR Get this crowd shifted and be bloody quick about it!

ANOTHER DELEGATE SEIZES THE MEGAPHONE.

DELEGATE 2 The police say we can't enter the square. I say, the City Hall belongs to the people. We have a right to have our views heard. Are you with me?

A ROAR FROM THE CROWD AS THEY MOVE FORWARD. THE POLICE RUSH WITH TRUNCHEONS RAISED AT THE DELEGATES AND LARRY, STRIKING THEM TO THE GROUND AND ARRESTING THEM. HATS AND HELMETS FLY EVERYWHERE. HARRY RESCUES LARRY'S HAT AND FOLLOWS THE POLICE.

EXIT ALL.

SCENE 39

HOPE HOSPITAL.

SALLY IS AT LARRY'S BEDSIDE BEHIND A FULL SCREEN. IN THE NEXT BED, UNSCREENED, PATIENTS ARE GAMBLING AT CARDS.

HARRY AND MRS.HARDCASTLE APPEAR. HARRY IS HOLDING LARRY'S HAT.

MRS.H I had t' take rent book t' police station t' get him bail, and him lyin' in hospital.

HARRY Bastards. They waited 'til we reached t' city hall, then charged us wi' their truncheons. It were madness.

MRS.H I'm just glad you didn't get hurt.

HARRY Tell that t' 'Elen, she had a right go at me for bein' there.

MRS.H I knew no good would come of it. Poor Larry, it's allus good-uns what cops for it.

HARRY He were wi' t' delegation. They were s'posed t' do talkin' for us wi' t' Mayor.

MRS.H You wouldn't 'ave thought they'd attack t' delegation.

HARRY They were arrestin' everybody. I hid in this doorway. I saw Ned Narkey wi' these three coppers. It looked at first like they were gonna arrest 'im; but he kept pointin' at t' delegation. They left Ned alone an' ran over t' Larry. Next thing I saw was this one copper collaring Larry. He pushed him and Larry's hat went flyin'. Then he hit 'im twice on t' back wi' truncheon. Larry went down onto his

knees an' he hit 'im again, on t' head this time. The other two slops took Larry by the armpits and dragged him off t' station. It were all over in t' seconds, I could only stand an' watch.

ONE OF THE CARD PLAYERS APPROACHES HARRY AND MRS.H

MRS.H That's awful.

HARRY Here y'are, grandad, d' you know which bed's taken by a Larry Meath? Our Sally's visitin'.

OLD MAN Y' mean yon lass sittin' wi' yon lad behind t' screen?

HARRY Sounds like them.

OLD MAN D' you have the price of a pipe o' baccy, lad? I've bin wi'out a puff for three days. They take y' pension off y' when y' come in 'ere.

HARRY Chance 'd be a fine thing, you're better off than me in 'ere.

MRS.H REACHES INTO HER PURSE

MRS.H Here's a couple o' coppers.

OLD MAN God bless y' missus.

HARRY (TO MRS.H) What did y' go an' do that for?

OLD MAN If y' re a relation of his, y' won't 'ave much longer t' sit wi' him.

OLD MAN RE-JOINS THE CARD PLAYERS TO GAMBLE THE COPPERS.

SCENE 40

HOPE HOSPITAL.

HARRY AND MRS. H PULL BACK THE SCREEN TO REVEAL SALLY AT THE BEDSIDE.

HARRY I brought 'im back 'is hat.

SALLY He's not opened his eyes nor moved since. Not a flicker.

MRS.H You must be worn out, lass. You should go home and rest, I'll sit wi' him for a while.

SALLY I'll not leave him, ever again.

HARRY Is there nothing' they can do?

MRS.H They've staff trained for this sort o' thing, lass. They'll minister to him.

SALLY I'll see to him, it's my place. I'm t' be his wife.

HARRY Will they keep your job open for you?

MRS.H Don't worry the lass further.

HARRY If mam sits wi' him, you could go t' work.

MRS.H We'll manage.

HARRY I meant take your mind off it, I didn't mean... sorry, Sal, I forgot you were t' breadwinner.

SALLY (OBLIVIOUS) He'll be an M.P. one day. He's gonna take me t' Russia.

HARRY He'll be playin' cards wi' them next door before y' know it.

SALLY We've got dreams t' look forward to...Dreams.

SHE LAYS HER HEAD ON HIS CHEST. THE CARD

GAME ERUPTS IN VICTORY FOR ONE OF THE
GAMBLERS. HARRY COMFORTS SALLY.

SCENE 41

HOPE HOSPITAL.

CHORUS PICK UP LARRY'S BODY FROM HIS
DEATHBED AND CARRY HIM AWAY.

CHORUS

He's dead,

the head

of our struggle has been severed.

Who will be our leader now?

Who will speak up for us?

Who will let them know

what life is really like in Hanky Park?

Darkness has fallen,

the birds are silent,

how long will we have to wait

for the new dawn?

CHORUS LOAD HIS BODY ONTO A CART.

SCENE 42

HANKY PARK.

HARRY AND THE CHORUS PILE LARRY'S
BELONGINGS ALONGSIDE HIM ON THE CART. A
CROWD HAS GATHERED TO WATCH SALLY.

MRS.BULL I think it's a sin an' a shame, I do. Five quid for all t' lad's
belongings? Bareface, daylight robbery, that's what it is.

MRS.DORBELL Sellin' aint buyin'. I remember that harmonium what
belonged to one of my lodgers afore he died. He gave
eight pounds for it. It were a nice piece o' furniture. He
couldn't play it, of course, an' he kept it locked so's
nobody else could either. As good the day it went as the
day it arrived. A lousy fifteen bob they gave me for it
when he died. Enough t' make him turn in his grave, I
shouldn't wonder.

MA JIKE (TO SALLY) Would you like us t' collect for a wreath for
t' lad? He were very pop'lar, though I aint confident o'
getting' much, things is that bad.

SALLY Thank you.

MRS.NATTLES Where are y' buryin' the lad, Sal?

SALLY He aint bein' buried.

MRS.N Not buryin' him?

SALLY I'm havin' him cremated. He allus said it was t' proper
way.

MRS.N Well, did you ever? That's a first for Hanky Park.

MRS.D Give me a grave, proper an' Christian like. I was brought up t' read Bible.

MA J What happens on t' Day of Resurrection if you're cremated?

MRS.N Nobody's gonna burn me, not if I have anythin' t' do wi' it.

MRS.B It'll cost you a pretty penny, lass.

SALLY I know.

MRS.D How much did y' have 'im in for?

SALLY He wasn't in for nowt. He didn't believe in insurance.

MRS.D Didn't believe in insurance?

MRS.N Who did he expect t' pay for his funeral?

SALLY He wasn't expectin' t' die. He didn't care what become of him, no more do I. He's gone, d'you hear? Gone.

MRS.B Take no heed, lass. I'd many a good crack wi' that lad an' he spoke a lot o' sense, more often than not. I've seen too much in my time t' be took in by all that parson 'd like y' t' swallow. 'S easy for them as live house an' light free an' a regular wage comin' in. There's nowt much for the likes of us t' live for. Religion? Pah, I've no patience wi' it.

SALLY I've patience wi' nowt nor nobody any more.

MRS.B How are you gonna manage t' pay for cremation, if all you've got is five quid for his things?

SALLY God knows. I need another five.

MRS.B Five quid's a lot o' money t' raise. I wish I could help thee, lass.

SALLY I'll get it somehow.

MRS.B Well, if you do, would y' mind if I come t' cremation with y'? I've allus wanted t' see how they do it.

HARRY AND CHORUS DRAG AWAY THE CART AND
EXIT.

SCENE 43

DUKE OF GLOUCESTER PUB.

THE PUB IS FULL, MEN ONLY, INCLUDING SAM GRUNDY AND NED NARKEY.

NOISY PUB FALLS SILENT WHEN SALLY WALKS IN. ALL EYES WATCH HER AS SHE GOES STRAIGHT TO THE BAR. SHE LOOKS AT NO ONE OTHER THAN THE LANDLORD BEHIND THE BAR.

SALLY Tell Sam Grundy I want a word.

SALLY WALKS STRAIGHT OUT AGAIN. SAM LEAVES HIS CIGAR AND DRINK AND FOLLOWS HER OUTSIDE.

SAM What's up, Sal? What can I do you for?

SALLY I was goin' t' ask you t' lend me five pounds...

SAM Oh?

SALLY But I'm not so sure I want to now.

SAM Well, this is a turn up for the books. Listen, you don't want t' be talkin' business where everybody can hear; why don't you come for a drive 'round in the car?

SALLY I want no drives in no cars. I'm feared o' nobody hearin'. Will y' lend it?

SAM I shan't ask what it's for?

SALLY Good.

SAM 'Course I'll lend y' the money. You know I'd do anythin' for you.

SALLY I'll pay it back when t' mill starts on full time again.

SAM There's no rush.

SALLY I wouldn't have come t' you if I could have borrowed it from somebody else.

SAM I'm glad y' did.
(HANDING HER FIVE SINGLE POUND NOTES) Here, take it. Y' can 'ave more if y' like?

SALLY Five's all I need.

SAM Go on, take more. Y' must be sick o' pinchin' an' scrapin' week after week? You've no need t' pay me back.

SALLY I said, five is all I need.

SAM You've got me all wrong. I'm happy t' do you a good turn. I'd like y' as a pal.

SALLY Aye, well, I'll say thank you and bid you goodnight.

SAM If there's anythin' else I can help y' with, just ask.
SALLY LEAVES.

SCENE 44

NED STEPS OUT OF THE PUB.

NED What were all that about?

SAM Nothin' that concerns you.

NED If it's t' do wi' Sally Hardcastle, it concerns me.

SAM Does she know that?

NED She knows. I hope you're not tryin' t' get sweet wi' her,
an' her fella still warm in t coffin?

SAM None of your goddamn business.

NED I make it my business.

(IN SAM'S FACE) Don't you go makin' same mistake as
him. I warned him not to cross me. Look what happened
to him?

SAM Now look 'ere, Ned.

NED Don't try an' soft soap me.

SAM You're a big fella, have y' ever thought o' joining t'
police? Wi' your army background, I'm sure you'd make
a good copper.

NED You can get me on as a copper?

SAM Three ten a week, lodgin' allowance, uniform, boots an'
all y' bloody holidays paid for.

NED Me?

SAM Depends.

NED On what?

SAM On whether you're gonna let a bit o' skirt stand between

you and a job for life?

NED Keep away from Sal?

SAM You've got it.

NED So you can 'ave her all t' yourself?

SAM That's about the size of it.

NED You'd better be able t' deliver?

SAM Every sensible bookie has his friends in t' police.

NED I look good in uniform.

SAM I knew you'd see reason.

NED I never wanted the bitch anyway. I jus' didn't want
anyone else t' 'ave her.

SCENE 45

AT MRS.NATTLES.

TOM HARE AND BILL SIMMONDS ARE WITH HARRY

AND CHORUS OUTSIDE MRS. NATTLES.

HARRY PULLS OFF HIS BALACLAVA.

HARRY I can't do it, I jus' can't do it.

TOM Go on, Harry.

BILL Go on, Harry.

CHORUS Go on, Harry.

TOM Through the window,

BILL easy does it,

TOM in and out,

BILL two minutes,

TOM it's that easy,

BILL she's an old woman,

TOM what does she need money for?

BILL You need it, Harry,

TOM baby could arrive any day,

BILL your family needs it.

TOM What kind of father can't look after his own?

BILL Don't you feel ashamed,

TOM goin' t' workhouse cap in hand,

BILL applying for relief,

TOM handouts t' pay your rent?

BILL Mission to the Respectable and Deserving Poor,

TOM with their brown paper parcels?

BILL Is that what you want

TOM for the rest of your life?

BILL What else y' gonna do?

TOM Join th' army like Sam Hardie?

BILL Or walk the streets like Jack Lindsay
selling contraceptives and dirty postcards?

TOM Money,
it's the answer to all your problems.

HE GOES INSIDE. TOM AND BILL WAIT OUTSIDE,
HE SEARCHES FOR MRS. NATTLE'S STASH.

CHORUS Mrs. Dorbell says, her stash
is somewhere in the back room.
Mrs. Nattles doesn't trust banks,
She must have a tidy sum tucked away.
The old money-lender,
nobody likes her,
she rips people off,
her own neighbours,
she pawned your mam's wedding ring,
she's no licence to sell liquor,
she's a law-breaker herself,
we're all thieves,
that's what they've turned us into.
You've heard what she's been saying

about your Sally taking money off Sam Grundy?

What's he getting in return? she says.

Mrs. Nattles didn't offer to lend it, did she?

You could give Sal that five pounds,

you owe it to Larry to keep Grundy away.

It's all about dirty money in the end,

a fistful of notes,

some people have more than their fair share,

where's yours?

NOISES OFF. MRS. NATTLES RETURNING HOME
EARLY.

HARRY Oh hell, she's not s'posed t' be back yet? What am I
gonna do?

CHORUS Take the rope from around your waist
and strangle her.

HARRY I can't strangle her!

CHORUS Tie her up,
she won't know who it is,
take her money
and run.

HARRY TAKES THE ROPE, READY TO BIND HER.

CHORUS LEAVE.

SCENE 46

AT MRS. NATTLES.

AS MRS NATTLES ENTERS HE RIPS OFF HIS

BALACLAVA.

MRS.N Harry?

HARRY Mrs. Nattles.

MRS.N What 're you doin' 'ere?

HARRY Mrs. Dorbell sent me... for a threepenny nip.

MRS.N DISCREETLY CHECKS HER STASH HASN'T
BEEN DISTURBED.

Mrs.D let me in, she said you wouldn't mind if I waited
indoors.

MRS.N Did she now? (PAUSE) Well? Where's her threepence?

HARRY PULLS OUT THREE SINGLE PENNIES AND
HANDS THEM OVER. SHE HANDS HIM A MEASURE.
Tell her I want the glass back.

HARRY (LEAVING) I'll bring it straight back.

MRS.N Oh, and Harry?

HARRY Yes, Mrs. Nattles?

MRS.N Wait outside next time.

HARRY Sorry, Mrs.N.

EXIT

SCENE 47

AT MRS.DORBELL'S

CHORUS CARRY HELEN.

CHORUS The waters have broke,
 the damn has burst,
 there's a baby on the way,
 call out the coastguard,
 man the lifeboats,
 sail the baby onto dry land,
 help the baby ashore.

HARRY Helen? What can I do?

HELEN Go t' mill for me wages.
 Make sure you're there at five o'clock sharp,
 Me number's 215.

HARRY 215. Five o'clock.

HELEN But first fetch me Mrs. Bull, urgent like, I'll get upstairs
 meself.

SCENE 48

HARRY RUNS TO MRS. BULL'S.

HARRY Mrs.Bull, Mrs.Bull, come, quick, it's Helen, she's...
upstairs, urgent, the baby, it's on its way, hurry.

MRS.B Did y' put kettle on?

HARRY Should I have done?

MRS.B Go and put kettle on, I'll be there shortly.

HARRY We aint got no fire.

MRS.B Go and make one and boil a kettle.

HARRY HURRIES BACK TO MRS. DORBELL'S.

SCENE 49

MRS.DORBELL'S.

A CROWD GATHERS AT MRS.DORBELL'S. MRS.

DORBELL RETURNS.

MRS.D 'Ere, what's all this? This aint Liberty hall.

WOMAN1 It's Helen, Mrs.D, the lass is confined, poor child.

MRS.D GOES INSIDE.

MRS. BULL ARRIVES, SLEEVES ROLLED UP.

MRS.B Make way for t' midwife,

WOMAN 2 Here she is, deliverance itself. She brings 'em into t'
world one end, and lays 'em out t'other end.

MRS.B GOES INSIDE.

WOMAN 1 Does insurance cover death in t' childbed?

HARRY (HANDING OVER THE KETTLE TO MRS. BULL) I did
it.

MRS.B What d' you want, a medal? Now sling your hook, lad,
y'aint wanted 'ere for a while, you'll only be in t' way.

HARRY BUMPS INTO MRS.NATTLES WHO IS

CARRYING A BOWL OF BROTH.

MRS.N Steady.

HARRY Mrs.Nattles?

MRS.N I've made some broth for th' lass.

MRS.B Lovely, I could do wi' a nice broth.

Go on then, lad, take a hike 'til six o'clock.

HARRY (REMEMBERING) 215. Five o'clock.

MRS.B Childbirth? Turns 'em into gibberin' wrecks.

AS HARRY LEAVES. HE OVERHEARS THE WOMEN
TALKING.

WOMAN 1 I'm sure they do pay up when y' die in t'childbirth.

WOMAN 2 Money's no good t' you when you're dead an' gone
though, is it?

HARRY I never thought of that.

Helen, die?

I couldn't bear it.

I couldn't live without her now.

Poor Sally, imagine how she must 'ave felt after Larry?

HARRY HEADS FOR THE MILL.

SCENE 50

AT THE MILL.

HARRY IS EMBARRASSED TO JOIN AN EXCLUSIVELY FEMALE QUEUE, WHERE CLERK 3 IS HANDLING THE WAGES.

WOMAN 3 (TO HER MATES, TEASING HARRY) Who's the new bit o' skirt?

WOMAN 4 Dunno. Bit o' make-up wouldn't go amiss though.

WOMAN 5 Heavy about the legs.

WOMAN 6 Not much on top.

ALL TOGETHER Nice bum!

HARRY (CALLING TO CLERK 3) Can't you go any faster?

WOMAN 4 Be different if they were takin' money off us, eh? Soon see 'em shift then.

WOMAN 5 (TO HARRY) What's your hurry?

HARRY I'm 'avin a baby.

WOMAN 6 Not with those hips, darlin'.

WOMAN 3 TAKES HARRY BY THE HAND AND PUSHES TO THE FRONT OF THE QUEUE.

WOMAN 3 Let this lad through. Come on ladies, we've a baby on the way. Shift everybody.

(TO CLERK 3) Here y'are, this lad's next. And look sharp, his missus is in childbirth.

CLERK 3 Name?

HARRY Harry Hardcastle.

CLERK 3 Your wife's name?

HARRY Oh, 'course, er, Helen, Helen Hardcastle. Number 215.

CLERK 3 Do you have any proof of identity?

HARRY SEARCHES HIS POCKETS.

HARRY Oh hell, erm, I've come out wi'out anythin'.

CLERK 3 Sorry, I can't release wages wi'out proof of identity.

 Imagine t' trouble I'd be in if I got it wrong?

HARRY I'm her husband, we're havin' a baby, ask Mrs. Bull, I lit
a fire, boiled a kettle, hot water, please, she'll tell you –

CLERK 3 Sorry, there's nothin' I can do; who's next?

WOMEN (SHOUTING) Give the lad his money.

SALLY I can vouch for 'im.

HARRY Thank God; tell 'im.

SALLY He's me brother. You can take it out o' my wages if
there's any bother.

CLERK 3 Sign here.

CLERK 3 HANDS WAGE PACKET TO HARRY AND
HARRY SIGNS FOR IT.

SALLY Come on Harry, we'll give y' a lift 'ome.

SHE LEADS HIM TO SAM GRUNDY'S CAR.

SCENE 51

BY SAM GRUNDY'S CAR

SALLY Can we drop 'Arry off? Helen's in labour.

SAM 'Course we can, love. Gerrin' lad, we'll 'ave y' home in a jiffy.

HARRY HESITATES.

SAM Amazin' where a threpenny treble can lead y', eh lad?
I couldn't 'ave give y' odds on t' way things 'ave turned out for us all lately.

HARRY I'll walk, if it's all t' same t' you.

SALLY Don't be like that. Helen needs you there sharpish.

HARRY I don't need your charity.

SALLY We're offerin' you a lift home, that's all.

HARRY I don't want nothin' t' do wi' you and 'im – together.

SALLY What is your problem?

HARRY I've allus tried me best t' sort things out for you, Sal.

SALLY This is my choice, 'Arry. No one has a gun to my head.
Larry's gone, I'm doin' the best I can.

HARRY (SETTING OFF) I said I'll walk.

SALLY (CALLING AFTER HIM) This isn't about Larry; it's about you and your damn silly pride. If I can get over it, so can you.

EXIT SALLY AND SAM.

SCENE 52

MRS.DORBELL'S.

MUSIC. HARRY RETURNS HOME TO FIND HELEN
HAS GIVEN BIRTH. THE CHORUS PRESENT HARRY
WITH A BABY GIRL.

CHORUS

It's a girl,
it's a girl,
the most beautiful creature
in the whole wide world
and she's yours, Harry.
Welcome to the club,
you're a dad,
we're off down the pub
to wet the baby's head;
you might be potless, penniless, out of collar,
but here's a thing much greater than
the pound, the franc, the yen, the dollar,
'cause when she sailed in on the evening tide
this girl brought with her a source of pride,
and she's yours, Harry.
She's all brand new and squeaky clean,
look, she's got your eyes and your curly hair,
perfect little hands – have you seen?
she's a love,
she's a looker, all right,

she'll break a few hearts when she turns sixteen.

It's a girl,

it's a girl,

the most beautiful creature

in the whole wide world.

HARRY, HELEN AND BABY ENJOY A GROUP HUG

AND EXIT WITH CHORUS.

SCENE 53

AT NO. 17

MRS. BULL IS VISITING MRS. HARDCASTLE.

MRS.H Everybody's talkin' about her.

MRS.B Talk's cheap enough. Let 'em talk. While they're talkin' about her, they're leavin' other folks be,

MRS.H We've allus been respectable. Her father 'll murder her. It's such a disgrace.

MRS.B Y' want t' forget y'selves an' t' neighbours, try t' understand how t' young uns must feel. World aint what it used t' be when we was young.

MRS.H What 'll become of her?

MRS.B She'll take no hurt. She'd have gone melancholy mad if she hung about 'ere doin' nowt but thinkin'. Allus she wants is someat t' help her forget, poor lass; it's more than flesh 'n' blood can stand.

MRS.H Ma Jike said she'd come into a fortune; but t' cards warned us, at a price.

SALLY ARRIVES. MRS.BULL MAKES TO LEAVE.

SALLY Don't leave on my account. The whole street knows me business. I aint ashamed.

MRS.B You'd be a damned fool if y' was. When y' get as owld as me, there aint nowt worth worryin' your head about save where next meal's comin' from.

MRS.H Seems t' me things allus turn out different to what y'

expect.

SALLY I thought I'd have bin married by now.

MRS.B It's not all it's cracked up t' be. You get wed for love an' find you've let y'self in for a seven day week job for no pay.

SALLY I can't have what I wanted so I've took next best thing.

MRS.B More fool you if you didn't, lass. There no woman in Hanky Park as wouldn't swop places with y'.

SALLY He's stinkin' wi' brass an', by God, I'll make him pay.

MRS.H I don't know what's come over you; you aint the same girl.

SALLY PRESENTS HER MAM WITH A WAD OF POUND NOTES.

SALLY I want you t' have this.

MRS.H We can't take this.

MRS.B Never refuse money, that's my motto.

MR. HARDCASTLE ARRIVES

MR.H Can't take what?

MRS.H (TRYING TO HIDE THE MONEY) Nothin', we were just -

MR. H SEIZES THE MONEY.

MRH Where's this come from?

SALLY It's a present from me.

MR.H From Sam Grundy, more like.

SALLY No. It's mine. I want you t' have it.

MR.H We don't want his money.

SALLY It's mine, I tell you.

MR.H An' how did you earn it? Y' brazen slut. Isn't it enough y' make respectable folk like me an' your mam the talk o' th' neighbourhood wi' your whorin'?

SALLY Tell me where's the fella 'round 'ere can afford t' wed me? Y' kicked our Harry out because he got married an' y' kickin' me out 'cause I ain't.

MR.H Damn y'. Y' aint fit t' be me daughter, if you don't know what's decent?

SALLY Decent? You call it decent t' live like this?
What's it matter if I'm whorin' t' cotton mill or Sam Grundy? I've bin carryin' this family since 'Arry was out o' work. It's a long time since you ever pulled your weight. You call me for livin' off a man when you've bin livin' off a woman?

MR.H (SLAPPING HER) Y' brazen bitch.

MRS.H Don't be a damn fool! Look what you've done t' lass.

MR.H (TO SALLY) Gerrout o' me sight.
(TO MR.H) Come away from her, d'you hear? Come away.

SALLY RECOVERS HERSELF, RETURNS HIS STARE DEFIANTLY AND LEAVES.

SCENE 54

AT MRS.DORBELL'S.

HARRY IS BABYSITTING. SALLY IS VISITING. SAM IS
WAITING IN THE CAR NEARBY.

HARRY Helen's at t' mill, seein' if she can get her old job back.

SALLY I've come t' say goodbye.

HARRY Oh. You goin' away with 'im?

SALLY Yes.

HARRY Where will you go?

SALLY Somewhere no one knows me. Or Sam. Somewhere we
can start again.

HARRY Sorry I can't be there t' look after you.

SALLY The worst is over for me, life can't hurt me any more.

HARRY When Helen was giving birth, I thought she might die. I
couldn't bear thinking about it. I realised how much grief
you must have suffered over Larry.

SALLY I've brought a present for the baby.

SHE HANDS HIM AN ENVELOPE.

HARRY Thanks.

SALLY Open it.

HE OPENS IT. THERE IS A NAME AND ADDRESS
WRITTEN ON A CARD.

HARRY What's this?

SALLY Read it.

HARRY Mr. Moorland. Eastern Bus Company, Openshaw. Start

Monday, 6.00am.

SALLY It's a job for you, 'Arry. For you and Helen and the baby.

HARRY How?

SALLY Money talks.

HARRY I can't let you do this. Not for me.

SALLY Would you 'ave done it for me? (PAUSE) Just because I'm a woman or your sister, makes no difference. I'm not takin' up wi' Sam for you or mam an' dad, I'm doin' it for me. But if I can help the family along the way, by God I will.

HARRY Does he love you?

SALLY I believe he does and I am fond of him. He's fun and considerate, I do like him.

HARRY I'm proud of you, sis.

SALLY I'm proud of you, little brother.

MUSIC. THEY EMBRACE. SALLY GETS IN SAM'S
CAR AND THEY DRIVE OFF.

SCENE 55

CHORUS

Raspberry, gooseberry, apple jam tart,

Tell me the name of your sweetheart?

Has he got a job? A position in life?

Will he care for you and make you his wife?

Raspberry, gooseberry, apple jam tart,

Tell me the name of your sweetheart?

Will she build a nest where you both can lie?

Will she have your kids and love you 'til you die?

Raspberry, gooseberry, apple jam tart,

Tell me the name of your sweetheart?

Are you lucky in love? A sensitive soul?

How would you cope with love on the dole?

PLAY ENDS