

Blood Brothers

Production note

The setting for *Blood Brothers* is an open stage, with the different settings and time spans being indicated by lighting changes, with the minimum of properties and furniture. The whole play should flow along easily and smoothly, with no cumbersome scene changes. Two areas are semi-permanent – the Lyons house and the Johnstone house. We see the interior of the Lyonses' comfortable home but usually only the exterior front door of the Johnstone house, with the 'interior' scenes taking place outside the door. The area between the two houses acts as communal ground for street scenes, park scenes, etc.

Blood Brothers was first performed at the Liverpool Playhouse on 8 January 1983, with the following cast:

Mrs Johnstone	Barbara Dickson
Mickey	George Costigan
Edward	Andrew C. Wadsworth
Sammy	Peter Christian
Linda	Amanda York
Mrs Lyons	Wendy Murray
Mr Lyons	Alan Leith
Narrator	Andrew Schofield
Chorus	Hazel Ellerby, Eithne Brown, David Edge

Directed by Chris Bond

Designed by Andy Greenfield

Musical Director Peter Filleul

Blood Brothers was subsequently presented by Bob Swash, by arrangement with Liverpool Playhouse, at the Lyric Theatre, London, on 11 April 1983, with the following cast:

Mrs Johnstone	Barbara Dickson
Mickey	George Costigan
Edward	Andrew C. Wadsworth
Sammy	Peter Christian
Linda	Kate Fitzgerald
Mrs Lyons	Wendy Murray
Mr Lyons	Alan Leith
Narrator	Andrew Schofield
Chorus	Hazel Ellerby, David Edge, Ian Burns, Oliver Beamish

Directed by Chris Bond and Danny Hiller

Designed by Andy Greenfield

Musical Director Richard Spanswick

Characters

Mrs Johnstone

Mickey

Edward

Sammy

Linda

Mrs Lyons

Mr Lyons

Narrator

Chorus

Act One

The overture comes to a close.

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Tell me it's not true. Say it's just a story.

The Narrator steps forward.

Narrator (*speaking*)

So did y' hear the story of the Johnstone twins?

As like each other as two new pins,

Of one womb born, on the selfsame day,

How one was kept and one given away?

An' did you never hear how the Johnstones died,

Never knowing that they shared one name,

Till the day they died, when a mother cried

My own dear sons lie slain?

The lights come up to show a re-enactment of the final moments of the play – the deaths of Mickey and Edward. The scene fades.

Mrs Johnstone *enters with her back to the audience.*

Narrator

An' did y' never hear of the mother, so cruel,

There's a stone in place of her heart?

Then bring her on and come judge for yourselves

How she came to play this part.

The Narrator exits.

Music is heard as Mrs Johnstone turns and walks towards us. She is aged thirty but looks more like fifty.

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Once I had a husband,

You know the sort of chap,

I met him at a dance and how he came on with the chat.

He said my eyes were deep blue pools,

My skin as soft as snow,

He told me I was sexier than Marilyn Monroe.

6 Blood Brothers

And we went dancing,
We went dancing.

Then, of course, I found
That I was six weeks overdue.
We got married at the registry an' then we had a 'do'.
We all had curly salmon sandwiches,
An' how the ale did flow,
They said the bride was lovelier than Marilyn Monroe.

And we went dancing,
Yes, we went dancing.

Then the baby came along,
We called him Darren Wayne,
Then three months on I found that I was in the club again.
An' though I still fancied dancing,
My husband wouldn't go,
With a wife he said was twice the size of Marilyn Monroe.

No more dancing
No more dancing.

By the time I was twenty-five,
I looked like forty-two,
With seven hungry mouths to feed and one more nearly due.
Me husband, he'd walked out on me,
A month or two ago,
For a girl they say who looks a bit like Marilyn Monroe.

And they go dancing
They go dancing

Yes they go dancing
They go . . .

*An irate **Milkman** (the **Narrator**) rushes in to rudely interrupt the song*

Milkman Listen, love, I'm up to here with hard-luck stories; you own me three pounds, seventeen and fourpence an' either you pay up today, like now, or I'll be forced to cut off your deliveries.

Mrs Johnstone I said, I said, look, next week I'll pay y' –

Milkman Next week, next week! Next week never arrives around here. I'd be a rich man if next week ever came.

Mrs Johnstone But look, look, I start a job next week. I'll have money comin' in an' I'll be able to pay y'. Y' can't stop the milk. I need the milk. I'm pregnant.

Milkman Well, don't look at me, love. I might be a milkman but it's got nothin' to do with me. Now you've been told, no money, no milk.

The Milkman exits.

Mrs Johnstone *stands alone and we hear some other kids, off.*

Kid One (*off*) Mam, Mam, the baby's cryin'. He wants his bottle. Where's the milk?

Kid Two (*off*) 'Ey, Mam, how come I'm on free dinners? All the other kids laugh at me.

Kid Three (*off*) 'Ey, Mother, I'm starvin' an' there's nothin' in. There never bloody well is.

Mrs Johnstone (*perfunctorily*) Don't swear, I've told y'.

Kid Four (*off*) Mum, I can't sleep, I'm hungry, I'm starvin' . . .

Kids (*off*) An' me, Mam. An' me. An' me.

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

I know it's hard on all you kids,

But try and get some sleep.

Next week I'll be earnin',

We'll have loads of things to eat,

We'll have ham, an' jam, an' spam an'

(*Speaking*) Roast Beef, Yorkshire Puddin', Battenberg Cake,

Chicken an' Chips, Corned Beef, Sausages, Treacle Tart,

Mince an' Spuds, Milk Shake for the Baby.

There is a chorus of groaning ecstasy from the Kids.

Mrs Johnstone (*picks up the tune again*)

When I bring home the dough,

We'll live like kings, like bright young things,

Like Marilyn Monroe.
And we'll go dancing . . .

Mrs Johnstone *hums a few bars of the song, and dances a few steps, as she makes her way to her place of work – Mrs Lyons's house. During the dance she acquires a brush, dusters and a mop bucket.*

Mrs Lyons's house, where Mrs Johnstone is working Mrs Lyons enters carrying a parcel.

Mrs Lyons Hello, Mrs Johnstone, how are you? Is the job working out all right for you?

Mrs Johnstone It's, erm, great. Thank you. It's such a lovely house it's a pleasure to clean it.

Mrs Lyons It's a pretty house, isn't it? It's a pity it's so big. I'm finding it rather large at present.

Mrs Johnstone Oh. Yeh. With Mr Lyons being away an' that? When does he come back, Mrs Lyons?

Mrs Lyons Oh, it seems such a long time. The Company sent him out there for nine months, so, what's that, he'll be back in about five months' time.

Mrs Johnstone Ah, you'll be glad when he's back, won't you? The house won't feel so empty then, will it?

Mrs Lyons *begins to unwrap her parcel.*

Mrs Lyons Actually, Mrs J, we bought such a large house for the – for the children – we thought children would come along.

Mrs Johnstone Well, y' might still be able to . . .

Mrs Lyons No, I'm afraid . . . We've been trying for such a long time now . . . I wanted to adopt but . . . Mr Lyons is . . . well, he says he wanted his own son, not someone else's. Myself, I believe that an adopted child can become one's own.

Mrs Johnstone Ah yeh . . . yeh. 'Ey, it's weird though, isn't it? Here's you can't have kids, an' me, I can't stop havin' them. Me husband used to say that all we had to do was shake hands

and I'd be in the club. He must have shook hands with me before he left. I'm havin' another one, y' know.


Mrs Lyons Oh, I see . . .

Mrs Johnstone Oh but look, look, it's all right, Mrs Lyons, I'll still be able to do me work. Havin' babies, it's like clockwork to me. I'm back on me feet an' workin' the next day, y' know. If I have this one at the weekend I won't even need to take one day off. I love this job, y' know. We can just manage to get by now —

She is stopped by Mrs Lyons putting the contents of the package, a pair of new shoes, on to the table.

Mrs Johnstone Jesus Christ, Mrs Lyons, what are y' trying to do?

Mrs Lyons My God, what's wrong?

Mrs Johnstone The shoes . . . the shoes . . . 

Mrs Lyons Pardon?

Mrs Johnstone New shoes on the table, take them off . . .

Mrs Lyons *does so.*

Mrs Johnstone (*relieved*) Oh God, Mrs Lyons, never put new shoes on a table . . . You never know what'll happen.

Mrs Lyons (*twiggling it; laughing*) Oh . . . you mean you're superstitious?

Mrs Johnstone No, but you never put new shoes on the table.

Mrs Lyons Oh, go on with you. Look, if it will make you any happier I'll put them away.

She exits with the shoes.

Music is heard as Mrs Johnstone warily approaches the table and the Narrator enters.

Narrator There's shoes upon the table an' a joker in the pack. The salt's been spilled and a looking glass cracked. There's one lone magpie overhead.

Mrs Johnstone I'm not superstitious.

Narrator The Mother said.

Mrs Johnstone I'm not superstitious.

Narrator The Mother said.

The Narrator exits to re-enter as a Gynaecologist.

Mrs Johnstone What are you doin' here? The milk bill's not due till Thursday.

Gynaecologist (*producing a listening funnel*) Actually I've given up the milk round and gone into medicine. I'm your gynaecologist. (*He begins to examine her.*) OK, Mummy, let's have a little listen to the baby's ticker, shall we?

Mrs Johnstone I was dead worried about havin' another baby, you know, Doctor. I didn't see how we were gonna manage with another mouth to feed. But now I've got me a little job we'll be OK. If I'm careful we can just scrape by, even with another mouth to feed.

The Gynaecologist completes his examination.

Gynaecologist Mouths, Mummy.

Mrs Johnstone What?

Gynaecologist Plural, Mrs Johnstone. Mouths to feed. You're expecting twins. Congratulations. And the next one please, Nurse.

The Gynaecologist exits.

Mrs Johnstone, *numbed by the news, moves back to her work, dusting the table upon which the shoes had been placed.*

Mrs Lyons *enters.*

Mrs Lyons Hello, Mrs J. How are you?

There is no reply.

(*Registering the silence.*) Mrs J? Anything wrong?

Mrs Johnstone I had it all worked out.

Mrs Lyons What's the matter?

Mrs Johnstone We were just getting straight.

Mrs Lyons Why don't you sit down.

Mrs Johnstone With one more baby we could have managed. But not with two. The welfare have already been on to me. They say I'm incapable of controllin' the kids I've already got. They say I should put some of them into care. But I won't. I love the bones of every one of them. I'll even love these two when they come along. But like they say at the welfare, kids can't live on love alone.

Mrs Lyons Twins? You're expecting twins?

The Narrator enters.

Narrator

How quickly an idea, planted, can
Take root and grow into a plan.
The thought conceived in this very room
Grew as surely as a seed, in a mother's womb.

The Narrator exits.

Mrs Lyons (*almost inaudibly*) Give one to me.

Mrs Johnstone What?

Mrs Lyons (*containing her excitement*) Give one of them to me.

Mrs Johnstone Give one to you?

Mrs Lyons Yes . . . yes.

Mrs Johnstone (*taking it almost as a joke*) But y' can't just . . .

Mrs Lyons When are you due?

Mrs Johnstone Erm, well, about . . . Oh, but Mrs . . .

Mrs Lyons Quickly, quickly, tell me . . . when are you due?

Mrs Johnstone July he said, the beginning of . . .

Mrs Lyons July . . . and my husband doesn't get back until the middle of July. He need never guess . . .

Mrs Johnstone (*amused*) Oh, it's mad . . .

Mrs Lyons I know, it is. It's mad . . . but it's wonderful, it's perfect. Look, look, you're what, four months pregnant, but you're only just beginning to show . . . so, so I'm four months pregnant and I'm only just beginning to show. (*She grabs a cushion and arranges it beneath her dress.*) Look, look. I could have got pregnant just before he went away. But I didn't tell him in case I miscarried, I didn't want to worry him whilst he was away. But when he arrives home I tell him we were wrong, the doctors were wrong. I have a baby, our baby. Mrs Johnstone, it will work, it will if only you'll . . .

Mrs Johnstone Oh, Mrs Lyons, you can't be serious.

Mrs Lyons You said yourself, you said you had too many children already.

Mrs Johnstone Yeh, but I don't know if I wanna give one away.

Mrs Lyons Already you're being threatened by the welfare people. Mrs Johnstone, with two more children how can you possibly avoid some of them being put into care? Surely, it's better to give one child to me. Look, at least if the child was with me you'd be able to see him every day, as you came to work.

She stares at Mrs Johnstone, willing her to agree.

Mrs Lyons Please, Mrs Johnstone. Please.

Mrs Johnstone Are y' . . . are y' that desperate to have a baby?

Mrs Lyons (*singing*)

Each day I look out from this window,
I see him with his friends, I hear him call,
I rush down but as I fold my arms around him,
He's gone. Was he ever there at all?
I've dreamed of all the places I would take him,
The games we'd play, the stories I would tell,

The jokes we'd share, the clothing I would make him,
I reach out. But as I do. He fades away.

The melody shifts into that of Mrs Johnstone who is looking at Mrs Lyons, feeling for her. Mrs Lyons gives her a half-smile and a shrug, perhaps slightly embarrassed at what she has revealed. Mrs Johnstone turns and looks at the room she is in. Looking up in awe at the comparative opulence and ease of the place. Tentatively and wondering she sings:

Mrs Johnstone

If my child was raised
In a palace like this one,
(He) wouldn't have to worry where
His next meal was comin' from.
His clothing would be (supplied by)
George Henry Lee.

Mrs Lyons *sees that Mrs Johnstone might be persuaded.*

Mrs Lyons *(singing)*

He'd have all his own toys
And a garden to play in.

Mrs Johnstone

He could make too much noise
Without the neighbours complainin'.

Mrs Lyons

Silver trays to take meals on.

Mrs Johnstone

A bike with *both* wheels on?

Mrs Lyons *nods enthusiastically.*

Mrs Lyons

And he'd sleep every night
In a bed of his own.

Mrs Johnstone

He wouldn't get into fights
He'd leave matches alone.
And you'd never find him

Effin' and blindin'.
And when he grew up
He could never be told
To stand and queue up
For hours on end at the dole
He'd grow up to be

Mrs Lyons and Mrs Johnstone (*together*)

A credit to me.

Mrs Johnstone

To you.

I would still be able to see him every day, wouldn't I?

Mrs Lyons Of course.

Mrs Johnstone An' . . . an' you would look after him, wouldn't y'?

Mrs Lyons (*singing*)

I'd keep him warm in the winter
And cool when it shines.
I'd pull out his splinters
Without making him cry.
I'd always be there
If his dream was a nightmare.
My child.
My child.

There is a pause before Mrs Johnstone nods. Mrs Lyons goes across and kisses her, hugs her. Mrs Johnstone is slightly embarrassed.

Mrs Lyons Oh. Now you must help me. There's so much . . . I'll have to . . . (*She takes out the cushion.*) We'll do this properly so that it's thoroughly convincing, and I'll need to see you walk, and baby clothes, I'll have to knit and buy bottles and suffer from piles.

Mrs Johnstone What?

Mrs Lyons Doesn't one get piles when one's pregnant? And buy a cot and . . . Oh, help me with this, Mrs J. Is it in the

right place? (*She puts the cushion back again.*) I want it to look right before I go shopping.

Mrs Johnstone (*helping her with the false pregnancy*) What you goin' the shops for? I do the shopping.

Mrs Lyons Oh no, from now on I do the shopping. I want everyone to know about my baby. (*She suddenly reaches for the Bible.*)

Music.

Mrs J, we must make this a, erm, a binding agreement.

Mrs Lyons shows the Bible to **Mrs Johnstone**, who is at first reluctant and then lays her hand on it.

The Narrator enters. A bass note, repeated as a heartbeat.

Narrator

In the name of Jesus, the thing was done,
Now there's no going back, for anyone.
It's too late now, for feeling torn
There's a pact been sealed, there's a deal been born.

Mrs Lyons puts the Bible away. **Mrs Johnstone** stands and stares as **Mrs Lyons**, grabs shopping bags and takes a last satisfied glance at herself in the mirror.

Mrs Johnstone Why . . . why did we have to do that?

Mrs Lyons Mrs J, nobody must ever know. Therefore we have to have an agreement.

Mrs Johnstone nods but is still uncomfortable.

Mrs Lyons Right, I shan't be long. Bye.

Mrs Lyons exits.

Mrs Johnstone stands alone, afraid.

The heartbeat grows in intensity.

Narrator

How swiftly those who've made a pact,
Can come to overlook the fact.

Or wish the reckoning to be delayed
But a debt is a debt, and must be paid.

*The **Narrator** exits.*

As the heartbeat reaches maximum volume it suddenly stops and is replaced by the sound of crying babies.

Two nurses appear, each carrying a bundle. A pram is wheeled on.

*The nurses hand the bundles to **Mrs Johnstone** who, smiling, places them into the pram. Making faces and noises at the babies she stops the crying. The babies settled, she sets off, wheeling the pram towards home.*

*Various debt collectors emerge from her house to confront **Mrs Johnstone**.*

Catalogue Man I'm sorry, love . . . the kids said you were at the hospital. (*He looks into the pram.*) Ah . . . they're lovely, aren't they? I'm sorry, love, especially at a time like this, but, you are twelve weeks behind in your payments. I've got to do this, girl . . .

Finance Man Y' shouldn't sign for the bloody stuff, missis. If y' know y' can't pay, y' shouldn't bloody well sign.

Catalogue Man Look, if y' could give me a couple of weeks' money on this I could leave it.

Mrs Johnstone *shakes her head.*

Finance Man Y' shouldn't have signed for all this stuff, should y'? Y' knew y' wouldn't be able to pay, didn't y'?

Mrs Johnstone (*almost to herself*) When I got me job, I thought I would be able to pay. When I went in the showroom I only meant to come out with a couple of things. But when you're standing there, it all looks so nice. When y' look in the catalogue an' there's six months to pay, it seems years away, an' y' need a few things so y' sign.

Finance Man Yeh, well, y' bloody well shouldn't.

Mrs Johnstone (*coming out of her trance; angrily*) I know I shouldn't, you soft get. I've spent all me bleedin' life knowin' I *shouldn't*. But I do. Now, take y' soddin' wireless and get off.

Catalogue Man Ah well, as long as y' can laugh about it, eh, that's the main thing, isn't it?

The Catalogue Man exits.

Mrs Johnstone (*not laughing*) Yeh.

Other creditors continue to enter the house and leave with goods.

Mrs Johnstone *watches the creditors. The babies begin to cry and she moves to the pram, rocking it gently as she sings, as if to the babies in the pram.*

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Only mine until
The time comes round
To pay the bill.
Then, I'm afraid,
What can't be paid
Must be returned.
You never, ever learn,
That nothing's yours,
On easy terms.

Only for a time,
I must not learn,
To call you mine.
Familiarise
That face, those eyes
Make future plans
That cannot be confirmed.
On borrowed time,
On easy terms.

Living on the never never,
Constant as the changing weather,
Never sure
Who's at the door
Or the price I'll have to pay.

Should we meet again
I will not recognise your name.
You can be sure
What's gone before
Will be concealed.
Your friends will never learn
That once we were
On easy terms.

Living on the never never,
Constant as the changing weather,
Never sure
Who's at the door
Or the price I'll have to pay . . .

Mrs Lyons *enters, still with the pregnancy padding*

Mrs Lyons They're born, you didn't notify me.

Mrs Johnstone Well, I . . . I just . . . it's . . . couldn't I keep them for a few more days, please, please, they're a pair, they go together.

Mrs Lyons My husband is due back tomorrow, Mrs Johnstone. I must have my baby. We made an agreement, a bargain. You swore on the Bible.

Mrs Johnstone You'd better . . . you'd better see which one you want.

Mrs Lyons I'll take . . .

Mrs Johnstone No. Don't tell me which one. Just take him, take him.

(*Singing*) Living on the never never,
Constant as the changing weather,
Never sure
Who's at the door
Or the price I'll have to pay,
Should we meet again . . .

Mrs Lyons *rapidly pulls out the padding from beneath her dress. Amongst it is a shawl which she uses to wrap around the baby before picking it up from the pram.*

Mrs Lyons Thank you, Mrs Johnstone, thank you. I'll see you next week.

Mrs Johnstone I'm due back tomorrow.

Mrs Lyons I know, but why don't . . . why don't you take the week off, on full pay of course.

Mrs Lyons *exits.*

Mrs Johnstone *turns and enters her house with the remaining twin in the pram.*

Kid One (*off*) What happened to the other twin, Mother?

Kid Two (*off*) Where's the other twinny, Mam?

Mrs Johnstone He's gone. He's gone up to heaven, love. He's living with Jesus and the angels.

Kid Three (*off*) What's it like there, Mam, in heaven?

Mrs Johnstone It's lovely, son, he'll be well looked after there. He'll have anything he wants.

Kid One (*off*) Will he have his own bike?

Mrs Johnstone Yeh. With both wheels on.

Kid One (*off*) Why can't I have a bike? Eh?

Mrs Johnstone I'll . . . I'll have a look in the catalogue next week. We'll see what the bikes are like in there.

Kids (*together, off*)

Mam, I want a Meccano set.

You said I could have a new dress, Mother.

Why can't I have an air pistol?

Let's look in the catalogue now, Mam.

It's great when we look in the catalogue, Mam.

Go on; let's all look in the catalogue.

Mrs Johnstone I've told y', when I get home, I've got to go to work.

Mr and Mrs Lyons *enter their house and we see them looking at the child in its cot.*

Mrs Johnstone *enters and immediately goes about her work.*

Mrs Johnstone *stops work for a moment and glances into the cot, beaming and cooing. Mr Lyons is next to her with Mrs Lyons in the background, obviously agitated at Mrs Johnstone's fussing.*

Mrs Johnstone Aw, he's really comin' on now, isn't he, Mr Lyons? I'll bet y' dead proud of him, aren't y', aren't y', eh?

Mr Lyons *(good-naturedly)* Yes . . . yes I am, aren't I, Edward? I'm proud of Jennifer, too.

Mr Lyons *beams at his wife who can hardly raise a smile.*

Mrs Johnstone Ah . . . he's lovely. *(She coos into the cot.)* Ah look, he wants to be picked up, I'll just . . .

Mrs Lyons No, no, Mrs Johnstone. He's fine. He doesn't want to be picked up.

Mrs Johnstone Ah, but look, he's gonna cry . . .

Mrs Lyons If he needs picking up, I shall pick him up. All right?

Mrs Johnstone Well, I just thought, I'm sorry, I . . .

Mrs Lyons Yes. Erm, has the bathroom been done? Time is getting on.

Mrs Johnstone Oh. Yeh, yeh . . .

She exits.

Mr Lyons Darling, don't be hard on the woman. She only wanted to hold the baby. All women like to hold babies, don't they?

Mrs Lyons I don't want her to hold the baby, Richard. She's . . . I don't want the baby to catch anything. Babies catch things very easily, Richard.

Mr Lyons All right, all right, you know best.

Mrs Lyons You don't see her as much as I do. She's always fussing over him; any opportunity and she's cooing and cuddling as if she were his mother. She's always bothering him, Richard, always. Since the baby arrived she ignores most of her work. (*She is about to cry.*)

Mr Lyons Come on, come on . . . It's all right, Jennifer. You're just a little . . . It's this depression thing that happens after a woman's had a . . .

Mrs Lyons I'm not depressed, Richard; it's just that she makes me feel . . . Richard, I think she should go.

Mr Lyons And what will you do for help in the house?

Mrs Lyons I'll find somebody else. I'll find somebody who doesn't spend all day fussing over the baby.

Mr Lyons (*glancing at his watch*) Oh well, I suppose you know best. The house is your domain. Look, Jen, I've got a board meeting. I really must dash.

Mrs Lyons Richard, can you let me have some cash?

Mr Lyons Of course.

Mrs Lyons I need about fifty pounds.

Mr Lyons My God, what for?

Mrs Lyons I've got lots of things to buy for the baby, I've got the nursery to sort out . . .

Mr Lyons All right, all right, here. (*He hands her the money.*)

He exits.

Mrs Lyons *considers what she is about to do, and then calls.*

Mrs Lyons Mrs Johnstone. Mrs Johnstone, would you come out here for a moment, please.

Mrs Johnstone *enters.*

Mrs Johnstone Yes?

Mrs Lyons Sit down. Richard and I have been talking it over and, well, the thing is, we both think it would be better if you left.

Mrs Johnstone Left where?

Mrs Lyons It's your work. Your work has deteriorated.

Mrs Johnstone But I work the way I've always worked.

Mrs Lyons Well, I'm sorry, we're not satisfied.

Mrs Johnstone What will I do? How are we gonna live without my job?

Mrs Lyons Yes, well, we've thought of that. Here, here's . . .
(*She pushes the money into Mrs Johnstone's hands.*) It's a lot of money . . . but, well . . .

Mrs Johnstone (*thinking, desperate; trying to get it together*) OK. All right. All right, Mrs Lyons, right. If I'm goin', I'm takin' my son with me, I'm takin' . . .

As Mrs Johnstone moves towards the cot Mrs Lyons roughly drags her out of the way.

Mrs Lyons Oh no, you're not. Edward is my son. Mine.

Mrs Johnstone I'll tell someone . . . I'll tell the police . . . I'll bring the police in an' . . .

Mrs Lyons No . . . no, you won't. You gave your baby away. Don't you realise what a crime that is? You'll be locked up. You sold your baby.

Mrs Johnstone, *horrified, sees the bundle of notes in her hand, and throws it across the room.*

Mrs Johnstone I didn't . . . You told me, you said I could see him every day. Well, I'll tell someone, I'm gonna tell . . .

Mrs Johnstone *starts to leave but Mrs Lyons stops her.*

Mrs Lyons No. You'll tell nobody.

Music.

*francis voca
express*

Because . . . because if you tell anyone . . . and these children learn of the truth, then you know what will happen, don't you? You do know what they say about twins, secretly parted, don't you?

Mrs Johnstone (*terrified*) What? What?

Mrs Lyons They . . . they say that if either twin learns that he once was a pair, they shall both immediately die. It means, Mrs Johnstone, that these brothers shall grow up unaware of the other's existence. They shall be raised apart and never, ever told what was once the truth. You won't tell anyone about this, Mrs Johnstone, because if you do, you will kill them.

Mrs Lyons *picks up the money and thrusts it into Mrs Johnstone's hands. Mrs Lyons turns and walks away. The Narrator enters.*

Narrator (*singing*)

Shoes upon the table
An' a spider's been killed.
Someone broke the lookin' glass.
A full moon shinin'
An' the salt's been spilled.
You're walkin' on the pavement cracks
Don't know what's gonna come to pass.

Now y' know the devil's got your number,
Y' know he's gonna find y',
Y' know he's right behind y',
He's starin' through your windows
He's creepin' down the hall.

Ain't no point in clutching
At your rosary
You're always gonna know what was done
Even when you shut your eyes you still see
That you sold a son
And you can't tell anyone.

But y' know the devil's got your number,
Y' know he's gonna find y',
Y' know he's right behind y',

He's starin' through your windows
He's creeping down the hall.

Yes, y' know the devil's got your number
He's gonna find y'
Y' know he's right behind y',
He's standin' on your step
And he's knocking at your door.
He's knocking at your door,
He's knocking at your door.

The Narrator exits.

During the song Mrs Johnstone has gone to her house and locked herself in.

Mickey *aged seven is knocking incessantly at the door. He is carrying a toy gun.*

Mrs Johnstone *(screaming, off)* Go away!

Mickey Mother . . . will y' open the bleedin' door or what?

Mrs Johnstone *(realising, with relief, off)* Mickey?

Mrs Johnstone *comes to open the door.*

Mickey Mam, Mam.

She grabs him and hugs him. He extricates himself.

Why was the door bolted? Did you think it was the rent man?

She laughs and looks at him.

Mam, our Sammy's robbed me other gun an' that was me best one. Why does he rob all me things off me?

Mrs Johnstone Because you're the youngest, Mickey. It used to happen to our Sammy when he was the youngest.

Mickey Mam, we're playin' mounted police an' Indians. I'm a Mountie. Mam, Mam, y' know this mornin', we've wiped out three thousand Indians.

Mrs Johnstone Good.

Mickey (*aiming the gun at her and firing*) Mam, Mam, you're dead.

Mrs Johnstone (*staring at him*) Hmm.

Mickey What's up, Mam?

Mrs Johnstone Nothin', son. Go on, you go out an' play, there's a good lad. But, 'ey, don't you go playin' with those hooligans down at the rough end.

Mickey (*on his way out*) We're down at the other end, near the big houses in the park.

Mrs Johnstone Mickey! Come here.

Mickey What?

Mrs Johnstone What did you say, where have you been playin'?

Mickey Mam, I'm sorry, I forgot.

Mrs Johnstone What have I told you about playin' up near there? Come here. (*She grabs him.*)

Mickey It wasn't my fault. Honest.

Mrs Johnstone So whose fault was it then?

Mickey The Indians. They rode up that way, they were tryin' to escape.

Mrs Johnstone Don't you ever go up there. Do you hear me?

Mickey Yeh. You let our Sammy go up there.

Mrs Johnstone Our Sammy's older than you.

Mickey But why –

Mrs Johnstone Just shut up. Never mind why. You don't go up near there. Now go on, get out an' play. But you stay outside the front door where I can see y'.

Mickey Ah but, Mam, the –

Mrs Johnstone Go on!

She exits.

Mickey makes his way outside. He is fed up. Desultory. Shoots down a few imaginary Indians but somehow the magic has gone out of genocide.

He sits, bored, looking at the ants on the pavement.

Mickey (reciting)

I wish I was our Sammy
Our Sammy's nearly ten.
He's got two worms and a catapult
An' he's built a underground den.
But I'm not allowed to go in there,
I have to stay near the gate,
Cos me mam says I'm only seven,
But I'm not, I'm nearly eight!

I sometimes hate our Sammy,
He robbed me toy car y' know,
Now the wheels are missin' an' the top's broke off,
An' the bleedin' thing won't go.
An' he said when he took it, it was just like that,
But it wasn't, it went dead straight,
But y' can't say nothin' when they think y' seven
An' y' not, y' nearly eight.

I wish I was our Sammy,
Y' wanna see him spit,
Straight in y' eye from twenty yards
An' every time a hit.
He's allowed to play with matches,
And he goes to bed dead late,
And I have to go at seven,
Even though I'm nearly eight.

Y' know our Sammy,
He draws nudey women,
Without arms, or legs, or even heads
In the baths, when he goes swimmin'.
But I'm not allowed to go to the baths,

Me mam says I have to wait,
Cos I might get drowned, cos I'm only seven,
But I'm not, I'm nearly eight.

Y' know our Sammy,
Y' know what he sometimes does?
He wees straight through the letter box
Of the house next door to us.
I tried to do it one night,
But I had to stand on a crate,
Cos I couldn't reach the letter box
But I will by the time I'm eight.

*Bored and petulant, **Mickey** sits and shoots an imaginary **Sammy**.*

Edward, also aged seven, appears. *He is bright and forthcoming.*

Edward Hello.

Mickey (*suspiciously*) Hello.

Edward I've seen you before.

Mickey Where?

Edward You were playing with some other boys near my house.

Mickey Do you live up in the park?

Edward Yes. Are you going to come and play up there again?

Mickey No. I would do but I'm not allowed.

Edward Why?

Mickey Cos me ~~mam~~ says.

social context (class)

Edward Well, my ~~mummy~~ doesn't allow me to play down here actually.

Mickey Gis a sweet.

Edward All right. (*He offers a bag from his pocket.*)

Mickey (*shocked*) What?

Edward Here.

Mickey (*trying to work out the catch; suspiciously taking one*) Can I have another one. For our Sammy?

Edward Yes, of course. Take as many as you want.

Mickey (*taking a handful*) Are you soft?

Edward I don't think so.

Mickey Round here if y' ask for a sweet, y' have to ask about, about twenty million times. An' y' know what?

Edward (*sitting beside Mickey*) What?

Mickey They still don't bleedin' give y' one. Sometimes our Sammy does but y' have to be dead careful if our Sammy gives y' a sweet.

Edward Why?

Mickey Cos, if our Sammy gives y' a sweet he's usually weed on it first.

Edward (*exploding in giggles*) Oh, that sounds like super fun.

Mickey It is. If y' our Sammy.

Edward Do you want to come and play?

Mickey I might do. But I'm not playin' now cos I'm pissed off.

Edward (*awed*) Pissed off. You say smashing things, don't you? Do you know any more words like that?

Mickey Yeh. Yeh, I know loads of words like that. Y' know, like the 'F' word.

Edward (*clueless*) Pardon?

Mickey The 'F' word.

Edward *is still pulled. Mickey looks round to check that he cannot be overheard, then whispers the word to Edward. The two of them immediately wriggle and giggle with glee.*

Edward What does it mean?

Mickey I don't know. It sounds good though, doesn't it?

Edward Fantastic. When I get home I'll look it up in the dictionary.

Mickey In the what?

Edward The dictionary. Don't you know what a dictionary is?

Shows how much older Eddie acts.

Mickey Course I do . . . It's a, it's a thingy, innit?

Edward A book which explains the meaning of words.

Mickey The meaning of words, yeh. Our Sammy'll be here soon. I hope he's in a good mood. He's dead mean sometimes.

Edward Why?

Mickey It's cos he's got a plate in his head.

Edward A plate. In his head?

Mickey Yeh. When he was little, me mam was at work an' our Donna Marie was supposed to be lookin' after him but he fell out the window an' broke his head. So they took him to the hospital an' put a plate in his head.

Edward A plate. A dinner plate?

Mickey I don't think so, cos our Sammy's head's not really that big. I think it must have been one of them little plates that you have bread off.

Edward A side plate?

Mickey No, it's on the top.

Edward And . . . and can you see the shape of it, in his head?

Mickey I suppose, I suppose if y' looked under his hair.

Edward *(after a reflective pause)* You know the most smashing things. Will you be my best friend?

Mickey Yeh. If y' want.

Edward What's your name?

Mickey Michael Johnstone. But everyone calls me Mickey. What's yours?

Edward Edward Lyons.

Mickey D' they call y' Eddie?

Edward No.

Mickey Well, I will.

Edward Will you?

Mickey Yeh. How old are y', Eddie?

Edward Seven.

Mickey I'm older than you. I'm nearly eight.

Edward Well, I'm nearly eight, really.

Mickey What's your birthday?

Edward July the eighteenth.

Mickey So is mine.

Edward Is it really?

Mickey 'Ey, we were born on the same day . . . that means we can be blood brothers. Do you wanna be my blood brother, Eddie?

Edward Yes, please.

Mickey (*producing a penknife*) It hurts y' know. (*He puts a nick in his hand.*) Now, give us yours.

He nicks Edward's hand, then they clamp hands together.

Mickey See, this means that we're blood brothers, an' that we always have to stand by each other. Now you say after me: 'I will always defend my brother.'

Edward I will always defend my brother . . .

Mickey And stand by him.

Edward And stand by him.

Mickey An' share all my sweets with him.

Edward And share . . .

Sammy *leaps in front of them, gun in hand, pointed at them.*

Mickey Hi-ya, Sammy.

Sammy Give us a sweet.

Mickey Haven't got any.

Edward Yes, you have . . .

Mickey *frantically shakes his head, trying to shut Edward up.*

Edward Yeh, I gave you one for Sammy, remember?

Sammy *laughs at Edward's voice and Mickey's misfortune.*

Sammy Y' little robbin' get.

Mickey No, I'm not. *(He hands over a sweet.)* An' anyway, you pinched my best gun.

Mickey *tries to snatch the gun from Sammy but Sammy is too fast.*

Sammy It's last anyway. It only fires caps. I'm gonna get a real gun soon, I'm gonna get an airgun.

He goes into a fantasy shoot-out. He doesn't notice Edward, who has approached him and is craning to get a close look at his head.

Sammy *(eventually noticing)* What are you lookin' at?

Edward Pardon?

Mickey That's Eddie. He lives up by the park.

Sammy He's a friggin' poshy.

Mickey No, he's not. He's my best friend.

Sammy *(snorting, deciding it's not worth the bother)* You're soft. Y' just soft little kids. *(In quiet disdain he moves away.)*

Mickey Where y' goin'?

Sammy (*looking at Mickey*) I'm gonna do another burial. Me worms have died again.

Mickey (*excitedly, to Edward*) Oh, y' comin' the funeral? Our Sammy is having a funeral. Can we come, Sammy?

Sammy *puts his hand into his pocket and brings forth a handful of soil.*

Sammy Look, they was alive an' wrigglin' this mornin'. But by dinner time they was dead.

Mickey and Edward *inspect the deceased worms in Sammy's hand.*

Mrs Johnstone *enters.*

Mrs Johnstone Mickey . . . Mickey . . .

Edward Is that your mummy?

Mickey Ma . . . Mam, this is my brother.

Mrs Johnstone (*stunned*) What?

Mickey My blood brother, Eddie.

Mrs Johnstone Eddie, Eddie who?

Edward Edward Lyons, Mrs Johnstone.

Mrs Johnstone *stands still, staring at him.*

Mickey Eddie's my best friend, Mam. He lives up by the park an' –

Mrs Johnstone Mickey . . . get in the house.

Mickey What?

Mrs Johnstone Sammy, you an' all. Both of y' get in.

Sammy But I'm older than him, I don't have to –

Mrs Johnstone I said get, the pair of y'.

Mickey (*going, almost in tears*) But I haven't done nothin'. I'll see y', Eddie. Ta ra, Eddie . . .

Mickey *exits.*

Mrs Johnstone Sammy!

Sammy Ah. (*To Edward.*) I'll get you.

Edward Have I done something wrong, Mrs Johnstone?

Mrs Johnstone Does your mother know that you're down here?

Edward *shakes his head.*

Mrs Johnstone An' what would she say if she did know?

Edward I . . . I think she'd be angry?

Mrs Johnstone So don't you think you better get home before she finds out?

Edward Yes.

Mrs Johnstone Go on, then.

Edward *turns to go, then stops.*

Edward Could I . . . would it be all right if I came to play with Mickey on another day? Or perhaps he could come to play at my house . . .

Mrs Johnstone Don't you ever come round here again. Ever.

Edward But . . .

Mrs Johnstone Ever! Now go on. Beat it, go home before the bogey man gets y'.

Edward *walks towards his home. As he goes Mrs Johnstone sings.*

Mrs Johnstone

Should we meet again,
I will not recognise your name,
You can be sure
What's gone before
Will be concealed.

Your friends will never learn
That once we were
On easy terms.

Mr and Mrs Lyons enter their house as **Edward** walks home.

Edward reaches his home and walks in. His mother hugs him and his father produces a toy gun for him. **Edward**, delighted, seizes it and 'shoots' his father, who spiritedly 'dies' to **Edward's** great amusement. **Edward** and his father romp on the floor. **Mrs Lyons** settles herself in an armchair with a storybook, calling **Edward** over to her. **Edward** goes and sits with her, **Mr Lyons** joining them and sitting on the arm of the chair.

Mrs Johnstone turns and goes into her house at the end of the song.

Mr Lyons gets up and walks towards the door.

Edward Daddy . . . we haven't finished the story yet.

Mr Lyons Mummy will read the story, Edward. I've got to go to work for an hour.

Mrs Lyons gets up and goes to her husband, **Edward** goes to the bookshelf and leafs through a dictionary.

Mrs Lyons Richard, you didn't say . . .

Mr Lyons Darling, I'm sorry, but if, if we complete this merger I will, I promise you, have more time. That's why we're doing it, Jen. If we complete this, the firm will run itself and I'll have plenty of time to spend with you both.

Mrs Lyons I just - it's not me, it's Edward. You should spend more time with him. I don't want - I don't want him growing away from you.

Edward Daddy, how do you spell bogey man?

Mr Lyons Ask Mummy. Darling, I'll see you later now. Must dash.

He exits.

Edward Mummy, how do you spell bogey man?

Mrs Lyons Mm?

Edward Bogey man?

Mrs Lyons (*laughing*) Edward, wherever did you hear such a thing?

Edward I'm trying to look it up.

Mrs Lyons There's no such thing as a bogey man. It's a — a superstition. The sort of thing a silly mother might say to her children — 'The bogey man will get you.'

Edward Will he get me?

Mrs Lyons Edward, I've told you, there's no such thing.

A doorbell is heard.

Mrs Lyons *goes to answer the door.*

Mickey (*off*) Does Eddie live here'?

Mrs Lyons (*off*) Pardon?

Mickey (*off*) Does he? Is he comin' out to play, eh?

Edward (*shouting*) Mickey!

Mickey enters, pursued by Mrs Lyons.

Mickey Hi-ya, Eddie. I've got our Sammy's catapult. Y' comin' out?

Edward Oh! (*He takes the catapult and tries a practice shot.*) Isn't Mickey fantastic, Mum?

Mrs Lyons Do you go to the same school as Edward?

Mickey No.

Edward Mickey says smashing things. We're blood brothers, aren't we, Mickey?

Mickey Yeh. We were born on the same day.

Edward Come on, Mickey, let's go . . .

Mrs Lyons Edward . . . Edward, it's time for bed.

Edward Mummy. It's not.

Mrs Lyons *takes over and ushers Mickey out.*

Mrs Lyons I'm very sorry, but it's Edward's bedtime.

Edward Mummy. Mummy, it's early.

Mrs Lyons *exits with Mickey to show him out, then she returns.*

Edward Mummy!

Mrs Lyons Edward. Edward, where did you meet that boy?

Edward At his house.

Mrs Lyons And . . . and his second name is Johnstone, isn't it?

Edward Yes. And I think you're very, very mean.

Mrs Lyons I've told you never to go where that boy – where boys like that live.

Edward But why?

Mrs Lyons Because, because you're not the same as him. You're not, do you understand?

Edward No, I don't understand. And I hate you!

Mrs Lyons *(almost crying)* Edward, Edward, don't. It's . . . what I'm doing is only for your own good. It's only because I love you, Edward.

Edward You don't, you don't. If you loved me you'd let me go out with Mickey because he's my best friend. I like him more than you.

Mrs Lyons Edward. Edward, don't say that. Don't ever say that.

Edward Well. Well, it's true. And I will say it. I know what you are.

Mrs Lyons What? What!

Edward You're . . . you're a fuckoff!

Mrs Lyons hits **Edward** hard and instinctively.

Mrs Lyons You see, you see why I don't want you mixing with boys like that! You learn filth from them and behave like this – like a, like a horrible little boy, like them. But you are not like them. You are my son, mine, and you won't, you won't ever . . .

*She notices the terror in **Edward**'s face and realises how heavy she has been. Gently she pulls him to her and cradles him.*

Mrs Lyons Oh, my son . . . my beautiful, beautiful son.

The scene fades as the next scene begins. We hear cap guns and the sound of children making Indian whoops.

The children rush on into the street playing cowboys and Indians; cops and robbers; goodies and baddies, etc.

*During the battle **Mrs Lyons** exits.*

Edward remains onstage, in the background, as though in his garden, watching, unnoticed by the battling children.

Mickey and **Linda** are in one gang, **Sammy** in another.

Sammy (singing a cappella, kids' rhyme)

I got y'
I shot y'
An' y bloody know I did
I got y'
I shot y'

Linda I stopped it with the bin lid.

There is a mass of derisive jeers from the other side. Music.

(Singing) But you know that if you cross your fingers
And if you count from one to ten
You can get up off the ground again
It doesn't matter
The whole thing's just a game.

↳ childishness –
How they still act
like
children

*The shooting starts all over again. A **Kid** raps on the door of a house.*

Linda, as a 'Moll' appears.

Kid

My name is Eliot Ness,
And, lady, here's my card,
I'm lookin' for one Al Capone

(*To Lackeys.*)

Mac, check the back
Sarge, you check the yard!

Linda

But, pal, I've told y'
Al ain't home.

We see 'Al' make a break for it. 'Ness' shoots him like he was eating his breakfast.

Kid So, lady, can I use your telephone?

As Ness goes to the phone and orders a hearse we see Al get up and sing the chorus with the other children.

All

But you know that if you cross your fingers,
And if you count from one to ten,
You can get up off the ground again,
It doesn't matter
The whole thing's just a game.

The Kid who was playing Al becomes a cowboy. He turns to face Sammy and sings.

Kid

When I say draw,
You'd better grab that gun,
An' maybe say a little prayer
Cos I'm the fastest draw
That man you ever saw.
Call up your woman, say goodbye to her,
Cos y' know you're goin' right down there.

As he draws his gun on Sammy, Sammy produces a bazooka and blows him off the stage.

All

But you know that if you cross your fingers,
And if you count from one to ten,
You can get up off the ground again,
It doesn't matter
The whole thing's just a game.

A small group of children become a brigade of US troops.

Sergeant

OK, men, let's get them
With a hand grenade.

Corporal Let's see them try and get outta this.

Rest

He's a hotshot Sergeant
From the Ninth Brigade
He's never been known to miss.

Sergeant (to grenade) C'mon, give Daddy a kiss. (*He pulls the pin and lobs it.*)

His brigade cover their ears and crouch down. Linda catches the grenade and lobs it back at them. After being blown to pieces they get up singing the chorus, along with the 'enemy'.

All

But you know that if you cross your fingers,
And if you count from one to ten.
You can get up off the ground again,
It doesn't matter,
The whole thing's just a game.

Sammy comes forward as 'Professor Howe' carrying a condom filled with water.

Sammy

My name's Professor Howe,
An' zeas bomb I 'old,
Eet can destroy ze 'emisphere,
I've primed it, I've timed it

To explode,
Unless you let me out of here (NO?)

They don't.

Then I suggest you cover your ears.

There is an explosion which tops them all. Out of it come all the children singing the chorus.

All

But you know that if you cross your fingers,
And if you count from one to ten,
You can get up off the ground again,
It doesn't matter,
The whole thing's just a game
The whole thing's just a game
The whole thing's just a . . .

Sammy (*interrupting; chanting*)

You're dead
Y' know y' are
I got y' standin'
Near that car.

Linda

But when y' did
His hand was hid
Behind his back
His fingers crossed
An' so he's not.

Mickey So you fuck off!

*All the children, apart from **Mickey** and **Linda**, point and chant the accusing 'Aah!' **Mickey** is singled out, accused. The rest, led by **Sammy**, suddenly chant at **Mickey** and point.*

All (*chanting*)

You said the 'F' word
You're gonna die
You'll go to hell an' there you'll fry

Just like a fish in a chip shop fat
Only twenty-five million times hotter than that!

They all laugh at Mickey.

Linda *moves in to protect Mickey who is visibly shaken.*

Linda Well, well, all youse lot swear, so you'll all go to hell with him.

Sammy No, we won't, Linda.

Linda Why?

Sammy Cos when we swear . . . we cross our fingers!

Mickey Well, my fingers were crossed.

Children (*variously*) No they weren't. / Liar! / Come off it. / I seen them.

Linda Leave him alone!

Sammy Why? What'll you do about it if we don't?

Linda (*undaunted; approaching Sammy*) I'll tell my mother why all her ciggies always disappear when you're in our house.

Sammy What?

Linda An' the half-crowns.

Sammy (*suddenly*) Come on, gang, let's go. We don't wanna play with these anyway. They're just kids.

The other children fire a barrage of 'shots' at Mickey and Linda before they rush off.

Linda I hate them!

She notices Mickey quietly crying.

Linda What's up?

Mickey I don't wanna die.

Linda But y' have to, Mickey. Everyone does. (*She starts to dry his tears.*) Like your twinny died, didn't he, when he was a baby.

See, look on the bright side of it, Mickey. When you die you'll meet your twinny again, won't y'?

Mickey Yeh.

Linda An' listen, Mickey, if y' dead, there's no school, is there?

Mickey (*smiling*) An' I don't care about our Sammy, anyway. Look. (*He produces an air pistol.*) He thinks no one knows he's got it. But I know where he hides it.

Linda (*impressed*) Ooh . . . gis a go.

Mickey No . . . Come on, let's go get Eddie first.

Linda Who?

Mickey Come on, I'll show y'.

They go as if to Edward's garden.

Mickey (*loud but conspiratorially*) Eddie . . . Eddie . . . comin' out?

Edward I . . . My mum says I haven't got to play with you.

Mickey Well, my mum says I haven't got to play with you. But take no notice of mothers. They're soft. Come on, I've got Linda with me. She's a girl but she's all right.

Edward *decides to risk it and creeps out.*

Mickey Hi-ya.

Edward Hi-ya, Mickey. Hello, Linda.

Linda Hi-ya, Eddie. (*She produces the air pistol.*) Look . . . we've got Sammy's airgun.

Mickey Come on, Eddie. You can have a shot at our target in the park.

Linda Peter Pan.

Mickey We always shoot at that, don't we, Linda?

Linda Yeh, we try an' shoot his little thingy off, don't we, Mickey?

They all laugh.

Come on, gang, let's go.

Edward (*standing firm*) But Mickey . . . I mean . . . suppose we get . . . caught . . . by a policeman.

Mickey Aah . . . take no notice. We've been caught loads of times by a policeman . . . haven't we, Linda?

Linda Oh, my God, yeh. Hundreds of times. More than that.

Mickey We say dead funny things to them, don't we, Linda?

Edward What sort of funny things?

Linda All sorts, don't we, Mickey?

Mickey Yeh . . . like, y' know, when they ask what y' name is, we say things like, like 'Adolf Hitler', don't we, Linda?

Linda Yeh, an' hey, Eddie, y' know when they say, 'What d' y' think you're doin'?' we always say somethin' like, like, 'Waitin' for the ninety-two bus.'

Mickey and Linda *crease up with laughter.*

Linda Come on.

Edward (*greatly impressed*) Do you . . . do you really? Goodness, that's fantastic.

Mickey Come on, bunk under y' fence, y' ma won't see y'.

Mickey, Linda and Edward *exit.*

Mrs Lyons *enters the garden.*

Mrs Lyons (*calling*) Edward, Edward, Edward . . .

The Narrator enters

Music.

Narrator (*singing*)

There's gypsies in the wood,
An' they've been watchin' you,
They're gonna take your baby away.
There's gypsies in the wood,
An' they've been calling you,
Can Edward please come out and play,
Please can he come with us and play.

You know the devil's got your number,
Y' know he's gonna find y',
Y' know he's right behind y',
He's staring through your windows,
He's creeping down the hall.

Mr Lyons *enters the garden.*

Mrs Lyons Oh Richard, Richard.

Mr Lyons For God's sake, Jennifer, I told you on the phone, he'll just be out playing somewhere.

Mrs Lyons But where?

Mr Lyons Outside somewhere, with friends. Edward . . .

Mrs Lyons But I don't want him out playing.

Mr Lyons Jennifer, he's not a baby.

Mrs Lyons I don't care, I don't care . . .

Mr Lyons For Christ's sake, you bring me home from work in the middle of the day, just to say you haven't seen him for an hour. Perhaps we should be talking about you getting something for your nerves.

Mrs Lyons There's nothing wrong with my nerves. It's just . . . just this place . . . I hate it. Richard, I don't want to stay here any more. I want to move.

Mr Lyons Jennifer! Jennifer, how many times . . . the factory is here, my work is here . . .

Mrs Lyons It doesn't have to be somewhere far away. But we have got to move, Richard. Because if we stay here I feel that something terrible will happen, something bad.

Mr Lyons *sighs and puts his arm round Mrs Lyons.*

Mr Lyons Look, Jen. What is this thing you keep talking about getting away from? Mm?

Mrs Lyons It's just . . . it's these people . . . these people that Edward has started mixing with. Can't you see how he's drawn to them? They're . . . drawing him away from me.

Mr Lyons, *in despair, turns away from her.*

Mr Lyons Oh Christ.

He turns to look at her but she looks away. He sighs and absently bends to pick up a pair of children's shoes from the floor.

I really do think you should see a doctor.

Mrs Lyons (*snapping*) I don't need to see a doctor. I just need to move away from this neighbourhood, because I'm frightened. I'm frightened for Edward.

Mr Lyons *places the shoes on the table before turning on her.*

Mr Lyons Frightened of what, woman?

Mrs Lyons (*wheeling to face him*) Frightened of . . . (*She is stopped by the sight of the shoes on the table. She rushes at the table and sweeps the shoes off.*)

Narrator (*singing*)

There's shoes upon the table
An' a spider's been killed
Someone broke the lookin' glass
There's a full moon shinin'
An' the salt's been spilled
You're walkin' on pavement cracks
Don't know what's gonna come to pass.

Now you know the devil's got your number
He's gonna find y'

Y' know he's right behind y'
He's starin' through your windows
He's creeping down the hall.

The song ends with a percussion build to a sudden full stop and the scene snaps from Mrs Lyons to the children.

Mickey, Eddie and Linda are standing in line, taking it in turns to fire the air pistol. **Mickey** takes aim and fires.

Linda (with glee) Missed.

Edward loads and fires.

Linda Missed!

Linda takes the gun and fires. We hear a metallic ping. She beams a satisfied smile at **Mickey** who ignores it and reloads, fires. The routine is repeated with exactly the same outcome until:

Mickey (taking the gun) We're not playin' with the gun no more. (He puts it away.)

Linda Ah, why?

Mickey It gets broke if y' use it too much.

Edward What are we going to do now, Mickey?

Mickey I dunno.

Linda I do.

Mickey What?

Linda Let's throw some stones through them windows.

Mickey (brightening) Ooh, I dare y', Linda, I dare y'.

Linda (bending for a stone) Well, I will. I'm not scared, either. Are you, Eddie?

Edward Erm . . . well . . . erm . . .

Linda He is, look. Eddie's scared.

Mickey No, he isn't! Are y', Eddie?

Edward (*stoically*) No . . . I'm not. I'm not scared at all, actually.

Linda Right, when I count to three we all throw together. One, two, three . . .

Unseen by them a Policeman has approached behind them.

Policeman Me mother caught a flea, she put it in the tea pot to make a cup of tea . . . And what do you think you're doing?

Linda and Mickey shoot terrified glances at **Edward**, almost wetting themselves.

Edward (*mistaking their look for encouragement*) Waiting for the ninety-two bus. (*He explodes with excited laughter.*)

Linda He's not with us.

Mickey Sir.

Linda Sir.

Policeman No. He's definitely with us. What's your name, son?

Edward Adolf Hitler.

Edward laughs until through the laughter he senses that all is not well. He sees that he alone is laughing. The laughter turns to tears which sets the other two off.

The three children turn round, crying, bawling, followed by the
Policeman.

The three children exit. Mrs Johnstone enters.

The Policeman goes to confront Mrs Johnstone.

Policeman And he was about to commit a serious crime, love. Now, do you understand that? You don't wanna end up in court again, do y'?

Mrs Johnstone shakes her head.

↓
Mickey is
'fully to blame'

Policeman Well, that's what's gonna happen if I have any more trouble from one of yours. I warned you last time, didn't I, Mrs Johnstone, about your Sammy?

Mrs Johnstone *nods.*

Policeman Well, there'll be no more bloody warnings from now on. Either you keep them in order, missis, or it'll be the courts for you, or worse, won't it?

Mrs Johnstone *nods.*

Policeman Yes, it will.

As the Policeman turns and goes towards the Lyons house music is heard.

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Maybe some day
We'll move away
And start all over again
In some new place
Where they don't know my face
And nobody's heard of my name
Where we can begin again
Feel we can win an' then . . .
Maybe . . .

The music tails off as we see the Policeman confronting Mr Lyons. The Policeman has removed his helmet and holds a glass of Scotch. Edward is there.

Policeman An', er, as I say, it was more of a prank, really, Mr Lyons. I'd just dock his pocket money if I was you. (*Laughs.*) But, one thing I would say, if y' don't mind me sayin', is, well, I'm not sure I'd let him mix with the likes of them in the future. Make sure he keeps with his own kind, Mr Lyons. Well, er, thanks for the drink, sir. All the best now. He's a good lad, aren't you, Adolf? Goodnight, sir. (*He replaces his helmet.*)

The Policeman leaves.

Mr Lyons Edward . . . how would you like to move to another house?

Eddie was
only having a joke!

Edward Why, Daddy?

Mr Lyons Erm, well, various reasons really. Erm, actually Mummy's not been too well lately and we thought a move, perhaps further out towards the country somewhere, might . . . Do you think you'd like that?

Edward I want to stay here.

Mr Lyons Well, you think about it, old chap.

Edward *leaves his home and goes to the Johnstones' door. He knocks at the door.*

Mrs Johnstone *answers the door.*

Edward Hello, Mrs Johnstone. How are you?

Mrs Johnstone You what?

Edward I'm sorry. Is there something wrong?

Mrs Johnstone No, I just . . . I don't usually have kids enquiring about my health. I'm . . . I'm all right. An' how are you, Master Lyons?

Edward Very well, thank you.

Mrs Johnstone *looks at Edward for a moment.*

Mrs Johnstone Yeh. You look it. Y' look very well. Does your mother look after you?

Edward Of course.

Mrs Johnstone Now listen, Eddie, I told you not to come around here again.

Edward I'm sorry, but I just wanted to see Mickey.

Mrs Johnstone No. It's best . . . if . . .

Edward I won't be coming here again. Ever. We're moving away. To the country.

Mrs Johnstone Lucky you.

Edward But I'd much rather live here.

Mrs Johnstone Would you? When are y' goin'?

Edward Tomorrow.

Mrs Johnstone Oh. So we really won't see you again, eh . . .

Edward *shakes his head and begins to cry.*

Mrs Johnstone What's up?

Edward *(through his tears)* I don't want to go. I want to stay here where my friends are . . . where Mickey is.

Mrs Johnstone Come here.

She takes him. Cradles him, letting him cry.

No, listen . . . listen, don't you be soft. You'll probably love it in your new house. You'll meet lots of new friends an' in no time at all you'll forget Mickey ever existed.

Edward I won't . . . I won't. I'll never forget.

Mrs Johnstone Shush, shush. Listen, listen, Eddie, here's you wantin' to stay here, an' here's me, I've been tryin' to get out for years. We're a right pair, aren't we, you an' me?

Edward Why don't you, Mrs Johnstone? Why don't you buy a new house near us?

Mrs Johnstone Just like that?

Edward Yes, yes.

Mrs Johnstone 'Ey.

Edward Yes.

Mrs Johnstone Would you like a picture of Mickey, to take with you? So's you could remember him?

Edward Yes, please.

She removes a locket from around her neck.

Mrs Johnstone See, look . . . there's Mickey, there. He was just a young kid when that was taken.

Edward And is that you, Mrs Johnstone?

She nods.

Can I really have this?

Mrs Johnstone Yeh. But keep it a secret, eh, Eddie? Just our secret, between you an' me.

Edward (*smiling*) All right, Mrs Johnstone. (*He puts the locket round his neck*)

He looks at her a moment too long

Mrs Johnstone What y' lookin' at?

Edward I thought you didn't like me. I thought you weren't very nice. But I think you're smashing.

Mrs Johnstone (*looking at him*) God help the girls when you start dancing.

Edward Pardon?

Mrs Johnstone Nothing. (*Calling into the house.*) Mickey, say goodbye to Eddie – he's moving.

Mickey *comes out of the house. Music is quietly introduced.*

Edward *moves to Mickey and gives him a small parcel from his pocket. Mickey unwraps a toy gun. The two boys clasp hands and wave goodbye. Mrs Johnstone and Mickey watch as Edward joins his parents, dressed in outdoor clothes, on their side of the stage.*

Edward Goodbye.

Mr Lyons Well, Edward . . . do you like it here?

Edward (*unenthusiastically*) It's very nice.

Mrs Lyons Oh, look, Edward . . . look at those trees and those cows. Oh Edward, you're going to like it so much out here, aren't you?

Edward Yes. Are you feeling better now, Mummy?

Mrs Lyons Much better now, darling. Oh Edward, look, look at those birds . . . Look at that lovely black-and-white one . . .

Edward (*immediately covering his eyes*) Don't Mummy, don't look. It's a magpie, never look at one magpie. It's one for sorrow . . .

Mr Lyons Edward . . . that's just stupid superstition.

Edward It's not, Mickey told me.

Mrs Lyons Edward, I think we can forget the silly things that Mickey said.

Edward I'm going inside. I want to read.

He exits.

Mr Lyons (*comforting his wife*) Children take time to adapt to new surroundings. He'll be as right as rain in a few days. He won't even remember he once lived somewhere else.

Mrs Lyons *forces a smile and allows herself to be led inside by her husband.*

Mickey *rings the doorbell of Edward's old house. A Woman answers the door.*

Woman Yes?

Mickey Is er . . . is Eddie in?

Woman Eddie? I'm afraid Eddie doesn't live here now.

Mickey Oh, yeh. (*He stands looking at the Woman.*)

Woman Goodbye.

Mickey Do y' . . . erm, do y' know where he lives now?

Woman Pardon?

Mickey See, I've got some money, I was gonna go, on the bus, an' see him. Where does he live now?

Woman I'm afraid I've no idea.

Mickey It's somewhere in the country, isn't it?

Woman Look, I honestly don't know and I'm rather busy. Goodbye.

The Woman closes the door on Mickey.

Mickey wanders away, aimless and bored, deserted and alone.

Music.

Mickey (*singing*)

No kids out on the street today,
You could be living on the moon.
Maybe everybody's packed their bags and moved away,
Gonna be a long, long, long,
Sunday afternoon.

Just killing time and kicking cans around,
Try to remember jokes I knew,
I tell them to myself, but they're not funny since I found
It's gonna be a long, long, long,
Sunday afternoon.

Edward in his garden, equally bored and alone. *The scene appears in such a way that we don't know if it is real or in Mickey's mind.*

Mickey

My best friend
Always had sweets to share, (he)
Knew every word in the dictionary.
He was clean, neat and tidy,
From Monday to Friday,
I wish that I could be like,
Wear clean clothes, talk properly like,
Do sums and history like –

Edward and Mickey (*together*)

My friend.

Edward

My best friend
He could swear like a soldier
You would laugh till you died
At the stories he told y'
He was untidy
From Monday to Friday
I wish that I could be like

Kick a ball and climb a tree like
Run around with dirty knees like

Edward and Mickey (*together*)

My friend.

The lights fade on Edward as the music shifts back to 'Long Sunday Afternoon'.

Mickey

Feels like everybody stayed in bed
Or maybe I woke up too soon.
Am I the last survivor
Is everybody dead?
On this long, long, long,
Sunday afternoon.

Mrs Johnstone *appears, clutching a letter.*

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Oh, bright new day,
We're movin' away.

Mickey (*speaking*) Mam? What's up?

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

We're startin' all over again.

Donna Marie *enters together with various Neighbours.*

Donna Marie (*speaking*) Is it a summons, Mother?

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Oh, bright new day,
We're goin' away.

Mickey (*calling*) Sammy!

Mrs Johnstone *addresses the various onlookers.*

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Where nobody's heard of our name.

Sammy *enters.*

Sammy (*speaking*) I've never robbed nothin', honest, Mam.

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Where we can begin again.
 Feel we can win and then
 Live just like livin' should be
 Got a new situation,
 A new destination,
 And no reputation following me.

Mickey (*speaking*) What is it, what is it?

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

We're goin' out,
 We're movin' house
 We're starting all over again.
 We're leavin' this mess
 For our new address (*pointing it out*)
 'Sixty-five Skelmersdale Lane'.

Mickey (*speaking, worried*) Where's that, Mam?

Sammy (*speaking*) Is that in the country?

Donna Marie (*speaking*) What's it like there?

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

The air is so pure,
 You get drunk just by breathing,
 And the washing stays clean on the line.
 Where there's space for the kids,
 Cos the garden's so big,
 It would take you a week just to reach the far side.

(*Speaking*) Come on, Sammy, Mickey, now you've all gorra help.
 (*To the Neighbours, in a 'posh' voice.*) Erm, would you excuse
 us, we've gorra pack. We're movin' away.

Mrs Johnstone and the children go in to pack.

Neighbour What did she say?

Milkman They're movin' away.

All Praise the Lord, He has delivered us at last.

Neighbour

They're gettin' out,
They're movin' house,
Life won't be the same as in the past.

Policeman

I can safely predict
A sharp drop in the crime rate.

Neighbour

It'll be calm an' peaceful around here.

Milkman

AND now I might even
Get paid what is mine, mate.

Neighbour An' you'll see, graffiti will soon disappear.

Mrs Johnstone *marches out of the house carrying battered suitcases, followed by the children who are struggling to get out some of the items mentioned in the verse.*

Mrs Johnstone

Just pack up the bags,
We're leavin' the rags,
The wobbly wardrobe, chest of drawers that never close.
The two-legged chair, the carpet so bare,
You wouldn't see it if it wasn't for the holes.
Now that we're movin'
Now that we're improvin',
Let's just wash our hands of this lot.
For it's no longer fitting, for me to be sitting
On a sofa I know for a fact was knocked off.

Her last line is delivered to Sammy who indicates the Policeman, trying to get her to shut up.

Mrs Johnstone

We might get a car,
Be all 'lardie dah',
An' go drivin' out to the sands.
At the weekend
A gentleman friend,

Might take me dancing
 To the local bands.
 We'll have a front room,
 And then if it should happen,
 That His Holiness flies in from Rome,
 He can sit there with me, eating toast, drinking tea
 In the sort of surroundings that remind him of home.

Mickey (*speaking*) It's like the country, isn't it, Mam?

Mrs Johnstone (*speaking*) 'Ey, we'll be all right out here,
 son, away from the muck an' the dirt an' the bloody trouble.
 Eh, I could dance. Come here.

Mickey Get off . . .

Mrs Johnstone *picks up a picture of the Pope which is lying next to one of the suitcases and begins to dance.*

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Oh, bright new day,
 We're movin' away,
 We're startin' all over again.
 Oh, bright new day,
 We're goin' away,
 Where nobody's heard of our name.

(*Speaking*) An' what are you laughin' at?

Mickey I'm not laughin', I'm smilin'. I haven't seen you
 happy like this for ages.

Mrs Johnstone Well, I am happy now. Eh, Jesus, where's
 the others?

Mickey They went into that field, Mam.

Mrs Johnstone Sammy. Sammy! Get off that bleedin' cow
 before I kill you. Oh Jesus, what's our Donna Marie stepped
 into? Sammy, that cow's a bull. Come here the pair of you.

Now we can begin again,
 Feel we can win an' then
 Live just like livin' should be.

58 Blood Brothers

Got a new situation,
A new destination,
An' no reputation following me.

All

We're gettin' out. We're movin' house
We're goin' away. Gettin' out today.
We're movin' movin' movin' house.

Mrs Johnstone

We're goin' away,
Oh, bright new day.

Curtain.

Act Two

Mrs Johnstone *moves forward to sing*

Mrs Johnstone

The house we got was lovely,
The neighbours are a treat,
They sometimes fight on Saturday night,
But never in the week.

Mrs Johnstone *turns and looks 'next door'. Raised voices, and a dog barking, are heard, off.*

Neighbours (*off, speaking*) What time do you call this then?
Time I got shot of you, ratbag!

Dog *barks.*

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

Since I pay me bills on time, the milkman
Insists I call him Joe. He brings me bread and eggs.

Joe, *the milkman, enters.*

Mrs Johnstone

Says I've got legs
Like Marilyn Monroe.

Mrs Johnstone and Joe *dance.*

Mrs Johnstone

Sometimes he takes me dancing
Even takes me dancing.

Joe *exits, dancing*

Mrs Johnstone

I know our Sammy burnt the school down
But it's very easily done.
If the teacher lets the silly gets
Play with magnesium.
Thank God he only got probation.

A Judge is seen, ticking Sammy off.

Mrs Johnstone

The Judge was old and slow.

She sings to the Judge, laying on a smile for him.

Mrs Johnstone

Though it was kind of him,

Said I reminded him of Marilyn Monroe.

Judge (*slightly scandalised*)

And could I take you dancing?

Take you dancing.

Mrs Johnstone takes the **Judge's** gavel and bangs him on the head.

The Judge exits, stunned.

Mrs Johnstone

Our Mickey's just turned fourteen

Y'know he's at *that* age.

Mickey is seen in his room.

Mrs Johnstone

When you mention girls, or courting,

He flies into a rage.

Mickey (*speaking*) Shut up talking about me, Mother.

Mrs Johnstone

He's got a thing for taking blackheads out,

And he thinks that I don't know,

That he dreams all night of girls who look like

Marilyn Monroe.

He's even started dancing, secret dancing,

(*Slower*) And as for the rest, they've flown the nest

Got married or moved away

Our Donna Marie's already got three, she's

A bit like me that way . . .

(*Slower*) And that other child of mine,

I haven't seen for years, although

Each day I pray he'll be OK,
Not like Marilyn Monroe . . .

On the other side of the stage Mrs Lyons enters, waltzing with a very awkward fourteen-year-old Edward.

Mrs Lyons (*speaking*) One, two, three. One, two three.

(*Singing*) Yes, that's right, you're dancing.
That's right, you're dancing.

(*Speaking*) You see, Edward, it is easy.

Edward It is if you have someone to practise with. Girls. But in term time we hardly ever see a girl, let alone dance with one.

Mrs Lyons I'll give you some more lessons when you're home for half-term. Now come on, come on, you're going to be late. Daddy's at the door with the car. Now, are you sure you've got all your bags?

Edward Yes, they're in the boot.

Mrs Lyons (*looking at him*) I'll see you at half-term then, darling. (*She kisses him, a light kiss, but holds on to him.*) Look after yourself, my love.

Edward Oh Mummy . . . stop fussing . . . I'm going to be late.

Mrs Lyons We have had a very good time this holiday, though, haven't we?

Edward We always do.

Mrs Lyons Yes. We're safe here, aren't we?

Edward Mummy, what are you on about? Sometimes . . .

A car horn is heard.

Mrs Lyons (*hustling him out, good-naturedly*) Go on, go on . . . There's Daddy getting impatient. Bye, bye, Edward.

Edward Bye, Ma.

He exits.

We see Mrs Johnstone hustling Mickey to school.

Mrs Johnstone You're gonna be late, y' know. Y' late already.

Mickey I'm not.

Mrs Johnstone You're gonna miss the bus.

Mickey I won't.

Mrs Johnstone Well, you'll miss Linda, she'll be waitin' for y'.

Mickey Well, I don't wanna see her. What do I wanna see her for?

Mrs Johnstone (*laughing at his transparency*) You've only been talkin' about her in your sleep for the past week . . .

Mickey (*outraged*) You liar . . .

Mrs Johnstone 'Oh, my sweet darling . . .'

Mickey I never. That was – a line out the school play!

Mrs Johnstone (*her laughter turning to a smile*) All right. I believe y'. Now go before you miss the bus. Are y' goin'?

We see Linda at the bus stop.

Linda Hi-ya, Mickey.

Mrs Johnstone Ogh, did I forget? Is that what you're waitin' for? Y' waitin' for y' mum to give y' a big sloppy kiss, come here . . .

Mickey I'm goin', I'm goin' . . .

Sammy *runs through the house, pulling on a jacket as he does so.*

Sammy Wait for me, YOU.

Mrs Johnstone Where you goin', Sammy?

Sammy (*on his way out*) The dole.

Mickey and Sammy *exit.*

Mrs Johnstone *stands watching them as they approach the bus stop. She smiles at Mickey's failure to cope with Linda's smile of welcome.*

The 'bus' appears, with the Narrator as the conductor.

Conductor Come on, if y' gettin' on. We've not got all day.

Sammy, Mickey and Linda *get on the 'bus'.*

Mrs Johnstone *(calling to her kids)* Tarrah, lads. Be good, both of y' now. I'll cook a nice surprise for y' tea.

Conductor *(noticing her as he goes to ring the bell)* Gettin' on, missis?

Mrs Johnstone *shakes her head, still smiling.*

Conductor *(speaking)*

Happy are y'? Content at last?

Wiped out what happened, forgotten the past?

She looks at him, pulled.

But you've got to have an endin', if a start's been made.

No one gets off without the price bein' paid.

The 'bus' pulls away as the Conductor begins to collect fares.

No one can embark without the price bein' paid.

(To Mickey.) Yeh?

Mickey *(handing over his money)* A fourpenny scholar.

Conductor How old are y'?

Linda He's fourteen. Both of us are. A fourpenny scholar for me as well.

The Conductor gives out the ticket as Sammy offers his money.

Sammy Same for me.

Conductor No, son.

Sammy What?

Conductor You're older than fourteen.

Mickey *(worried)* Sammy . . .

Sammy Shut it. (*To the Conductor.*) I'm fourteen. I wanna fourpenny scholar.

Conductor Do you know the penalty for tryin' to defraud –

Sammy I'm not defraudin' no one.

Conductor (*shouting to the driver*) 'Ey, Billy, take the next left, will y'? We've got one for the cop shop here.

Sammy What? (*He stands.*)

Mickey He didn't mean it, mister. Don't be soft. He, he was jokin'. Sammy, tell him, tell him you're really sixteen. I'll lend you the rest of the fare . . .

Sammy (*considers, then*) Fuck off. (*He produces a knife. To the Conductor.*) Now move, you. Move! Give me the bag.

Music.

Mickey Sammy . . . Sammy . . .

Sammy (*to the Conductor*) I said give. Stop the bus.

The Conductor rings the bell to stop the 'bus'.

Sammy Come on, Mickey.

Linda You stay where y' are, Mickey. You've done nothin'.

Mickey Sammy, Sammy, put that away . . . it's still not too late. (*To the Conductor.*) Is it, mister?

Sammy Mickey.

Linda He's stayin' here.

Sammy No-mark!

Sammy *leaps from the 'bus' and is pursued by two policemen. The 'bus' pulls away leaving Mickey and Linda alone on the pavement.*

Linda He'll get put away for this, y' know, Mickey.

Mickey I know.

Linda He's always been a soft get, your Sammy.

Mickey I know.

Linda You better hadn't do anything soft, like him.

Mickey I wouldn't.

Linda Y' better hadn't or I won't be in love with y' any more!

Mickey Shut up! Y' always sayin' that.

Linda I'm not.

Mickey Yis y' are. Y' bloody well said it in assembly yesterday.

Linda Well, I was only tellin' y'.

Mickey Yeh, an' five hundred others as well.

Linda I don't care who knows. I just love you. I love you!

Mickey Come on . . . we're half an hour late as it is.

He hurries off, followed by Linda.

Edward's school where Edward is confronted by a teacher (the Narrator) looking down his nose at Edward.

Teacher You're doing very well here, aren't you, Lyons?

Edward Yes, sir. I believe so.

Teacher Talk of Oxbridge.

Edward Yes, sir.

Teacher Getting rather big for your boots, aren't you?

Edward No, sir.

Teacher No, sir? Yes, sir. I think you're a tyke, Lyons. The boys in your dorm say you wear a locket around your neck. Is that so?

Pause.

Edward Yes, sir.

Teacher A locket? A locket. This is a boys' school, Lyons.

Edward I am a boy, sir.

Teacher They you must behave like one. Now give this locket to me.

Edward No, sir.

Teacher No sir? Am I to punish you, Lyons? Am I to have you flogged?

Edward You can do exactly as you choose, sir. You can take a flying fuck at a rolling doughnut! But you shall not take my locket!

Teacher (*thunderstruck*) I'm going to . . . I'm going to have you suspended, Lyons.

Edward Yes, sir.

He exits.

As **Edward** exits, a class in a secondary modern school is formed — all boredom and futility. The school bell rings. The teacher becomes the teacher of this class in which we see **Linda** and **Mickey**.

Teacher And so, we know then, don't we, that the Boro Indian of the Amazon Basin lives on a diet of . . .

Perkins Sir, sir . . .

Teacher A diet of . . .

Perkins Sir, sir . . .

Teacher A diet of what, Johnstone? The Boro Indian of the Amazon Basin lives on a diet of what?

Mickey What?

Teacher Exactly, lad, exactly. What?

Mickey I don't know.

Teacher (*his patience gone*) Y' don't know. (*Mimicking*) You don't know. I told y' two minutes ago, lad.

Linda Leave him alone, will y'?

Teacher You just stay out of this, miss. It's got nothing to do with you. It's Johnstone, not you . . .

Perkins Sir!

Teacher Oh, shut up, Perkins, y' borin' little turd. But you don't listen, do you, Johnstone?

Mickey (*shrugging*) Yeh.

Teacher Oh, y' do? Right, come out here in front of the class. Now then, what is the staple diet of the Boro Indian of the Amazon Basin?

Mickey *looks about for help. There is none.*

Mickey (*defiantly*) Fish fingers!

Teacher Just how the hell do you hope to get a job when you never listen to anythin'?

Mickey It's borin'.

Teacher Yes, yes, you might think it's boring but you won't be sayin' that when you can't get a job.

Mickey Yeh. Yeh, an' it'll really help me to get job if I know what some soddin' pygmies in Africa have for their dinner!

The class erupts into laughter.

Teacher (*to class*) Shut up. Shut up.

Mickey Or maybe y' were thinkin' I was lookin' for a job in an African restaurant.

Teacher Out!

Linda Take no notice, Mickey. I love you.

Teacher Johnstone, get out!

Linda Oh, leave him alone, you. Y' big worm!

Teacher Right, you as well . . . out . . . out . . .

Linda I'm goin' . . . I'm goin' . . .

Teacher You're both suspended.

Linda and Mickey *leave the class.*

The classroom sequence breaks up as we see Mrs Lyons staring at a piece of paper. Edward is standing before her.

Mrs Lyons (*incredulously*) Suspended? Suspended? (*She looks at the paper.*) Because of a locket?

Edward Because I wouldn't let them have my locket.

Mrs Lyons But what's so . . . Can I see this locket?

There is a pause.

Edward I suppose so . . . If you want to.

He takes off the locket from around his neck and hands it to his mother. She looks at it without opening it.

Mrs Lyons Where did you get this?

Edward I can't tell you that. It's a secret.

Mrs Lyons (*finally smiling in relief*) I know, it's from a girlfriend, isn't it? (*She laughs.*) Is there a picture in here?

Edward Yes, Mummy. Can I have it back now?

Mrs Lyons You won't let Mummy see your girlfriend. Oh, Edward, don't be so . . . (*She playfully moves away.*) Is she beautiful?

Edward Mummy, can . . .

Mrs Lyons Oh, let me look, let me look. (*She beams a smile at him and then opens the locket.*)

Music.

Edward Mummy . . . Mummy, what's wrong . . . ? (*He goes to her and holds her steady.*) Mummy!

Mrs Lyons *takes his arms away from her.*

Edward What is it?

Mrs Lyons When . . . when were you photographed with this woman?

Edward Pardon?

Mrs Lyons When? Tell me, Edward.

Edward *begins to laugh.*

Mrs Lyons Edward!

Edward Mummy . . . you silly old thing. That's not me. That's Mickey.

Mrs Lyons What?

Edward Mickey . . . you remember, my friend when I was little. *(He takes the locket and shows it to her)* Look. That's Mickey . . . and his mother. Why did you think it was me? *(He looks at it.)* I never looked a bit like Mickey.

He replaces the locket around his neck.

Mrs Lyons *watches him.*

Mrs Lyons No, it's just . . . *(She stares, deep in thought.)*

Edward *(looking at her)* Are you feeling all right, Mummy? You're not ill again, like you used to be . . . are you?

Mrs Lyons Where did you get that . . . locket from, Edward? Why do you wear it?

Edward I can't tell you that, Ma. I've explained, it's a secret, I can't tell you.

Mrs Lyons But . . . but I'm your mother.

Edward I know, but I still can't tell you. It's not important, I'm going up to my room. It's just a secret, everybody has secrets, don't you have secrets?

He exits to his room.

The Narrator enters.

Music continues.

Narrator *(singing)*

Did you really feel that you'd become secure
That time had brushed away the past
That there's no one by the window, no one knocking on
your door

Did you believe that you were free at last
Free from the broken looking glass.

Oh y' know the devil's got your number
He's never far behind you
He always knows where to find you
And someone said they'd seen him walking past your door.

The Narrator exits.

We see Mickey and Linda making their way up the hill, Linda having some difficulty in high-heeled shoes.

Linda Tch . . . you didn't tell me it was gonna be over a load of fields.

Mickey I didn't tell y' nothin'. I didn't ask y' to come, y' followed me. *(He walks away from her.)*

Linda *(watching him walk away)* Mickey, Mickey . . . I'm stuck . . . *(Holding out her helpless arms.)* Me foot's stuck. Honest.

Mickey *goes back, timidly takes a wrist and ineffectually pulls.*

Linda Mickey, I think y' might be more successful if you were to sort of put your arms around here. *(She puts her hands on her waist.)* Oh Mickey, be gentle, be gentle . . .

Mickey *(managing to pull her free)* Will you stop takin' the piss out of me!

Linda I'm not, I'm not.

Mickey *points down in the direction they have come from.*

Mickey Look . . . y' can see the estate from up here.

Linda Have we come all this way just to look at the bleedin' estate? Mickey, we're fourteen.

She beams at him. He can't take it and looks the other way.

Mickey Look.

Linda What?

Mickey There's that lad lookin' out the window. I see him sometimes when I'm up here.

Linda Oh . . . he's gorgeous, isn't he?

Mickey What?

Linda He's lovely lookin', isn't he?

Mickey All right, all right! You've told me once.

Linda Well, he is. An' what do you care if I think another feller's gorgeous, eh?

Mickey I don't.

Linda You . . . I give up with you, Mickey Johnstone. I'm off. You get on my bleedin' nerves.

Linda *exits.*

Mickey What . . . Linda . . . Linda . . . Don't . . . Linda, I wanna kiss y', an' put me arms around y' an' kiss y' and kiss y' an even fornicate with y' but I don't know how to tell y', because I've got pimples an' me feet are too big an' me bum sticks out an' . . .

He becomes conscious of Edward approaching, and affects nonchalance.

Mickey *(speaking)*

If I was like him

I'd know *(singing)* all the right words

Edward

If I was like . . . him

I'd know some real birds

Apart from those in my dreams

And in magazines.

Mickey

Just look at his hair

Edward

His hair's dark and wavy

Mine's mousey to fair

Mickey

Mine's the colour of gravy

Edward and Mickey (*together*)

Each part of his face
Is in just the right place

Edward

He's laughing at me
At my nose, did he notice

Mickey

I should wear a brace

Edward

That I've got halitosis

Edward and Mickey (*together*)

When nature picked on me
She chose to stick on me

Edward

Eyes that don't match

Mickey

And ears that stand out

Edward and Mickey (*together*)

She picked the wrong batch
When she handed mine out
And then she attacked me
With permanent acne

Edward

I wish I was a bit like
Wish that I could score a hit like
And be just a little bit like
That guy
That guy

Mickey

I wish that I could be like
Just a little less like me
Like the sort of guy I see, like

That guy
That guy.

Edward Hi.

Mickey Hi. Gis a ciggie?

Edward Oh, I don't smoke actually. But I can go and get you some.

Mickey Are you soft? (*He suddenly realises.*) A blood brother.

Edward Mickey? Well, shag the vicar.

Mickey *laughs.*

Edward What's wrong?

Mickey You, it sounds dead funny swearin' in that posh voice.

Edward What posh voice?

Mickey That one.

Edward Well, where do you live?

Mickey The estate, look. (*He points.*)

Edward My God, I only live . . .

Mickey I know.

Edward That girl I saw you with, was that . . .

Mickey Linda. Do you remember Linda?

Edward Wow, was that Linda? And is she your girlfriend?

Mickey Yeh. She's one of them.

Edward One of them.

Mickey Have you got a girlfriend?

Edward Me? Me? No!

Mickey Haven't y'?

Edward Look, you seem to have rather a lot of them, erm . . . perhaps you'd share one with me.

Mickey Share one? Eddie, I haven't even got one girlfriend.

Edward But Linda . . . you said . . .

Mickey I know, but she's not. I mean, I mean she would be me girlfriend, she even says she loves me all over the place, but it's just like dead difficult.

Edward What?

Mickey Like knowing what to say.

Edward But you must, you must . . .

Mickey I know that. But every time I see her I promise meself I'll ask her but, but the words just disappear.

Edward But you mustn't let them.

Mickey What do I say, though?

Edward Mickey, it's easy, I've read about it. Look, the next time you see Linda, you stare straight into her eyes and you say, 'Linda, I love you, I want you, the very core of my being is longing for you, my loins are burning for you. Let me lay my weary head between your warm breasts!' And then, Mickey, her eyes will be half closed and her voice may appear somewhat husky as she pleads with you, 'Be gentle with me, be gentle.' It would work, you know. Listen, we can see how it's done; look, the Essoldo for one week only, *Nymphomaniac Nights* and *Swedish Au Pairs*. Whoa . . .

Mickey I'll have to go home and get some money . . .

As the boys are going, we see Mrs Lyons appear. She has seen

Edward and Mickey *and she stares after them. Making up her mind she quickly goes and fetches a coat, then follows the two boys.*

The Narrator enters.

Music.

Edward I've got plenty, I'll lend –

Mickey No, it's all right, me mam'll give it me . . .

Edward Come on then, before my ma sees me. She's off her beam, my ma . . .

The boys exit, followed by Mrs Lyons.

Narrator (*singing*)

Did you really feel that you'd become secure,
And that the past was tightly locked away,
Did you really feel that you would never be found,
Did you forget you've got some debts to pay,
Did you forget about the reckoning day?

Yes, the devil he's still got your number,
He's moved in down the street from you,
Someone said he wants to speak to you,
Someone said they'd seen him leanin' on your door.

The Narrator exits.

We see Mrs Johnstone in her kitchen as Mickey bursts in followed by Edward.

Mickey Mother, Mam, look, look it's Eddie . . . Eddie . . .

Mrs Johnstone *stands looking at Edward and smiling.*

Edward Hi-ya, Mrs Johnstone. Isn't it fantastic? We're neighbours again.

Mickey Mum, Mum, Mum, Eddie lives in that house, y' know, that big house on the hill. Mam, can y' lend us a quid to go to the pictures?

Mrs Johnstone Yes, it's, erm . . . it's in the sideboard . . .

Mickey Oh thanks, Mam. I love y'.

He exits to the next room.

Edward You're looking very well, Mrs Johnstone.

Mrs Johnstone Am I? Do you . . . do you still keep that locket I gave y'?

Edward Of course . . . Look . . .

Mickey *enters.*

Mickey Mam, Mam, can I bring Eddie back afterwards, for coffee?

Mrs Johnstone Yeh. Go on . . . go an' enjoy yourselves, but don't be too late, will y'?

Mickey See y', Mam.

Edward Bye, Mrs Johnstone.

The boys prepare to leave.

Mrs Johnstone 'Ey. What's the film you're gonna see?

Edward Erm, what?

Mrs Johnstone What film . . .

Edward and Mickey (*together*) *Dr Zhivago*. / *Magnificent Seven*.

Mrs Johnstone *Dr Zhivago's Magnificent Seven*.

Edward It's a double bill.

Mrs Johnstone I see. An' where's it on?

Edward and Mickey (*together*) What? / The Essoldo.

Mrs Johnstone Oh . . . the Essoldo, eh? When I passed the Essoldo this mornin' they were showin' *Nymphomaniac Nights* and *Swedish Au Pairs*.

Edward Ah yes, Mrs Johnstone, yes, yeh, they're just the trailers: a documentary and . . .

Mickey An' a travelogue. About Sweden!

Mrs Johnstone Do the pair of you really think I was born yesterday?

Edward *can't hold it any longer and breaks into embarrassed laughter.*

Mickey (*trying to hold on*) It is, it . . . it's just a travelogue . . .

Mrs Johnstone Showing the spectacular bends and curves of Sweden . . . Go on, y' randy little sods.

Mickey (*scandalised*) Mother!

Mrs Johnstone Go on before I throw a bucket of water over the pair of y' . . .

Mickey *drags Edward out.*

Mrs Johnstone I don't know about coffee . . . you'd be better off with bromide. (*She gets on with her work.*)

Edward (*outside the house but looking back*) . . . She's fabulous your ma, isn't she?

Mickey She's a fuckin' headcase. Come on.

As they run off we see Mrs Lyons appear from where she has been concealed in the alley.

Mrs Johnstone *is tilting the 'We Go Dancing' line as Mrs Lyons appears in the kitchen. Mrs Johnstone gets a shock as she looks up and sees Mrs Lyons there. The two women stare at each other.*

Mrs Johnstone (*eventually nodding*) Hello.

Mrs Lyons How long have you lived here?

Pause.

Mrs Johnstone A few years.

Pause.

Mrs Lyons Are you always going to follow me?

Mrs Johnstone We were rehoused here . . . I didn't follow —

Mrs Lyons Don't lie! I know what you're doing to me! You gave him that locket, didn't you? Mm?

Mrs Johnstone *nods.*

Mrs Lyons He never takes it off, you know. You're very clever, aren't you?

Mrs Johnstone I . . . I thought I'd never see him again. I wanted him to have a picture of me . . . even though he'd never know.

Mrs Lyons Afraid he might eventually have forgotten you? Oh no. There's no chance of that. He'll always remember you.

After we'd moved he talked less and less of you and your family. I started . . . just for a while I came to believe that he was actually mine.

Mrs Johnstone He is yours.

Mrs Lyons No. I took him. But I never made him mine. Does he know? Have you told –

Mrs Johnstone Of course not!

Mrs Lyons Even when – when he was a tiny baby I'd see him looking straight at me and I'd think, he knows . . . he knows. (*Pause.*) You have ruined me. (*Pause.*) But you won't ruin Edward! Is it money you want?

Mrs Johnstone What?

Mrs Lyons I'll get it for you. If you move away from here. How much?

Mrs Johnstone Look . . .

Mrs Lyons How much?

Mrs Johnstone Nothin'! Nothing. (*Pause.*) You bought me off once before . . .

Mrs Lyons Thousands . . . I'm talking about thousands if you want it. And think what you could do with money like that.

Mrs Johnstone I'd spend it. I'd buy more junk and trash; that's all. I don't want your money. I've made a life out here. It's not much of one maybe, but I made it. I'm stayin' here. You move if you want to.

Mrs Lyons I would. But there's no point. You'd just follow me again, wouldn't you?

Mrs Johnstone Look, I'm not followin' anybody.

Mrs Lyons Wherever I go you'll be just behind me. I know that now . . . always and for ever and ever like, like a shadow unless I can . . . make . . . you go . . . But you won't, so . . .

We see that throughout the above Mrs Lyons has opened the knife drawer and has a lethal-looking kitchen knife in her hand. Mrs Johnstone, unaware, has her back to her. On impulse, and punctuated by a note, Mrs Johnstone wheels. On a punctuated note Mrs Lyons lunges again but Mrs Johnstone manages to get hold of her wrist, rendering the knife hand helpless. Mrs Johnstone takes the knife from Mrs Lyons's grasp and moves away.

Mrs Johnstone (*staring at her; knowing*) YOU'RE MAD. MAD.

Mrs Lyons (*quietly*) I curse the day I met you. You ruined me.

Mrs Johnstone Go. Just go!

Mrs Lyons Witch. (*Suddenly pointing*) I curse you. Witch!

Mrs Johnstone (*screaming*) Go!

Mrs Lyons *exits to the street.*

Kids' *voices are heard, chanting, off.*

Kids (*off*)

High upon the hill the mad woman lives,
Never ever eat the sweets she gives,
Just throw them away and tell your dad,
High upon a hill there's a woman gone mad.

Mad woman, mad woman living on the hill,
If she catches your eye then you never will
Grow any further, your teeth will go bad
High upon a hill there's a woman gone mad.

Edward and Mickey *emerge from the cinema, blinking as they try to adjust to the glare of the light in the street. They are both quite overcome with their celluloid/erotic encounter. As they pause and light up cigarettes by a corner lamp post they groan in their ecstatic agony. Each is in an aroused trance.*

Mickey Ooh . . . !

Edward Naked knockers, ooh . . . !

Mickey Naked knockers with nipples . . . !

Edward Playing tennis. Ooh. Tennis with tits. Will Wimbledon ever be the same?

Mickey Tits!

Edward Tits, tits, tits . . . (*He begins a frustrated chant of the word, oblivious to everything*)

Linda and a mate enter.

Finally Mickey realises Linda's presence and knocks Edward, who becomes aware of the girls' presence. He goes into a song without missing a beat.

Edward

Tits, tits, tits a lovely way,
To spend an evening . . .

He grabs Linda's Mate and begins to waltz her around the street.

Edward

Can't think of anything I'd rather do . . .

Mate (*simultaneously with the above*) Gerroff. Put me down, get y' friggin' paws off me, you. Linda. Y' bloody lunatic, gettoff.

Edward finally releases her and bows.

Mate Linda, come on. I'm goin' . . .

The Mate begins to walk away. Linda makes no attempt to follow.

Linda What y' doin' in town, Mick?

Mickey We've erm, we've . . .

Edward We have been undergoing a remarkable celluloid experience!

Mate We'll miss the bus, Linda.

Mickey We've been the pictures.

Linda So have we. What did y' go see?

Edward and Mickey (*together*) *Nympho— / Bridge Over the River Kwai.*

Linda Ah, we've seen that. We went to see *Nymphomaniac Nights* instead. An' *Swedish Au Pairs*.

Mickey You what?

Edward *begins to laugh.*

Mate Oh, sod y' then. I'm goin'.

The Mate exits.

Mickey (to **Edward**) What are you laughin' at? Take no notice. Remember Eddie? He's still a headcase. Shurrup.

Edward (shouting) Tits. Tits, tits, tits, tits, tits.

Edward *leaps around and hopefully ends up sitting at the top of the lamp post. Linda and Mickey laugh at him, while Edward chants.*

A **Policeman** enters.

The three do not see the arrival of the Policeman.

Policeman An' what the bloody hell do you think you're doin'?

Edward Adolf Hitler?

Policeman Get down.

Edward *gets down from the lamp post.*

Policeman (getting out his black book) Right. I want your names. What's your name?

Linda, Mickey and Edward (together) Waitin' for the ninety-two bus!

Linda (pointing upwards) Oh my God, look . . .

Policeman Now listen . . .

The Policeman falls for it and looks up. The three make their exit.

The Policeman realises and gives chase.

Mickey, Linda and Edward enter, laughing and exhausted. The **Narrator** enters.

Narrator

There's a few bob in your pocket and you've got good friends,
And it seems that summer's never coming to an end,
Young, free and innocent, you haven't got a care,
Apart from decidin' on the clothes you're gonna wear.
The street's turned into Paradise, the radio's singing dreams,
You're innocent, immortal, you're just fifteen.

*The **Narrator** becomes the rifle-range man at the fairground.*

Linda, Mickey and Edward pool their monry and hand it to the rifle-range man. He gives the gun to **Mickey**, who smiles, shakes his head and points to **Linda**. The man offers the gun to **Edward** but **Linda** takes it. The boys indicate to the rifle-range man that he has had it now **Linda** has the gun. They eagerly watch the target but their smiles fade as **Linda** misses all three shots. **Mickey and Edward** tum on **Linda** in mock anger. They are stopped by the rifle-range man throwing them a coconut which is used as a ball for a game of piggy-in-the-middle. When **Linda** is caught in the middle the game freezes.

Narrator

And who'd dare tell the lambs in spring,
What fate the later seasons bring?
Who'd tell the girl in the middle of the pair
The price she'll pay for just being there?

*Throughout the following we see **Linda, Mickey and Edward** suiting their actions to the words – coming out of the chip shop, talking, lighting a cigarette by the lamp post.*

Narrator

But leave them alone, let them go and play
They care not for what's at the end of the day.
For what is to come, for what might have been,
Life has no ending when you're sweet sixteen
And your friends are with you to talk away the night,
Or until Mrs Wong switches off the chippy light.
Then there's always the corner and the street lamp's glare
An' another hour to spend, with your friends, with her,
To share your last cigarette and your secret dream
At the midnight hour, at seventeen.

*Throughout the following we see **Linda, Mickey and Edward**, as if at the beach, **Linda** taking a picture of **Mickey and Edward**, arms around each other, camping it for the camera but eventually giving good and open smiles. **Mickey** taking a picture of **Edward and Linda**. **Edward** down on one knee and kissing her hand. **Edward** taking a picture of **Mickey and Linda**. **Mickey** pulling a distorted face, **Linda** wagging a finger at him. **Mickey** chastened. **Linda** raising her eyebrows and putting one of his arms round her. **Linda** moving forward and taking the camera. **Linda** waving the **Narrator** to snap them. He goes. **Linda** showing the **Narrator** how to operate the camera. **Linda, Mickey and Edward**, grouped together, arms around each other as the **Narrator** takes the picture. They get the camera and wave their thanks to the **Narrator**.*

Narrator

It's just another ferry boat, a trip to the beach
 But everything is possible, the world's within your reach
 An' you don't even notice broken bottles in the sand
 The oil in the water and you can't understand
 How living could be anything other than a dream
 When you're young, free and innocent and just eighteen.

Linda, Mickey and Edward exit.

Narrator

And only if the three of them could stay like that for ever,
 And only if we could predict no changes in the weather,
 And only if we didn't live in life, as well as dreams,
 And only if we could stop and be for ever, just eighteen.

*We see **Edward** waiting by a street lamp. **Linda** approaches, sees him, and goes into a street walk.*

Linda Well, hello, sweetie pie; looking for a good time? Ten to seven. (*She laughs.*) Good time . . . ten to seven . . . it was a joke . . . I mean, I know it was a lousy joke but y' could at least go into hysterics!

Edward smiles.

Linda That's hysterics?

Edward Where's Mickey?

Linda He must be workin' overtime.

Edward Oh.

Linda What's wrong with you, misery?

Edward (*after a pause*) I go away to university tomorrow.

Linda Tomorrow! You didn't say.

Edward I know. I think I've been pretending that if I didn't mention it the day would never come. I love it when we're together, the three of us, don't you?

Linda *nods.*

Edward Can I write to you?

Linda Yeh . . . yeh, if you want.

Edward Would Mickey mind?

Linda Why should he?

Edward Come on . . . because you're his girlfriend.

Linda No, I'm not.

Edward You are, Linda.

Linda I'm not, he hasn't asked me.

Edward (*laughing*) You mean he still hasn't?

Linda (*laughing*) No.

Edward But it's ridiculous.

Linda I know. I hope for his sake he never has to ask me to marry him. He'll be a pensioner before he gets around to it.

Edward (*after a pause*) He's mad. If I was Mickey I would have asked you years ago.

Linda I know you would. Cos y' soft, you are.

Edward (*singing*)

If I could stand inside his shoes I'd say,
How can I compare thee to a summer's day

Linda (*speaking*) Oh go away . . .

Edward

I'd take a page in all the papers,
I'd announce it on the news
If I was the guy, if I
Was in his shoes.
If I was him I'd bring you flowers
And ask you to dance
We'd while away the hours making future plans
For rainy days in country lanes
And trips to the sea.
I'd just tell you that I love you
If it was me.

But I'm not saying a word,
I'm not saying I care,
Though I would like you to know,
That I'm not saying a word,
I'm not saying I care,
Though I would like you to know.
If I was him I'd have to tell you,
What I've kept in my heart,
That even if we had to live
Some worlds apart
There would not be a day
In which I'd not think of you.
If I was him, if I was him.
That's what I'd do.

But I'm not saying a word
I'm not saying I care
Though I would like you to know
That I'm not saying a word,
I'm not saying I care,
Though I would like you to know.

But I'm not.

Linda What?

Edward Mickey.

Mickey *enters*

Edward Mickey!

Mickey Hi-ya, Ed. Lind.

Linda Where've y' been?

Mickey I had to do overtime. I hate that soddin' place.

Edward Mickey. I'm going away tomorrow . . . to university.

Mickey What? Y' didn't say.

Edward I know . . . but the thing is, I won't be back until Christmas. Three months. Now you wouldn't want me to continue in suspense for all that time, would you?

Linda What are you on about?

Edward Will you talk to Linda?

Linda Oh Eddie . . .

Edward Go on . . . go on.

Mickey *turns and goes to her.* **Linda** *tries to keep a straight face.*

Mickey Erm . . . well, the er, thing is . . . Linda, I've erm . . .
(*Quickly.*) Linda for Christ's sake will you go out with me?

Linda (*just as quickly*) Yeh.

Mickey Oh . . . erm . . . Good. Well, I suppose I better . . .
well . . . er . . . come here . . . (*He quickly embraces and kisses*
Linda.)

Linda (*fighting for air*) My God. Y' take y' time gettin' goin'
but then there's no stoppin' y'.

Mickey I know . . . come here . . .

They kiss again. **Edward** *turns and begins to leave.*

Mickey Eddie . . . Eddie, where y' goin'? I thought we were
all goin' the club. There's a dance.

Edward No . . . I've got to, erm, I've got to pack for
tomorrow.

Mickey Are y' sure?

Edward *nods.*

Mickey See y' at Christmas then, Eddie? Listen, I'm gonna do loads of overtime between now and then, so the Christmas party's gonna be on me . . . right?

Edward Right. It's a deal, Mick. See you.

Linda *rushes across and kisses Edward lightly.*

Linda Thanks, Eddie.

Mickey Yeh, Eddie . . . thanks.

Linda and Mickey, *arms around each other, watch him go. They turn and look at each other.*

Mickey and Linda *exit.*

The lights crossfade to the Johnstone house. Mickey enters and prepares to go to work. Mrs Johnstone enters with Mickey's lunch bag. The Narrator enters.

Narrator

It was one day in October when the sun began to fade,
And winter broke the promise that summer had just made,
It was one day in October when the rain came falling down,
And someone said the bogey man was seen around the town.

The Narrator exits.

Mrs Johnstone Y' gonna be late, Mick. I don't want you gettin' the sack an' spendin' your days idlin' round like our Sammy. Come on.

Mickey, *instead of making an effort to go, stands looking at her.*

Mickey Mam!

Mrs Johnstone What?

Mickey What!

Mrs Johnstone Come on.

Mickey Mam. Linda's pregnant!

A moment.

Mrs Johnstone Do you love her?

Mickey Yeh!

Mrs Johnstone When's the weddin'?

Mickey We thought, about a month . . . before Christmas anyway. Mam, could we live here for a bit?

She looks at him and nods.

Are you mad?

Mrs Johnstone At you? Some hypocrite I'd be. No . . . I'm not mad, son. I'm just thinkin' . . . you've not had much of a life with me, have y'?

Mickey Don't be stupid, course I have. You're great, you are, Mam. (*He gives her a quick kiss.*) Ta-ra, I'd better get a move on. They've started layin' people off in the other factory, y' know. Ta-ra, Mam. Thanks.

He exits.

Music.

Mrs Johnstone *watches him go. As 'Miss Jones' begins, she whips off her overalls and a wedding suit is underneath. She acquires a hat.*

A wedding party assembles. Mickey remains in his working clothes.

Linda *is in white. Other guests are suitably attired. A managing director enters and sings as his secretary, Miss Jones, takes notes.*

Mr Lyons (*singing*)

Take a letter, Miss Jones (quote)

I regret to inform you,
That owing to circumstances
Quite beyond our control.
It's a premature retirement
For those surplus to requirement,
I'm afraid it's a sign of the times, Miss Jones,
An unfortunate sign of the times.

Throughout the next verse we see the wedding party wave goodbye to Mickey, who goes to work only to have his cards given to him when he gets there.

Mr Lyons

Take a letter, Miss Jones,
Due to the world situation
The shrinking pound, the global slump,
And the price of oil
I'm afraid we must fire you,
We no longer require you,
It's just another
Sign of the times,
Miss Jones,
A most miserable sign of the times.

The Guests at the wedding become a line of men looking for work.

Mickey joins them as Linda watches. They are constantly met with shaking heads and by the end of the following verse have assembled in the dole office.

Mr Lyons

Take a letter, Miss Jones, of course we'll
Let the workforce know when
Inflation's been defeated
And recession is no more.
And for the moment we suggest
You don't become too depressed
As it's only a sign
Of the times,
Miss Jones,
A peculiar sign of the times.

Take a letter, Miss Jones:
My dear Miss Jones, we'd like to thank you
Many years of splendid service,
Et cetera blah blah blah
You've been a perfect poppet,
Yes that's right, Miss Jones, you've got it
It's just another sign
Of the times,

↘ shows social
context of how
margaret
Thatcher fired
all the miners
& milkmen.

Miss Jones, it's
Just another sign of the times.

He shows her the door. Crying, she approaches the dole queue but then hesitates. The men in the queue take up the song.

Dole-ites

Dry your eyes, Miss Jones
It's not as bad as it seems (you)
Get used to being idle
In a year or two.
Unemployment's such a pleasure
These days, we call it leisure
It's just another sign
Of the times,
Miss Jones, it's
Just another sign of the times.

Mickey leaves the group and stands apart. Miss Jones takes his place. Behind Mickey we can see Linda and his mother.

Dole-ites

There's a young man on the street, Miss Jones,
He's walkin' round in circles,
He's old before his time,
But still too young to know.
Don't look at him, don't cry though
This living on the giro
Is only a sign of the times,
Miss Jones, it's
Just another sign of the times.

As they exit.

Miss Jones,
It's just another sign of the times . . .

Crowd exits.

Mickey is left alone, sitting dejected. We hear Christmas bells.

Edward enters in a duffel coat and college scarf, unseen by Mickey. He creeps up behind Mickey and puts his hands over his eyes.

Edward Guess who?

Mickey Father Christmas.

Edward (*leaping out in front of him*) Mickey . . . (*Laughing*) Merry Christmas.

Mickey, *unamused, looks at Edward and then looks away.*

Edward Come on then . . . I'm back, where's the action, the booze, the Christmas parties, the music and the birds?

No reaction.

What's wrong, Mickey?

Mickey Nothin'. How's university?

Edward Mickey, it's fantastic. I haven't been to so many parties in my life. And there's just so many tremendous people, but you'll meet them, Mick, some of them, Baz, Ronnie and Clare and oh, lots of them. They're coming over to stay for the New Year, for the party. Ooh it's just . . . it's great, Mickey.

Mickey Good.

Edward Come on, what's wrong? It's nearly Christmas, we were going to do everything. How's Linda?

Mickey She's OK.

Edward (*trying again to rally him*) Well, come on then, let's go then . . . come on.

Mickey Come on where?

Edward Mickey, what's wrong?

Mickey You. You're a dick head!

Edward *is slightly unsure but laughs anyway.*

Mickey There are no parties arranged. There is no booze or music. Christmas? I'm sick to the teeth of Christmas an' it isn't even here yet. See, there's very little to celebrate, Eddie. Since you left I've been walking around all day, every day, lookin' for a job.

Edward What about the job you had?

Mickey It disappeared. (*Pause.*) Y' know somethin', I bleedin' hated that job, standin' there all day never doin' nothin' but put cardboard boxes together. I used to get . . . used to get terrified that I'd have to do it for the rest of me life. But, but after three months of nothin', the same answer everywhere, nothin', nothin' down for y', I'd crawl back to that job for half the pay and double the hours. Just . . . just makin' up boxes it was. But after bein' fucked off from everywhere, it seems like it was paradise.

Pause.

Edward Why . . . why is a job so important? If I couldn't get a job I'd just say, sod it and draw the dole, live like a bohemian, tilt my hat to the world and say 'screw you'. So you're not working. Why is it so important?

Mickey (*looking at him*) You don't understand anythin', do ye? I don't wear a hat that I could tilt at the world.

Edward Look . . . come on . . . I've got money, plenty of it. I'm back, let's forget about bloody jobs, let's go and get Linda and celebrate. Look, look, money, lots of it, have some . . . (*He tries to throw some notes into Mickey's hands.*)

Mickey No. I don't want your money, stuffit.

He throws the notes to the ground. Edward picks them up and stands looking at Mickey.

Mickey Eddie, just do me a favour an' piss off, will ye?

Edward I thought, I thought we always stuck together. I thought we were . . . were blood brothers.

Mickey That was kids' stuff, Eddie. Didn't anyone tell y? (*He looks at Edward.*) But I suppose you still are a kid, aren't ye?

Edward I'm exactly the same age as you, Mickey.

Mickey Yeh. But you're still a kid. An' I wish I could be as well, Eddie, I wish I could still believe in all that blood brother stuff. But I can't, because while no one was looking I grew up.

An' you didn't, because you didn't need to; an' I don't blame y' for it, Eddie. In your shoes I'd be the same, I'd still be able to be a kid. But I'm not in your shoes, I'm in these, lookin' at you. An' you make me sick, right? That was all just kids' stuff, Eddie, an' I don't want to be reminded of it. Right? So just, just take yourself away. Go an' see your friends an' celebrate with them.

Pause.

Go on . . . beat it before I hit y'.

Edward *looks at Mickey and then slowly backs away. Sammy approaches Mickey as, on the other side, we see Linda hurrying on, passing Edward, who stops and calls.*

Edward Linda!

Sammy Mickey.

Edward Linda.

Reluctantly she stops, goes back a few paces.

Hello, Linda.

Linda Hello, Eddie.

Edward Why haven't you called to see me?

Linda I heard you had friends, I didn't like butting in.

Edward You'd never be butting in and you know it. It wouldn't matter if I never saw those friends again, if I could be with you.

Linda Eddie . . .

Sammy Look, I'm offerin' . . . all we need is someone to keep the eye for us. Look at y', Mickey. What have y' got? Nothin', like me mam. Where y' takin' y' tart for New Year? Nowhere.

Edward You might as well know, if I'm not going to see you again. I've always loved you, you must have known that.

Sammy We don't use the shooters. They're just frighteners. Y' don' need to use them. Everyone behaves when they see a

shooter. You won't even be where the action is. Just keep the eye out for us.

Edward I'm sorry.

Sammy Fifty quid, Mickey. Fifty quid for an hour's work. Just think where y' could take Linda if you had cash like that.

Edward I'm sorry, Linda.

Linda It's all right. I suppose, I suppose I always . . . loved you, in a way.

Edward Then marry me.

Linda Didn't Mickey tell y'? We got married two weeks before you came home and I'm expecting a baby.

Mickey Fifty notes?

Sammy *nods.*

Mickey All right.

Sammy Great.

Mickey *nods.*

Sammy Cheer up, will y'? It's New Year.

He exits.

Edward's Friends (*variously, off*) Where's Lyo? / Come on, Lyons, you pillock, you're suppond to be helping us with the booze. / Come on, Lyonese. / Edward, come on.

Linda I'll see y', Eddie. Happy New Year. (*She moves away.*)

Edward *exits.*

Mickey Linda . . . Linda.

Linda Are you comin' in?

Mickey Look . . . I'll be back about eight o'clock. An' listen, get dressed up. I'm takin' y' out.

Linda What?

Mickey We're goin' dancin'. Right? Then we're goin' for a slap-up meal an' tomorrow you can go into town an' get some new clothes.

Linda Oh yeh? Where's the money comin' from?

Mickey I'm . . . doin' some work . . .

Linda What?

Mickey Look, stop arguin', will y'? I'm doin' some work and then I'm takin' you out.

Sammy (*off*) Mickey!

Linda Is that your Sammy?

Mickey Now shut up, Linda. Right, right? Just make sure you're ready at eight . . . (*He starts to leave.*)

Linda (*as he goes*) Mickey . . . Mickey . . . No!

She exits.

Mickey *moves away.*

The Narrator enters.

Sammy *enters.*

Narrator

There's a full moon shining and a joker in the pack,
The dealer's dealt the cards, and he won't take them back,
There's a black cat stalking and a woman who's afraid,
That there's no getting off without the price being paid.

We see Mickey, nervously keeping lookout, as behind him, as if inside a filling station office, we see Sammy, his back to us, talking to an offstage character.

Sammy Don't piss about with me, pal . . . I said give!
(*Pause.*) Listen, it's not a toy, y' know . . . We're not playin' games. Y' don't get up again if one of these hits y' . . . What are you doin'? I said listen to me, I . . . don't you fuckka' touch that . . . Listen.

*An alarm bell is heard, followed by an explosion from the gun. **Sammy** reels backwards. He and **Mickey** run and enter their house.*

Narrator

There's a man lies bleeding on a garage floor.

Sammy

Quick, get in the house an' bolt the fuckin' door.

Mickey *stands unable to move, tears streaming down his face.*

Narrator

And maybe, if you counted ten and kept your fingers crossed
It would all be just a game and then no one would have lost.

Mickey

You shot him, you shot him.

Sammy

I know I bloody did.

Mickey

You shot him, you shot him.

Sammy

Move, I've got to get this hid.

Linda *(off)* Mickey . . . Mickey, is that you?

Sammy Ooh, fuck . . . *(He quickly pulls back a mat, pulls up a floorboard and puts the gun beneath it.)*

Linda *enters.*

Two Policemen arrive at the house.

Sammy *splits out the back. Mickey remains silently crying. Linda goes to him and puts her arms around him. As Sammy is being apprehended at the back, the other Policeman enters and gently removes Linda from Mickey and leads him out and into the police station.*

Linda But I've ironed him a shirt.

Music.

Mickey, *placed in a prison cell, stands quietly crying.*

Mrs Johnstone *enters.*

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

The jury found him guilty
Sent him down for seven years,
Though he acted like they gave him life,
He couldn't stop the tears.
And when we went to visit him,
He didn't want to know,
It seems like jail's sent him off the rails,
Just like Marilyn Monroe
His mind's gone dancing
Can't stop dancing.

A Doctor enters the cell and examines Mickey.

They showed him to a doctor,
And after routine test,
A prescription note the doctor wrote,
For the chronically depressed.
And now the tears have stopped
He sits and counts the days to go
And treats his ills with daily pills
Just like Marilyn Monroe.

← antidepressants

The Doctor exits.

They stop his mind from dancing
Stop it dancing.

A prison warder leads Linda into the cell. He indicates a seat opposite Mickey.

Linda What are y' doin'?

Mickey What? I'm takin' me tablet.

Linda Listen, Mickey, I've told y'. They're just junk. You'll be home soon, Mickey, and you should come off them.

Mickey Why? I need . . . I need to take them.

Linda Listen, Mickey, you've —

Mickey No! See, he says, the doctor, he said . . .

Linda What did he say?

Mickey He said, about me nerves. An' how I get depressed an' I need to take these cos they make me better . . .

Linda I get depressed but I don't take those. You don't need those, Mickey.

Mickey Leave me alone, will y'? I can't cope with this. I'm not well. The doctor said, didn't he, I'm not well . . . I can't do things . . . leave me alone . . .

*The **Warder** escorts **Linda** from the cell.*

*During the following verse **Mickey** leaves the prison and goes home.*

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

With grace for good behaviour
He got out before his time
The family and the neighbours told him
He was lookin' fine.
But he's feelin' fifteen years older
And his speech is rather slow
And the neighbours said
You'd think he was dead
Like Marilyn Monroe
No cause for dancing
No more dancing . . .

Linda *approaches Mrs Johnstone. Linda is weighed down with shopping bags and is weary.*

Mrs Johnstone Linda, where've y' been? We've gorra do somethin' about him. He's been out for months and he's still takin' those pills. Linda, he needs a job, you two need a place of your own an' -

Linda Mam . . . Mam, that's why I'm late, I've been to see . . . We're movin' at the end of the month. We've got our own place an' I think I've got Mickey a job . . .

Mrs Johnstone Oh, Jesus, thank God. But how -

Linda It's all right . . . I . . . someone I know . . .

Mrs Johnstone But . . .

Linda It's all right, Mam. Did y' get our Sarah from school?

Mrs Johnstone Yeh, she's in bed, but listen, how did y' manage to —

Linda Never mind, Mam. Mam, isn't it great; if he's workin' an' we've got our own place he'll be able to get himself together an' stop takin' those friggin' things . . .

They start to leave.

Mrs Johnstone But, listen, Linda, who —

Linda Oh, just some . . . some feller I know. He's . . . he's on the housin' committee. You don't know him, Mam . . .

Mrs Johnstone *exits.*

Mickey and Linda *are in their new house. In the lounge Linda is preparing Mickey's working things.*

Linda (*shouting*) Mickey, Mickey, come on, you'll be late . . .

Mickey *enters his house.*

Mickey Where's me . . .

Linda Here . . . here's y' bag. Y' sandwiches are in there.

He ignores the bag and begins looking through a cupboard drawer.

Mickey, what y' lookin' for?

Mickey Y' know what I'm lookin' for.

Linda Mickey, Mickey, listen to me . . .

Mickey Where's me tablets gone, Linda?

Linda Mickey, you don't need your tablets!

Mickey Linda!

Linda Mickey, you're workin' now, we're livin' on our own — you've got to start makin' an effort.

Mickey Give them to me, Linda.

Linda You promised.

Mickey I know I promised but I can't do without them. I tried. Last week I tried to do without them. By dinner time I was shakin' an' sweatin' so much I couldn't even work. I need them. That's all there is to it. Now give.

Pause.

Linda Is that it then? Are y' gonna stay on them for ever?

Mickey Linda.

Linda Look . . . we've managed to sort ourselves out this far but what's the use if —

Mickey *We* sorted ourselves out? Do you think I'm really stupid?

Linda What?

Mickey I didn't sort anythin' out, Linda. Not a job, not a house, nothin'. It used to be just sweets an' ciggies he gave me, because I had none of me own. Now it's a job and a house. I'm not stupid, Linda. You sorted it out. You an' Councillor Eddie Lyons.

Linda *doesn't deny it.*

Mickey Now give me the tablets . . . I need them.

Linda An' what about what I need? I need you. I love you. But, Mickey, not when you've got them inside you. When you take those things, Mickey, I can't even see you.

Mickey That's why I take them. So I can be invisible.

Pause.

Now give me them.

Music. We see Linda hand Mickey her bag

Mickey *quickly grabs the tablets.*

He exits.

The Narrator enters.

The Narrator watches Linda. She moves to telephone, but hesitates.

Narrator

There's a girl inside the woman
Who's waiting to get free
She's washed a million dishes
She's always making tea.

Linda (*speaking on the phone*) Could I talk to Councillor Lyons, please?

Narrator

There's a girl inside the woman
And the mother she became
And a half-remembered song
Comes to her lips again.

Linda (*on the phone*) Eddie, could I talk to you? Yeh, I remember.

Narrator

The girl would sing the melody
But the woman stands in doubt
And wonders what the price would be
For letting the young girl out.

Mrs Johnstone *enters.*

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

It's just a light romance,
It's nothing cruel,
They laid no plans,
How it came,
Who can explain?

Linda *approaches Edward who is waiting at the park fence.*

Mrs Johnstone (*singing*)

They just said 'hello',
And foolishly they gazed,
They should have gone
Their separate ways.

The music continues.

Edward Hey. (*He mimes firing a gun.*)

Linda Missed.

Edward *laughs, grabbing Linda jokingly. Their smiles fade as they look at each other. Suddenly they kiss. They walk together, hand in hand. All this through the following verse.*

Mrs Johnstone *(singing)*

It's just the same old song,
Nothing cruel,
Nothing wrong.
It's just two fools,
Who know the rules,
But break them all,
And grasp at half a chance
To play their part
In a light romance.

Throughout the following chorus we see Mickey at work. We see him go to take his pills. We see him make the effort of not taking them. We see the strain of this upon him but see that he is determined.

Mrs Johnstone

Living on the never never,
Constant as the changing weather,
Never sure
Who's at the door,
Or the price
You're gonna have to pay.

We see Linda and Edward kicking up the leaves before parting

Mrs Johnstone

It's just a secret glance,
Across a room.
A touch of hands
That part too soon.
That same old tune
That always plays,
And lets them dance as friends,
Then stand apart,
As the music ends.

*During the next chorus **Edward** and **Linda** wave goodbye, as **Edward** and **Mickey** once did.*

Mrs Lyons enters and goes to **Mickey**.

*She turns **Mickey** round and points out **Edward** and **Linda** to him. By the end of the chorus **Mickey** is hammering on his own door.*

Mrs Johnstone

Living on the never never,
Constant as the changing weather,
Never sure
Who's at the door
Or the price you're gonna have to pay.

*As the music abruptly segues, **Mickey** is heard hammering on his door and calling for **Linda**, as he once did for his mother. The music pulsates and builds as he runs to his mother's house. He enters and flings back the floorboard to reveal the gun hidden by **Sammy**.*

Mrs Johnstone enters just as **Mickey** disappears with the gun.

Mrs Johnstone (screaming) Mickey . . . Mickey . . .

*We see **Mickey** comb the town, breaking through groups of people, looking, searching, desperate, not even knowing what he's looking for or what he is going to do. His mother is frantically trying to catch him but not succeeding*

Narrator

There's a man gone mad in the town tonight,
He's gonna shoot somebody down,
There's a man gone mad, lost his mind tonight,
There's a mad man
There's a mad man
There's a mad man running round and round.

Now you know the devil's got your number,
He's runnin' right beside you,
He's screamin' deep inside you,
And someone said he's callin' your number up today.

As Mrs Johnstone makes her way to Linda's house.

Narrator

There's a mad man / There's a mad man / There's a mad man.

Mrs Johnstone *hammers on Linda's door, shouting her name.*

Linda, *just returning home, comes up behind her.*

Linda Mam . . . Mam . . . what's . . .

Mrs Johnstone *(out of breath)* He's . . . Mickey . . . Mickey's got gun . . .

Linda Mickey? . . . Eddie? . . . The Town Hall . . .

Mrs Johnstone What?

Linda *(beginning to run)* Eddie Lyons!

Narrator

There's a mad man running round and round
You know the devil's got your number
You know he's right beside you
He's screamin' deep inside you
And someone said he's callin' your number up today
Today
Today
TODAY!

On the last three words of the chorus Mrs Johnstone runs off.

On the last 'Today' the music stops abruptly.

We see Edward, standing behind a table, on a platform.

He is in the middle of addressing his audience. Two councillors stand either side.

Edward And if, for once, I agree with Councillor Smith, you mustn't hold that against me. But in this particular instance, yes, I do agree with him. You're right, Bob, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Quite right. None of us would argue with you on that score. But what we would question is this, how many of us . . .

From his audience a commotion beginning. He thinks he is being heckled and so tries to carry on. In fact his audience is reacting to the sight of Mickey appearing from the stalls, a gun held two-handed, to steady his shaking hands, and pointed directly at Edward. Edward turns and sees Mickey as someone on the platform next to him realises the reality of the situation and screams.

Mickey Stay where you are!

Mickey stops a couple of yards from **Edward**. *He's unsteady and breathing awkwardly.*

Edward (eventually) Hello, Mickey.

Mickey I stopped takin' the pills.

Edward (pause) Oh.

Mickey (eventually) I began thinkin' again. Y' see. (*To the councillors.*) Just get her out of here, mister, now!

The councillors hurry off.

Edward and **Mickey** are now alone on the platform.

Mickey I had to start thinkin' again. Because there was one thing left in my life. (*Pause.*) Just one thing I had left, Eddie – Linda – an' I wanted to keep her. So, so I stopped takin' the pills. But it was too late. D' y' know who told me about . . . you . . . an' Linda . . . your mother . . . she came to the factory and told me.

Edward Mickey, I don't know what she told you, but Linda and I are just friends . . .

Mickey (*shouting for the first time*) Friends! I could kill you. We were friends, weren't we? Blood brothers, wasn't it? Remember?

Edward Yes, Mickey, I remember.

Mickey Well, how come you got everything . . . an' I got nothin'? (*Pause.*) Friends. I've been thinkin' again, Eddie. You an' Linda were friends when she first got pregnant, weren't y'?

Edward Mickey!

Mickey Does my child belong to you as well as everythin' else? Does she, Eddie, does she?

Edward (*shouting*) No, for God's sake!

Pause.

From the back of the auditorium we hear a Policeman through a loudhailer.

Policeman 1 Now listen, son, listen to me, I've got armed marksmen with me. But if you do exactly as I say we won't need to use them, will we? Now look, Michael, put down the gun, just put the gun down, son.

Mickey (*dismissing their presence*) What am I doin' here, Eddie? I thought I was gonna shoot y'. But I can't even do that. I don't even know if the thing's loaded.

Mrs Johnstone *slowly walks down the centre aisle towards the platform.*

Policeman 2 What's that woman doin'?

Policeman 1 Get that woman away . . .

Policeman 2 Oh Christ.

Mrs Johnstone Mickey, Mickey. Don't shoot him, Mickey . . .

Mickey *continues to hold the gun in position.*

Mickey Go away, Mam . . . Mam, you go away from here.

Mrs Johnstone No, son. (*She walks on to the platform.*)

Mickey (*shouting*) Mam!

Mrs Johnstone Mickey. Don't shoot Eddie. He's your brother. You had a twin brother. I couldn't afford to keep both of you. His mother couldn't have kids. I agreed to give one of you away!

Mickey (*something that begins deep down inside him*) You!
(*Screaming.*) You! Why didn't you give me away? (*He stands glaring at her, almost uncontrollable with rage.*) I could have been . . . I could have been him!

On the word 'him' Mickey waves at Edward with his gun hand. The gun explodes and blows Edward apart. Mickey turns to the Policemen, screaming the word 'No'. They open fire and four guns explode, blowing Mickey away. Linda runs down the aisle.

The Policemen are heard through the loudhailer.

Policemen Nobody move, please. It's all right, it's all over, just stay where you are.

Music.

As the light on the scene begins to dim we see the Narrator watching

Narrator

And do we blame superstition for what came to pass?
Or could it be what we, the English, have come to know
as class?

Did you ever hear the story of the Johnstone twins,
As like each other as two new pins,
How one was kept and one given away,
How they were born, and they died, on the selfsame day?

Mrs Johnstone *(singing)*

Tell me it's not true,
Say it's just a story.
Something on the news.
Tell me it's not true.
Though it's here before me,
Say it's just a dream,
Say it's just a scene
From an old movie of years ago,
From an old movie of Marilyn Monroe.

Say it's just some clowns,
Two players in the limelight,
And bring the curtain down.
Say it's just two clowns,
Who couldn't get their lines right,
Say it's just a show
On the radio,
That we can turn over and start again,
That we can turn over; it's only a game.

Company

Tell me it's not true,
Say I only dreamed it,
And morning will come soon,
Tell me it's not true,
Say you didn't mean it,
Say it's just pretend,
Say it's just the end
Of an old movie from years ago
Of an old movie with Marilyn Monroe.

Curtain.