

SCRIPT AS AT 28.2.96.

CAST ENTER SINGING “MEMORIES” AND SAYING ONE LINERS ABOUT CHILDHOOD AMBITIONS/FANTASIES ACROSS THE SONG TO AUDIENCE

*Memories, memories, dreams of long ago  
In the sea of memory I'm drifting to and fro  
Childhood days, wildwood days,  
Among the birds and bees,  
Now when I'm alone, they're still my own  
My beautiful memories.*

Joan: I played with my dolls and bandaged them up. I wanted to be a nurse

Barbara: I played with dolls and put them to bed. I wanted to be a mother.

Penny: I wanted to dress up and be an actress.

Anne: I liked to scrub the wooden floors for my Mum and sometimes she gave me tuppence. I wanted to be a housewife and a mum.

Eileen: I was an only child, so I pretended I had a big brother to play with.

Lilian: I had five sisters and I dreamed of being an only child.

Hilda: I used to play at slaves with my cousins. I was always the slave driver with a string whip. I wanted to be in charge. Then I wanted to go in the films and be Shirley Temple.

Kitty: I wanted to be a dancer and go on the stage.

Lil: I used to pretend I lived in a big castle with beautiful furniture and thick carpets.

Liz: I wanted to be a tap dancer.

Joyce: I wanted to be a teacher so I could smack all the children's bottoms.

*Childhood days, wildwood days,  
Among the birds and bees,  
Now when I'm alone, they're still my own  
My beautiful memories.*

MARCHING INTO SCHOOL ASSEMBLY TO SCHOOL PIANO MUSIC.

All: “Good morning Miss Roberts”

TEACHERS' COMMENTS. GIRL STEPS FORWARD ONE BY ONE

Barbara: This is what we think our teachers would have said about us.

Anne: Annie is a thoroughly reliable girl and steadily finishes what she has begun. She has plenty of common sense too.

Eileen: I don't know what's going to become of Eileen. Her mother keeps her away from school and half the time I'm sure there's nothing wrong with her. She's as fat as butter and she's thoroughly spoilt.

Joan: Joan's missed such a lot of her schooling during the war years, and considering that she's done very well. She's a lively child, a little bit shy but very independent. I do hope she does something with her life.

Joyce: Joyce Pleasant is a studious girl, but very quiet and reticent. She must learn to assert herself more. And I hope her health will improve. She's such a thin, puny little thing because she doesn't eat properly.

Liz: Elisabeth is very attentive but she can't cope with maths. She goes on to cloud nine. I think she'll need private tuition if it's going to be worth her staying on at school.

Olive: I feel so sorry for Olive having to leave school. Her father's unemployed and they've got financial troubles at home. It's really a pity because she wanted to be a professional musician. I don't know how she'll come to terms with what is happening to her now.

Barbara: Barbara Blackaby is a very serious girl and very reliable. An average sort of a girl.

Lilian: Lilian tries hard. She wants to come top in class but she always comes third.

Lil: Lily is a very studious girl. She has an excellent memory and this helps her to learn very fast. The only thing wrong with that young lady is the fact that she never stops talking in class.

Kitty: Kathleen should be staying on at school, but the family can't afford it. I'll miss her singing and dancing and acrobatics. I hope she finds a job where she can be with people.

Hilda: Hilda is an evacuee and a typical Londoner. She doesn't wear very nice clothes. Her needlework is so bad that I had to throw a petticoat she'd made in the waste paper bin. She'll go back to London as soon as she leaves school and we won't hear any more of her.

Penny: Penny Martindale came to us at ten years old from an orphanage. She's a bit of a rebel. She can't spell and I don't think she ever will. I think she wants to go into the theatre. She's always dreaming of dancing and singing. I don't know what's going to happen to Penny, but..... good luck to her anyway.

SCHOOL PHOTO...

Lilian: The class of 1928.

Kitty: to 1948.

GIRLS COME FORWARD AND SAY HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT LEAVING

Kitty: I'm really sad to be leaving. I love school and I don't want to leave my friends and all my teachers.

Barbara: Hooray! I can't wait! Now I can get back to London and meet lots of boys.

Eileen: I'm not even waiting till the school term finishes. I'm dying to get away and I'll never come back here.

Lil: I don't really want to leave school. I want to go on learning. I'm frightened about having to go into a grown-up world.

Joyce: I don't know really. I don't mind leaving school as long as I can work with my friends in the West End. Something with a bit of glamour.

Anne: I'm looking forward to starting my job in printing.

Liz: I feel I'm going to miss everyone. I don't want to leave.

Joan: I'm going back to London. I don't know what's going to happen to me or what I'm going to do.

Hilda: I'm very excited. I'm dying to get back to London. My mother's coming to collect me and take me home and I'll see everyone again.

Penny: I'm very pleased to be leaving school. I didn't like it here anyway. I can't wait to go.

(HUG EACH OTHER AND WAVE GOODBYE)

*Sing as we go and let the world go by*

*Sing as we go, we march along the highway,*

*Say goodbye to sorrow, why think of tomorrow?*

*Just think of today*

Penny: I've got myself a job down the road in the corner shop. Eight shillings a week. I've got to deliver the milk on a bicycle and then help out in the shop.

Joan: My mum's got me a job in the glass factory where she works. I really don't want to do it. It's very hot and noisy and it's covered in glass dust. Mum wants me to dress up on the first day to impress all her friends. I've got on this taffeta dress...I ask you!

Liz: I want to do something glamorous, so I'm going to train as a beauty consultant with Elizabeth Arden. I'm going to see lots of famous people and hear all the gossip about them.

*Sing as we go although the skies are grey*

*Beggar or King we've got to sing a gay song*

*With a song or a smile making life worthwhile*

*We sing as we go along*

LIL'S, OLIVE'S AND LILIAN'S STORIES

PENNY, HILDA, OLIVE AND LILIAN IN A LINE: "DOGS LOVE VIMS... WOOF  
.... WOOF...."

Lil: I left school on the Friday and I was starting work on the Monday. I was supposed to be grown up, a working girl at a dog biscuit factory. There was a big sign all along the wall outside saying

All: DOGS LOVE VIMS

Olive: Now then young lady. Have you got your school leaving certificate with you?

Lil: Oh yes. I've bought it with me. (SHE HANDS IT OVER)

Olive: Good. Yes. That's all in order. Now you know that your wages will be sixteen shillings a week.

Lil: Yes, I was told that.

Olive: Now you come with me and I'll show you to the packing bench where the girls are packing the dog biscuits. Now then Hilda and Penny, can you stop a minute? This is Lily Fry and she's starting today. Will you show her what to do and look after her girls? She's very young.

Penny: You come here Lily. Stand next to me. Don't worry about anything. You'll be all right. Are you frightened?

Lil: Yes, a bit. I've never been in a factory before.

Penny: We'll show you what to do. Hilda's bringing a tray of dog biscuits. Now we make the box. You fold the box in like that and then over like that. Then you pick up six biscuits and put them inside. Close the box and woof it away down there. Now you do it. (LIL DOES IT VERY SLOWLY) That's it. That's it. Six. Six, not five. (HILDA AND PENNY GIVE EACH OTHER DESPAIRING LOOKS AND HILDA TUTS) Can you count up to six?

Lil: Course I can. Then what do you do?

Hilda: That's it. That's it. That's what we do all day.

Penny: Nothing else all day long. Till we finish tonight. Are you going home for your dinner?

Lil: I only live just down the road.

Hilda: (TO LILIAN AS SHE COMES IN BREATHELESS) Oh Lilian, where've you been?

Lilian: One minute late. Just one minute late and they made me wait quarter of an hour at the gate. And I'm going to miss a quarter of an hour's money. I don't know what my mum will say.

Hilda: (TO LIL) How much money are they starting you on?

Lil: Sixteen shillings they told me.

Penny: It'll go up each year by a shilling. You'll get a little bit more in time.

Lil: I've got to take it home to Mum unopened and she says she's going to give me some pocket money back. I've never had pocket money in my life before.

Penny: Oh that'll be nice won't it?

Lil: Do you know what I'm going to spend my first week's money on?

Penny: No what?

Lil: I'm going into Woolworths and I'm going to buy a quarter of Jameson's Raspberry Ruffles. They're my favourites.

Penny and Hilda: Ahh. Lovely.

Olive: I worked in Woolworths. The one up on Kilburn High Road and I was on the ice cream counter in the summer. There was always a queue. The kids were hell.

Lil: I wanna cornet please. A penny one. I don't want strawberry.

Penny: I was before her.

Olive: You wait your tun and line up proper.

Hilda: (AS MANAGER) Hurry along now miss. Watch what you're doing.

Penny: I want one of those.

Lil: I want vanilla.

Olive: Give us your money.

Penny: I want one of them.

Hilda: Be courteous please miss.

Penny: I don't want that. I didn't ask for that.

Olive: You asked for vanilla.

Penny: No I didn't. I want that one there.

Hilda: Watch your colours miss. You're doing it wrong.

Penny: Don't buy Woollies ice cream. It's horrible.

Olive: This is how it went on. It was murder. But when the summer ended, I went upstairs on to the toy counter getting ready for Christmas. I liked it very much up there. I had all the soldiers and animals and I spent ages lining them all up and they looked really nice in their various prices and sizes. I really loved that counter. It was fine until the kids came in.

Lil: Hey let's go in Woolworths cos we can walk all round the counter.

Penny and Hilda and Lilian: Yeah come on. Let's go to the toy counter.

Hilda: How much is this?

Olive: That's thruppence. Don't knock those soldiers down.

Hilda: Haven't you got something for a ha'penny in a smaller box?

Olive: Nothing for a ha'penny. Tuppence and thruppence. (TO PENNY) Put that down.

Lil: How much is this soldier?

Olive: That's a tuppenny one you've got there.

Lil: I can't afford tuppence.

Olive: Well put it down then if you don't want it.

Penny: (QUIETLY THIEVING)

Lil: Hey look at all these motors...

Hilda: Have you got any smaller painting books?

Olive: No I haven't. Nothing. They've knocked off two of my best soldiers. The sixpenny ones. The manager'll go mad. Oi you come back here. Those rotten kids.

Penny: Look what I've got. (SHOWING STOLEN THINGS)

Lil: Hey look at that.

Olive: The only thing that brought me back to sanity was listening to the old 78 records being played. They used to play them to advertise the sheet music. My favourite was Stardust. (EVERYONE HUMS BEHIND)

Olive: Every Saturday I'd treat myself to a pair of artificial silk stockings. Sixpence each leg. Cafe au Lait and Red Pepper. I used to turn them inside out and cut all the fringe out, sometimes with dire results. That way they used to look finer on the leg.

Lil: Ooh smashing, yes.

Penny: I bought perfume. Californian Poppy.

Lil: I bought my first ever record in Woolworths. It was Frank Sinatra.

Hilda: And I bought Phulnana face powder and Eve shampoo. I'd always wanted that because my face was always washed with soap.

Lilian: And I bought a lovely lipstick called Tangee. You put it on and it blended in with your own lovely colouring.

Lilian: Woolworths. Nothing was over sixpence.

I also worked in Woolworths on a printing machine on the end of one of the counters. We did 25 for 6 pence little visiting cards and sheets of headed notepaper.

Lil: Can I have some notepaper please.

Lilian: 25 sheets for 6 pence. I say, did you know you can have it printed with your own name and address for an extra sixpence.

Hilda: Have you got my cards done? Mrs Hilda Brownlow?

Lilian: Yes, here they are. Sixpence please.

Hilda: Thank you. Excuse me. You've done my name wrong on here. You've spelt Hilda with a B instead of a D. I can't go round leaving visiting cards saying HilBa, can I? You'll have to do them again.

Lilian: I'm very sorry. I've not been doing it long and it's easy to get the Bs and Ds muddled up. I'll have them ready in 20 minutes. I'm very sorry.

Lil: I don't think I'll bother thanks.

Penny: (ENTERING WITH OLIVE AS A COUPLE OF SHOW GIRLS) I want business cards please and there's my name and address.

Olive: And that's mine.

Lilian: Right. Are you sure you live at the Strand Palace Hotel?

Olive: Oh yes. That's where we live. (WINKS AT PENNY)

Penny: That's our business address.

Lilian: Well, I don't know if I should be doing this, but....

Penny: You just do it Miss. We'll collect them in an hour's time. We'll be at the Adelphi.

Olive: Here, should we get ourselves weighed? I'll go first.

Lil: There was a weighing machine in the store which told you your weight.

Hilda: (AS WEIGHING MACHINE, SPEAKING AS OLIVE GETS ON) Eight stone ten. (THEN AS LIL GETS ON AND OLIVE JUMPS ON BEHIND HER) Fifteen stone.

Lil: Get away. I don't weigh fifteen stone.

Hilda: (AS PENNY GETS ON AND OLIVE REPEATS JOKE) Sixteen stone.

Penny: Oh my God...I'll have to go on a diet.

Lil: The hours of work at Woolworths were:

Lilian: Monday Tuesday Wednesday 9am to 7pm.

Penny: Thursday: nine to one.

Everyone: Early closing. Hurray.

Hilda: Friday 9 in the morning to 8 in the evening

Lil: Saturday 9 in the morning to 9 in the evening.

Olive: I had my supper at home with my feet in a bowl of warm water.

Everyone: (YAWNING) Sunday was a day of recovery.

KITTY'S JOB AT PEAK FREANS BISCUITS (BUSY MUSIC BEHIND)

Kitty: My first job was at Peak Freans, the biscuit factory. I earned £1 a week and I gave it to my auntie (cos I was living with her at the time) and she gave me back half a crown. But the first week she let me keep it all to buy my first bra...a Berlei underlift bra, that was the best there was. I was a messenger at Peak Freans, going all around

the different floors. I loved it there. I went from one department to another and they let me have a go on all the jobs.

(OTHERS MAKE THE PRODUCTION LINE AND DO THE ACTIONS.) There was creaming room, where you added the cream to the custard cream biscuits. (KITTY RUNS ROUND AND JOINS LINE IN ANOTHER PLACE AND THEY CHANGE THE ACTIONS) Then there was the pudding room where the puddings were made and the smell of rum...well it made you feel drunk. (MOVE AGAIN AS BEFORE AND CHANGE ACTIONS) And then there was the biscuit packing department. Once we were packing biscuits to send out for the soldiers. And we all put little notes in with our names and addresses. (THEY ALL SCRIBBLE) Of course we never did get a reply, but it was fun. Then one day we all had a chance to stir the mixture for Princess Elizabeth's wedding cake and have a wish. (ALL STIR AND WISH) It was the biggest most beautiful thing you'd ever seen.

PIANO "MAIDEN'S PRAYER"  
IN SERVICE STORY (WITH EILEEN, LIZ, JOYCE AND PENNY PLAYING RENEE'S PART)

Penny: This is Renee's story and I am going to play her part. And Joyce is her mum.

Mum: (JOYCE): Now Renee you've been left school two weeks now and you're fourteen. We're going to have to start seeing about getting you a job. Have you thought about it at all?

Renee: Not really Mum. Haven't given it any thought.

Mum: Well I've heard about a job going. It's in service. Working in a lovely posh house at Greenwich, near the park.

Renee: I'm not sure about going into service Mum.

Mum: Well I did it. It's good training for when you're married. You've done a bit of cleaning for me. You'll be all right. Let's give it a try shall we.

Renee: All right Mum.

Mum: Give us your hand then. Here we are. (KNOCK AT DOOR) Mrs Johnstone?

Mrs. J: (LIZ) Yes. Can I help you.

Mum: I've brought my daughter Renee along for the job in service.

Mrs. J: Oh do come in. This is my mother.

Old Mrs. J: (EILEEN) Good afternoon. Nice to meet you.

Mum: Now would you like to give me an idea of what you would want from my girl.

Mrs. J: General household duties really. There's a list on her door to tell her what she needs to do. I'm very fussy and everything's got to be spotless. I don't mind if she takes a little bit longer to complete her work because she's got all day to do it in, but every job must be finished thoroughly.

Mum: How much a week are you going to pay her?

Mrs. J: Three and six.

Mum: Not very much is it?

Mrs. J: Ah but don't forget we'll supply the uniform.

Old Mrs.J: And her food. And she's a big girl.

Mrs. J: Yes, a very big girl.

Old Mrs. J: I think it's a good wage. You can do quite a lot with three and six.

Mrs. J: And she'll get every other Sunday afternoon off.

Mum: Is there any company for her here? Anyone her own age?

Old Mrs. J: Well, we've got two dogs.

Mrs. J: And a nice room of her own right up in the attic. Would you like to see it?

Mum: Yes please. Come on Rene, Let's go and have a look. (THEY SPIRAL ROUND WITH MRS J. TO INSPECT ROOM) It's a long way up isn't it.(STARTS SHIVERING) Cold up here isn't it. Got any more bedclothes? And where does she wash? In that bowl and jug?

Mrs. J: Yes that's right. Of course there's no hot water up here. You wouldn't expect that would you?

Mum: Well we'll give it a try. I'll bring her back tonight and we'll see how it goes.

Anne: I wasn't very keen and it felt like the end of the world leaving Mum and the family that first night. I cried myself to sleep. And first thing I saw when I woke up was this long list on the door of what I had to do.

(THE TWO WOMEN RECITE THE FOLLOWING LIST, WITH RENEE TRYING TO DO EVERYTHING. *PIANO BEHIND...BUSY MUSIC INTO MAIDEN'S PRAYER*)

Mrs.J: Up at six o'clock every morning. Clear the grates. Lay and light the fires by 6.30.

Old Mrs J: My early morning tea in bed at 7.

Mrs. J: Lay the breakfast. Serve the breakfast.

Old Mrs. J: Clear the breakfast things away. Wash up.

Mrs.J: Check which windows need cleaning and do one lot every day.

Old Mrs. J: Keep the boiler going so there's hot water.

Mrs. J: Sweep the drawing room and dust.

Old Mrs J: Sweep two flights of stairs and on Tuesdays polish the brass stair rods.

Mrs J: Scrub the front steps and polish the front door handle.

Old Mrs J: Then take the dogs for a walk.

Mrs. J: Prepare all the vegetables when you come back.

Old Mrs J: Serve and clear the lunch and wash up after.

Mrs. J: You get an hour off in the afternoons.

Old Mrs.J: Except on Friday when you polish the silver.

Mrs.J: Then there's the ironing to do and the daily hand washing.

Old Mrs. J: Then supper to see to and clear and wash up.

Mrs.J: Then you can do what you like in your own room.

(MUSIC SLOWS DOWN AS SHE SLUMPS)

Renee: It was very hard work and I had no-one to talk to. I couldn't wait for Mum to come and visit me.

Mum: Hello dear. How are you? All right?

Renee: Not really Mum. I don't like it here. I'm ever so lonely. Can't I come home?

Mum: I'll have a word with them. It's perishing cold up here isn't it. I think we'll try and get you home for Christmas. (GOES TO THE TWO BOSSES) Er Mrs Johnson I'd like a word please.

Mrs.J: Yes of course. We're very happy with Renee. She's a good worker.

Old Mrs. J: And she's a lovely girl.

Mum: Well she's not happy I'm afraid.

Old Mrs.J: Well I don't know why not. I even let her listen to the wireless with me last week when Princess Marina's wedding to the Duke of Kent was on. She did fall asleep, but I think she enjoyed it.

Mrs.J: That was a big treat for her.

Mum: Well, it's a bit lonely for her.

Mrs. J: Well she's got the dogs for company.

Mum: And the money's not much for what you're asking her to do. I've seen that list on the door of her jobs. You're asking too much of her.

Old Mrs. J: Well she's a big healthy girl.

Mrs.J: Well we could put her wages up by sixpence to four shillings a week. How about that?

Mum: Well, I'll let her stay till Christmas and then I'll have her home and we'll sort it out with her dad.

Old Mrs.J: Oh she can't go home for Christmas.

Mrs. J: You're joking. We've got a house full over Christmas. She won't have a day off.

Mum: Well we have our own family Christmas. Her Gran comes over and we have a chicken and everything. Of course my girl'll want home for that.

Old Mrs. J: I suppose we could give her the Boxing Day afternoon off, couldn't we?

Mum: I'll tell you what Misses. You find someone else as from now. She's coming home with me tonight. I'm not having my girl made a skivvy. And that room's not fit for anyone to sleep in. She's going to have Christmas with us. Come on Rene. Pack up your things. We're going now.

(SHOCK HORROR REACTIONS FROM LADIES)

Old Mrs J: Well I never. What a liberty!

Mrs. J: Would you believe it?

BARBARA'S STORY

SONG "WE'RE IN THE MONEY" as girls march on robot-like.

*We're in the money, we're in the money*

*We've got a lot of what it takes to get along*

*We're in the money, come on my honey*

*Let's lend it, spend it, send it rolling along.*

Barbara: We've arrived in the vaults of the Bank of England. That's where I started work. We're going to count bank notes. (THEY DO SO FURIOUSLY. MAKE PAPERY SOUND) The security is very tight. (ALL SHUSH AND LOOK BEHIND THEM FIRST LEFT, THEN RIGHT. THEN NOD AND COUNT MORE WITH PAPER SOUND) Every now and then there was great excitement. Someone shouted:

Hilda: Hey. Guess what I've found.

Everyone: A forgery.

Hilda: Look, no watermark. (ALL NOD)

Barbara: You got a day off for that.

Hilda: Hooray. (EVERYONE CHEERS HER)

Barbara: Mostly though it was extremely monotonous and sometimes it got to you and you went berserk. (ALL DO SO AND THEN MARCH OFF THE WAY THEY CAME SINGING "IN THE MONEY" SONG).

JOYCE'S STORY: (JOYCE, EILEEN, BARBARA, ANNE, LIZ, KITTY)

Joyce: I started work at Siemens in Charlton on my 14th birthday. I was put in a dingy little office with no windows in it. There was just me and one old man writing away at a roll top desk in the corner.

Barbara: You'll sit there. That's your desk there. You're doing the time sheets, when people clock in and clock out. Different departments. ABC. Put them in alphabetical order. Understand? (JOYCE NODS) I'll be at my desk up here.

Joyce: Yes. (SHE STARTS WORK DESPAIRINGLY) Oh this is awful. I wanted to work in London with my friends, but Mum and Dad wanted me near home.

Barbara: All right young lady? Know what you're doing? I think we've got someone else here called Pleasant. You got a relation here?

Joyce: Yes, my uncle.

Barbara: Does he like it here?

Joyce: I don't know. He's been here a long while.

Barbara: Oh well, he must like it then.

Joyce: (TO AUDIENCE) Well I didn't. I hated it. I was so bored. This old man sitting in the corner (BARBARA COUGHS) coughing all day. (JOYCE MOVES AWAY

FROM DESK) I persuaded Mum to let me go and work in a smart London office in Cheries Street. They made number plates for cars.

Miss Adams: Good morning. You're the new Junior Clerk. I'm glad to see you haven't got any make-up on. Now you must dust and polish the leather tops of all the desks, and change the water for the flowers and arrange them nicely and make the tea in the morning and the afternoon. And you'll have some filing to do. All right.  
(JOYCE NODS ENTHUSIASTICALLY)

Joyce: (TO AUDIENCE) I loved it all. It was such a smart place to work and I made friends there. Soon I got transferred to work with some of them in the order department. This was in the middle of the number plate factory above where all the boys were working. (SHE MOVES INTO OFFICE WITH KITTY AND BARBARA, WHO WELCOME HER) I'm coming to work with you. Hey you can see everything from here.

Kitty: Yes, that's the boss's son supervising them down there. He's got his eye on Barbara. He's looking up here Barabara. Wave. (SHE DOES) (PHONE RINGS)

Joyce: I spoke very badly till I went there. They taught you to speak very clearly.  
(PHONE RINGS. JOYCE TAKES CALL AND SPEAKS IN SPECIAL VOICE)  
Hello order department. One pair of pressed plates, bevelled for Sunbeam talbot. One oblong and one square.

Eileen: That's it. WXB, 357.

Joyce: (Posh Voice) W/William, X/Xmas, B/Brother. Thrrree, Fife, Seffen. Thank you. Will you collect? (OWN VOICE, TO AUDIENCE) And soon I got to know the voices from the different garages. And we really had a laugh.

Eileen: Oh by the way, is that Joyce there? This is Humphrey.

Joyce: (STILL SPECIAL VOICE, BUT MORE FLIRTATIOUS) How are you?

Eileen: I'm very well. Now what about that evening out you promised me? (MUCH GIGGLING FROM GIRLS) You didn't show up last time.

Joyce: Sorry. I fell over on the way. (MUCH GIGGLING)

Eileen: Oh dear. I hope you're all right. How about this Friday evening? Outside the Corner House.

Joyce: We used to make all these dates, but we never actually kept them. We three used to walk home together arm in arm and go to near where we'd said we'd meet them.

Kitty: Do you reckon that's him?

Barbara: Don't let him see us.

Kitty: Oh look, he's got a moustache.

(EVERYONE GIGGLES AND POINTS) We didn't really want to meet them it was all just a game. And my friend really did marry the managing director's son.

SONG: *Put your arms around me honey, hold me tight  
Cuddle up and snuggle up with all your might.  
Oh, oh when will you roll those eyes  
Eyes that I just idolise  
When you look at me my heart begins to float  
Then it starts a-knocking like a motor-boat  
Oh, oh, I never knew anyone like you.*

EILEEN AND ANNE IN THE PRINT. (EILEEN, LILIAN, ANNE, JOYCE, JOAN)

Eileen: I wanted to work in a flower shop but my mother said No. I've got you a job in the print. Well, you didn't argue with your mum, did you? So off I went to London Bridge on the Monday after my fourteenth birthday. (SEES ANNE AND CALLS OUT) Anne. Anne. Hang on. (EILEEN PUSHES THROUGH IMAGINARY CROWD SAYING LOTS OF SORRIES AND EXCUSE ME'S)

Anne: Hello Eileen. Where are you off to?

Eileen: I'm going to Upper Thames Street. I'm starting at Hodgsons Printers this morning over the River.

Anne: Ooh that's good. That's where I'm working. I'll show you the way.

Eileen: It's ever so busy isn't it?

Anne: It's like this every day. You'll get used to it. Here we are. What department are you in?

Eileen: I'm going to be on envelopes.

Anne: Oh I'm in the binding department. You go in that door and I'll see you lunchtime.

Joyce: (SHOUTING AS IT'S NOISY) Morning. You the new envelope girl?

Eileen: (SHOUTING) Yes. I'm Eileen. (TO AUDIENCE IN NORMAL VOICE) It was ever so noisy and dingy in there.

Joyce: (SHOUTING) You'll be working with me. You see the envelopes in that pile. Well you lift them over and seal them with that machine and pile the finished ones up

there. (INDICATING RIGHT TO LEFT) Do as many as you can. Right? (THEY START) Oi, you'll have to mind your elbow cos you see you keep knocking mine.

Eileen: (SHOUTING) I can't help it cos I'm left-handed.

Joan: (AS MRS ROWBOTTOM, ALSO SHOUTING) Hello hello what are we doing here then?

Joyce: (SHOUTING) That's Miss Rowbottom, the forelady.

Joan: What's all this mess? What's all this waste?

Joyce: It's the new girl. She's left-handed. Some of her envelopes are inside out, and they've had to be scrapped.

Joan: Oh not another left-handed one. I thought we weren't going to employ any more left-handed girls.

Eileen: I can't help it.

Joan: Well, you'll just have to fit in and adapt. It's simple enough isn't it? Joyce, you watch what she's doing will you? I'll come back in half an hour and see if you've improved.

Eileen: Oh I don't like her. She's a miserable old bitch, isn't she?

Joyce: 'Fraid so.

(ANNE NOW STARTS WORKING AT HER TREADLE BINDER)

Joan: (SHOUTING AT HER) Quicker. I say, quicker.

Anne: I can't work any quicker on this machine.

Joan: This is useless. How long have you been doing this?

Anne: Not long.

Joan: Oh dear, this has all got to be done by lunchtime. Now watch me. (DEMONSTRATES AND STAPLES FINGERS TOGETHER.) Oh my God I've stapled my fingers together. (GOES OFF SCREAMING WHILE GIRLS FALL ABOUT. WHISTLE GOES)

Joyce: Come on Eileen, let's go and have some lunch.

Eileen: Ooh yes....Oh hello Anne. What do you think of that Miss Rowbottom stapling her fingers together?

Anne: Serves her right. (THEY LAUGH AND WALK ARM IN ARM)

Joyce: Careful down these steps to the river. It's a bit wet. (THEY EAT SANDWICHES AND THROW BITS TO BIRDS)

Eileen: Look at that big crane over there.

Anne: They're unloading tomatoes from the Canaries.

Eileen: Look, there's a police launch. Let's wave to them. (GIRLS CALL OUT AND WAVE)

Joyce: Ooh look at that big liner over there Eileen. It's a P & O liner cos it's got red funnels. I wanted to go as a stewardess on a liner. My dad wouldn't let me go. He said if you're a stewardess it's not glamorous. All you have to do is clean up after people when they're sea-sick.

Eileen: Better than making envelopes though, isn't it? (DREAMILY) And I could've come with you and arranged all the flowers on the tables.

Joyce: Just think. We could've been on that one. (MUSIC UNDER THIS OF "RED SAILS IN THE SUNSET") I bet it's going to India. We'd have been sailing out to the Indian Ocean.

All sing: *Red sails in the sunset, way out on the sea  
Oh carry my loved one home safely to me.  
He sailed at the dawning, all day I've been blue.  
Red sails in the sunset, I'm trusting in you.*

HILDA'S STORY:

Hilda: When I was 14, I came back from evacuation and I worked with my mum. We had a second hand clothes shop and we lived at the back of the shop.

Mum: (JOYCE) Bit quiet today Hild. Not many people about. See all that new stuff I got last night.

Hilda: Yeah, how much did you pay for that?

Mum: Only tuppence a bundle. Nice bit of woollies.

Hilda: Ooh we could make a bit on that Mum. (ENTER EILEEN AND LILIAN)

Mum: Oh here we go look. Morning.

Lilian: Morning.

Eileen: Let's see what they've got today. (THEY START SORTING CLOTHES)

Mum: That one never buys nothing anyway. Don't bother with her.

Eileen: How much do you want for that old skirt?

Hilda: Sixpence.

Eileen: Sixpence? Well it's not new is it? It smells. It's got a funny smell. You smell that.

Hilda: It's not bad. You only need to wash it. It's quite nice.

Mum: You'll not get better than that for sixpence.

Eileen: Oh no, no...

Lilian: I want a cardigan please.

Mum: Show her that one over there Hild.

Hilda: I've got just the thing for you. Nice red one. (LILIAN TRIES IT) I was always good at dressing people, finding what would make them look good.

Lilian: Oh lovely. I like that.

Mum: How about a skirt to go with that? Show her that black one Hilda. Came in Saturday. It'd go nice with that. (LILIAN WRIGGLES INTO SKIRT )

Hilda: Mum and I worked it together. Good team. (LILIAN TWIZZLES IN SKIRT) Very nice that is.

Mum: That's a shilling.

Lilian: Right, I'll have that. Morning. (GOES, PASSING PENNY COMING IN)

Mum: Oh look Hild, here's old Big Hoof. You see to her.

Penny: Ere where's that other shoe you promised to get me? I can't walk around with one shoe, can I?

Hilda: We've had nothing in to go with it. Are you sure you've not got it at home?

Penny: You calling me a liar? I'll have my money back on that shoe. Can't expect a poor woman to go throwing money away on one shoe.

Mum: Ere don't come the old soldier. Come back in the week dear and we'll try and sort you out another pair.

Hilda: Of course a lot of people didn't come in to buy. They just came in for a chat.  
(EILEEN AND LILIAN JOIN PENNY AND JOYCE JOINS IN GOSSIP)

Joyce: What about them down the road then?

Eileen: I know...shocking isn't it?

Penny: I thought it'd turn out like that. Heard 'em fighting outside the pub the other night.

Lilian: What a racket. Couldn't help hearing it.

Eileen: And her with all them children.

Hilda: (LOITERING NEAR) I listened in and I learned ever so much about life that way.

Joyce: I've heard there's a baby on the way.

Eileen: And he'll not marry her.

Penny: She don't want him. Got her eye on another I've heard.

Lilian: Shocking isn't it? (EVERYONE TUTS PLEASURABLY.)

Hilda: Course when Dad came in (ENTER OLIVE AS DAD)

Dad: Ere Rose, where's my tea? I'm bloomin hungry mate. (MUM SHOOS EVERYONE OUT)

Mum: I've been too busy to get your tea. (ASIDE TO HILDA) Quick Hilda. Light the oven. Put his chops in.

Dad: You've been talking all the time. You lot can clear off now. (DAD RATTLES NEWSPAPER)

Mum: You can stop that. You're only rattling that paper for a row, aren't you? Ere take this bob and go down to the Lion and get yourself a pint. You're gettin on my nerves. (DAD GOES OFF)

Hilda: He was always in a good mood after a couple of pints. In fact if I brought a fella home he'd ask "You a drinkin man?" and if they was, he was happy. My dad never stopped buying and selling. (RE-ENTER DAD MORE CHEERFUL)

Dad: Ere Rose come outside and see what I've got on the horse and cart.

Mum: Come on Hild. Let's see what he's got now.

Dad: It's a piano. Smashing. Iron frame. Solid bit of wood. Look at that. (DAD GIVES SHORT BURST OF BARROW BOY SONG)

Hilda: (TO AUDIENCE) Anyone wanna lovely pianna. Listen to that. It's a good'un. Iron frame. Forty pounds.

Lilian: I'll have it

Hilda: Sold to the lady over there.

Olive: I'll bring it round tomorrer duck.

Hilda: (TO AUDIENCE) We sold that piano in five minutes. We sold everything.

Dad: (TO HILDA) You're a natural at selling Hild. Proper little business woman. Much better than your brothers. They couldn't give it away, let alone sell it. You're coming with me girl tomorrow on the market.

(START SONG....BARROW BOY BEHIND THIS AND DAD AND HILDA MIME HORSE AND CART TRIP) *All my life I wanted to be a barrow boy  
A barrow boy I've always wanted to be*

Hilda: So sure enough next morning I was with Dad on the horse and cart going across the Woolwich Ferry to Beresford Square market in Woolwich.

(SONG BEHIND AND HORSES' HOOVES)

Dad: Steady girl. Woa up.

Hilda: Dad and me set up the stall, all tinware, kettles, baking trays.

Dad: (TO CROWD) Come on then. Come and get your tinware. Right Hild, I'll leave it to you. I've got to have a word with Harry about some stuff he's got for me.

Hilda: (NERVOUSLY) Oh Dad, don't leave me. they'll all be hollering and shouting. Oh well....(SHOUTS OUT TO AUDIENCE) Ere y'are...one and fourpence ha'penny a four pint kettle. All sound. No leakers. I'll show you. See this. I'll pour in the water from this cup and you can see. Look at that. No leakers. Ere y'are lady. And one over there. Just coming over.

Dad: Told you you could do it girl. (TO AUDIENCE) That's it. All gone. Got to be quick for a bargain. Home we go Hilda.

(BARROW BOY SONG BY ALL WITH HILDA AND DAD ON CART)  
*All my life I wanted to be a barrow boy  
A barrow boy I've always wanted to be  
I own the title, it sticks to me with pride  
I'm a coster, a coster from over the other side*

*I turn me back upon the whole of society  
I'm sleeping where the weeping willows grow  
Three pots a shilling  
That's how I earn my living  
I ought to have been a barrow boy years ago  
Get off me barra  
I ought to have been a barra boy years ago.*

#### JOAN'S STORY (WITH EVERYONE)

Joan: Every year the firm I worked for organised an outing to the sea-side. All the women in the factory dressed up to the nines and we all set off for Brighton in a big charabanc.

ALL CAST SING AS THEY GREET EACH OTHER AND BOARD CHARABANC  
MAKE COACH BY STANDING IN TWOS, SIDEWAYS TO AUDIENCE AND  
SWAYING AND POINTING

*Dear old Mrs Brown fed up with London town  
Thought she'd like a holiday by the sea  
Thought she would decide to have a chara ride  
Seats are very comfy and it doesn't hurt your pride  
As we started off upon the spree  
The conductor said to all the company:*

*Let's all sing the charabanc song  
Oh it's a lovely day today  
Ain't you glad you came?  
And Mrs. What-her-name  
Half a crown to Brighton  
And we'll bring you back again  
Pull up Bill at the bottom of the hill  
We must have a gargle on the way  
Let's all sing the charabanc song  
Oh it's a lovely day today.*

Kitty: Oh look, there's the sea.

Lil: Let's go for a paddle.

ALL FACE FRONT AND DIP TOES IN WATER. SHOUTS OF "COCKLES AND  
WHELKS" and "FISH AND CHIPS" and "STICKS OF ROCK" "KISS ME  
QUICK"

KEEP MUSIC UNDERNEATH THIS AND ALL GET BACK ON BOARD TO:

*The day was nearly done  
We'd finished up our fun  
Everybody feeling merry and bright  
With sticks of rock galore and shells from off the shore*

*Mrs Brown without a frown but looking rather tight  
Suddenly she staggered to her feet  
And said "Once more before we end our treat":  
Let's all sing the charabanc song  
Oh it's a lovely day today*

(HUM UNDER JOAN SPEAKING)

Joan: I'm going to be sorry to lose all the friends I've made at work. But I'm getting married. Ron's named the day. You have to leave when you get married, but I've invited all my friends from here to the wedding. I will miss them though.

Kitty: Come on Joan. Here we go.

*EVERYONE: Let's all sing the charabanc song  
Oh it's a lovely day today  
Ain't you glad you came?  
And Mrs. What-her-name  
Half a crown to Brighton  
And we'll bring you back again  
Pull up Bill at the bottom of the hill  
We must have a gargle on the way  
Let's all sing the charabanc song  
Oh oh oh it's a lovely day today.*