

KURT WEILL

ELMER RICE

LANGSTON HUGHES

STREET SCENE



Orchestra and Chorus of Opera North
James Holmes

opera
north



Opera North presents

STREET SCENE

A Broadway Opera

Music by Kurt Weill

Book by Elmer Rice

Lyrics by Langston Hughes and Elmer Rice

Musical Arrangements and Orchestration by Kurt Weill

With

Giselle Allen, Alex Banfield, Gillene Butterfield, Robert Hayward

Also Featuring:

Michelle Andrews, Quirijn de Lang, Rodney Vubya

Orchestra and Chorus of Opera North

James Holmes, Conductor

Matthew Eberhardt, Stage Director

Recorded live at Leeds Grand Theatre, UK, January 2020

This recording made possible in part through funding
from the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music.

"Ain't it Awful the Heat, Ain't it Awful?"

The cast spread around the "inside out" tenement house set of Opera North's 2020 production.

CAST

The Murrant family
Anna Murrant
Frank Murrant *her husband*
Rose Murrant *their daughter*
Willie Murrant *their young son*

Giselle Allen
Robert Hayward
Gillene Butterfield
Louis Parker

The Kaplan family
Abraham Kaplan
Sam Kaplan *his son*
Shirley Kaplan *Sam's elder sister*

Dean Robinson
Alex Banfield
Amy Freston

The Jones family
Emma Jones
George Jones *her husband*
Mae Jones *their daughter*
Vincent Jones *their son*

Claire Pascoe
Richard Mosley-Evans
Michelle Andrews
Christopher Nairne

The Fiorentino family
Greta Fiorentino *a German neighbor*
Lippo Fiorentino *her Italian husband*

Miranda Bevin
Christopher Turner

The Olsen family
Olga Olsen *a Swedish neighbor*
Carl Olsen *her husband*

Amy J Payne
John Savournin

The Hildebrand family
Laura Hildebrand
Jennie Hildebrand *her daughter*
Charlie Hildebrand *her young son*
Mary Hildebrand *her youngest daughter*

Victoria Sharp
Laura Kelly
Oliver Wright
Hazel Read

Other residents and visitors to the tenement

Henry Davis *the janitor*
Grace Davis *his young daughter*
Daniel Buchanan *a neighbour*
Dick McGann *a friend of Mae Jones*
Harry Easter *Rose Murrant's boss*
Steve Sankey *the milk collector*
First Nursemaid
Second Nursemaid
Dr John Wilson
Officer Harry Murphy
James Henry *City Marshal*
Fred Cullen *his assistant*
Salvation Army Girls

Byron Jackson
Sara Belal
Stuart Laing
Rodney Vubya
Quirijn de Lang
Paul Gibson
Lorna James
Hazel Croft
Jeremy Peaker
Ivan Sharpe
Nicholas Butterfield
Tim Ochala-Greenough
Kathryn Stevens
Rachel J Mosley
Niamh Murphy
Benjamin O'Connor
Charlotte Carr,
Travis Clark,
Henry Kent,
Annabelle Lee,
Blaize Middleton,
Eve Midgley,
Max Scholey,
Keira Smallwood,
Alexandra Wilkinson

Violin girl
Grocery boy
Children

CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor
Director
Set and Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Choreographer / Movement Director
Sound Designer
Assistant Conductor
Assistant Director
Chorus Master
Youth Chorus Master
Chief Repetiteur
Dialect Coach
Library Manager
Librarian

James Holmes
Matthew Eberhardt
Francis O'Connor
Howard Hudson
Gary Clarke
Gareth Tucker for Autograph Sound
Catriona Beveridge
Rosie Purdie
Oliver Rundell
Nicholas Shaw
Philip Voldman
Emma Woodvine
Andrew Fairley
Victoria Bellis

ORCHESTRA

First Violins

Andy Long (Leader),
Byron Parish, Michael Ardron,
Susannah Simmons, Brian
Reilly, Tamsin Symons,
Claire Osborne, Sam Parker
Katherine New, Cristina
Ocaña Rosado, Louise
Latham, Catherine Baker,
Alison Dixon, Ian Bone
Lourenço Macedo Sampaio,
Anne Trygstad, Clare
Gardiner, Vivienne Campbell
Daniel Bull, Andrew Fairley,
Zöe Long, Damion Browne
Genna Spinks, James Goode

Second Violins

Violas

Cellos

Basses
Flute / Piccolo
Oboe
Clarinets

Bass Clarinet
Bassoon
Horns
Trumpets

Trombones

Timpani
Percussion
Harp
Piano / Celeste

David Moseley
Catherine Lowe
Sarah Masters,
John Mellor, Adam Slater
John Mellor
David Baker
Robert Ashworth, John Pratt
Tracey Redfern,
Michael Woodhead
Robert Burtenshaw,
Christian Jones
Mark Wagstaff
Christopher Bradley
Céline Saout
Philip Voldman

Act 1

- [1] **Introduction and Opening Ensemble:**
“Ain’t it Awful the Heat?” 5:48
- [2] **Blues:**
“I Got a Marble and a Star” 1:35
- [3] **Scene and Trio:**
“Get a Load of That” 4:21
- [4] **Arietta:**
“When a Woman has a Baby” 2:46
- [5] **Scene** 2:37
- [6] **Aria:**
“Somehow I Never Could Believe” 6:56
- [7] **Scene and Quartet:**
“Get a Load of That” 3:40
- [8] **Ice-Cream Sextet** 9:05
- [9] **Aria:**
“Let Things Be Like They Always Was” 3:57
- [10] **Scene and Ensemble:**
“Wrapped in a Ribbon and Tied in a Bow” 8:15
- [11] **Arioso:**
“Lonely House” 3:42
- [12] **Scene and Song:**
“Wouldn’t You Like to be on Broadway?” 5:20
- [13] **Cavatina and Scene:**
“What Good Would the Moon Be?” 6:15
- [14] **Song, Scene and Dance:**
“Moon-Faced, Starry-Eyed” 8:10
- [15] **Duet:**
“Remember That I Care” 8:11
- [16] **Finaletto** 3:54

Act II

- [17] **Introduction and Children’s Game:**
“Catch Me if You Can” 10:45
- [18] **Scene and Trio:**
“There’ll be Trouble” 7:21
- [19] **Song:**
“A Boy Like You” 4:52
- [20] **Duet and Scene:**
“We’ll Go Away Together” 4:24
- [21] **Scene** 4:43
- [22] **Scene** 2:03
- [23] **Choral Scene and Lament:**
“The Woman Who Lived Up There” 5:07
- [24] **Interlude** 2:56
- [25] **Scene and Lullaby** 5:10
- [26] **Scene:**
“She never opened her eyes again.” 3:14
- [27] **Finale:**
“I Loved Her Too” 4:19
- [28] “Don’t Forget the Lilac Bush” 9:02



Anna Maurant and her daughter Rose.

"The Story of Street Scene"

Number 346 is no different than the other brownstone tenements on the block, nor are its occupants any different than the Irish, the Poles, the Italians, and the Swedes who crowd the cold-water flats in the other houses. On a sultry June evening, the residents sit on the front stoop, complain about the heat and gossip about their neighbors. The neighbors gossip about Mrs. Buchanan's new baby, about the younger generation and about Mr. Kaplan's distress over "the skendals in the kapitalist press." But most of all they gossip about...

... the **Maurrants** – Frank, Anna, Rose, and Willie. Frank, a stagehand, is a hard man and a drinker, stern with his family. Anna, his wife, yearns for affection, for a little happiness; a kind, warm hand to touch, smiling eyes to smile back into hers. She has found that with Sankey, the collector for the milk company. Willie, it seems, can get along without his mother, and Rose is in love with the son of...

... the **Kaplans** – Abraham, Shirley, and Sam. Sam, who finds in books an escape from the squalor of his environment, appreciates Rose's longing to get away from Number 346. His sister, Shirley, pleads with Rose to leave him alone, to allow him to finish his law studies. Meanwhile, there is no escape for Sam and Rose from the gossiping and prying of...

The Neighbors:

The Joneses – George, Emma, Mae, and Vincent. Although Emma's daughter, Mae, is a gin-drinking floosie and her son, Vincent, is a bully, Emma criticizes everyone, including "them dumb foreigners" and "that alley cat, Mrs. Maurrant."

The Fiorentinos – Lippo and Gretta. Lippo teaches the violin and is too busy enjoying life to concern himself with the failings of his neighbors. He delegates to his childless wife, Gretta, the responsibility for expressing any moral indignation.

The Olsens – Carl and Olga. Mrs. Olsen takes time out from minding her teething baby to spy on Anna and Sankey.

The Hildebrands – Laura and her children Jennie, Mary, and Charlie. It's a busy day for the Hildebrands; Jennie receives her diploma "wrapped in a ribbon and tied in a bow" and the entire family is being evicted.

[Transcribed from original souvenir program, 1947]

Tragedy inevitably strikes Number 346 when Frank Maurrant returns home unexpectedly and finds his wife in the arms of her lover. Anna's final street scene is played before the unrelenting eyes of the neighbors. The Fugitive, Frank Maurrant, is finally captured. In taking leave of Rose, he is able, for the first time, to communicate that tenderness which he had so long denied his wife Anna. At Number 346, the residents settled again on the front stoop to complain about the heat and gossip about the neighbors.





My Most Experimental Play

By Elmer Rice

The exterior of a typical Manhattan brownstone walk-up housing ten or a dozen families became the sole background for my new play, *Street Scene*. But the house was much more than a background; it was an integral part of the play. It might almost be said that it was the play. I had been strongly influenced by the work of the seventeenth-century French painter Claude Lorrain, in most of whose pictures there was a dominant architectural unit, usually ornate and romanticized. In the foreground were groups of figures, seen always in relation to the pervasive structure. Though it was a far cry from the idyllic classical painting of Claude to a realistic play about modern New York, I was excited by the concept of a large number of diverse individuals whose behavior and relationships were largely conditioned by their accidental common occupancy of a looming architectural pile. In keeping with this plastic approach, I thought of calling the play "Landscape with Figures." But that seemed a little too esoteric, so I borrowed another term from painting, "Street Scene."

The play is, by all odds, the most experimental I have ever attempted, a fact not readily apparent to the reader or spectator, for its construction depends not upon novel or striking technological devices, but upon concealed architectonics. Blending and arranging unrelated elements into a patterned mosaic and introducing the many characters in a seemingly natural way posed technical problems of the greatest difficulty. I was helped by concert-going, as well as by picture-gazing. No musician, I yet had some grasp of the structure of symphonic music: the statement, restatement and development of themes, the interplay of contrasting instruments. Unconsciously I utilized my slight knowledge of the principles of orchestration. From the time *Street Scene* was first produced, various composers had talked to me about the possibility of making an opera of it.

[From Elmer Rice, *Minority Report: An Autobiography*.]

My Broadway Opera

By Kurt Weill

The special brand of musical theater in which I have been interested from the start is a sort of “dramatic musical,” a simple, strong story told in musical terms, interweaving the spoken word and the sung word so that the singing takes over naturally whenever the emotion of the spoken word reaches a point where music can “speak” with great effect. This form of theater has its special attraction for the composer, because it allows him to use a great variety of musical idioms to write music that is both serious and light, operatic and popular, emotional and sophisticated, orchestral and vocal. Each show of this type has to create its own style, its own texture, its own relationship between words and music, because music becomes a truly integral part of the play – it helps to deepen the emotions and clarify the structure.

It was in 1946 that I decided the time had come to try a real opera for Broadway, not, of course, an opera in the traditional European sense, but an American opera, written for the Broadway theater. I chose one of the finest American plays, Elmer Rice's *Street Scene*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1929. It was a realistic drama of life in a New York tenement house. Since I was faced with a real-life story, I decided not to use recitative (which would have been too stylized), but to replace it with a sort of spoken recitative or dialogue underscored by the orchestra, connecting the musical numbers which consist of

arias, ensembles, songs, duets and dances. We decided to do it as a musical version of the play and to cast it entirely with singers, so that the emotional climax could be expressed in music, and to use spoken dialogue to further the realistic action.

Because the music had to grow out of the characters, we recognized that the lyrics should attempt to lift the everyday language of the people into a simple, unsophisticated poetry. We chose Langston Hughes for the job. As soon as I began to think about the music, I discovered that the play lent itself to a great variety of music, just as the streets of New York themselves embrace music of many lands and many people. I had an opportunity to use different forms of musical expression, from popular songs to operatic ensembles, music of mood and drama, music of young love, music of passion and death – and, overall, the music of a hot summer evening in New York. We found an excellent cast of American singers, headed by Polyna Stoska, Anne Jeffreys, Brian Sullivan, and Norman Cordon. When it opened at the Adelphi Theatre in January 1947, critics hailed *Street Scene* as the first truly American opera.

[Compiled freely from Weill's article “Score for a Play,” which was published in *The New York Times* on January 5, 1947, and a press release on Playwrights' Company stationery that included comments by Weill about *Street Scene* as a “real opera for Broadway.”]

The original Broadway cast of *Street Scene* arrayed before famed Broadway designer Jo Mielziner's looming set.





Street Scene's creators: Kurt Weill, Elmer Rice, Langston Hughes, 1947. Photo: Eileen Darby.

WEILL'd RICE Making *Street Scene* into an Opera

Kim H. Kowalke

Genesis

As Kurt Weill was composing *Street Scene* in 1946, he told his brother Hans that “it is without doubt the most important piece I’ve written since *Die Bürgschaft* [1931], and it might turn out to be the best of all my works.” Shortly before his death just four years later, he reaffirmed that appraisal: “Seventy-five years from now, *Street Scene* will be remembered as my major work.” It represented, he claimed, the culmination of two dreams: 1. “a special brand of musical theater that would completely integrate drama and music, spoken word, song, and movement,” toward which most of his previous works had aspired; 2. an “opera on Broadway,” intended for America, written about America, and stylistically reflective of America. Indeed, when Chappell published the vocal score in 1948, the subtitle of the work had evolved into the more incisive “An American Opera.”

Weill had first encountered Rice’s Pulitzer Prize-winning drama in German translation as *Die Strasse* in Berlin in 1930, and a year later King Vidor’s film starring Sylvia Sydney. Even then, he thought it “the perfect vehicle for a musical play.” When he first approached Rice in 1936 during rehearsals for *Johnny Johnson*, the playwright said that other composers had proposed musical adaptations, but he thought “a show of that type” would be premature. Weill didn’t give up. When the two discussed it again ten years later, he was no Broadway novice, after *Knickerbocker Holiday* (1938), *Lady in the Dark* (1941), and *One Touch of Venus* (1943). He was convinced that Broadway represented “the living theater in this country, and American opera should be part of the living theater.” Now he managed to convince Rice that the time was right. They agreed to recruit Langston Hughes, the leading poet of the Harlem Renaissance (widely recognized as the Black successor to Walt Whitman), to “lift the everyday language of the play into simple, unsophisticated poetry.” (One can sense how bold such a decision was in 1945 by noting that Hughes was not allowed to stay with the company during the Philadelphia tryout because of the hotel’s racist policies.)

Weill observed that Rice’s drama was “constructed very much like Greek tragedy, with tight unity of time and place and the inescapability of fate.” In preparation for tackling its musical adaptation, Weill studied Verdi’s treatment of Shakespeare. But Verdi didn’t

have Shakespeare looking over his shoulder. The creative process turned out to be more of a collision of conflicting conceptions than a harmonious collaboration, though Weill and Hughes developed a solid working relationship. After a year of intense labor, after drafts of several musical sequences had been discarded, what emerged was nearer to Rice’s original “slice-of-life” play than to Weill’s own scenario, which had called for music to assume a larger role in carrying the action. In the end, the libretto is a remarkably faithful abridgement of the play rather than the musical adaptation Weill had envisioned initially. Ultimately Rice received co-lyricist credit for ten of the twenty-one musical numbers, because Hughes, under pressure, had hewed so closely to the text of the play in those instances.

In trying (unsuccessfully) to recruit Rouben Mamoulian (the director of *Porgy and Bess* and *Carousel*) to helm the production, Weill summarized the few changes envisioned for the 1929 play: “The political element will be considerably toned down. The love story between Sam and Rose will be more passionate. Sam, instead of always being the beaten Jew, will be the young poet trying to adjust to the world and to the hateful surroundings he is living in. His aria, ‘Lonely House,’ is almost a theme song for the show: the house as a prison for the human spirit.” (Weill’s comment inspired Mike Gerard’s design for the cover art of this release.) The libretto also omits much of the derogatory ethnic commentary in the original, as some of these slurs were unthinkable in light of events between 1929 and 1946. It also added the character of Henry Davis, an African-American janitor, to the melting-pot cast. One carryover from 1929 was Jo Mielziner’s unit set, a realistic exterior of a brownstone, which remained virtually unaltered for the opera.

Original Production and Reception

Producing such a tragic opera on Broadway as a commercial venture probably required more optimism (and fortitude) than writing it. The Playwrights’ Company, of which Rice was a founding member and to which Weill was a recent addition (and the only composer), could not cope with mounting the gigantic production with its cast of 55 on stage and 35 players in the pit. Broadway veteran Dwight Deere Wiman believed in the show and signed on as co-producer and principal funder. When Mamoulian was

unavailable to direct, the team turned to Charles Friedman, coming off the 503-performance run of the all-Black production of *Carmen Jones*, Oscar Hammerstein and Robert Russell Bennett’s adaptation of Bizet’s opera, which had debuted on Broadway in 1943 subtitled merely “a musical.” *Street Scene*, after disastrous previews in Philadelphia, with tepid reviews and near-empty houses during the holidays, nevertheless opened in New York as scheduled at the Adelphi Theatre on 9 January 1947. Heeding Hammerstein’s warning that “opera” was a way people lost money, the producer shunned that generic term in all publicity in favor of the label “a dramatic musical.” With Polyna Stoska and Norman Cordon imported from the Metropolitan Opera as Anna and Frank, and Maurice Abravanel conducting the orchestra (outsized, by Broadway norms), the sub-titular disguise fooled few.

Many of the following morning’s reviews were headlined “Broadway’s First Real Opera,” “Opera on Broadway,” or some variation thereof. The critic for the *Times* deemed it “the most important step towards significantly American opera” that he had encountered. Billy Rose summarized the unexpected, rapturous response: “It was one of those rare nights when a show catches lightning in a barrel. The applause was like a 21-gun salute going off in a phone booth. When the final curtain dropped, I found myself weeping—and I don’t weep easy. Next morning, the critics dusted off the adjectives they keep in the vault.” In fact, *Street Scene* garnered the most positive critical response of any stage work Weill composed on either side of the Atlantic. When Richard Watts found himself “a lone voice of dissent,” he felt compelled to write a second piece in the *New York Post*, reconciling his reservations with the verdict of his fellow reviewers, “who assure me that *Street Scene* is a finer thing than *Porgy and Bess* and that it is the most exciting event in the history of the American musical show since *Oklahoma!*” Comparisons with *Porgy* informed virtually every review; Howard Barnes even asserted that “Friedman staged the production with a suspense and fluency reminiscent of *Porgy and Bess*.”

Comparison with what went on at the Metropolitan Opera was another prevalent subtext of many assessments of *Street Scene*, because the first production there of an opera by an American composer in almost a decade had the misfortune of premiering two days after *Street Scene*. *The Warrior* was a one-acter by Bernard Rogers based on the biblical tale of Samson and Delilah. Conducted by Max Rudolf and simultaneously broadcast nationally on the radio, it survived for just two performances after

savage reviews concurred with Cecil Smith’s memorable headline: “*The Warrior* Bites the Dust.” Eleven years would elapse before the next premiere of an American-made opera at the Met. On Broadway, however, *Finian’s Rainbow* followed close on the heels of *Street Scene*, and two months later *Brigadoon* would do so, all three competing with such long-running hits as *Oklahoma!*, *Carousel*, and *Annie Get Your Gun*.

To Weill’s dismay, exorbitant weekly costs forced *Street Scene* to close after just 148 performances—a mediocre run for “a dramatic musical” but an impressive string of consecutive performances for an opera (more than *Porgy*’s 124 in 1935). Weill estimated proudly that at least 200,000 people had seen his Broadway opera. The original cast recording (released on the Columbia Masterworks label as a set of six 78 rpm discs) was cannily conceived to preserve 51 minutes of the score on 20 tracks, capturing nearly the entire trajectory of *Street Scene*’s plot. And Weill would receive a “special” Tony Award for “outstanding score”—the first award in that category. At the time of his sudden death in 1950, he was planning a revised version for opera houses, particularly in Europe, with an expanded orchestration and additional musical underscoring of dialogue.

The Score and Its Means of Storytelling

Weill’s musical design for Act I resonates with the “patterned mosaic” structure of Rice’s play, while also referencing the dwarfed figures foregrounded in Claude Lorrain’s landscape paintings, which had inspired the playwright. In the opera, the private drama of the Maurant family is set in relief against a broader musical backdrop of numbers performed by the diverse families living in apartment building No. 346. After the introductory unit of the first four “establishing numbers,” successive “I am/I want” musical monologues by each of the four principal characters (Anna, Frank, Rose, and Sam) alternate with ensembles populated by secondary characters, with different accents, dialects and ethnic backgrounds: the “Ice Cream Sextet,” “Wrapped in a Ribbon,” “Wouldn’t You Like to be on Broadway?” and “Moon Faced, Starry Eyed.” In the span of these twelve numbers, the audience is confronted with a “blues,” two full-blown arias, a parody of a virtuosic nineteenth-century Italian operatic ensemble, a charm song à la Rodgers & Hammerstein, a seductive soft-shoe, a slow-fox torch song, and a show-stopping jitterbug. Weill reserves overt operatic generic labels (*aria* for the elder Murrants, *arioso* and *cavatina* for Sam and Rose) and minor mode for the central figures in the drama.



The centrifugal force of so many diverse idioms packed into an hour might threaten musical coherence, had Weill not counteracted this stylistic plurality with an analogue for the "symphonic technique" Rice had used to unify his text, by which words and images (especially ethereal ones relating to moon, stars, sky, and dreams) recur, interact, and evolve when presented by various characters at key points in the drama. Despite its collage-like surface, no score of Weill's is more tightly interwoven motivically and thematically than *Street Scene*. This is especially remarkable given how much material from his original conception was ultimately discarded, including a huge "melting-pot" ensemble entitled "A Nation of Nations" and Henry's original closer for Act I, "Great Big Sky." Weill utilized all manner and scale of musical repetition, development, and transformation to unify seemingly un-unifiable elements: reprises of large sections of numbers; refrains within musical scenes; continuous motivic generation and thematic evolution. The resulting integration of diverse idioms within a coherent musical structure was virtually unique in the Broadway musical theater of the decade.

Some instances are entirely traditional in technique and function: a four-bar orchestral reprise of "Lonely House" closes Act I as Sam is left alone on stage; the orchestra replays the melody associated with Anna's words "somehow I never could believe" at the climax of the "Choral Lament" as she is carried off on a stretcher, never to regain consciousness; the reprise at the end of the opera of "Ain't It Awful the Heat" brings the drama full circle to emphasize the impossibility of escaping the difficult life in No. 346; and, with characteristic Weillian irony, in the final two-bar cadence of the work, the orchestra blares the principal melodic figure from Frank's "Let Things Be Like They Always Was." The densest web of associative material occurs in the underscoring of dialogue, which Weill uses not only to reinforce the illusion of naturalism by mediating between what is spoken and what is sung, but also to comment on the stage action, usually from an omniscient authorial point of view—a familiar technique in film, which had been appropriated from opera and operetta.

"The results are something like *Carmen*," Weill declared. "The entire musical score thus becomes a form of storytelling." The impetus toward narrativizing instrumental discourse is apparent at the very outset of the opera, when the Introduction to Act I begins with the four-measure refrain of "Lonely House," brutally scored and dissonantly harmonized for maximum distortion. Then, over a pentatonic ostinato

invoking a cliché for a bustling metropolis, the minor second that punctuates the verse of Sam's "arioso" unfolds linearly. Thus, what Weill called the "theme song" of the opera generated the principal musical material of its Introduction. Both elements of that opening are then recalled at the moment of greatest tension immediately preceding the double murder in Act II.

Clues to the function or meaning of such *intratextual* musical references are encoded entirely within *Street Scene*. But what Weill termed the "great variety of musical idioms" in the score was not intended to work merely on a "phenomenal" level as the music one might experience on a hot summer evening in Manhattan. Rather, the opera's collage of styles generates a matrix of *intertextual* allusions, almost as large and complex as the intratextual ones. They invite associations with specific works, musical idioms, or stylistic conventions external to *Street Scene* and thereby force the audience to pull back from the proscenium for metadramatic commentary invoking a larger world. Decoding such intertextual references poses a challenge for most listeners, of course. Many instances can be recognized and interpreted only if the audience member is pre-equipped to do so.

To ensure that the audience for the Broadway audience of *Street Scene* would recognize the most important intertextual reference in the opera, the inside front and back covers of the souvenir program book featured color photographs of lilac sprigs, illustrating two stanzas of "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," Whitman's famous elegy in memory of Abraham Lincoln, which is recited, but only in small part, by Sam to Rose at the climax of the first act of Rice's 1929 play. During the time he worked on the opera, Hughes had edited and introduced two collections of Whitman's poetry and proposed to his publisher an anthology of recent poetry entitled "Walt Whitman's Darker Brothers." Weill had set three of Whitman's poems from *Drum Taps* in response to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, intended for Paul Robeson. Thus, Whitman helped to shape all three collaborators' impressions of the American scene and the American dream. *Street Scene* gradually evolved into their "Whitman opera." Weill, however, actually reduced the Whitman quotation to just one stanza as he omitted the "false start" of the poem in the play. But in both play and opera, the scene serves a pastoral function within "verismo" surroundings, as Sam and Rose enact a ritual of innocence prior to their elders' ritual of violence. The younger pair yearn for a small parcel of the utopia symbolized by lilacs in Whitman's poetic vision. In the opera,

the lilac sprigs are not associated explicitly with President Lincoln's casket, so they can function as an emblem of hope rather than mourning, a universalized expression of affection and bonding.

But Weill's setting of Whitman's stanza also makes it seem more than it was in the play. As soon as Sam begins to recite the poem, *intratextual* pentatonic references to Rose's cavatina ("What Good Would the Moon Be?") give way to an *intertextual* allusion to the last vocal utterance in Act II of *Madama Butterfly*, "Dammi sul viso un tocco di carmino." Puccini's and Weill's melodies are nearly identical for three measures. The moment in Puccini follows immediately upon Butterfly's and Suzuki's famous "flower duet," where images from the spring garden had given Butterfly new hope in anticipation of Pinkerton's arrival. Critics' dismissals of the passage in *Street Scene* as "secondhand Puccini" may be discounted if one recalls that the parallel pastoral moment in *Butterfly* is prompted by the appearance of an American warship in port: "Hold my trembling hand so that I may read its name: ABRAHAM LINCOLN!"

For those in *Street Scene*'s audience in 1947 who really knew their Puccini, this might have seemed the quintessential musical pun. But the allusion presents a challenge of dramatic interpretation. Butterfly and Suzuki decorate the house with flowers in anticipation of a reunion with the boy's father. Soon Butterfly's "American dream" will be dashed, and this pastoral respite must be reinterpreted as false hope. In *Street Scene*, Sam's sister Shirley gives Rose advice that might have been lifted from Puccini's libretto: "It's better to marry with your own kind. You can't mix oil and water." The cultural chasm between the young Jew Sam and Irish Catholic Rose living in the same apartment building may be more forbidding than that separating Butterfly and Pinkerton. Weill's musical allusion tells the alert and knowledgeable listener that Sam and Rose's relationship is doomed, before it has had a chance to blossom. *Street Scene* is suffused with many comparable musical allusions, ranging from "June Is Bustin' Out All Over" to the fate motive in *Carmen* and the prelude to Act I of *Tristan und Isolde*, from the *Rigoletto* quartet and the *Lucia di Lammermoor* sextet to *Pagliacci*, as well as several memorable moments in *Porgy and Bess*. Of course, listeners unaware of such subtextual musical commentaries can simply enjoy the more explicit storytelling on its own terms.

When *Street Scene* closed on Broadway in mid-May, Weill was visiting his parents in Palestine, his first and only trip overseas since his arrival in New York in 1935. In a letter to the composer, the company manager vividly described the final performance: "The excitement generated was something no one had ever seen before in the theater. At the end on Saturday night, the audience got up and cheered for fully ten minutes. They threw their programs in the air, and the orchestra finally struck up 'Auld Lang Syne,' and the cast, with arms locked, sang the song to the audience. When it was all over, the people in the theater kept on cheering for another ten minutes." During his trip, Weill personally promoted *Street Scene* in London and Paris, but without success. Upon his return, he told Maxwell Anderson that he was planning a symphonic suite from the opera. But, alas, Weill would not live to see another staged performance of the work he deemed his most significant.

Street Scene was seldom produced in the 1950s, until New York City Opera presented it in 1959 as one of a series of productions of American operas. (Thirteen "Broadway operas" would eventually enter the repertory of the company.) A new City Opera staging of *Street Scene* opened in 1978 and was televised a year later on "Live from Lincoln Center." The American opera successfully crossed the Atlantic with a concert performance in London in 1987, followed by David Pountney's staging for Scottish Opera in Glasgow two years later, which then transferred to English National Opera in London. Both presentations, with different casts and conductors, prompted independent recordings of the complete work in the same year: the former on the Decca label, the latter on JAY/TER. In 1995, Francesca Zambello's production for Houston Grand Opera and Berlin's Theater des Westens was released as a DVD, with James Holmes conducting. Though the opera has not been revived on Broadway, it has been produced frequently by European opera houses and has become a staple of conservatory opera programs. The present audio recording is the third complete one, the first since 1991, and the only one captured as a live performance—by BBC radio in 2020. Produced by Sir Richard Mantle, directed by Matthew Eberhardt, and conducted by James Holmes, Opera North's *Street Scene* is a compelling reminder of Weill's own assessment of the work, more than 75 years after his death.



Sam Kaplan's sister, Shirley, offers Rose Maurant some advice: "It's better to marry with your own kind."



Street Scene at Opera North Three Perspectives

Sir Richard Mantle, General Director (1994–2023)

Over the course of my forty-plus year career in opera, I have something of a history with Kurt Weill, beginning with a production of *Street Scene* directed by David Pountney in the 1980s for Scottish Opera, which subsequently transferred to the English National Opera. More latterly, in 2020 a BBC broadcast of a new production of Weill's "Broadway opera," directed by Matthew Eberhardt and conducted by James Holmes for Opera North, became the basis of the present live recording. Just as *Street Scene* has featured in my operatic life, so have many of Weill's other works for the stage. They were highlights of my time as Managing Director of Scottish Opera (1985–1991) with *Street Scene*, *Lady in the Dark*, *The Threepenny Opera*, and *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, and again as General Director at Opera North with *Love Life*, *One Touch of Venus*, *Mahagonny Songspiel*, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, and, of course, *Street Scene* again.

Kurt Weill was brilliant at creating the unmistakable flavor of a particular time and place, with powerful storytelling and characterful music, while retaining a formidable resonance for audiences yet today. This aesthetic became a potent influence on my own approach and belief in how opera and music theater should speak to contemporary audiences. *Street Scene* is truly a company show and one which made the most of the strength of the stellar Chorus of Opera North, with many of the leading roles taken by choristers, including Gillene Butterfield as Rose and Alex Banfield as Sam. Restriction of space here prevents me from naming the extensive list of choristers who undertook myriad roles; there is no doubt in my mind that few opera choruses in the world are capable of being cast in this way.

To complete that sense of "company" which has characterized Opera North, the Chorus were joined by members of the wider Opera North family, including Giselle Allen and Robert Hayward as Anna and Frank Maurant, both long-serving freelance artists with the company. I could not have been more proud of Opera North when we presented this cast and production of *Street Scene*, together with conductor James Holmes and the Orchestra of Opera North making it a true ensemble produc-

tion. It was a real privilege for me, particularly to see it captured for posterity on these discs.

Beyond a doubt, Kurt Weill, with his collaborators, has influenced my own rich opera experience. How appropriate, then, that productions of *Street Scene* have bookedend my professional life in opera. While Francis O'Connor, the production designer, and I were having early conversations about our production of *Street Scene* at Opera North, I stayed in a tenement building in Edinburgh. From the communal staircase, you could see objects in front of the apartment doors that gave an impression of the people who lived there: clues about economic status, social background, or demographic. The idea of using the internal stairwell as a kind of vertical street became central to our approach. We devised an in-between space that offered our protagonists a place to meet, gossip, and dream, away from the cramped domestic flats with overbearing family expectations and from the harsh reality of the sun-scorched urban streets. Francis created a staircase reaching to the stars that extended beyond the proscenium, a space that was both vast and intimate, mundane yet poetic. As the piece progresses, the house is turned inside out, invaded by removal men, bailiffs, policemen, paramedics, prospective tenants, not to mention nosy nannies. It strikes us suddenly how permeable this space has become; what was once a community is now a redundant void of stairs, banisters, and doors, primed for demolition and change.

Photographs from the time were a great source of inspiration, not only for the tenement building itself but also for its inhabitants. These images revealed the difficult lives of our Lower East Side community, helping us to create detailed identities for them beyond the confines of the home. For example, the happy Italian Lippo brings light relief in the form of humor and ice cream, but when detailed through costume as a World War II veteran he represents the model second generation American immigrant, an integrated Italian-American fighting for the American Dream.

Matthew Eberhardt, Stage Director

Given the vocal and instrumental resources required, *Street Scene* holds natural attraction for opera houses; moreover, it's a company piece, its central tragedy unfolding against the backdrop of a vividly drawn community. However, Weill's "Broadway opera" also makes the special demands that a juxtaposition of those two words implies. The community backdrop is drawn chiefly through popular musical theater styles, from the janitor's blues through Jennie's Richard Rodgers-inflected graduation number to the lounge-lizard swing of Harry Easter; some (Mae and Dick's peppy jitterbug, for example) might lie beyond most opera houses' regular orbit. Opera North was founded on the principle of a permanent vocal ensemble that could also take solo roles; add an ongoing acquaintance with Broadway material dating back nearly four decades, and it's unsurprising that much of the *Street Scene* community—not to mention the central roles of Rose and Sam—could be cast from within the company.

"Opera" in *Street Scene*, however, is more a dramatic agent than a style, one that goes

way beyond providing a parody in praise of ice cream to lend depth of feeling to the central protagonists. Life in the melting-pot has crushed the aspirations of Anna and Frank, has kindled Rose and Sam's desire to escape. Opera affords a heightened emotional plane where they can articulate such feelings and thus provides a level of dramatic expression beyond the pure speech, underscored dialogue, and full-blown song routinely found in Broadway shows. These levels are distinctively employed throughout, but if they don't come across as a seamless entity, the evening can easily feel overlong.

Through exploration of this repertoire, we've learned the central importance of the agent that binds everything together—the words. So often in rehearsal, it has proven helpful to treat songs as spoken theater, letting the natural pace of the dialogue dictate the shaping of underscoring. We try to understand not only where the music leads the drama but where it follows. To do full justice to Weill's wonderfully varied score, one must never wholly forget that *Street Scene* began life as a play.

James Holmes, Conductor

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"Fat, Fat, the water rat." The neighborhood children at serious play.

STREET SCENE

ACT ONE

An evening in June.

[1] Introduction and Opening Ensemble: “Ain’t it Awful the Heat?”

(Curtain opens. The exterior of a “walk up” apartment house in a mean quarter of New York. Kaplan at the window, reading newspapers. Radio off stage, Mrs. Fiorentino leaning out of her window. Mrs. Jones enters.)

A VOICE *(off stage)*
Charlie!

MRS. FIORENTINO
Good ev’ning, Mrs. Jones.

MRS. JONES
Good ev’ning, Mrs. Fiorentino, well, I hope it’s hot enough for you.

MRS. FIORENTINO
Terrible!

MRS. JONES
Have you ever seen such heat?

MRS. FIORENTINO
I get through with the supper dishes and I’m wet from head to foot.

MRS. JONES
Ain’t a dry stitch on me neither.

MRS. FIORENTINO
So I joost take off my corset and let myself spread.

MRS. JONES
I think I’ll take a nice hot bath before I go to bed.

MRS. FIORENTINO
The trouble with a bath is that when you get done, You’re just about as hot again as when you begun.

BOTH
Ain’t it awful the heat, ain’t it awful,
Don’t know what I’m gonna do.

MRS. FIORENTINO
Gott, I’m sweatin’!

MRS. JONES
My dog’s frettin’,
I’m a-soakin’ wet all through.

BOTH
Don’t know what I’m gonna do.

(Mrs. Olsen enters.)

MRS. OLSEN
Good evening.

MRS. JONES AND MRS. FIORENTINO
Good evening, Mrs. Olsen.

MRS. OLSEN
I tink is more cooler in de cellar.

MRS. FIORENTINO
A heat like this I don’t remember.

MRS. JONES
We’ll all be wishin’ for this in December.

MRS. OLSEN
My baby is cryin’, cryin’ all day.

MRS. FIORENTINO
They feel the heat more than we do I say.

MRS. JONES
And my dog Queenie is just draggin’ roun’,
her tail ain’t waggin’, just hangin down.

MRS. OLSEN
My baby gets teet; it hurt her gums.

MRS. JONES
My kids used to nearly chew off their thumbs.

MRS. FIORENTINO
The heat’s got me, I’m feelin’ lazy.

WOMAN
Lawdy, Mercy, I’m nearly crazy!

MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS JONES AND MRS. OLSEN
Ooh! Ain’t it awful the heat! Ain’t it awful!
Don’t know what I’m gonna do.

(Olsen comes up from the cellar.)

OLSEN
Oh the heat, oh!

MRS. JONES
Damn mosquito!

MRS. OLSEN
I’m a sweatin’ through and through.

MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS. JONES AND MRS. OLSEN
Don’t know what I’m gonna do.

(Shirley appears at window.)

SHIRLEY
Good evening.

THE WOMEN
Good evening.

SHIRLEY
Papa, here’s your tea. Haven’t you finished your paper yet?
It makes it so hot with the lights on.

KAPLAN
All right. Put it out.
There is notting to read in des bourgeois papers.
Oi de moiders! Oi de moiders!
Oi de moiders in de kepitalist papers! Ha!
Man kills his soulmate and throws her in de gutter.
Ten-year-old daughter burns up her mutter.
Notting but opium for de working kless.
Oi de moiders in de kepitalist press.

MRS. JONES *(talking to Mrs. Fiorentino)*
And there she stood without a stitch on.

KAPLAN
And the skendals! Oi de skendals!
Oi de skendals in de kepitalist papers.
Girl picks up sailor boy and dopes him while he’s tight.
Boston playboy loses trousers in a night club fight.
People want bread and they give them this to fress!
Oi de skendals in de kepitalist press.

(Two Salvation Army Girls crossing the stage slowly)

SALVATION ARMY GIRLS, MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS. JONES AND MR. AND MRS. OLSEN
Ain’t it awful the heat, ain’t it awful ...

MR. KAPLAN
Oi, de moiders!

SALVATION ARMY GIRLS, ETC.
...don’t know what I’m gonna do.

MR. KAPLAN
Oi! On a scorcher this is torture.

SALVATION ARMY GIRLS, ETC.
Only hope I live it through...

MR. KAPLAN
Oi de skendals!

ALL
Don’t know what I’m gonna do.
Don’t know what I’m gonna do.

MR. KAPLAN
Oi!

(Salvation Army Girls exit.)

[2] Blues: “I Got a Marble and a Star”

(Henry comes up from the cellar, carrying a garbage can.)

HENRY
I got a marble and a star,
And the star is in my pocket too.
Got a marble and a star,
The star is in my pocket too.
If you’ll be real good,
I’ll show that star to you.

MRS. JONES
Henry, what about that kitchen faucet of mine?

HENRY
I’ll get to it first thing in the morning.
I got a halo and a hat,
But my halo I don’t wear.
Got a halo and a hat,
My halo I don’t wear.
I’m gonna save that halo until I get up there.

(He exits to cellar.)

[3] Scene and Trio: “Get a Load of That”

A BOY *(off stage)*
Come in, come in wherever you are.

(Willie enters on roller skates.)

WILLIE
Hey, Ma!

MRS. JONES
Why don’t you go upstairs, instead of yellin’ like that?

WILLIE
Hey, Ma!

MRS. MAURRANT *(at window)*
What do you want, Willie?

WILLIE
Gimme a dime, will ya? I wanna get a cone!

MRS. MAURRANT
Good evening.

THE WOMEN
Good evening, Mrs. Maurrant.

MRS. MAURRANT
How many cones did you have today, already?

WILLIE
I'm hot! All de other guys is having cones. Come on, gimme a dime.

MRS. MAURRANT
Well, it's the last one.

MRS. JONES
You certainly don't talk very nice to your mother. I'd like to hear one of mine talking that way to me.

MRS. MAURRANT
All right, catch it, Willie. And don't come home too late.

(Willie exits.)

MRS. FIORENTINO
Why don't you come down and be sociable, Mrs. Maurrant?

MRS. MAURRANT
I'm keeping some supper warm for my husband. Well, maybe I will for just a minute.

A GIRL THEN A BOY *(off stage)*
Come in, come in wherever you are!

MRS. FIORENTINO
She has her troubles with dot boy.

MRS. JONES
I guess it don't bother her much. She's got her mind on other things.

MRS. OLSEN
He vas comin' again today to see her.

MRS. JONES
Who... Sankey?

MRS. FIORENTINO
Are you sure, Mrs. Olsen?

MRS. OLSEN
I seen him. I vas sitting on de stoop.

MRS. FIORENTINO
Dot's terrible!

MRS. JONES
Get a load of this!
You wouldn't think a married woman with a grown-up daughter

Would be fooling round with men like she hadn't oughta.

MRS. FIORENTINO AND MRS. OLSEN
Whatcha think of that? Whatcha think of that?

MRS. OLSEN
Two times already dis week I see him here.

MRS. JONES
I seen that man myself last week. He had the gall to stop and speak! He was comin' out as I came in. "Good morning," says he, putting on a grin. "Good morning," says I, lookin' him in the eye, As me and my dog passed him right on by.

MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS. JONES AND MRS. OLSEN
Ain't he got a nerve! Ain't he got a nerve! Ain't he got a nerve!
I said to myself: Now what a disgrace!
And both of 'em are married too.
A woman ought to know her place and act like decent women do.
Ain't she got no shame? Ain't she got no shame?

MRS. JONES AND MRS. FIORENTINO
A woman ought to know her place and act like decent women do!
ts ts ts ts ts! ts ts ts ts ts!

MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS. JONES AND MRS. OLSEN
Get a load of that. Get a load of that. Get a load of that.

MRS. JONES
Be careful, she's comin'!

(Mrs. Maurrant enters.)

MRS. MAURRANT
Goodness, ain't it hot!

MRS. JONES
I feel like a wet dish-rag.

MRS. MAURRANT
I would have liked to go to the Park concert tonight, if Rose had got home in time. My husband don't care for music. But Rose is more like me — just crazy about it.

MRS. JONES
Ain't she home yet?

MRS. MAURRANT
No, I think maybe she had to work overtime.

MRS. JONES
Well, all mine ever comes home for is to sleep.

MRS. FIORENTINO
The young girls nowadays!

MRS. OLSEN
My sister was writin' me in Schweden is same ting.

MRS. JONES
It ain't only the young ones either.

(The Olsen baby is heard crying in the cellar.)

OLSEN *(from the cellar)*
Olga!

MRS. OLSEN
I betcha' the baby she's crying again.
(She exits.)

MRS. JONES
What them foreigners don't know about bringin' up babies—

MRS. FIORENTINO
Foreigners know joost as much as other people, Mrs. Jones.

MRS. JONES
Oh, I'm not talkin' about the Joimans. You Joimans is different — more like the Irish. What I mean is the squareheads, an' the Polacks, an' the ...

(Sam enters with books under his arm.)

SAM
Good evening.

MRS. FIORENTINO
Goot evening.

MRS. MAURRANT
Hello, Sam.

SAM
Hello, Mrs. Maurrant.
Is Rose upstairs?

MRS. MAURRANT
Why, no, she's not home from work yet.

SAM
Oh! It's just that I thought she might want to walk around to the library with me.

MRS. MAURRANT
Goodness, Sam, are you off to the library again?

SAM
Well, I've finished these, so I've got to get myself something to read.

MRS. MAURRANT
I used to love reading, too, but lately — well, I just got out of the habit.

SAM
Oh, I wouldn't know how to get along without reading. It means more to me than food or sleep, or anything. I've read at least one book every day since I was ten! Well, if you'll excuse me, I've got to go, or the library will be closing.

MRS. MAURRANT
I'll tell Rose you were asking for her.

SAM
Thank you.

(He exits.)

MRS. MAURRANT
He's such a nice boy — so quiet and gentle.

MRS. JONES
Well, he certainly can't have much on his mind, if he's got time for all that readin'!

MRS. MAURRANT
Oh, I think it's wonderful to have something like that, to put your heart and soul into. Rose says he's just about the brightest boy she ever met. and she's sure some day that he's gonna —

(Buchanan enters with bag of oranges.)

[4] BUCHANAN
Oh! Good evening, ladies.

THE WOMEN
Oh, good evening, Mr. Buchanan.

BUCHANAN
Well, I hope it's hot enough for you?

MRS. MAURRANT
How's your wife feeling in this weather?

BUCHANAN
She don't complain about the weather. But she's afraid to go out of the house. Thinks maybe she wouldn't get back in time, in case — you know.

MRS. JONES
I was the same with my Vincent. But with Mae, I was up and out until the very last minute.

MRS. FIORENTINO

Mr. Buchanan, do you think your wife would like some nice minestrone, some good Italian vegetable soup?

BUCHANAN

Much obliged, Mrs. Fiorentino, but she can't seem to keep anything on her stomach. That's why I ran out to get her an orange. I'm sort of jittery, I guess. I'll sure be glad when we get this over with.

MRS. JONES

Honest, the way the men carry on, you'd think it was them that was havin' the baby.

Arietta: "When a Woman Has a Baby"

BUCHANAN

Well, in a way, I think it's harder for the man.

No, I mean it.
When a woman has a baby, Assuming that she can, She shouldn't overlook the fact, It's awful hard on a man.

THE WOMEN

When a woman has a baby it is hard on a man.

BUCHANAN

That's the way it is with me, folks
I'm under a nervous strain
And even though I'm not laid up
I can hardly stand the pain.

THE WOMEN

The poor fellow, the poor fellow, he can hardly stand the pain.

BUCHANAN

She tells me all her fears and nearly drives me silly,
She thinks the baby's eyes will cross and he'll look like Cousin Tilly.

THE WOMEN

Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!

BUCHANAN

I cannot seem to please her, no matter how I try.
She wants soft-shell crabs at Christmas and oysters in July.
Of course I'm just a beginner, that's why I'm in this state.
I guess I'll be much calmer when we get to number eight!
Ah!

THE WOMEN

Ah-ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!

BUCHANAN

It's easy for a mother to produce a Mike or Abie, It's dad who has to pay and pay when a woman has a baby...

THE WOMEN

Ah! Ah!

MRS. BUCHANAN'S VOICE

Danny!

BUCHANAN

I'm on my way up, baby.

MRS. BUCHANAN'S VOICE

Danny!

BUCHANAN

I think it's coming maybe.

(He rushes into the house.)

MRS. JONES

Well, I'm glad it's her and not me that has to go through it.

MRS. MAURRANT

Oh, I don't know. Sometimes, when I look back I think that was the happiest time of my life. It's a wonderful thing to be young like that and have all the time to —

(Maurrant enters)

[5] MRS. JONES

Good evening, Mr. Maurrant.

MRS. FIORENTINO

Oh, good evening, Mr. Maurrant.

MAURRANT

Evenin'. Some honey of a day!

MRS. MAURRANT

Have you been working all this while, Frank?

MAURRANT

I'll say. Dress-rehearsin' with lights—in this weather. An' tomorrow I gotta go to New Haven with the rest of the crew for the try-out.

MRS. MAURRANT

Oh, you're going to New Haven tomorrow?

MAURRANT

Yeah, what about it?

MRS. MAURRANT

Why, nothing. Oh, I've got some cabbage and potatoes on the stove for you.

MAURRANT

All I want is a good wash. Anybody upstairs?

MRS. MAURRANT

No, Willie's off playing. And I guess Rose is working overtime.

MAURRANT

I never hear of nobody working nights in a real estate office.

MRS. MAURRANT

Well, the office is closed tomorrow on account of Mr. Gordon's funeral. He was the head of the firm.

MAURRANT

Nevermind all that.
She shouldn't be staying out nights without us knowing where she is!

MRS. MAURRANT

Well, she didn't say a word about not coming home, but...

MAURRANT

That's what I'm saying, ain't it?
It's a mother's place to know what her daughter's doing.

MRS. FIORENTINO

Things are different nowadays from what they used to be.

MAURRANT

Not in my family, they're not goin' to be no different, Not as long as I got something to say.
(turns and goes into the house)

JONES

(enters, passing Maurrant)
Hello, Mr. Maurrant.

CHILDREN *(off stage)*

Come in, come in wherever you are.
Come in, come in wherever you are.

JONES

Good evening, ladies.

MRS. MAURRANT

Good evening, Mr. Jones.

MRS. OLSEN *(enters from house)*

De baby's teeth hurt her.
I'm yoost going to de drug store for some paregoric.
(She exits left)

MRS. JONES

What that kid needs is a good spankin', 'stead of being spoiled with paregoric.

JONES

Aw, you're just feelin' the heat. Guess your husband is too, Mrs.Maurrant.

MRS. MAURRANT

Well, he's been working till just now.

MRS. JONES

Men are all alike. They're all easy to get along with, so long as everythin's goin' the way they want it to. But once it don't—good night!

MRS. MAURRANT

I guess it's just the same with the women.

MRS. JONES

The way I look at it, you get married for better or worse, an' if it turns out to be worse, why all you can do is make the best of it.

MRS. MAURRANT

I think the trouble is people don't make allowances.

[6] Aria: "Somehow I Never Could Believe"

After all, we're all human, and we can't just go along by ourselves all the time.
Somehow I never could believe
That life was meant to be all dull and gray.
Somehow I always will believe There'll be a brighter day.
Folks should try to find a way to get along together,
A way to make the world a singing happy place,
Full of laughter and kind words, and friendliness on ev'rybody's face.
But somehow in the world that I grew up in
The streets were dark with mis'ry and distress.
The endless daily grind was too much for them.
It took away all hope of happiness.

When I was a girl, I remember,
I used to dream about a party dress to wear.
But I never had a party dress
And I guess my dreams got lost somewhere—
nobody seemed to care.

But when I grew up I said, "I'll make it!"
For I believed there'd be a lucky star above me.
In the fairy tales I read, the maiden always said:
"I know I'll find a fairy prince to love me."

So I went wand'ring down the pavements of New York,
And through the subway's roaring tunnels underground,
Hoping I'd discover some wonderful lover.
Frank was the one that I found.
Oh, on the day that we were married

I took a flower from my bouquet
And I pressed it in a book and put the book away.

Sometimes now I go and take a look,
The flower's dry, the perfume's gone,
The petals all turned gray.
Oh dream of love! Should love turn out that way?
Should love turn out that way?

But then the babies came.
Their little arms made a ring-around-a-rosy about me,
Yet as they grew older, they, too, seemed to grow
away,
Until even Willie, my little boy Willie
seems he can get along without me.

I don't know—it looks like something awful happens
In the kitchens where women wash their dishes.
Days turn to months—months turn to years,
The greasy soap-suds drown our wishes.

There's got to be a little happiness somewhere,
Some hand to touch that's warm and kind!
And there must be two smiling eyes somewhere
That will smile back into mine.

I never could believe
That life was meant to be all dull and gray.
I always will believe
There'll be a brighter day!

[7] Scene and Quartet: “Get a Load of That”

(Sankey enters)

SANKEY
Good evening, folks! Is it hot enough for you?

THE OTHERS
Good evening.

MRS. MAURRANT
Good evening, Mr. Sankey!

SANKEY
I don't know when we've had a day like this. It was
up to ninety-four at 3 p.m.

(Maurrant appears at window)

JONES
Six dead in Chicago. An' no relief in sight.

SANKEY
Well, it's good for the milk business.

MRS. JONES
Yeah, I'm just after pourin' half a bottle down the
sink.

MRS. FIORENTINO
You shouldn't throw it away. You should make...
what do they call it... schmierkase.

SANKEY
Oh yes, pot cheese. My wife makes it, too, once
in a while.

MRS. MAURRANT
Is your wife all right again, Mr. Sankey? You were
telling me last time, she had a cold.

SANKEY
Was I?

MRS. MAURRANT
Yeah.

SANKEY
Oh, sure, sure, that was a couple of weeks ago.
Yes, sure, she's all right again.

MRS. JONES
You got a family, too, ain't you?

SANKEY
Yes, Yes, I have—two little girls. Well, I told my
wife I'd go down to the drug store to get her some
nice, cold ginger-ale.

MRS. JONES
If you ask me, all that gassy stuff don't do you a
bit of good.

(Maurrant leaves the window)

SANKEY
I guess you're right at that. Still, it cools you off.
Well, good night, folks. See you all again.
(Exits, Olsen enters from cellar)

JONES
What's that bird's name? Sankey?

MRS. JONES
Yeah, Mr. Sankey.

MRS. MAURRANT
He's the collector for the milk company.

A VOICE *(off stage)*
Charlie!

MRS. MAURRANT
I wonder what's become of Willie... I think I'd
better walk down to the corner and look for him.
My husband don't like it if he stays out late.

(Exits left)

MRS. JONES
Get a load of that!

MRS. FIORENTINO
Get a load of that!

JONES
Get a load of that!

OLSEN
Get a load of that!

MRS. JONES
Lookin' out for Willie! didja hear her say?
Who's she think she's foolin', goin' off that way?

ALL
She must think we're dumb! She must think we're
dumb!

MRS. FIORENTINO
And what about him and his drug store?

MRS. JONES
He just strolled up for some ginger ale!

JONES
Boy, ain't that a whale of a tale!

MRS. JONES
“Good ev'ning, folks!” like on the radio.

MRS. FIORENTINO
Do you think maybe Maurrant might know?

MRS. JONES
Well, men don't seem to have any eyes
And the husband is always the last to get wise.

ALL
Wait till he finds out!
I'd hate to be in Sankey's shoes
when somebody tells Maurrant the news.
No man who's a man will stand for that
and live with a wife who's an alley cat!
Betcha life on that! Betcha life on that!

MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS. JONES AND JONES
No man who's a man will stand for that and live
with a wife who's an alley cat.

OLSEN
It's awful! It's dreadful! A woman like that!

ALL
Tch tch tch tch tch! Tch tch tch tch tch!

OLSEN
Some day her hoosband is killing him.

MRS. FIORENTINO
Dot would be terrible.

JONES
He's liable to at that. You know he has a wicked
look in his eye, dat baby has.

MRS. JONES
Well, it's no more than he deserves, the little
rabbit.

(Mrs. Olsen hurries on.)

MRS. OLSEN
Vat do you think, I yoost seen them together, him
and her.

MRS. JONES
What did I tell you?

MRS. FIORENTINO
Vare did you see them?

MRS. OLSEN
Yoost next door in the entrance to the vare-
house.
Dey were standin' right close together.
An' him vit his hands upon her shoulders.
It's yoost awful. Ain't it?

MRS. JONES
You didn't notice if they was kissin' or anything?

MRS. OLSEN
No. I felt so ashamed for them, I didn't hardly look
at all.

JONES
Look out! Maurrant's comin'.

(Maurrant enters)

MRS. OLSEN
Good evening, Mr. Maurrant.

MAURRANT
Evenin'. What's become of my wife?

MRS. JONES
She said she was goin' around the corner to look
for your son.

MAURRANT
Oh.

MRS. JONES
They need a lot of looking after, when they're that
age.

[8] LIPPO

Hello Margherita!

MRS. JONES *(seeing Lippo off stage)*

Oh well, will you look at your hubby, Mrs. F. He's sure got his hands full. Be careful you don't drop any.

(Lippo enters with ice-cream cones and violin.)

LIPPO

Who wantsa da ice-cream cone? Nice fresha ice-cream cone.

MRS. JONES

Here, gimme your violin.

LIPPO

Thanks, Messes Jones. 'Ere's for you a nice fresh ice-cream cone.

MRS. JONES

Thank you, Mr. F. Careful you don't drop any.

LIPPO *(as Mrs. Olsen enters)*

An' Mr. Olsen? One for you an' one for de missus.

OLSEN

Much oblige.

MRS. OLSEN

Tanks, Mr. Fiorentino.

LIPPO

Henry?

HENRY

Oh, thank you Lippo!

LIPPO

Messes Fiorentino, 'ere's for you a nice, fresha ice-cream cone.

MRS. FIORENTINO

Oh, it makes me too fat.

LIPPO

Oh no! Five, ten pounds more, nobody can tell da deef!

Ice-Cream Sextet**LIPPO**

First time I come to da America...

MRS. JONES

What happened?

LIPPO

First thing I see is da ice-cream cone!

MRS. FIORENTINO, JONES, OLSEN AND MRS. OLSEN

The ice-cream cone!

LIPPO

And ever since I lick my tongue on eet, I cannot leave eet alone.

MRS. FIORENTINO, JONES, OLSEN, MRS. OLSEN

Ah, the ice-cream cone!

LIPPO

As long as I stay in da America
I never get tired of da ice-cream cone.

MRS. JONES

Hah, you're a sketch!

LIPPO

Wonderful! Eet's marvellous!

MRS. JONES

And all for a dime!

LIPPO

As good as any king could get on his throne.

MRS. FIORENTINO, JONES, OLSEN, MRS. OLSEN AND HENRY

Hats off to the ice-cream cone!
Three cheers for the ice-cream cone.

LIPPO

I scream...

ALL

...ice cream

LIPPO

I scream...

ALL

...ice cream!

MRS. FIORENTINO, JONES, OLSEN, MRS. OLSEN AND HENRY

I dream ice-cream, I scream ice-cream, I'm nuts
about ice-cream,
I dream ice-cream, I dream ice-cream,
I'm nuts about ice-cream.

LIPPO

When I go into the drug store, ah, eet is da
wonderful spot!
Dere you find da marble fountain, with a bill-o-fare
cold and hot.
There doctor, sailor or worker can sit on a little
round seat-a,
And buy from the soda jerker a million good things
to eat-a.

ALL

When I go into the drug store, ah, it is a lovely
spot!
There you find the marble fountain, with a bill-o-
fare cold and hot.

LIPPO *(echoed by the others)*

You can get chicken hash!
You can get potato mash!
You can get summer squash!

MRS. JONES

But I want succotash!

LIPPO

Okay!

ALL

Baked beans, chop suey, lemon pie gooey,
choc'late cake and potted steak and corn-a flake
and milk-a-shake and mar-ma-lake
enough to make your belly ache!
But of all the drug store, but of all the drug store,

LIPPO

Of all the drug store ice cream is the Queen!

ALL

Of all the drug store ice cream is the Queen!

MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS. OLSEN AND JONES

Ah! Vanilla!

LIPPO

Ah, tortoni!

OLSEN

Ah, spumoni!

HENRY

And chocolate!

JONES

And cocoa-nut!

OLSEN

Pineapple and pecan!

ALL

Strawberry, maple walnut!

LIPPO

Da gift of da gods to da man.

OLSEN

And how about the sodas?

HENRY

And the banana splits?

MRS. OLSEN

Fudge sundae!

MRS. JONES

Nut Mondae!

MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS. OLSEN, LIPPO AND OLSEN

The whipped cream special two bits, ah!

HENRY

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah and Hosanna
when it comes to banana!

LIPPO

When I go into the drugstore
Where da marble fountains gleam,
there I sit, a royal king-a,
And eat some more ice cream,
Some more ice cream! And more ice cream! Ah!
Hallelujah and Hosanna
Hallelujah for ice cream!

MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS. OLSEN, HENRY, JONES AND OLSEN

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah for ice cream!...

MRS. JONES

Here's your wife, now, Mr. Maurrant.

(Mrs. Maurrant enters)

LIPPO

'Allo, Messes Maurrant. Why you don't come to
da Park concerto, eh?

MRS. MAURRANT

Well, I was waiting for Rose, but she didn't get
home. Is she home yet, Frank?

MAURRANT

No, she ain't. And where you been all this while?

MRS. MAURRANT

Why, I've been out looking for Willie.

MAURRANT

I'll give him a good fannin' when I get hold of him.

MRS. MAURRANT

Oh, don't whip him, Frank, please don't. All boys
are wild like that at that age.

MAURRANT

That's all accordin' to how they're handled. And
if you can't make him behave, I will—if I have to
beat the daylight's out of him to do it.

KAPLAN
Mr. Maurrant—let me ask you, please, a question.

MAURRANT
Yeah?

KAPLAN
Do you think by beatings, you can make in a child improvements?

MAURRANT
Who’s askin’ you?

KAPLAN
Excuse me! I’m asking you. By beatings you can get maybe submission, but not a change in kerecter. If you treat somebody like an animal, he will act like an animal.

MRS. JONES *(to Mrs. Fiorentino)*
He’s in again.

MRS. FIORENTINO
Yes.

MAURRANT *(to Kaplan)*
How about mindin’ you’ own business?

KAPLAN
Dis is a fondemental question which is de business of everyone who is interested in human progress.

SHIRLEY *(Appearing at window)*
Papa, it’s time to go to bed.

KAPLAN
Let me alone, Shoiley!
(To Maurrant) Because you have power over your child you think it gives you the right to impose upon him by force your own standards of morality.

MAURRANT
Lay off that stuff, I’m tellin’ you. I’m runnin’ my own family, the way I want to run it.

KAPLAN
Dis is what I’m trying to explain to you. It is this philosophy w’ich results in imperialism and war and de exploitation of the verkers by the kepitalist klesses. It is the basis of our whole rotten social and economic system...

MAURRANT
To hell wit’ all that radical hooley! I been a working man all my life an’ I got no kick against the system.

OLSEN
We’re plenty rich, dis country.

JONES
You said something.

KAPLAN
Sure, de reech is planty reech. But upstairs a woman wit three children can’t pay de rent and our bourgeois laws gives to the landlord de right to toin her in de street.

MAURRANT
And if you was to divide up all the money in de country, in six months it would be right back where it is now.

MRS. FIORENTINO
Yes, dot’s right, Mr. Maurrant.

JONES
You said it.

KAPLAN
Who is talking about deviding money? We must hev a new conception of society, based upon human need, not human greed, and dis will require maybe a revolution.

MAURRANT
Yeah! Well we don’t want no revolution in dis country, see?

MRS. JONES
I know all about that stuff! Teachin’ kids there ain’t no Gawd and that their grandfathers was monkeys.

JONES
Atheism. Like they got in Russia, huh?

KAPLAN
All dis is bourgeois propaganda to take the minds of de verkers from de kless struggle.

MAURRANT
All right, we heard enough. You better lay off with that Red talk, or you’re liable to get your head busted open.

MRS. MAURRANT
Frank...

SHIRLEY
Papa!

KAPLAN
Oll right! I should argue wit a roughneck ignoramus.

MAURRANT
Who’s an ignoramus? Why you Goddam...
(He makes a break for Kaplan)

MRS. MAURRANT
Frank!

JONES
Hey! Wait a minute!

MAURRANT
Lemme go!

SHIRLEY
You ought to be ashamed to talk that way to an old man.

[9] MAURRANT
Alright, lemme go! I ain’t gonna do nothin’. But I’m tellin’ you it’s time we put a stop to that kind of talk and to the kind of things going on nowadays.

Aria: “Let Things Be Like They Always Was”

It’s time we got back to the way things used to be.

Let things be like they always was, That’s good enough for me.
Let things again be safe and sound, The way they used to be.
What’s going on? Why is it so bad?
If you ask me, the world is going mad!

Look at these new-fangled ideas going round:
Free love, divorce, and birth control.
Young girls smoking cigarettes,
Their dresses up around their necks,
And men coming in, breaking up decent people’s homes.
But it ain’t gonna be that way around here, You hear? You hear?
If anyone in my house wants that kind of stuff, Oh no! Oh no!
My kids are gonna be brought up right!
Not running the streets as if they’re wild all night.
In the old days they didn’t carry on that way,
And I’m telling you they ain’t gonna do it today!
With me that stuff will never go!
In my house I run the show!

Let things be like they always was,
That’s good enough for me!
That’s good enough for me!

And I tell you it’s time something was done, to put the fear of God into people.

MRS. FIORENTINO
Good for you, Mr. Maurrant.

LIPPO
Sure t’ing.

OLSEN
Yust the same vit me.

JONES
You’re damn right.

MAURRANT
You bet I’m right! An’ if all these lousy foreigners that are running around loose don’t like it, why the hell don’t they go back to where they came from?

MRS. FIORENTINO
It’s nothing wrong to be a foreigner, Mr. Maurrant. Many good people are foreigners.

LIPPO
Sure! Looka the Eetalians. Looka Christoforo Colombo! Esa firs’ man to discov’ America... es Eetalian, jussa like me.

MAURRANT
I ain’t sayin’ anythin’ about that...

OLSEN
Firs’ man is Lief Ericson.

LIPPO
Wassa dat?

OLSEN
Firs’ man is Lief Ericson.

LIPPO
No! No! Colombo! Christoforo Colombo...eesa firs’ man to discover America... ever’body knowsa dat!

[10] Scene and Ensemble: “Wrapped in a Ribbon and Tied in a Bow”

CHILDREN *(Children’s voices off stage)*
Hail to the school that floats the Banner Blue,
Hail to the school with standards high and true,
Our service, love and loyalty to you,
Julia Richmond High! Julia Richmond High!

(During song)

JONES
What’s that?

MRS. FIORENTINO
It’s Jenny coming home from graduation.

MRS. MAURRANT
Doesn’t she look pretty!

MRS. JONES
My Gawd, flowers and everything.
And tomorrow they’re going to be dispossessed.

OLSEN
Just the same, firs' man was Lief Ericson.

(Jenny, Mrs. Hildebrand and children enter.)

NEIGHBORS
Hello Everybody!

MRS. HILDEBRAND
What do you think, folks? Jenny has won the most amazing prize...

JENNY
Oh, Ma... please!

MRS. HILDEBRAND
Why, you ought to be proud of it. Just think, she won the art prize and a scholarship at the art school.

NEIGHBORS
She did? What do you know? How wonderful!

JENNY
Oh no, I can't, Ma.

NEIGHBORS
Oh come on. Sure you can. Oh, go ahead and tell us. Come on!

MRS. HILDEBRAND
Say something. There's nothing to be bashful about.

JENNY
Well, I...

HENRY
Come on, girl!

JENNY
Dearest friends and neighbors, why should I feel this way?
I don't know why I want to cry, It's been such a wonderful day!
We sat in our snowy white dresses, and then it was my turn to go.
"Your diploma!" they said, and I took it,
Wrapped in a ribbon and tied in a bow.
I felt like it must feel in heaven.
What greater joy was there to know?
Then my mother gave me all these flowers,
Wrapped in a ribbon and tied in a bow.
Happy me!
Could it be what I dared to hope in my heart...
That I was the best in the scholarship test of the "Gillihan School of Applied Commercial Art"?
I could hardly believe when I heard it...

MRS. HILDEBRAND
"On you we most proudly bestow...

CHARLIE AND MARY *(lifting the trophy)*
...this here annual Gillihan trophy!"

JENNY
Wrapped in a ribbon and tied in a bow.

NEIGHBORS
Good for you! Good for you! And for you, and for you, and you too!

LIPPO
Dot's fine, Meesses Hildebran'. Makes you feel OK, I betcha.

MRS. HILDEBRAND
Oh yes, it does. I feel so proud and happy. But when I think of tomorrow and how we're all going to be dispossessed—It's just so awful!
(She breaks down)

MRS. MAURRANT
Don't think of unhappy tomorrow. A brighter day's coming, I know.
And I'm sure you will find more good fortune...

ALL
Wrapped in a ribbon and tied in a bow.

LIPPO
I bet Jenny'll find a rich husband.

JENNY
Oh, please, Mister Fiorentino!

OLSEN
Ev'ry pay-day he'll bring home a million...

ALL
Wrapped in a ribbon and tied in a bow.

MRS. OLSEN
In a year you will hear she is knitting little pink boots.

MRS. FIORENTINO
And one happy day your grand-daughter will say:
"Oh please, grand-ma-ma, let's go ride the chute-the-chutes."

MRS. MAURRANT
And then you'll have Mary and Charlie, Just think how far they can go.

CHARLIE AND MARY
We'll buy mama a car and a gas-stove...

ALL
Wrapped in a ribbon and tied in a bow.

NEIGHBORS
Good for you! Good for you! and for you, and for you, and you too.

MRS. JONES
A gas-stove is just what I wished for,
With an oven that's not so damn slow.

HENRY
Sure the landlord will send one for Christmas...

ALL
Wrapped in a ribbon and tied in a bow.

GRACE
Oh see, it's a wishing star falling...

JONES
I'm wishing a wish full of dough.

THREE GRADUATION GIRLS
Wait!
(They make a silent wish.)

ALL
Wrapped in a ribbon and tied in a bow.

GIRLS
School is done. Let's have fun, Let's kick out that old Mister Blues.

ALL
Come on, take my hand, It is grand, it is grand to be young and be gay and be singing out the news that
Tonight we are having a party.

BUCHANAN *(appears at door)*
Oh Please, please, won't you sing low!

ALL
To our street has come good news and glory,
wrapped in a ribbon and
tied in a bow.

LIPPO
Now I'm gonna dance, who'sa gonna dance wit' me? Messes Maurrant, hows about you?

MRS. MAURRANT
Well, I don't know.
(They begin to dance)

LIPPO
Your wife essa dansa swell, Meesta Maurrant.

MRS. MAURRANT
Well I always loved to dance.

(Sankey enters)

SANKEY
I see you're having a little dance.

(They stop dancing)

SANKEY
Say, go right ahead. Don't let me stop you.

MRS. MAURRANT
Oh, that's all right. I guess we've danced about enough.

SANKEY
It's a pretty hot night for dancing.

MRS. MAURRANT
Yes, it is.

SANKEY
Well, I better be going along. Good night, folks.

THE OTHERS
Good night.

LIPPO
Buona notte.

(Sankey exits.)

MRS. HILDEBRAND
Up to bed, now, children.

(They enter into house)

MAURRANT
Who's that bird?

MRS. MAURRANT
Oh, that's Mr. Sankey. He's the milk collector.

MAURRANT
What's he hangin' around here for?

MRS. MAURRANT
Well, he lives just down the block somewhere.

MRS. JONES
He was just gettin' his wife some ginger-ale.

MAURRANT
Yeah? Well, what I want to know is, why ain't Rose home yet?

MRS. MAURRANT
I told you, Frank...

MAURRANT
Yeah, well, what I'm tellin' you is, you oughta be lookin' after your kids, 'stead of doin' so much dancin'.

(Willie cries off stage)

MRS. MAURRANT

Why, it's the first time I've danced in I don't know when.

WILLIE *(off stage)*

Lemme go!

(Willie enters, sobbing, accompanied by Sam)

MRS. MAURRANT

Why, Willie what's the matter?

SAM

He was having a fight, so I thought I'd better...

MRS. MAURRANT

Oh, Willie, have you been fighting again?

WILLIE

Dat big bum ain't gonna say dat to me.

MAURRANT

Who's been sayin' things to you?

WILLIE

Dat big bum, Joe Connolly, dat's who! I'm gonna knock his goddam eye out, next time.

MRS. MAURRANT

Willie!

MAURRANT

Shut up your swearin', do you hear?... or I'll give you somethin' to bawl for. What did he say to you, huh? What did he say to you?

WILLIE

Leggo my arm!

MRS. MAURRANT

What difference does it make what a little street loafer says?

MAURRANT

Nobody's askin' you! *(to Willie)* G'wan up to bed now! G'wan beat it!

MRS. MAURRANT

Wait, Willie, I'll go with you. Are you coming up, Frank?

MAURRANT

No, I ain't. I'm goin' around to Callahan's for a drink. An' if Rose ain't home when I get home, there's gonna be trouble.

(He exits.)

MRS. MAURRANT

Well, good night, all.

THE OTHERS

Good night, Mrs. Maurrant.

(Mrs. Maurrant and Willie enter the house. Mrs. Fiorentino reappears at the window.)

MRS. FIORENTINO

Lippo!

MRS. JONES

Say you missed it all!

MRS. FIORENTINO

Vat?

MRS. JONES

Well, they was dancin', see? An' who should come along but Sankey!

MRS. FIORENTINO

Oh!

MRS. JONES

Well, there was the three o' them... Mr. Maurrant lookin' at Sankey, as if he was ready to kill him; Mrs. Maurrant as white as a sheet; an' Sankey as innocent as the babe unborn.

MRS. FIORENTINO

Did he say something?

MRS. JONES

No, not until after he was gone. Then he wanted to know who he was an' what he was doin' here. "He's the milk collector", she said.

MRS. FIORENTINO

It's just awful!

MRS. JONES

Oh, an' then Willie comes home.

LIPPO

Da boy tella 'eem 'is mamma ees a whore, and Weelie leek 'im!

MRS. JONES

Well, what else is she?

SAM

Stop it! Stop it! Can't you let her alone? Have you no hearts? Why do you have to tear her to pieces like a pack of wolves? It's cruel.

(He rushes off.)

LIPPO

Wotsa matter you?

MRS. JONES

Well, listen to him, will you? He must be goin' off his nut, too.

LIPPO

'Esa reads too mucha book. Ees bad for you.

MRS. FIORENTINO

I think he is loving the girl.

MRS. JONES

Yeah? Well, that's all the Maurrants need is to have their daughter get hooked up wit' him. It's a fine house to be livin' in, ain't it, between the Maurrants upstairs an' that screwy bunch down here. Well, come on upstairs.

JONES

No, I think I'll go around to Callahan's and shoot a little pool.
(He exits.)

MRS. JONES

Him and his pool! Tomorrow he won't be fit to work again. Well, good night.
(She goes into the house)

MRS. FIORENTINO

Good night, Mrs. Jones.

LIPPO

Good night, Mrs. Jones.

Margherita eef I ever ketcha you sleepin' wit' da meelkman, ahm gonna breaka your neck.
(Laughs and goes into house)

MRS. FIORENTINO

Stop your foolishness, Lippo. Come to bed.
(They exit. Sam comes on slowly, looking at the house despairingly.)

[11] Arioso: "Lonely House"

SAM

At night when ev'rything is quiet,
This old house seems to breathe a sigh.
Sometimes I hear a neighbor snoring,
Sometimes I hear a baby cry.
Sometimes I hear a staircase creaking,
Sometimes a distant telephone.
Then the quiet settles down again...
The house and I are all alone.

Lonely house, lonely me!
Funny, with so many neighbors. How lonely it can be!
Oh lonely street! Lonely town!
Funny you can be so lonely with all these folks around.

I guess there must be something I don't comprehend.
Sparrows have companions, Even stray dogs find a friend.
The night for me is not romantic.
Unhook the stars and take them down.
I'm lonely in this lonely house
In this lonely town.

(Sam goes into the house.)

(Rose and Easter enter.)

[12] ROSE

This is where I live, Mr. Easter. Well, good night. I've had a lovely time.

EASTER

Now, wait a minute! I've hardly had a chance to talk to you.

ROSE

We've been doing nothing but talking since six o'clock.

EASTER

No, we haven't. No, we've been eating and dancing. *(Putting his arm around her)* But Rose...

ROSE

Please don't, Mr. Easter. There's somebody coming.

(She frees herself as Mrs. Olsen comes up the cellar steps, with a pail filled with waste paper.)

MRS. OLSEN

Good evening, Miss Maurrant.

ROSE

Good evening, Mrs. Olsen. How's the baby?

MRS. OLSEN *(Putting the pail on the sidewalk)*

She vas crying all the time.

ROSE

Oh, the poor little thing! What a shame! *(As Mrs. Olsen goes down the steps again)* Good night, Mrs. Olsen.

MRS. OLSEN

Good night, Miss Maurrant.

ROSE

She's got the cutest little baby you ever saw.

EASTER

Oh yeah? Huh, that's great. Rose... I'm crazy about you.

ROSE

Please let me go now, it's awfully late and my father doesn't like it when I...

EASTER

Kiss me good night.

ROSE

No.

EASTER

Why not? Just one kiss.

ROSE

No.

EASTER

Yes.

(He takes her in his arms and kisses her.)

ROSE

It wasn't nice of you to do that.

EASTER

I'm clean off my nut about you.

ROSE

You shouldn't keep looking at me, at the office. The other girls are starting to pass hints about it.

EASTER

Is that a fact? Well, I guess I just can't keep my eyes off you. Well, we've got to do something about it.

ROSE

Well I guess the only thing for me to do is look for another job.

EASTER

Yeah, that's just what I've been thinking, too. A girl like you has got no business working all day in a real estate office. Why, you ought to be on the stage.

Scene and Song: "Wouldn't You Like to Be on Broadway?"

ROSE

Don't be silly, how could I ever get a job on the stage?

EASTER

Why, easy as walking around the block, for a girl that's got what you've got. Oh, just leave it to me. I've got three or four friends in show business. Ever hear of Harry Porkins?

ROSE

No.

EASTER

Well, he's put on a lot of musicals. He's an old pal of mine. I'd just say to him: "Harry, here's this little girl I'm interested in," and you'd be all set. Wouldn't you like to be on Broadway, and go dancing at the Zanzibar?

And have yourself an up-and-coming boyfriend

Who can make any course in par?

Hey, kid?

Wouldn't you like to be on Broadway, And wear some Bergdorf Goodman clothes?

Red alligator shoes, a bright gold anklet, and seventeen dozen nylon hose?

Hey, kid?

Wouldn't you like to see your name up in the bright lights,

In the white lights that gleam and glow?

Wouldn't you like to be the leading lady in my heart,

But also in some Broadway show?

Wouldn't you like some personal promotion

To a niche on the Great White Way?

Wouldn't you? Hey Kid?

How about it? Hey Kid?

Wouldn't you like to be on Broadway?

It's just a few blocks over, I know the way. Hey Kid?

It's easy. I'll show you the way.

ROSE

Oh, look out!

(Mrs. Jones enters.)

MRS. JONES

Oh, good evenin'.

ROSE

Good evening, Mrs. Jones. It's been a terrible day, hasn't it?

MRS. JONES

Yeah, awful. I think your father's been kinda worried about you.

ROSE

Oh, has he?

MRS. JONES

Yeah. Good night.

(goes off)

ROSE

Good night, Mrs. Jones. I'll soon have all the neighbors talking about me.

EASTER

What can they say, huh? Oh, that they say you saying good night to somebody on the front doorstep?

ROSE

They can say worse than that... and what's more, they will too!

EASTER

Well, if you'll just listen to what I'm telling you, you won't have to worry about any of them.

Wouldn't you like to get away from this crummy old street?

Wouldn't you like to have a smart little place of your own?

Wouldn't you like to have two maids

Scrubbing your shoulder blades in a bubble bath's sweet perfume?

Can't you hear the doorman at the stage door:

"Here's your car!" When we leave your dressing room?

Wouldn't you like to have the crowds applaud you

At your first night on the Great White Way?

Wouldn't you? Hey, Kid?

What do you say? Hey, Kid?

Wouldn't you like to be on Broadway?

It's just a few blocks over, I know the way.

Hey kid! It's easy.

I'll show you the way.

ROSE

No!

EASTER

Why not? There's really nothing wrong about it, sweetheart.

ROSE

No! And you mustn't call me sweetheart.

EASTER

Why not?

ROSE

Because I'm not your sweetheart.

EASTER

But I want you to be. Why just think of all the good times we could have, huh? You with a little apartment and all. Maybe we could get us a little car.

ROSE

And what about your wife?

EASTER

Well, the way I figure it, she doesn't have to know anything about it.

[13] Cavatina and Scene: "What Good Would the Moon Be?"

ROSE

I don't think it's the way I'd want things to be.

I've looked in the windows at diamonds, They're beautiful but they're cold. I've seen Broadway stars in fur coats That cost a fortune so I'm told. I guess I'd look nice in diamonds, and sables might add to my charms, But if someone I don't care for would buy them I'd rather have two loving arms! What good would the moon be Unless the right one shared its beams? What good with dreams-come-true be If love wasn't in those dreams? And a primrose path—What would be the fun Of walking down a path like that without the right one? What good would the night be Unless the right lips whisper low: Kiss me, oh darling, kiss me, While ev'ning stars still glow? No, it won't be a primrose path for me, No, it won't be diamonds or gold, but maybe there will be,

Someone who'll love me, Someone who'll love just me, To have and to hold! *(A sudden yell of pain is heard from upstairs.)*

EASTER

My God, what's that... a murder?

ROSE

It must be poor Mrs. Buchanan. She's expecting a baby. Good night, Mr. Easter.

EASTER

But, Rose, listen...

ROSE

Look, here's my father. There'll only be an argument if he sees you.

EASTER

All right, I'll go. Good night. See you tomorrow. *(Easter exits as Maurrant enters.)*

ROSE

Hello, Pop.

MAURRANT

Who was that guy you were talkin' to? **ROSE** That's Mr. Easter. The manager of the office.

MAURRANT

You been out wit' him?

ROSE

Well, you see, Pop, the office is closed tomorrow, on account of Mr. Gordon's funeral. So I had to

stay late to get out some letters and after that we went to dinner.

MAURRANT

This is a hell of a time to be gettin' home from dinner.

ROSE

Well, we danced afterwards.

MAURRANT

Oh you danced, huh? With a little neckin' on the side, is that it?

ROSE

No it isn't! And even if it were...

MAURRANT

It's your business, is that it? Well, I'll make it my business, see?
Is this bird married?... I t'ought so! They're all alike, them guys!
All after the one thing!

ROSE

Be quiet, Pop! And go upstairs before you wake everybody up!

MAURRANT

Aren't you coming up?

ROSE

Not for a while. I want to get a breath of air before I go up to that hot room.

MAURRANT

Well, just get this straight. No married man ain't gonna come nosin' around my family, get me?
(He enters the house.)

ROSE *(looks after him)*

You just wait and see, someday I will run off with someone. What's the use? Maybe I should say yes to Mr. Easter, and get out of this. Still, I don't know...

What good would the moon be
Unless the right one shared its beams?
What good with dreams-come-true be
If love wasn't in those dreams?
And a primrose path—What would be the fun
Of walking down a path like that without the right one?
What good would the night be
Unless the right lips whisper low:
Kiss me, oh darling, kiss me,
While ev'ning stars still glow?
No, it won't be a primrose path for me,
No, it won't be diamonds or gold, but maybe there will be,
Someone who'll love me,

Someone who'll love just me,
To have and to hold!
(Buchanan rushes out of the house.)

BUCHANAN

I think the baby's coming.

ROSE

Can I do anything, Mr. Buchanan?

BUCHANAN

Well, if you wouldn't mind phoning the doctor. Here's his number, and the other number is her sister. And here's two nickels. *(A scream from upstairs)* Just listen to her!

ROSE

Oh, you go right on back! And stop on the way and ask my mother to go up with you.

BUCHANAN

All right, I will!
(He dashes into the house. Mae and Dick appear.)

MAE

Hello, Rose. What's your hurry?

ROSE *(As she hurries off)*

It's Mrs. Buchanan. I've got to phone to the doctor.

[14] DICK

Say, who's your little friend?

MAE

Oh, that's Rose Maurrant. She lives in the house.

DICK

She's kinda cute, ain't she?

MAE

Say, according to you anythin' in a skirt is kinda cute... providin' the skirt is short enough.

DICK

Yeah, but ain't any of them as cute as you, Mae.

MAE

Yeah? Go on, tell me some more.

DICK

Honest, I mean it. Say, How's 'bout a little kiss?
(He plants a long kiss on her lips. She submits in a bored way.)
You might show a little en-thoo-siasm.

MAE

Say, you seem to think I oughta hang out a flag every time some jerk decides to wipe off his mouth on me.

DICK

Aw, don't be that way, sugar. I can't take it!

MAE

No kiddin'!

DICK

No, this is on the square. Nobody ever had me jumpin' t'roo hoops, like you do.

Song, Scene and Dance: "Moon Faced, Starry Eyed"

DICK

Moon faced, starry eyed,
Peaches and cream with nuts on the side.
I never knew there was anyone living like you.
Moon faced, starry eyed,
I'm gonna bust my vest with pride.
I never lived, Baby, not at all 'til I met you.

At six o'clock I expect your call,
At seven o'clock I am in the hall,
At eight o'clock if you don't come by,
By nine o'clock, Baby, I die!
Moon faced, starry eyed,
Cooking with gas when I'm by your side.
I swear my heart's nowhere without you.

Come on I feel like steppin'!

MAE

Yeah? Well, not me! I been hippety hoppin' on my dogs all night.

DICK

Well, what the hell? You only live once.

MAE

Yeah, well for me that's twice too often.

DICK

Why, you're losin' your control! Come on, get it over the plate!

MAE

Oh say, leggo, will you? I'm pooped, I'm telling you!

DICK

I guess the trouble wit you is you need another little shot.

MAE

Nope! I can't swaller any more o' that rotten gin.

DICK

All you gotta do is shut your eyes and make believe it's scotch.

MAE

Hey, fer God's sake, what you doin'... emptyin' the bottle?

(She snatches it from him.)

DICK

I thought you didn't want none.

MAE

Can't you take a joke?

(She drains the bottle.)

DICK

Whoa, watch your step, baby, or you're li'ble to go right up in a puff o'smoke.

MAE

Phew! Boy! I feel like a t'ree alarm fire! Say, what de hell do dey make dat stuff out of?

DICK

T'ree parts high octane, one part atom bomb.

MAE

Hiya, he-man? Where you been all my life?

Moon faced, starry eyed, you're whiskey straight with beer on the side.
Can it be true that I'm loved by a Tarzan like you?
Moon faced, starry eyed,
You took my heart on a buggy ride.
I don't know how I got ever along without you.

At six o'clock I'm gettin' up steam, at seven o'clock, I'm on the beam,
At eight o'clock, if the knob don't turn,
By 9 o'clock, Baby, I burn.
Moon faced, starry eyed,
Floating on clouds when I'm by your side,
I swear my heart's nowhere without you.

Come on, step it up!

DICK

So, why don't you say so?

(They dance.)

MAE

Kiss me, kid!

DICK

I'll say.

(He kisses her, then takes her arm.)
Come on!

MAE

Wait a minute! Where y' goin'?

DICK
Come on, I'm tellin' ya! Fred Hennessy gimme de key to his apartment. Dere won't be nobody dere.

MAE
I oughta go home. Oh, Baby, nail down dat sidewalk, will ya?

DICK
Come on!

MAE
Oh, sweet papa!

(Rose enters.)
Hello Rose. How's de milkman?

DICK *(to Rose)*
Goo'night, sweetheart!

(He and Mae exit.)

BUCHANAN'S VOICE
Miss Maurant, did you get them?

ROSE
Yes, the doctor will be here right away. And Mrs. Thomas said it would take her about an hour.

BUCHANAN'S VOICE
She's got terrible pains. Your mother's up here with her. I think she's calling me.

(Meanwhile, Vincent Jones has entered.)

VINCENT
Hello, Rosie.

ROSE
Good evening.

VINCENT
What's your hurry?

ROSE
It's late.

VINCENT
Ah, you don' wanna go to bed yet. Come on, I'll take you for a ride in me hack.

(Sam appears.)

ROSE
Please let me pass.

VINCENT
You got a lot o'stren'th, ain't you? Say, you know you're gettin' fat?

ROSE
Let go of me, you big tough!

SAM
Take your hands off her!

VINCENT
Oh, well, look who's here! What de hell do you want?

SAM
I said take your hands off her.

VINCENT
Oh, so that's the way you feel about it, is it?
(He strikes Sam a vicious blow that sends him sprawling on the sidewalk.)

ROSE
You let him alone or I'll call a policeman.

VINCENT
Gee, don't frighten me like dat, I got a weak heart!

(Mrs. Jones enters.)
Hello, Ma!

MRS. JONES
Hello, Vincent. What's goin' on here?

(Sam picks himself up and dust off his clothes.)

VINCENT
Oh, nothin', jus' a frien'ly argument. Tarzan don't like me to say good evenin' to his girl frien'.

MRS. JONES
Come on upstairs, Vincent. I saved some stew for you.

VINCENT
All right, I'm comin'. *(To Rose)* Good night, dearie. Some sheik you picked out for yourself, huh?
(He enters the house)

MRS. JONES
You seem to have plenty of admirers, Miss Maurant. But I guess you come by it natural.
(She enters the house.)

[15] SAM
That dirty bum! I'd like to kill him!

ROSE
It's all right, Sam. Why should you pay any attention to a big tough like that? He's nothing but a loafer, you know that.

SAM
I guess you think I'm just a coward.

ROSE
Why, because he happens to be bigger and stronger than you are? You know he's not worth your little finger. Ten years from now, he'll still be driving a taxi and you — why, you'll be so far above him, you won't even remember he's alive.

SAM
I'll never get anywhere.

ROSE
Why, of course you will! A boy with your brains. Graduating from college with honors and all that!

SAM
But what good does it do you when nobody ever looks at you... when nobody cares whether you exist or not?

Duet: “Remember That I Care”

ROSE
I care, Sam.

SAM
I wonder if you really do.

ROSE
Of course I do! You're the best friend I have in the world. Sam, there's something I want to ask you.

SAM
What is it, Rose?

ROSE
I wouldn't dream of asking anybody but you. Sam, do you think it's true... What they're saying about my mother?
(Sam does not reply)
I guess it is, isn't it?

SAM
They were talking here, before... I couldn't stand it anymore. Oh God, why do we go on living in this sewer?

ROSE
What can I do, Sam? See, my father's always been sort of strict... sort of making you freeze up, when you really wanted to be nice and loving. That's the whole trouble, I guess; my mother never had anybody to really love her. Only—the way things are now—everybody spying and whispering—making remarks! If I only knew what to do!

SAM
I wish I could help you, Rose.

ROSE
You do help me, Sam, just by being nice and sympathetic—talking things over with me. You keep me from getting that feeling that I'm all alone in the world—and that everybody's against us!

(A scream from Mrs. Buchanan)

ROSE
Oh, just listen to the poor thing! She must be having terrible pains!

SAM
Pain! Nothing but pain! That's all there is to life! Before we're born until we die... Nothing but pain! Brutality! Strife!
Too high a price to pay for life! Not worth it, not worth it to live!
The scream of birth, the moan of death...
What else has life got to give?

ROSE
I don't know, Sam, sometimes I feel discouraged, too. Last night I could hardly sleep and I woke up depressed and blue.
I thought I'd walk to the office, So I cut through the park by the mall.
Ev'rything looks so fresh and green. Life seemed not so bad after all!
What do you think I saw, Sam? A lilac bush flow'ring bright.
It made me think of that poem you said, Remember?
When we sat in the park one night.

SAM
Yes, I remember.

ROSE
It was just like tonight, we were both feeling sort of low,
And all of a sudden, you began that poem.

SAM
In the dooryard fronting an old farmhouse near the whitewash'd palings,
Stands the lilac bush tall growing with heart-shaped leaves of green,
With many pointed blossoms rising delicate, with the perfume strong I love,
With ev'ry leaf a miracle.
ROSE
In the dooryard fronting an old farmhouse near the whitewash'd palings,
Stands the lilac bush tall growing.

SAM
With the perfume strong I love, with ev'ry leaf a miracle.
And from this bush in the dooryard,
With delicate colored blossoms

and heart-shaped leaves of green,
A sprig with its flower I break.

ROSE
A sprig with its flower I break.
Yes, that's what I thought the park today,
When I saw that bush, fresh and green.
I wanted to break off a flower
But I was afraid I might be seen.
Maybe a park policeman
Might come and take me away.
"Do not pick the flowers" the signs forever say.

SAM
"Don't! Don't!" They always say
"Stand back! Keep off the grass!
Don't pick the flowers! Don't pick the flowers!
Don't take!"

ROSE
But in our dreams, Sam!...

SAM
Yes in our dreams, Rose!...

ROSE
Yes in our dreams...

BOTH
A sprig with its flower we break, A sprig with its
flower we break.
And the lilac bush is ours, Nothing can take it
away.
The lilac bush is ours, Forever and a day.
And when you see the lilac bush Bright in the
morning air,
Remember, always remember, remember that I care!
Remember that I care!

[16] Finaletto

BUCHANAN'S VOICE
Miss Murrant! Miss Murrant!

ROSE
Yes?

BUCHANAN
Do you mind phoning the doctor again? She's
getting worse.

ROSE
Yes, sure I will. Wait! Maybe this is the doctor now.

BUCHANAN
Yeah, that's him. Doctor, I guess you're none too
soon.
(Wilson enters)

DR. WILSON
Plenty of time. Just don't get too excited.

ROSE
I hope she won't have to suffer much longer.

MAURRANT *(at window)*
Rose!

ROSE
Yes, Pop. I'll be right up.

MAURRANT
Well, don't make me call you again, d'ya hear?

ROSE
I better go up now, Sam. There was something I
wanted to talk to you about, but it will have to be
another time.

SAM
Rose, will you kiss me?

ROSE
Why of course I will Sam.

(She kisses him)

Don't be discouraged about things. You're going to
do big things some day. I've got lots of confidence
in you.

SAM
Have you really, Rose?

ROSE
Of course I have.

And don't forget the lilac bush Bright in the
morning air.
Remember, always remember,

BOTH
Remember that I care.
Remember that I care.

(Henry comes up from cellar)

HENRY
I got a marble and a star,
And the star is in my pocket, too.

ROSE
Good night, Sam. I hope it won't be too hot to
sleep.

SAM
Good night, Rose.

(She enters the house.)

HENRY
Got a marble and a star,
The star is in my pocket, too.

If you'll be real good,
I'll show that star to you.

(He disappears in the house.)

ROSE *(At window)*
Yoo-hoo, Sam!

ROSE
Good night, Sam.

SAM
Good night, Rose dear.

(Slow curtain closes)

ACT TWO

Scene I – The following morning

[17] Introduction and Children's Game: "Catch
Me if You Can"

*(Curtain opens. Dr. Wilson comes out of the
house.)*

BUCHANAN'S VOICE
Doctor!

DR. WILSON
Well?

BUCHANAN'S VOICE
What if she does wake up?

DR. WILSON
She won't, I've told you. She's too exhausted.
Best thing you can do is lie down—get some
sleep yourself.
(Enter Mae and Dick)
Oh, good mornin'.
(Dr. Wilson exits.)

DICK
Well, goo' night.

MAE
So long!

DICK
How 'bout kissing me good-night?

MAE
For God's sake, ain't you got enough kissin' for
one night?

DICK
Well, say, if that's the way you feel about it!

MAE
Aw, go to hell!
(Enter the house)

DICK
You dirty little tart!
(Goes off)

(Henry appears.)

POLICEMAN *(crossing)*
Hello, Henry.

MILKMAN
Hello, Harry. Goin' to be another scorcher.

POLICEMAN
You said it.

*(Henry enters the house. Two little girls, Joan and
Myrtle, cross the stage.)*

JOAN
Ooh golly! Rats?

MYRTLE
Uh-huh. And he says, what's more, if he ever
ketches her again using my mother's lipstick, he's
going to take her pants down and lambaste the
hell out of her.
(Exit)

(Willie comes out of the house.)

WILLIE
Fat, Fat the water rat, fifty bullets in his hat.

SAM
Hello, Willie! Is Rose up yet?

WILLIE
Yeah. I don't know. I guess so.
(Exits)

(Mrs. Jones come out of the house.)

MRS. JONES
Mornin'.

SAM
Morning.

(Mrs. Jones goes off. A workman enters.)

WORKMAN
You up there, Henry?

HENRY
Yeah!

WORKMAN

All right!

(Charlie runs to the stoop as Willie, Myrtle and Joan come on.)

CHARLIE

One, two, three, four Superman, come and catch me if you can.

OTHERS

If we catch you, you must do just whatever we tell you to.

CHARLIE

Maybe I will, maybe I won't.

OTHERS

We'll shampoo your head with a brick if you don't.

(Charlie runs, pursued by others. Grace comes at right and catches Charlie.)

CHARLIE

Now you've got me what'll I do?

GRACE

Make out you live on Park Avenue.

OTHERS

Roses are red and vi'lets are blue, make out you live on Park Avenue.

(Charlie struts about like a Park Avenue resident.)

CHARLIE

My father's name is Rockefeller. He shovels diamonds in the cellar. He's got a hankie made of gold, to blow his nose when he gets a cold.

OTHERS

Hey! Diddle Dee! Hey! Diddle Derry! Hey! Babarebop!
Hey Babarebop! Hey Babarebob! Your mama's canary!

(They dance an impersonation of Park Avenue people. Joan gets into position.)

JOAN

One, two, three, four Harold Teen, if you catch me, you are mean.

OTHERS

If we catch you, you must do just whatever we tell you to.

JOAN

Maybe I will, maybe I won't.

OTHERS

We'll shampoo your head with a rock, if you don't.

(They chase her. Willie catches her.)

JOAN

Now you've got me, what'll I do?

GRACE

Give out like a deb on Park Avenue.

ALL

Roses are red and vi'lets are blue. Give out like a deb on Park Avenue.

(She acts like a debutante.)

JOAN

I am a deb named Gloria Jinx, my hair is bleached, my perfume stinks. I drink champagne with rich old clucks. And get my face in the ads for Lux.

(They all continue dancing like debutantes.)

ALL

Hey! Diddle Dee! Hey! Diddle Dash!
Hey! Babarebop! Hey! Babarebop!
Hey! Babarebob, my father's mustache!

WILLIE

One, two, three, four Donald Duck, if you catch me I'm outta luck.

OTHERS

If we catch you, you must do just whatever we tell you to!

(They chase. Joe catches him.)

WILLIE

Now you got me, what'll I do?

JOE

Do like a gent on Park Avenue.

WILLIE

O-kay.
(He reels about, drunkenly)
I've spent the night in a gambling house, I'm known around as Joe the souse.

(They all play drunkards. Willie seizes Myrtle's arm and tries to drag her away.)

MYRTLE

Ow! You hurt.

WILLIE

Yah! Yah! Cry-baby!

MYRTLE

Shut up you big tough!

WILLIE

Cut that out!

JOE

Let her alone, you!

WILLIE

Sez who?

JOE

Sez me! Wanta make anything out of it?

(A general brawl follows.)

ROSE *(at window)*

Willie! Stop that fighting!

(The fighting continues. Sam appears and separates Willie and Joe.)

Willie, come right upstairs. We're waiting for the bread.

WILLIE

All right! Cancha see I got it?

(The children disperse.)

SAM

Hello, Rose.

ROSE

Hello, Sam.

SAM

Come down.

ROSE

I have to go to Mr. Gordon's funeral this morning.
(Calling to the room) Yes, I'm coming.
(To Sam) I'll be down as soon as the dishes are done.

(She leaves the window. Sam sits on the stoop.)

SHIRLEY *(Appearing at the window)*

Sam, come in, Papa is half through breakfast already.

SAM

I don't want any breakfast.

SHIRLEY

You've got your head so full of that Rose Maurant upstairs that you don't want to eat or sleep or anything, anymore.

KAPLAN'S VOICE

Shoi-ley!

SHIRLEY *(Calling into the room)*

All right, Papa! *(To Sam)* Come in, Sam, or Papa will be making long speeches again.

SAM

All right! All right! I'll come.

(Sam rises and goes into the house. Buchanan, emerging from the house, encounters Sam in the vestibule. Mrs. Fiorentino appears at the window.)

MRS. FIORENTINO

Good morning, Mr. Buchanan.

BUCHANAN

Good morning, Mrs. Fiorentino. I guess you know that the baby came last night, don't you?

MRS. FIORENTINO

No! I did not hear a verd about it!

BUCHANAN

I've been up the whole night, Mrs. Maurant too. I don't know what we'd have done without her.

MRS. FIORENTINO

A boy, is it?

BUCHANAN

No, it's a little girl. I guess we'll call her Mary, after my mother.
(as Lippo enters with groceries.)
Hey, I was just telling your wife...

MRS. FIORENTINO

Lippo, vot do you t'ink? Mr. Buchanan has a little girl!

LIPPO

Oh, dotsa fine! Margherita, why you don't hava da baby, ha?

MRS. FIORENTINO

I must go make the coffee.
(She leaves the window.)

LIPPO

Ees funny t'ing. You have a leetla, skeeny wife an' she's hava da baby. My Margherita, she's beeg an' fat, an she no hava da baby.

BUCHANAN

Well, that's the way of the world, I guess.
(He exits as Lippo goes up the steps and Mrs. Maurant comes out of the house.)

LIPPO

Good morning, Meeses Maurant.

MRS. MAURRANT

Good morning, Mr. Fiorentino.

(Lippo enters the house. Mrs. Jones comes on.)

MRS. JONES

Good mornin’.

MRS. MAURRANT

Good morning, Mrs. Jones.

MRS. JONES

How is little Mrs. Buchanan gettin’ on?

(Rose comes out of the house.)

MRS. MAURRANT

Well, she’s sleeping now, poor thing. I really didn’t think, last night, she’d have the strength to pull through it.

MRS. JONES

Well, it’s somethin’ we all gotta go through. I been through enough of mine, I hope to tell you. Not that they didn’t turn out all right.

MRS. MAURRANT

I wouldn’t give up having mine, for anything in the world.

MRS. JONES

Well, after all, what more does any woman want, then to watch her kids grow up an’ a husband to look out for her?

MRS. MAURRANT

That’s true.

MRS. JONES

Yes, an’ the world would be a whole lot better off, if there was more that lived up to it.

(She enters the house. Mrs. Maurrant turns away.)

ROSE

Ma!

MRS. MAURRANT

I’m going down to Kraus’s to get a little chicken for Mrs. Buchanan.

ROSE

Wait a minute, Ma!

MRS. MAURRANT

I’ll be right back.

(She exits. Charlie and Mary Hildebrand come out of the house carrying their schoolbooks.)

MARY

Hello.

ROSE

Hello, Mary. Hello, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Hello.

MARY

We’re going to be dispossessed today.

ROSE

What a shame.

MARY

Yes, ma’am. My father ran away with some lady and so we couldn’t pay the rent.

CHARLIE

Aw, come on Mary!

MARY

I’m going to school now. Good-bye.

ROSE

Good-bye.

CHARLIE

I’ll beat you to the avenoo.

(He runs off)

(As Mary and Charlie run off, Maurrant comes out of the house carrying a satchel.)

MARY *(Running after him)*

No fair, head-start!

[18] MAURRANT

Where’s your ma gone to again?

ROSE

She’ll be right back. She just went down to Kraus’s. Pop, there’s something I’ve been wanting to talk to you about.

MAURRANT

Well, what is it?

ROSE

It’s about Ma.

MAURRANT

What about her?

ROSE

It’s only that if you were a little nicer to her, maybe everything would be different.

MAURRANT

Yeah? Where’s she got any kick comin’? Ain’t I always been a good husband? Ain’t I always looked after her?

ROSE

It’s not that, Pop. It’s someone to be sort of nice to her that she wants—sort of nice and gentle, the way she is to you. That’s all it is.

Scene and Trio: “There’ll be Trouble”

MAURRANT

So she’s got you headed the same way, has she? Steppin’ out with married men, huh? No daughter o’ mine ain’t gonna go that way. I seen too many o’ those kind around the theayter.

ROSE

I guess I’ve got a right to think about those things for myself.

MAURRANT

Well, jus’ remember what I told you, hear?

ROSE

Maybe if you did a little less drinking and...

MAURRANT

Shut up with that! I’m not asking you!

MRS. MAURRANT *(entering)*

Are you leaving already, Frank?

MAURRANT

Looks like it. Where you been all night?

ROSE

She’s been up at the Buchanans’.

MAURRANT

You keep out of this!

MRS. MAURRANT

I was up all night with a poor young mother. I tried to calm her troubled mind and ease her pain.

MAURRANT

Why don’t you look after your own home and let other people look after theirs?

MRS. MAURRANT

I was just trying to help a neighbor; That is the least a woman can do.

ROSE

The poor woman had a baby...

MRS. MAURRANT

That is the least...

ROSE

... and nobody to help her.

MRS. MAURRANT

... a woman can do.

MAURRANT

I don’t care about that! You look after your own house, after your husband and children!

MRS. MAURRANT

What else have I been doing all these years, Tell me, but looking after my own children and you, Frank.

MAURRANT

Then see that you don’t forget it.

ROSE

Why do you talk to her like that?

MAURRANT

I’ll talk anyway I want! You stay out o’ this! *(to Mrs. Maurrant)* And you just see that you don’t forget it! That’s all. Or there will be trouble!

MRS. MAURRANT

All right, Frank. Please don’t say anymore now. When will you be back? Tomorrow?

MAURRANT

I don’t know when I’ll be back. When I’m through with me work, that’s when. Why do you want to know? Why are you so anxious to know?

MRS. MAURRANT

I was just asking, that’s all.

MAURRANT

Just asking, huh? In case somebody came calling, huh?

MRS. MAURRANT

No! It isn’t! It’s nothing of the kind!

ROSE

You’ve got no right to talk to her like that!

MRS. MAURRANT

You’ve got no right to talk to me like that.

MAURRANT

Stay out of this! I say, stay out of this!

ROSE

All she wants is someone to be nice to her, nice and gentle, the way she is to you.

MRS. MAURRANT

I’ve tried to make a home for you. I’ve always tried to do my best.

MAURRANT

A woman's got a right to stay in her own home and mind her family.

ROSE

That's all she needs, that's all she needs, that's all she wants from you.

MRS. MAURRANT

You know I have, you know I have!

MAURRANT

Watch out I say, watch out I say. That's all I've got to say

MRS. MAURRANT

You've got no right to talk to me like that in front of my own daughter!

MAURRANT

I've heard enough, I've said what I've got to say. Just see that you don't forget it! Or there'll be trouble!

MRS. JONES *(at window)*

Good mornin' Mr. Maurrant. You off on a little trip?

MAURRANT

Yeah.
(Exits)

ROSE

Oh, Ma!

MRS. MAURRANT

I tried to be a good wife to him; But he never seemed to care.

ROSE

I know, Ma.

MRS. MAURRANT

I tried to be a good mother, too, Rose, but he never seemed to care.

ROSE

I know just the way you feel about it.

MRS. MAURRANT

Do you, Rose?

ROSE

Of course I do. But if I try to say something, will you listen to me?

MRS. MAURRANT

Yes, sure I will Rose.

ROSE

Well, what I was thinking was, if he didn't come around here so much, maybe. Do you see what I mean, Ma?

MRS. MAURRANT

Are you going to start too, just like all the others?

ROSE

It's only on account of all the talk that's been going around. And Pop, too. He started drinking, and I'm afraid of what he's likely to do.

MRS. MAURRANT

Sometimes I think it would be better if I was dead. If you have nobody who understands.

ROSE

If there was something I could do!

MRS. MAURRANT

You might just as well be dead, Rose, you might just as well be dead.

ROSE

Oh Ma, oh Ma, don't say that to me, Ma. If there was only something I could do!

(Jones enters from house.)

JONES

Well, is it hot enough for you today?

ROSE

It's awful, isn't it?

JONES

Like the feller says, you wouldn't mind the heat so much if it wasn't only for the humidity.
(Jones exits.)

ROSE

I'll run up and put the chicken in the ice-box.

MRS. MAURRANT

Thanks, Rose.

(As Rose goes up the steps, Willie comes out of the house, on his way to school.)

[19] ROSE

Why, Willie, the way you look. Your collar's open again.

WILLIE

I know it, the button came off.

ROSE

Well, wait till I see if I have a pin.

WILLIE

Aw, it's all right the way it is.

ROSE

No, it isn't. You can't go to school looking like that.

WILLIE

Say, lemme alone, can'tcha?

ROSE

All right, then go to school looking like a little street-loafer, if you want to!

(Rose goes quickly into the house.)

WILLIE

Aw, you gimme a pain in de...

MRS. MAURRANT

Why, Willie? Is that any way to act to your sister?

WILLIE

Then why don't she stop picking on me?

MRS. MAURRANT

She's not picking on you, she's just trying to be nice to you and to help you to act right. You don't want people to think you don't know how to behave, do you?

WILLIE

Aw...

MRS. MAURRANT

Well of course you don't.

Song: "A Boy Like You"

You want to grow up to be a fine good man that everybody likes and has respect for.

Somebody's going to be so handsome,
Somebody's going to make me proud.
Somebody's going to be so wonderful,
He'll stand out from the crowd.
Such a manly arm I'll have to lean on,
When I walk down the avenue
Somebody will always be my standby. Who do you think it is?
Guess Who?

WILLIE

Is it me, Ma?

MRS. MAURRANT

Of course it is Willie. Now give me a nice kiss, and run along to school, or you'll be late.
(She embraces him, as Rose comes out on the stoop.)

Somebody will never,
No, not ever, forget to care and understand.
Yes, that is the grandest feeling,
That any woman ever knew,
To know I have somebody wonderful,
To know I have a boy like you.

WILLIE

So long, Ma. See you later.
(Goes off)

MRS. MAURRANT

To know I have a boy like you.

ROSE

I put some water on to boil. And the chicken's in the ice-box.

MRS. MAURRANT

Thanks, Rose. Well, I'd better go in and start the soup. Are you coming home for lunch, Rose?

ROSE

Yes, I'll be home as soon as the funeral's over.

MRS. MAURRANT

All right.
(Shirley enters.)
Good morning.

SHIRLEY

Good morning.

ROSE

Good morning, Miss Kaplan.
(Mrs. Maurrant goes into the house.)
It's another awful day, isn't it?

SHIRLEY

Yes, and when you have to keep forty children quiet...
(She comes down the steps)
Miss Maurrant, there's something I'd like to ask you. A girl like you can get plenty of fellows. Why must you pick out my brother Sam?

ROSE

Why, we're just good friends, that's all.

SHIRLEY

It'll be three years yet before he's a full-fledged lawyer. And maybe ten years before he can support a family. Anyhow, it's better to marry with your own kind. You can't mix oil and water.

ROSE

I'm not trying to take Sam's mind off his work. We just happen to...

SHIRLEY

I could of had my chances too. Only I wanted to give Sam an education. But he sees a pretty face and right away, he forgets everything else.

ROSE

I know I haven't as much brains as Sam, or as you either, if that's what you mean.

SHIRLEY

I haven't got anything against you. Only he's all I've got in the world. What else have I got to live for?

SAM (*Appearing at the window*)

Hello, Rose.

ROSE

Hello, Sam.

(*Sam leaves window*)

SHIRLEY

Please don't tell him what I said.

ROSE

Oh no, I won't.

(*As Shirley exits, Vincent comes out of the house.*)

VINCENT

Hello, Rosie! You've been here all night, neckin' with Joe Louis?

(*She does not answer.*)

Got a date for tonight, kid?

ROSE

Yes, I have.

VINCENT

Gee, ain't that too bad? Say—I'll give you two bucks if you let me snap your garter.

(*Exits left*)

ROSE

Oh, shut up, you!

[20] SAM (*Comes out of the house*)

Has he been starting with you again?

ROSE

Oh, never mind about him! Oh, if there was only some way to get out of here. I sometimes think I'd just like to run away!

SAM

Yes, I feel the same way.

ROSE

Anywhere, just to get out of this. And I have a chance, too.

SAM

What do you mean, Rose?

ROSE

Well, it's what I started to tell you about last night. A man I know wants to put me on the stage.

SAM

What man?

ROSE

A man who works at the office. You see, what I thought was, if I could make a lot of money, maybe everything would be different... not only for me, but for Ma and Pop and Willie.

SAM

But don't you know what this man wants?

ROSE

Nobody gives you anything for nothing, Sam. If you don't pay for things in one way, you do in another.

SAM

Rose, for God's sake, you mustn't!

ROSE

Nothing could be much worse than things are around here.

SAM

Then why don't we both get out of it—why don't we go away together, you and I?

ROSE

But, Sam, how could we do that? How could we manage? Wouldn't want to give up your law work and everything.

SAM

I'd give up anything if I could be with you.

ROSE

Oh, it would be so wonderful to get away somewhere. When we were young, we had to be tied down. But it's different now.

Duet and Scene: "We'll Go Away Together"

When birds get old enough,
They spread their wings and fly.
It's natural for a bird to want to try the sky.

SAM

When two people are in love their souls grow wings and say:
The nest is too small now,
Come away, love, come away, come away!
We'll go away together, just we two, just you and I,
We'll build a house to shelter us beneath the happier sky.

ROSE

We'll go away together out of shadows into light,
We'll leave behind our yesterdays and make tomorrow bright.

SAM

Life is a sky-tall mountain, where clouds play hide and seek,
But love will blaze a trail for us up to the highest peak.
Maybe there'll be a rainbow,
Maybe there's stormy weather,
But you'll be in my arms, my love...

BOTH

When we go away together.

SAM

When we go away together.

ROSE

I've heard that people are much nicer and friendlier, when you get away from New York. Oh, if we could do it, Sam!

SAM

We can, if we just make up our minds that we will.

ROSE

We wouldn't need much to live on... just the two of us.
Home may not be a palace or a golden castle in Spain.
I'd be content with just a roof to keep out snow and rain.

BOTH

Just so we find a shelter from cold and wind and weather.

SAM

I'll warm you in my arms, my love.

BOTH

When we go away together.

ROSE

When we go, we two, away!

SAM

When we go, my love, away!

[21] SAM

Then promise me that you will, Rose—and the sooner the better.

ROSE

I just want to be sure that we'd be doing the right thing. Just give me a little time to think, Sam...

(*Enter Easter*)

EASTER

Knock, knock! Good morning, Miss Murrant.

ROSE

Good morning, Mr. Easter.

EASTER

I just happened to have some business, right around the corner, so I thought we might just as well go to the funeral together.

ROSE

Well, I hardly expected to see you around here.
(*An awkward pause*)
I'd like you to meet my friend, Mr. Kaplan.

EASTER

How do you do, Mr. Kaplan? Glad to know you.
(*An awkward silence.*)

ROSE

Mr. Easter is the manager of the office.
(*Another silence*)
It's awful hot again, isn't it?

EASTER

I was thinking that after the funeral, we might take a run down to the beach, somewhere.

ROSE

I can't today. I've got a lot of things I want to do. Well, I guess it's time we got started.

EASTER

Yes, it is. We'll pick up a cab at the corner.

ROSE

Why, I thought I'd walk. It's not far.

EASTER

Much more comfortable taking a cab.

ROSE

I'd rather walk.

EASTER

Well, whatever you say.

ROSE

Good-bye, Sam. I'll see you later.

EASTER

Good morning, Mr. Kaplan. Glad to have met you.

ROSE

It's a lucky thing my father wasn't around.

(*They go off. Sam turns, and goes into the house.*)

A DISTANT VOICE

Strawberries! Strawberries!
(A girl with a violin case—Lippo’s pupil—appears and enters the house. Buchanan enters, with a medicine bottle.)

BUCHANAN

I just had her medicine made up.

MRS. MAURRANT *(at window)*

I’m making some soup for her. I’ll be up with it later.

BUCHANAN

Thanks, Mrs. Maurrant. You sure have been a mighty good neighbor.
(He enters house)

THE VOICE *(a little nearer)*

Strawberries! Strawberries!

(Sankey appears. He and Mrs. Maurrant see each other.)

MRS. MAURRANT

Come up.

SANKEY

Now?

MRS. MAURRANT

I got to talk to you.

SANKEY

Is it all right?

MRS. MAURRANT

Yes, he’s gone to New Haven.

SANKEY

How about later?

MRS. MAURRANT

No. Rose’ll be home in an hour. She’s not working today.

SANKEY

All right.

(Sankey enters the house. Sam appears. He looks up at the Maurrant windows, sees the shades drawn and, deeply disturbed, sits down on the steps and begins to read.)

(The girl with the violin starts playing Antonín Dvořák’s “Humoresque” from inside the house. Two men appear, James Henry, a city marshal, and Fred Cullen, his assistant.)

MARSHAL

Dis is it. *(To Sam)* Hildebrand live here?

SAM

What?

MARSHAL

I’m askin’ you if Hildebrand lives here.

SAM

Yes. Third floor.

MARSHAL

Better give the janitor a buzz, Fred.

(Fred rings the janitor’s bell.)

FRED

Hey, janitor.

HENRY

Yeah—Right up here.

FRED

Come on down a minute, we got a warrant for Hildebrand.

HENRY

Third floor, Hildebrand.

FRED

Yeah, I know. We got a warrant for her.

MARSHAL

I’m City Marshal Henry. We got a dispossess warrant.

HENRY

You gonna put ‘em out?

MARSHAL

Yeah, dat’s it. Has she got anybody to take de foinicher away?

HENRY

Not that I heard of.

MARSHAL

Well, we’ll have t’ dump it on de side-walk den. Go ahead, Fred.

(They enter the house. Henry goes back into the cellar.)

A VOICE *(as before, a little nearer)*

Strawberries! Strawberries!

(Henry comes up the cellar-steps, starts to scrub. Mrs. Jones appears at the window. An old-clothes man enters.)

AN OLD-CLOTHES MAN

I kesh ko. I kesh ko!
Kesh ko?

(To Sam)

Any old klose, mister?
(Sam pays no attention to him.)

OLD-CLOTHES MAN *(To Mrs. Jones)*

Any ol’ klose, leddy?

MRS. JONES

Naw, nawthin’!

OLD-CLOTHES MAN

Hets? Shoes? Ol’ stockin’s?

MRS. JONES

Nawthin’, I tell you.

(As the Old-Clothes man goes off, Maurrant appears.)

MRS. JONES

Hello, Mr. Maurrant. I thought you was up in New Haven.

MAURRANT

I changed my mind!

SAM *(Sam rises, suddenly blocking the steps)*

No! No! For God’s sake...!

MAURRANT

Out o’ me way, you goddamn little rat!
(He flings Sam violently aside and enters the house.)

SAM

Mrs. Maurrant! Mrs. Maurrant!

MRS. JONES

What’s the matter?

SAM *(To Mrs. Jones)*

Quick! Run and tell her! Quick!

MRS. JONES

What is it?

SAM

Mrs. Maurrant! Mrs. Maurrant!

(A scream of terror is heard from the Maurrant apartment.)

MRS. MAURRANT’S VOICE *(Scream, violin stops)*

Oh no, Frank! No! Frank, no!

[22] MARSHAL

For Christ sakes what’s happenin’? Get an ambulance, you!

(He pushes Sam, then hurries off. As Sam runs off, a crowd begins to form.)

HENRY

What’s happening?

WORKMAN

What is it? A murder?

(Fred, the Marshal’s assistant, appears upstairs.)

FRED

Grab dat boid! He’s comin’ down!

WORKMAN

What boid?

(Maurrant appears. His face, hands and clothing are covered with blood. He stands in the doorway.)

FRED

Grab him! Don’t let him get away!

(Maurrant whips out an automatic revolver and levels it.)

MAURRANT

Git back! Git back, all o’ you!

(Still leveling his revolver at the crowd, he retreats to the cellar.)

MRS. JONES

Get an ambulance! Get an ambulance, somebody!

(A Policeman runs on.)

POLICEMAN

Where is he?

OLSEN

Olga!

(He hurries down the cellar steps.)

LIPPO

Look out, he’s got a gun.

WORKMAN

He’s down in the cellar!

(The Policeman and Henry go down the cellar steps.)

MRS. JONES

Can you hear me? Get an ambulance!

LIPPO

What’s de matter? You want de ambulance?

MRS. JONES

Yes!

LIPPO *(To a Boy in the crowd)*
Run aroun' de corner to the hospital, Johnny, an'
tell 'em to send de ambulance, okay?

BOY
Sure!

MRS. JONES
Run!
(The Boy runs off. Meanwhile, the Marshal has run on.)

MARSHAL
Did they get 'm?

LIPPO
He beat it down de cellar.

A WORKMAN
De cop's gone after him.

MARSHAL
Why de hell didn't you go after 'im?

WORKMAN
He had a gun.

MARSHAL
What de hell happened, Fred?

FRED
It's a moider. Jesus, you oughta see de blood.

(Officer Murphy runs on, followed by Sam.)

OFFICER MURPHY
Look out o' de way, youse! Where's de guy dat did it?

MARSHAL
He beat it down de steps!

SAM
Are they dead?

MARSHAL
I'm City Marshal Henry. Kin I do anythin'?

OFFICER MURPHY
Don't let anybody in or out! Hear?

MARSHAL
Yeah, sure!

(The Policeman exits quickly, into the house.)

SAM
Are they dead?

BUCHANAN
Where is the ambulance?

MARSHAL
It'll be here, right away.

SAM
Mr. Buchanan! Mr. Buchanan! Are they dead?

(Henry comes up the steps.)

FRED
Here's the guy that went after him.

MARSHAL
Did they get him?

HENRY
He must be hidin' somewheres. De cop's lookin'
for 'im.

(Sam runs up the steps and tries to enter the house)

MARSHAL *(Seizing him roughly)*
You can't get in now! Get back dere!

OFFICER MURPHY
Is dat de ambulance?

MARSHAL
Yeah.

(A hospital intern comes on.)

OFFICER MURPHY
Hurry up, Doc! She's still breathin'.

(The Intern goes quickly into the house.)

MARSHAL *(Pushing crowd back.)*
Keep back, now! Back off de stoop, everybody!
(to Fred)
Better get busy wit' dat foinicher, Fred. We got two
udder jobs today.

FRED
Yeah, sure, Jimmy.

(He enters the house. The Ambulance Driver appears, carrying a canvas stretcher.)

AMBULANCE-DRIVER
Get out o' the way!

MARSHAL
Git back, can't youse? What de hell's de matter
wit' youse?

(The Ambulance-Driver enters the house)

OFFICER MURPHY *(Upstairs)*
Are dey bringin' dat stretcher?

MARSHAL
It's on de way!

(Lippo's pupil, her violin case under her arm, appears timidly in the doorway.)

MARSHAL
Where are you goin'?

GIRL
I'm going home.

MARSHAL
Home? Where do you live?

GIRL
Ninety-first Street.

MARSHAL
What are you doin' here?

GIRL
I came for a music lesson, that's all.

MARSHAL
Well, you can't go now. Nobody can't leave de
house, now.

OFFICER MURPHY *(Coming out of the house)*
Who's dis kid?

MARSHAL
Says she come here to take a music lesson an'
she wants to go home.

OFFICER MURPHY *(To the girl)*
Do you know anythin' about this killin'?

GIRL
No, I don't. I just heard shooting, that's all. My
mother will be worried if I don't come home.

OFFICER MURPHY
Well, you can't go now. Get inside dere, out o' de
way. Dey'll be bringing her down, in a minute.

MARSHAL
What did he do? Shoot two of 'em?

OFFICER MURPHY
I'll say he did! His wife an' her sweetie. A guy
named Sankey. He was dead when I got up
dere.

INTERN *(Upstairs)*
Officer! Come on up!

(Policeman exits into the house.)

(Rose comes on quickly.)

[23] ROSE
What's the matter? Sam! What's the ambulance
for? Did anybody get hurt?

SAM
Go away, Rose. Go away.

ROSE
Who is it? What's the matter? Is it my mother?
It's not my mother, is it? Sam, is it?

SAM
There's been an accident. Go away, Rose.

ROSE
Tell me what's happened! Tell me!

MRS. JONES *(Upstairs)*
They're bringing her down!

ROSE
It is my mother!

Choral Scene and Lament: "The Woman Who Lived Up There"

MRS. JONES
Oh, my God, there's Rose!

SAM
Rose, go away!

VOICES IN THE CROWD
Who is she?... Her daughter... Poor thing!... Her
mother's dead...
Who killed her?... Her husband!... About another
man!...
He killed them both.

ALL
The man from down the street and the woman
who lived up there!
The man from down the street and the woman
who lived up there!

INTERN
Hold the door open, will you?

MARSHAL
Sure, doc.

ROSE
Doctor, is she dead?

INTERN
Who are you? Her daughter?

ROSE
Yes sir, I'm her daughter.

INTERN
She's hurt pretty bad.

A WOMAN
Poor thing!

ALL
The woman who lived up there.

ROSE
Oh, Sam! Sam!

SAM
Now love and death have linked their arms together
and gone away to another bourn;
Beyond the far off sky, beyond forever,
they have gone and left us here to mourn.

VOICES IN THE CROWD
Who's gone?... I don't know... I never saw her.

ALL
They say it was the woman who lived up there.

VOICES IN THE CROWD
Poor thing!... They're bringing her down now...
Poor thing!...
Where is he?... Who?... Her lover?... They left him there!
He's dead!... She loved him!... Poor thing!... She loved him!
He loved her!... Poor thing!... He loved her!

ALL
Her husband shot her!
(*The stretcher with Mrs. Maurant appears in the door.*)
Maybe he loved her too, the woman who lived up there.
The woman who lived up there.

POLICEMAN
Easy now!
(*They carry the stretcher slowly down the steps.*)

ROSE
Mother! Mother!

MRS. MAURRANT (*Feebly*)
Rose. Rose.

INTERN
You mustn't talk to her now.

A VOICE (*In the distance*)
Strawberries! Strawberries! Strawberries!

ROSE
Sam!

SAM
Now summer's bright and warm and golden weather,
and all the children in the streets laugh as they run.
But love and death have gone away together
to find their morning in the sun.

CROWD
The summer's bright in warm and golden weather,
and all the children in the streets laugh as they run.
But love and death have gone away together,
to find their morning in the sun, in the sun.

[24] Interlude

Scene II – Afternoon of the Same Day
(*Slow curtain. Mid-afternoon of the same day. Two furniture-movers appear.*)

ONE OF THE MEN
All right. That's all Fred.

(*Two young nurse-maids in smart uniforms appear, each wheeling a baby carriage.*)

[25] FIRST NURSE-MAID
This must be the place, right here... 346.

SECOND NURSE-MAID
Yes, I guess it is.

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Must be right up there, on the first floor, see?

SECOND NURSE-MAID
Yes, sure. You can see where the glass is out of the window. That's where this feller what's-his-name tried to climb out.

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Say, what do you know about that! Oh wait: there's a picture of it, somewhere.

(*She reaches into the baby buggy for a tabloid. The baby begins to cry.*)

Lullaby

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Oh, she's in again!

Sleep baby dear! The picture is right here.
Drowse, tiny tot.

SECOND NURSE-MAID
It shows how they got shot.

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Rest, little chick. Maurant came home too quick.
Doze, pussy cat!

SECOND NURSE-MAID
He got them with his gat.
Oh boy, that guy Maurant looks mad!

FIRST NURSE-MAID
No wonder with that wife he had!

SECOND NURSE-MAID
And here is Sankey, scantily clad.

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Trying to climb through the window frame;

SECOND NURSE-MAID
But he got bumped off just the same!

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Look at the blood all over his mug!
Sleep ladybug;

BOTH
Sleep sweet and snug; Sleep, my lady bug-bug.
Ah. Bug-bug. Bug-bug.

FIRST NURSE-MAID
It's worse than awful. Can you imagine what the two of them must have felt like, when he walked in on them like that?

SECOND NURSE-MAID
Well, he just happened to be one of the ones that finds out. Believe me, there's lots and lots of husbands that don't know the half of what goes on uptown, while they're down-town, making a living.

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Say, you're not telling me, are you? If I was to spill all I know, there'd be many a happy home busted up.

SECOND NURSE-MAID (*As her baby begins to cry*)
Shut up, a little while, can't you?

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Hush, baby, hush. Your daddy is a lush. Shut your eyelids tight.

SECOND NURSE-MAID
He's plastered ev'ry night.

FIRST NURSE-MAID
No, darling no. Your mummy has a beau. Snooze, little man!

SECOND NURSE-MAID
She cheats whenever she can.
Your parents are a loving pair;

FIRST NURSE-MAID
He smacks her face;

SECOND NURSE-MAID
She pulls his hair;

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Their shrieks and curses fill the air.

SECOND NURSE-MAID
She smashes plates, and he tears her clothes;

FIRST NURSE-MAID
She lands a left right on his nose,

SECOND NURSE-MAID
Until there's blood all over his mug!

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Sleep, ladybug;

BOTH
Sleep sweet and snug; Sleep, my lady bug-bug.
Ah. Bug-bug. Bug-bug.

SECOND NURSE-MAID
Shut up, you lug!

OFFICER MURPHY (*Appearing upstairs*)
Keep movin', ladies, no loiterin' aroun' here.

SECOND NURSE-MAID
Say, have they caught him, yet?

OFFICER MURPHY
Why, ain't you hoid? He was last seen flyin' over Nova Scotia, on his way to Paris.

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Who are you trying to string, anyhow?

SECOND NURSE-MAID
Say, will you let us come up and look around?

OFFICER MURPHY
Why, sure, sure. Bring de babies, too. De commissioner is soivin' tea, up here, at four-thoity.

FIRST NURSE-MAID
Yeah, you're awful smart, aren't you?

OFFICER MURPHY
Yeah, dat's why dey put me on de entertainment committee. I'm Handsome Harry Moiphy, de boy comedian o' Brooklyn.

SECOND NURSE-MAID
Oh, say, I ought to be getting back. Clarice darling would throw a duck-fit, if she knew I brought her precious Dumplings to a neighborhood like this.

FIRST NURSE-MAID

Oh, well, there's not much to see, anyhow. It's nothing but a cheap, common dump.

OFFICER MURPHY

Over de river, goils. See you in de funny paper.

FIRST NURSE-MAID

Don't get so fresh.

OFFICER MURPHY

Drop in again, when you're in de neighborhood. An' tell Mrs. Vanderbilt, Harry was askin' for her.

BOTH

Sleep sweet and snug; Sleep, my lady bug-bug. Ah. Bug-bug.

(They disappear off stage.)

Bug-bug, Bug-bug, Bug-bug.

[26] Scene: "She never opened her eyes again."

(Rose enters dressed in black.)

ROSE

Oh, officer!

OFFICER MURPHY

Yes, Miss Maurant?

ROSE

Have they caught him yet?

OFFICER MURPHY

Nope, they're still out looking for him.

HENRY *(Comes out of the house)*

'Afternoon, Miss Maurant.

ROSE

Good afternoon, Henry. Could you lend me some tacks? I want to put up a crape.

HENRY

Yes ma'am. Right away.

(Goes to the cellar)

SAM *(enters)*

Rose!

ROSE

Hello, Sam.

SAM

I went to the hospital, but they said you'd just left.

ROSE *(softly, almost without expression)*

She never opened her eyes again.

She looks so quiet and natural, you'd think she was asleep.

What about Willie, Sam?

SAM

I called for him at school and I took him around to your aunt's. He's waiting for you there.

ROSE

Thank you, Sam. What did you tell him?

SAM

I said there'd been an accident.

ROSE

Yes, it was better to break it to him that way. But he will soon find out, what with the papers full of it. I saw poor Mrs. Sankey down at Police Headquarters. It's terrible for her, with two little children.

SHIRLEY *(Running on)*

Rose, you poor thing! It's terrible! Terrible!

(Henry comes back.)

ROSE

Yes, it is. But he would never have done it, if he had been in his right mind. Oh, thanks, Henry.

HENRY

Lemme do that for you.

ROSE

Oh, would you, please?

I bought a white dress for her and white stockings.

I want her to look pretty, the way she always did.

I have to go up now.

SHIRLEY

Rose, you mustn't go up there.

ROSE

I've got to. I am sort of afraid to go alone. Would you mind coming up with me?

SHIRLEY

Anything I ca

n do for you, poor child.

ROSE

Oh, thanks, Henry; it's very nice of you.

(They enter the house.)

(Kaplan appears.)

SAM

Papa, the police are going to make me testify against Maurant. What can I do? How can I send a man to the electric chair? I tried to stop him. I tried to warn her...

(Two shots are heard.)

What's that?

(The neighbors appear from out of the house.)

OLSEN

Dey find him?

SHIRLEY

Is that him?

OFFICER MURPHY

Must be!

SHIRLEY

Oh, God! They wouldn't shoot him, would they?

BUCHANAN

They found him!

MRS. JONES

Have they got him?

BUCHANAN

Yes! He was hiding in the furnace, down at 322.

(As Rose comes out of the house) They found him, Miss Maurant.

ROSE

Oh! Is he hurt?

BUCHANAN

I don't know. I was just passing, when it happened.

SHIRLEY

Rose, you'd better come inside.

BUCHANAN

Yes, you better.

ROSE

No, No. Please let me alone. I want to see him.

(Maurant appears between two policemen.)

[27] ROSE

Pop! Are you hurt?

MAURRANT

Rose!

FIRST POLICEMAN

Keep back, Miss!

MAURRANT

It's me daughter! Fer Chris' sake, boys, lemme talk to me daughter! Maybe I'll never be seein' her again!

OFFICER MURPHY

Give 'im a woid wit' her!

SECOND POLICEMAN

Well, all right! But don't try to pull nothin', hear?

Finale: "I Loved Her Too"

MAURRANT

Rose! You're wearing a black dress!

ROSE

Why did you do it? Why did you?

MAURRANT

I must o' been out of my head, Rose.

ROSE

She never opened her eyes again.

MAURRANT

It might not have looked like it to you, but I loved her, too.

THE CROWD

He loved her, too...

MAURRANT

I couldn't stand to see nobody taking her away from me, But I loved her, too.

THE CROWD

He loved her, too...

He really loved her...

He loved her, too...

ROSE

She was so gentle, always so good and sweet.

MAURRANT

I'd been drinkin', Rose, see what I mean?

And all the talk that went around.

There always was something inside of me right here like a wall.

Seems like I never could break through,

But I swear to God, Rose,

that I loved her, too. I loved her, too. Yes, I loved her, too.

ROSE

What will they do to you, Pop?

MAURRANT

It's the chair for me, I guess, But I don't care,

Let 'em give me the chair, I don't care.

The way she looked at me! That look in her eyes!

Rose!

I oughtn't have done it!

ROSE

She always was gentle, always so sweet, and now she is dead.

She always was gentle, and now she is dead.

You say you loved her too, but now she's dead.

She was my mother, why did you kill her?

MAURRANT

I oughtn't have done it!

I must have been crazy, I just went clean out of my head.

But I loved her, too.

There always was something inside of me, right here like a wall I couldn't break through.

But I loved her, too.

THE CROWD

No, he oughtn't have done it! He loved her, he loved her...

And yet he killed her, he killed her, now she is dead, now she is dead.

The woman he loved is dead. She is dead, where the window is broken...

He loved her too, and yet he killed her.

...up there in that room.

Why did he do it? Why did he kill her? Why did he kill the one he loved?

OFFICER MURPHY

Come on, that's all.

MAURRANT

Gimme a chance, can't you? What's to become of you, Rose?

ROSE

I'll be all right, Pop. Don't worry about me.

MAURRANT

Look after Willie.

THE CROWD

He loved her, too.

ROSE

I'll do all I can.

MAURRANT

What a good girl!

ROSE *(she is crying)*

Oh, Pop!

MAURRANT

You always was a good girl, Rose.

THE CROWD

He loved her, too.

[28] "Don't Forget the Lilac Bush"

(The people move off stage and exit. Rose stands down by the curb. Sam watches her. Rose starts up the stoop.)

SAM

Rose! Rose!

ROSE

Yes, Sam?

SAM

What are you going to do, Rose?

ROSE

I think I'll go away.

SAM

I'll go with you.

ROSE

But, Sam dear, that isn't possible!

SAM

Don't you remember only this morning, we said you and I would go away together.

ROSE

Yes, but this morning things were so different; I never dreamed it would be this way.

SAM

I'll go where you go, I don't care about anything else!

Do you think I can stay here, in this slum, never seeing you, never hearing your voice, never standing by your side?

Oh, Rose, I love you! My life is nothing unless I'm with you.

ROSE

Oh, if it could be!

But some things, I think, you have to face alone. Inside yourself, you have to face some things alone.

SAM

No! Not alone! We need each other, we must be together!

There's no hope for us unless we love each other, Unless I belong to you and you belong to me.

ROSE

Oh Sam, it's love that I want more than anything in the world.

But loving and belonging... they're not the same.

Look at my father, my poor mother,

If she had belonged to herself,

If he had belonged to himself,

It never would've happened.

And that's why, even though my heart breaks, I can't belong to you,

Or have you belong to me.

SAM

Oh Rose, this is the end of my world.

ROSE

Please, listen to me, Sam.

If we say goodbye now, it doesn't mean that it has to be forever.

Maybe someday when we're older and wiser, things will be different.

I'm so fond of you, Sam. And no matter where I go or what I do,

I'll always be thinking of you.

And don't forget the lilac bush bright in the morning air.

Remember, always remember,

Remember that I care.

Remember that I care.

(A couple appears.)

THE MAN

This must be the flat Fred was talking about. 346. Yeah, this is it, all right.

THE WOMAN

Well, I hope nobody got here ahead of us. Better try to find the janitor. Somebody must have just died.

THE MAN

Yeah, maybe that's why they're movin' out.

(Starts down the cellar steps)

Phoo! Seems to be gettin' hotter, every minute.

(Shirley, carrying a suitcase, comes out of the house.)

ROSE

Miss Kaplan, I was just telling Sam, I'll soon be going away from New York.

SHIRLEY

I put your things in this suit-case.

ROSE

Thank you, Miss Kaplan. You've been awfully nice to me. ...Well, good-bye.

SHIRLEY

Good-bye, Rose. You're a sweet girl.

ROSE

I hope I'll see you again.

SHIRLEY

I hope so, Rose.

(Rose is about to turn away, but instead goes to Sam and kisses him swiftly. Sam breaks away and goes abruptly into the house. Rose stands looking after him, then slowly picks up her bag and starts to go off. Mrs. Fiorentino appears at her window. Rose disappears.)

CHILD'S VOICE *(off stage)*

Come in, come in, wherever you are!

KAPLAN *(at window)*

Shoiley, what's the matter with Sam? He's crying on the bed again.

SHIRLEY

Leave him alone, Papa, can't you?

(Exits into house. Mrs. Olsen and Mrs. Jones appear.)

MRS. OLSEN

The poor little thing!

MRS. JONES

Wouldn't surprise me a bit if she turns out the same way as her mother. She's had a gentleman friend who was hanging around here late last night.

MRS. FIORENTINO

Ain't it awful, the heat, Ain't it awful?

MRS. OLSEN AND MRS. FIORENTINO

Don't know what I'm gonna do.

MRS. FIORENTINO

Gosh, I'm bakin'!

MRS. JONES

My head's achin'!

KAPLAN

I'm a soakin' wet all through.

MRS. FIORENTINO, MRS. OLSEN, MRS. JONES AND KAPLAN

Don't know what I'm gonna do, Don't know what I'm gonna do.

(Henry and the Man come up the cellar steps, and he conducts the Couple into the house.)

END



Frank Maurant is captured. "I loved her too."

Cast

Giselle Allen (Anna Maurant) was born in Belfast and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Royal Academy of Music. Recent engagements include: Foreign Princess *Rusalka* (Irish National Opera); Praskov'ya Osipovna in Shostakovich's *The Nose* (La Monnaie) and Third Norn *Götterdämmerung* (Opernhaus Zürich). Other roles include: title role *Elektra* (Irish National Opera); Ellen Orford *Peter Grimes* (Bergen National Opera / Aldeburgh Festival's Britten centenary production on the beach / Komische Oper Berlin); Gerhilde *The Valkyrie*, Martha *The Passenger*, Lisa *The Queen of Spades* (ENO); Marie *Wozzeck*, Tatyana *Eugene Onegin*, Helena A *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Canadian Opera); title role *Jenůfa* (Glyndebourne on Tour); Senta *The Flying Dutchman*, title roles *Tosca* and *Salome* (Northern Ireland Opera); Mimì *La bohème*, Magda Sorel *The Consul* (WNO); Miss Jessel *The Turn of the Screw* (Glyndebourne Festival / NI Opera / Opéra national de Lyon / Opernhaus Zürich); title role *Tosca* (Nevill Holt Opera). In concert, appearances include: Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* (CBSO, Hallé and Philharmonia); Act III *Die Walküre* (Philharmonia); *Our Hunting Fathers*, *Glagolitic Mass* (Hallé/Elder); *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (Edinburgh Festival). For Opera North: Tatyana, Fox *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Musetta *La bohème*, Mařenka *The Bartered Bride*, Donna Elvira *Don Giovanni*, Ellen Orford, Miss Jessel, Freia, Gerhilde, Guttrune *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, Giorgetta *Il tabarro*, Mila *Osud*, Santuzza *Cavalleria rusticana* and title roles *Jenůfa*, *Rusalka*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Salome*, *Tosca*.

Robert Hayward (Frank Maurant) performs with major opera companies worldwide including Bayerische Staatsoper, Frankfurt Opera, Staatstheater Stuttgart and Nantes Opera, as well as Houston Grand Opera, Opéra de Montréal, Minnesota Opera, Dallas Opera and Opera Australia. Roles include: Wotan, Wanderer *Ring*, Jokanaan *Salome*, title roles *Eugene Onegin*, *Mazeppa*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Scarpia Tosca*, Iago *Otello*, Don Pizarro *Fidelio*, Tomsy *The Queen of Spades*, Nick Shadow *The Rake's Progress*, Kurwenal *Tristan*, Bluebeard *Bluebeard's Castle*, Prince Ivan Khovansky *Khovanshchina*, Telramund *Lohengrin*, Simone in Zemlinsky's *Florentine Tragedy*. Engagements include: Roderick Usher in a double bill of Debussy's *The Fall of the House of Usher* and Getty's *Usher House*, Khovansky (WNO); Bluebeard (LA and Scottish Opera); *Moses und Aron* (Komische Oper); Boris *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Chief of Police Iain Bell's *Jack the Ripper*, Commander *The Handmaid's Tale* (ENO); Alberich *Das Rheingold* and Siegfried

(LPO); title role *Falstaff* (Grange Festival); Tonio Pagliacci, Jack Rance *La fanciulla del West* (Opera Holland Park). For Opera North: Golaud *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Ford *Falstaff*, Marcello *La bohème*, Escamillo *Carmen*, Guglielmo *Così fan tutte*, Malatesta *Don Pasquale*, Count, Figaro *The Marriage of Figaro*, Robert *Yolanta*, Mandryka *Arabella*, Shishkov *From the House of the Dead*, Prus *The Makropulos Case*, Balstrode *Peter Grimes*, Jack Rance, Gérard *Andrea Chénier*, Wotan, Jokanaan, *Scarpia*, Don Pizarro, Amfortas *Parsifal* Alfio *Cavalleria rusticana* and title roles *Don Giovanni*, *Saul*, *Falstaff*, *Macbeth*, *Aleko*.

Gillene Butterfield (Rose Maurant) is originally from Swindon and has been a member of the Chorus of Opera North since 2006. She studied at Trinity College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Roles for Opera North include: Rosaura the Puppet *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, Zorah *Ruddigore*, Masha *The Queen of Spades*, Julie Jordan *Carousel*, Second Woman *Dido and Aeneas*, Strolling Player *Death in Venice*, Cinderella *Into the Woods* (with West Yorkshire Playhouse), First Mendicant *Suor Angelica*, Sylviane/Valencienne *The Merry Widow*, Pat Not Such *Quiet Girls*, Papagena *The Magic Flute*, Elle *La Voix humaine*, Mrs Nordstrom *A Little Night Music* (with Leeds Playhouse), A Voice *La rondine*, Despina *Così fan tutte* (also Nevill Holt Festival) and Eliza Doolittle *My Fair Lady* (with Leeds Playhouse). She has also performed with Opera Holland Park, Opera Minima, Much Loved Productions, British Youth Opera and the National Youth Music Theatre (*Into the Woods*). She was part of the chorus for *Grimes on the Beach* at the Aldeburgh Festival and has also sung at the Salzburg Festival, Bregenz Festival, Buckingham Palace, the Linbury Studio, and the Handel House Museum.

Alex Banfield (Sam Kaplan) is originally from Northumberland. He studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and between 2016 and 2021 was a member of the Chorus of Opera North. He has performed with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, Vienna Staatsoper, Vienna Tonkünstler Orchestra and BBC Philharmonic. For Opera North, Alex sang Jonathan Dale in the UK premiere of Kevin Puts' *Silent Night* and St Briche *The Merry Widow*. In 2020-21 he was a member of OperAvenir at Theater Basel, and sang the roles of Tamino *Die Zauberflöte*, Rinuccio *Gianni Schicchi* and Ernesto *Don Pasquale*. For the Château de Versailles Spectacles label, Alex sang Aminta for Les Talens Lyriques' CD release of Cimarosa's *L'Olimpiade*.

Michelle Andrews (Mae Jones) trained at Laine Theatre Arts. Theatre credits include: Worker/1st Cover Persephone *Hadestown* (Lyric Theatre); Annie/Velma/Mamma Morton *Chicago*

(International tour); Ensemble *Oklahoma!* (Chichester Festival Theatre); Havana Dancer/Understudy *Adelaide Guys and Dolls* (Mill at Sonning); Ensemble *Pippin* (Southwark Playhouse); Ensemble/Cover *Hildy On The Town* (Regent's Park Open Air Theatre); Dance Captain *Sweet Charity* (Royal Exchange Theatre Manchester); Consuela/Understudy *Anita West Side Story* (Kilworth House); Dance Captain *Miss Atomic Bomb* (St James's Theatre); Angel/Understudy *Reno Sweeney Anything Goes* (UK tour); Understudy *Tracy Turnblad Hairspray*, Ensemble *Chicago* (Leicester Curve); Ensemble *Top Hat* (Aldwych Theatre); Swing *Crazy For You* (Novello Theatre). For Opera North: Dancer/Cover *Lois Lane Kiss Me, Kate*. Television credits include: *Byker Grove*, *The Olympic Opening Ceremony* (BBC); *Ant & Dec* (ITV).

Miranda Bevin (Greta Fiorentino) was born in Lancashire and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. After graduation she won a scholarship from the Countess of Munster Musical Trust to study with Teresa Cahill. In 1998 she became a full-time member of the Chorus of Opera North, where roles include: Seller/Lady-in-Waiting *The Portrait*, Chlöe *The Queen of Spades*, Violetta *La traviata*, Stepmother *Into the Woods* (with West Yorkshire Playhouse), Fire/Nightingale *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, Nurse/Mother *Not Such Quiet Girls*, Mrs Nordstrom *A Little Night Music* (with Leeds Playhouse), Chief Hen *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Mrs Higgins *My Fair Lady* (with Leeds Playhouse) and Queen of the Night *The Magic Flute*. She sang the solo voice role in Northern Ballet's recording of Feeney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.

Hazel Croft (Second Nursemaid) was born in Leeds and joined the Chorus of Opera North in 2000. Roles for the Company include: Maid *Jenůfa*, Third Gentleman *Julietta*, Frugola *Il tabarro*, Madrigal Singer *Manon Lescaut*, Suzy *La rondine*, Countess Ceperano *Rigoletto*, Glasha *Katya Kabanova*, Beetle Doctor/Fantasy Rich *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, Mrs Gilhooley Let 'Em Eat Cake, Mabel *Ruddigore*, Third Showgirl *La bohème*, German Mother *Death in Venice*, Aunt *Jenůfa*, Jack's Mother *Into the Woods* (with West Yorkshire Playhouse), Third Orphan *Der Rosenkavalier*, Old Woman *The Greek Passion*, Giovanna *Rigoletto*, Mrs Anderssen *A Little Night Music* (with Leeds Playhouse), Heavenly Voice *Parsifal*, Forester's Wife *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Third Lady *The Magic Flute*. She also sang the Mezzo solo in Howard Shelley's recording of Beethoven's *Choral Fantasia*.

Dutch baritone **Quirijn de Lang** (Harry Easter) has established himself as a versatile and compelling performer across both opera and

musical theatre, appearing with major companies including Deutsche Oper Berlin, La Monnaie, English National Opera, Opera North, and the summer festivals of Garsington and Grange Park. His operatic work ranges from the Mozart baritone canon to contemporary repertoire, with notable performances as Oppenheimer in John Adams' *Doctor Atomic* and Sam in Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* (also filmed for television). In musical theatre, he has earned acclaim for his portrayals of Fred Graham *Kiss Me, Kate*, Fredrik Egerman *A Little Night Music* and Randy Curtis *Lady in the Dark*. He originated the role of Jan Six in *Rembrandt, the Musical*, and in 2025 performed the leading role of Sam Cooper in the first complete recording of *Love Life* (Capriccio). His wide vocal range and ability to fully inhabit diverse characters make him a sought-after singing actor on both the operatic and musical theatre stage.

Byron Jackson (Henry Davis) is a dramatic baritone born of Jamaican heritage in Birmingham, West Midlands. He graduated from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire vocal department in 2005 and was awarded the St Clare Barfield Memorial Bowl for Operatic Distinction. He has sung at prestigious opera companies and concert halls around the UK and abroad including English National Opera, De Nationale Opera, Pegasus Opera Company, Opera North, Scottish Opera and the Adelaide Festival. With a versatile repertoire, his opera roles include: title role *Der fliegende Holländer*, Monterone *Rigoletto*, Donner *Das Rheingold*, Frazier *Porgy and Bess* and Terry *Breaking the Waves*.

Lorna James (First Nursemaid) enjoyed a successful and varied freelance career from 2007 to 2025 working with companies such as Opera North, Heritage Opera and Diva Opera. In 2015/16, she collaborated with director Emma Black and conductor/pianist Christopher Pelly on a new production of Poulenc's *La Voix humaine*, which was performed a number of times across the UK. She also enjoys singing jazz, and has performed Will Todd's *Mass In Blue* on a number of occasions over the past ten years. In 2021, after five years as a member of the Chorus of Opera North, Lorna embarked on a new career, retraining as a counsellor. She now runs a private therapeutic practice in Gloucestershire.

Laura Kelly (Jennie Hildebrand) gained a BMus Hons (I) from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and completed her studies with a postgraduate diploma in opera from the Royal Academy of Music. She is an alumna of the Britten-Pears School and ENO's Baylis Programme. She is a member of the Chorus of Opera North, and her recent appearances with the Company include:

Berlin to Broadway featuring the music of Weill, Madeleine Audebert *Silent Night*, Glasha *Katya Kabanova*, Hansel *Hansel and Gretel* (Whistle Stop Opera), Trio *Trouble in Tahiti*, Dryad *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Suzy *La rondine* and Amelia's Maid *Simon Boccanegra*. She has also appeared with Diva Opera, English Touring Opera, Stanley Hall Opera, Opera Bohemia and Open Door Opera.

Stuart Laing (Daniel Buchanan) was a member of the Opera North Chorus from 2016 to 2023, where he performed as part of the Company's celebrated ensemble and appeared in a range of character roles. Notable roles include: Remendado (*Carmen*), Beppe (*Pagliacci*) and Brother (*The Seven Deadly Sins*). Before Opera North, Stuart performed with Wexford Festival Opera, Buxton Festival and Grange Park Opera. Recent performances include: Ruiz (*Il trovatore*), Gamekeeper (*Rusalka*) and Blind (*Die Fledermaus*) with the Western Australian Opera and Symphony Orchestra.

Richard Mosley-Evans (George Jones) was born in Wales. He studied Engineering and worked in the steel industry before studying at the RWCMD in Cardiff. Opera includes many roles at Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Glyndebourne on Tour, the Linbury Theatre at the Royal Ballet and Opera, Opéra de Lille, English Touring Opera, Raymond Gubbay at the Royal Albert Hall, Opera Box and Henfield Opera Project. He is a member of the Chorus of Opera North, and recent roles for the Company include: Grail Knight *Parsifal*, Superintendent Budd *Albert Herring*, Alfred Doolittle *My Fair Lady* (with Leeds Playhouse), Bottom *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Second Armed Man *The Magic Flute* and Pietro *Simon Boccanegra*.

Claire Pascoe (Emma Jones) was born in Hartlepool and, after reading History at Durham University, won an Entrance Exhibition to study with Julie Kennard at the Royal Academy of Music. She attended the Opera School and graduated with a Dip. RAM in Opera. She joined the Chorus of Opera North in 1996, and recent roles for the Company include: Witch *Into the Woods* (with West Yorkshire Playhouse), Novice Mistress *Suor Angelica*, Bobylkha *The Snow Maiden*, Counsel *Trial by Jury*, Ambulance Driver/Father *Not Such Quiet Girls*, Witch *Hansel and Gretel* (Whistle Stop Opera), Mrs Anderssen *A Little Night Music* (with Leeds Playhouse), Melissa *Alcina*, Mrs Herring *Albert Herring*, Dame Hannah *Ruddigore* and Mrs Sedley *Peter Grimes*.

Amy J Payne (Olga Olsen) is much in demand across Europe for her interpretations of both comic and dramatic roles, including *The Old Woman Candide* (Welsh National Opera); Mrs

Große *The Turn of the Screw* (Teatro Verdi Pisa); Petrovna in Elena Langer's *To Die For [A Comedy]* (Nederlandse Reisopera); Annina *La traviata* (Buxton Festival); Arnalta *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Mother Goose *The Rake's Progress* (English Touring Opera); and Dame Carruthers *The Yeomen of the Guard* (Opera Holland Park). Her many roles for Opera North include: Tisbe *La Cenerentola*, Cornelia *Giulio Cesare*, *Petra A Little Night Music* (with Leeds Playhouse) and June Spoon *Pass the Spoon*.

Dean Robinson (Abraham Kaplan) was born in Australia and studied at Royal Northern College of Music with major support from the Peter Moores Foundation. He has appeared as principal guest artist with The Royal Opera, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera and Netherlands Opera. Festival appearances include the Rossini Opera Festival and Garsington. Film appearances include: First Officer *The Death of Klinghoffer* and Goffredo in Judith Weir's *Armida*. A member of the Chorus of Opera North, recent roles for the Company include: Mother *The Seven Deadly Sins*, Remendado *Carmen*, Mr Lindquist *A Little Night Music* (with Leeds Playhouse), Pluto *Orpheus*, Music Master *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Pistol *Falstaff*, Colonel Pickering *My Fair Lady* (with Leeds Playhouse) and Peter Quince *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

John Savournin (Carl Olsen) works as both director and singer and is Artistic Director of Waterperry Opera Festival and Charles Court Opera. He is a passionate advocate for new work and work for young people, having created or directed many projects for London's Royal Ballet and Opera, Opera North and Opera Holland Park, as well as CBBC. As a singer, he has enjoyed a long association with Opera North and has also undertaken principal roles for companies including English National Opera, Garsington Opera, The Grange Festival, Opera Holland Park, Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, Nederlandse Reisopera and at BBC Proms.

Christopher Turner (Lippo Fiorentino) was born in Birmingham and studied at the University of Hull, Royal Northern College of Music and the National Opera Studio before becoming a company principal at ENO. He has received numerous accolades, including the Frederick Cox, Michael and Joyce Kennedy and Elizabeth Harwood Prizes, and the Sybil Tutton Award. He was also a major scholar of the Sir Peter Moores Foundation and the Countess of Munster. He has performed at most of the major UK opera houses and also in Norway, China, Macau, Italy and Germany. Recent concert performances include: *Messiah*, *The Dream of Gerontius* and *Hymnus Paradisi*. He is a respected pedagogue and has

been a Vocal Professor at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire for many years and is now a Vocal Professor at RNCM.

Rodney Vubya (Dick McGann) training at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. Theatre credits include: *Titanique* (Criterion Theatre); Hans (cover) *Frozen* (Theatre Royal Drury Lane); *Evita* (Regent's Park Open Air Theatre); *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical* – original West End cast (Aldwych Theatre); General cover *The Book of Mormon* (Prince of Wales Theatre); Prince Richard *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Hoxton Hall); Branom/Marty *A Clockwork Orange* (Norway tour); Avis White *Oresteia III: Eumenides* (Camden People's Theatre); *Americana*, *Facehunters* (Edinburgh Festival Fringe). Television credits include: *Chad Patterns* (Series 2, Amazon Prime).

Creative Team

James Holmes (Conductor) straddles the worlds of opera and musicals in a wide-ranging career. A former ENO staff conductor and Opera North's Head of Music from 1996 to 2008, he has become well-known in recent years for 'classic' musical theatre, including: *Carousel* (National Theatre); *Pacific Overtures*, *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, *Street Scene* (ENO); *Sweeney Todd*, *One Touch of Venus*, *Arms and the Cow*, *Of Thee I Sing*, *Paradise Moscow*, *Carousel*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Street Scene*, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, *Love Life* (Opera North); *Into the Woods* (West Yorkshire Playhouse/Opera North); *A Little Night Music* (Leeds Playhouse/Opera North); *The King and I* (Châtelet, Paris); *One Touch of Venus* (Dessau); *Street Scene* (Berlin); *Into the Woods*, *Magical Night* (ROH2); *Pat Kirkwood is Angry* (Royal Exchange Theatre/Tour); *Sweeney Todd*, *Kiss Me, Kate* (WNO); *Wonderful Town*, *Lady in the Dark*, *Into the Woods* (Vienna Volksoper); *The Silver Lake* (ETO). Recordings include: *Pacific Overtures* (Grammy nomination); *One Touch of Venus*, *Street Scene* (DVD); *Love Life* (Opera North, first complete recording); and as pianist/arranger, *Mercy and Grand – The Tom Waits Project*. A Trustee of the Kurt Weill Foundation, New York, he has conducted as wide a range of the composer's work as anyone in the world; 2026 will see the publication of his critical edition of Weill's complete symphonic music. In 2018 he became only the seventh ever recipient of the Foundation's Lifetime Distinguished Achievement Award for his services to the composer.

Matthew Eberhardt's (Stage Director) directing credits for Opera North include: Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*, Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti*, Weill's *Street Scene* and *Love Life*; concert stagings of *Fidelio* (livestreamed from Leeds Town Hall) and

Billy Budd (Aldeburgh Festival); and Opera North Education's *Big Sing: Wonderland Restored*. Recent directing credits include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Die Fledermaus* (both Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama); *Cendrillon* and *The Cunning Little Vixen* (both Royal Birmingham Conservatoire); *Three Decembers/The Medium* (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland). He was associate director on Will Todd's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Opera Holland Park and Linbury Theatre). His work as revival director with Opera North includes *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; and as assistant director *Rigoletto*; *Aida*; *Hansel and Gretel*; *Kiss Me, Kate*; *Carousel*; and *La traviata*.

Gary Clarke (Choreographer) is a multi-award winning British Choreographer and Director who has been contributing to the UK dance scene for over 25 years. In 2017 he was awarded an inaugural Honorary Fellowship from the Northern School of Contemporary Dance. He is currently the co-founder and Artistic Director of Gary Clarke Company where he has created a number of major dance works which have toured extensively, both nationally and internationally, to critical and audience acclaim. Other credits include: the National Theatre, Sky Arts, Hull City of Culture, London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Akademi, Phoenix Dance Theatre and StopGAP Dance Co. He has received a multitude of awards for his groundbreaking work including a UK Theatre Award, a Critics' Circle National Dance Award, A Herald Angel Award and the Summerhall Lustrum Award. As a performer, Gary has worked with Matthew Bourne's New Adventures, Lloyd Newson's DV8 Physical Theatre, Lea Anderson's The Cholmondeleys, FUEL Theatre and Retina Dance Co. He has also worked on a number of large-scale feature films including *World War Z*, *The Mummy* and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. In 2011, Gary was invited by Royal Command to Buckingham Palace to meet Her Majesty The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh Prince Philip to acknowledge his outstanding contribution to the arts.

Francis O'Connor (Set and Costume Designer) has designed numerous productions for the National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Royal Court and Hampstead Theatre. He is perhaps best known for his many collaborations with Garry Hynes and Druid Theatre Company, premiering work by some of Ireland's finest writers. Internationally, his opera designs include productions for Komische Oper Berlin, Grand Théâtre de Genève, Spoleto Festival and Opéra de Monte-Carlo. He has long associations with Garsington Opera, Grange Park Opera, Opera North, the Abbey Theatre Dublin and Druid, Galway. Notable work includes the premiere

of Martin McDonagh's *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, Kevin Puts' Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *Silent Night* for Minnesota Opera, and Jonathan Dove's *The Adventures of Pinocchio* for Opera North, which received a Faust Prize nomination. His opera credits include *Manon*, *Street Scene*, *Mazeppa*, *La gioconda*, *Ivan the Terrible*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Faust*, *Fidelio*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, *La traviata*, *The Magic Flute* and *Don Pasquale*. Other premieres include *Testament*, based on Colm Tóibín's novel. Francis has received four Irish Times Theatre Awards, a Critics' Circle Award and a Dora Mavor Moore Award. His work in Ireland was celebrated in *Fragments* at Prague Quadrennial 2019. He is Vice Chair of the Irish Society of Performance Designers.

Howard Hudson's (Lighting Designer) opera credits include: *Don Pasquale* (Opéra Nice Côte d'Azur); *Anna Bolena* (Greek National Opera); *The Flying Dutchman* (Irish National Opera); *Don Pasquale* (Opéra Lorraine, Lausanne); *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Bologna, Trieste, Venice); *Written On Skin* (Opera Philadelphia); *The Monstrous Child*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Linbury, ROH); *The Barber of Seville*, *Mansfield Park* (Grange Festival); *The Barber of Seville*, *The Bartered Bride*, *Fantasio*, *Fidelio*, *Vert-Vert* (Garsington); *Die Fledermaus*, *Lakmé*, *La bohème* (Holland Park). Theatre includes: *Starlight Express* (Troubadour); & *Juliet* (West End, Broadway, Australia, UK tour, Germany, US tour); *Just For One Day* (West End, Old Vic, Toronto); *Kiss of*

the Spider Woman (Leicester Curve); *Weird* (Theatre Royal Newcastle); *Here and Now* (UK tour); *The Line of Beauty* (Almeida); *13 Going on 30* (Manchester Opera House); *Grease* (Secret Cinema); *Natasha*, *Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812* (Donmar); *A Knight's Tale*, *Here and Now* (Manchester Opera House, UK tour); *A Chorus Line* (Curve, UK tour, Sadler's Wells); *I Should Be So Lucky*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Tell Me On A Sunday*, *Strangers On A Train*, *Gaslight* (UK tour); *The Little Big Things*, *Orlando*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Strictly Ballroom* (West End); *In Dreams* (Leeds Playhouse, Toronto); *When Winston Went to War With the Wireless* (Donmar); *Titanic The Musical* (UK, world tours); *The Phantom of the Opera* (Riyadh, Greece, international tours); *What's New Pussycat?* (Birmingham Rep); *Rent* (Hope Mill). For Opera North: *Street Scene*, *Rigoletto*, *Love Life*.

Described by *American Record Guide* as playing with 'sensitivity, vigour and taste in equal proportions, **Andy Long** (Orchestra Leader) enjoys a distinguished career as a violinist, chamber musician and educator. A former Associate Leader of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, he has performed as a soloist throughout Britain and Europe. He continues to appear in concertos, recitals and chamber music, and is highly regarded as a chamber music coach. A passionate teacher, he works internationally and online, reaching a global audience through his Andy Long Violin channel. He is the author of three books about violin technique.

Opera North – Making Opera Vital

Opera North is England's national opera company in the North. Rooted in Leeds, international in outlook, we are passionate about making opera vital for everyone in our communities. We create large-scale productions of classic and contemporary operas and musicals which are frequently praised for their excellence and innovation, as well as shows tailored to family audiences. The Orchestra of Opera North performs a year-round programme of high-quality orchestral and chamber concerts and films with live orchestra. In our own venue, the Howard Assembly Room in Leeds, we create and curate an eclectic programme of gigs, concerts and events featuring artists from around the globe. We offer various schemes to make our work accessible to first-time opera-goers, and our Learning & Engagement team delivers inspirational activity for children, families, young people and adults of all ages. At the heart of the Company are the talented and versatile full-time singers and musicians of our '*magnificent chorus and superbly assured orchestra*' (Richard Morrison, *The Times*), as heard on this and many other recordings. We are immensely grateful to Arts Council England, Leeds City Council, our supporters and audiences who enable us to create outstanding work which connects with people and transforms lives throughout our region and beyond.



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The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music

Chartered in 1962 as a not-for-profit private foundation, the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music preserves and perpetuates the legacies of composer Kurt Weill (1900-1950) and his actress-singer wife Lotte Lenya (1898-1981). Based in New York City, the Foundation encourages appreciation of Weill's music through support of performances, recordings, and scholarship, while nurturing talent more generally in the creation, performance, and study of musical theater. Through its Grants Program, the KWF funds projects and productions involving the work of both Kurt Weill and Marc Blitzstein in a number of categories, including both professional and amateur performance. As counterparts to the Grants Program, Collaborative Initiatives foster partnerships to realize projects that advance the strategic goals of the Foundation. The Foundation produces the annual Lotte Lenya Singing Competition and awards the Weill-Lenya Artist Sponsorships, the Julius Rudel/Kurt Weill Conducting Fellowship, and the Harold Prince/Kurt Weill Directing Fellowship. To date, the KWF has prepared and published fourteen volumes of the Kurt Weill Edition and maintains the Weill-Lenya Research Center. It awards biennially the Kurt Weill Prizes for scholarship about music theater. The Foundation's ongoing communications include its semi-annual Kurt Weill Newsletter, monthly E-News, and lively presence on multiple social media platforms. Since 2012, the Foundation has also administered the musical and literary estate of Marc Blitzstein.



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Robert Beale, The Arts Desk

STREET SCENE

A Broadway Opera

Music by Kurt Weill Book by Elmer Rice Lyrics by Langston Hughes and Elmer Rice
Musical Arrangements and Orchestrations by Kurt Weill

James Holmes, Conductor
Orchestra & Chorus of Opera North
Matthew Eberhardt, Stage Director
Oliver Rundell, Chorus Master
Andy Long, Orchestra Leader

Principal Cast:

Giselle Allen Anna Murrant
Robert Hayward Frank Murrant
Gillene Butterfield Rose Murrant
Alex Banfield Sam Kaplan

Producer: Johannes Kernmayer (Capriccio)
Co-Production: Opera North &
Kurt Weill Foundation for Music

Also Featuring:

Michelle Andrews
Quirijn de Lang
Rodney Vubya

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Booklet insert includes libretto, essays, photos & more!

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Cover Design: Mike Gerard

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