

THE LEAVING OF LIVERPOOL

A Play with Music

Book by

**DAVID SCOTT and JEREMY JAMES
TAYLOR**

Music by

RICHARD BRETT

SchoolPlay Productions Ltd

15 Inglis Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3HU

www.schoolplayproductions.co.uk

THE LEAVING OF LIVERPOOL

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SchoolPlay Productions Limited,
15 Inglis Road,
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CAST

FITZGAMMON BOWLINGREEN (*Actor-Manager*)

His Juvenile Thespians:

ADAM TODD
SOLOMON LUCAS
ALFRED ARCHARD
THOMAS ONWHYN
DIBDIN PITT
SILAS WOODROW
WILLIAM HERRING
NICHOLAS RAWLINGS
CATHERINE-KATE KELLY
FANNY FENTON
BELINDA VERITY

AMANDA RYE (*Governess*)

Boys of the Ragged School:

RICHARD WALTERS
MICHAEL MOLLOY
TOM TINDELL
JOSEPH BROWN
SAMUEL SCROGGS
DANIEL SCROGGS
MATTESON DIGGES

The Doyle Family:

BRIDGET
MARY
PATRICK
DANNY
CHRISTIE
WILLIAM

CAST (continued)

HENRY DUPLOYEN
PRUDENCE DUPLOYEN
WILLIAM TAPSCOTT
SLIDEY
FIRST MATE
SECOND MATE
SHIPPING CLERK

The action is set in the hovel of the Doyle Family in County Donegal; at The Emigration Embarkation Point of the Waterloo Dock, Liverpool, and in the Steerage of The Packet Ship, The Garrick.

The time is August 1850.

The melodrama in Act II, Scene 2, should convey the impression of being NOT very well acted.

[The word “nigger” as used in this script is historically correct and, used thus in context, should cause no offence; there is however no objection to a substitute word being used if this is felt necessary or appropriate]

Jeremy James Taylor, 1990

THE LEAVING OF LIVERPOOL

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Book *David Scott and Jeremy James Taylor*

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PROLOGUE

[MUSIC CUE No 1] “THE HILLS OF TYRONE”

Darkness. Voices singing the KYRIE. [MUSIC CUE No 2]

The lights come up on the hovel of the Doyle family in Donegal.

It is May 1850. The family are celebrating mass in the presence of FATHER NEEHAN. WILLIAM DOYLE is very sick with TB and the family are quite obviously living in great poverty.

The singing is being led by DANNY DOYLE.

Suddenly and violently the door bursts open, almost off its hinges. The mass stops.

The local BAILIFF and two labourers with pick-axes enter.

Bailiff: So, you're still here? We gave you warning two days ago to be off.

There is silence from the family.

Bailiff: Your passage is booked on the Princess Royal which is docked in Donegal Bay. It leaves for Liverpool tomorrow at eight; you'll make it if you start now. In two months you'll be with your father in America. If you're still here in two minutes, you'll have to take the roof out of your hair.

Bridget: Carry on, Danny.

He turns, nods to the labourers, and they leave. There is a slight pause. DANNY starts singing again. After a few seconds a pick-axe tears through the wall. MARY screams. There is a blackout. The singing continues, on tape, defiantly.

ACT I

The singing is drowned by a deafening explosion, as of a cannon. This is followed by shouting, clashing of swords and all the other attendant noises of a sea-battle. Dim lights appear illuminating what appears to be HMS Victory. “On Deck” is LORD NELSON, surrounded by his officers. In the background can be seen the dim figures of the English and French in hand-to-hand battle. In the foreground, we can see the heads of what appears to be an audience watching the spectacle. This is in fact a very second-rate rendition of “The Death of Nelson”, one of Fitzgammon Bowlinggreen’s less celebrated

theatrical pieces.

BOWLINGREEN is playing NELSON,

THOMAS ONWHYN plays HARDY

DIBDIN PITT plays the SURGEON

ADAM TODD plays the DRUMMER BOY

*SILAS WOODROW plays the LIEUTENANT and the rest of the troupe play the
fighters.*

Lucas: The French to starboard; coming our way!

Nelson: Hot work, Hardy!

Hardy: Never too hot, sir.

Archard: Keep your heads down!

Woodrow: I can't see a thing . . .

Herring: Take your cap off your eyes.

Lucas: Death to the French pigs. Fiends of hell! Minion, thou shalt pay for this.

Archard: Dogs!

Rawlings: Crop-eared traitors.

Herring: Now you picaroons, heave ahead!

Suddenly one special shot halts the din. NELSON reels, dramatically.

Nelson: Aaaahhh! I'm paralysed . . . I feel the weakness coming over me that tells
me death is near. *(They all gasp)*

The stage has frozen in a moving tableau, centering on FITZGAMMON.

Tomorrow the sun will rise in beauty on my grave...yet...England...will be...

Todd: *(Todd has the prompt-script on his drum, and prompts)* ... Free ...

Nelson: *(aside, angry)* I know, you fool! That was a pause! *(aloud)* Free! ...
(forgetting where he was) ... Where was I? ... Cue you little devil!

Todd: *(fumbling)* I've lost the place.

Nelson: *(beside himself with anger)* What? Just wait till ... *(Pulls himself together)* I
have but few minutes left ...

Herring: *(to himself)* Thank God!

Nelson: How goes the field?

Woodrow: We've won it, sir. Victory is ours!

There is a muffled cheer.

Nelson: Yours be the victory, oh God. And now, as I leave this stage of life for an
eternity in heaven ... *(gasps)* ... my breath is short now. I cannot stay much
longer. *(He smears his breast with stage blood. Lots of it)* Surgeon! Can you
stanch this blood? *(They all gasp again)*

Pitt: *(Looking at it)* I don't think so, my Lord.

Nelson: There is no hope then?

Pitt: Then ... kiss ... me ...

Todd: *(Prompting again)* ... Hardy.

Nelson: *(Losing his cool)* I know, you rat! *(With which he catches TODD round the ear with back-hand swipe, felling him to the ground. He gets back to his melodramatic pose and has another go.*

Kiss ... me ... Hardy, ere I ... die.

The actors look somewhat sheepishly at each other. HERRING gets pushed forward against his will. He is saved by the orchestra who play the first bars of [MUSIC CUE No 3] “THE DEATH OF NELSON”

Solo: *O dauntless hero, England’s pride,
The flow’r of Trafalgar Bay;
Rejoice, rejoice on ev’ry side,
Our Nelson has won the day.*

Full: *Through English hearts the red blood ran
For Kingdom, home and beauty.
England expects that ev’ry man
This day will do his duty.*

Solo: *Alas, behold the hero fall,
With fatal, bloody wound.
O knavish fiends ye Frenchmen all,
We’ll ne’er to thee be bound.*

Full: *From Nelson’s breast the red blood ran
For Kingdom, home and beauty.
England confess’d that ev’ry man
That day had done his duty.*

And with a final tableau depicting triumphant British victory, there is applause as tumultuous as the limited numbers of those watching can muster. Simultaneously, a lamp-lighter appears and illuminates the scene to reveal not the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, but the Waterloo Dock, Liverpool. The place is littered with the baggage of the emigrants who are waiting on the wharf for The Garrick to berth and take them to America. Two or three crude shelters have been rigged; one for FITZGAMMON BOWLINGGREEN, one for MISS RYE. The children of the Acting Company and the Ragged Schoolboys are evidently going to sleep in the open air. There are various Liverpoolian CARRIERS, PORTERS etc. sitting there too.

Fitzgammon: *(Moving to the front of the stage - stepping over the prostrate body of ADAM TODD)* Kind friends, for your well-deserved applause, felicitations and a thousand thanks. Here upon this humble Liverpool stage, Fitzgammon Bowlinggreen and His Juvenile Thespians are proud to have entertained you in their last performance on English soil before embarking on their greatest campaign yet - the conquest of the dramatic stages of the brave New World. Today, the Waterloo Dock, Liverpool; tomorrow, The Walnut Street Theatre,

Philadelphia, The Boston Museum; The Park Theatre, New York. Who can say? *(Pause for effect)* A kind goodnight to all.

With which WILLIAM HERRING, evidently well-versed in BOWLINGREEN's curtain speech, immediately sets off into the audience with the collecting box.

Herring: Thankyou, one and all. *(He shakes the box at DANIEL SCROGGS)*

Daniel: No use pointin' your box at me, me old china. I'm clean out of sov'rins!

HERRING moves on, shaking the box.

Tindell: Shouldn't go too near Samuel Scroggs either. He'll empty it in a winking!

Herring: Ruddy thing's empty already! Come on, it's my benefit night. Spare a sixpence, sir?

Carrier: *(amused)* Only got a florin - it's yours for eighteen pence change.

Herring: *(eagerly)* Eighteen pence? That's what's in the box, I think. Here.

He opens the box, shakes out the pennies into the carrier's hand and is then horrified to see him strolling off.

Carrier: Wharra generous performer! Your health! *(He dashes off)*

Herring: Hey! Come back here ...

Samuel: *(Laughing, along with the other Ragged Boys)* Who's a noodle, then?

Brown: At least he left you the box ...

Poor HERRING sits down and contemplates the empty box as the others laugh. The focus shifts back to the platform.

Walters: *(Walters, who has been examining the costumes, props etc, comes upon TODD who is nursing his thick ear)* Didn't think much of poor old Nelson there!

Todd: Who, Murphy Bowlingreen? He doesn't think much of me!

Molloy: *(Handing over a wooden sword he has picked up)* This yours?

Lucas: Ta. *(Takes it)*

Molloy: I've been tryin' to fathom out in me dull Irish brain what a crowd of acting-folk are doing in the Docks of Liverpool. Have you sunk that low?

Todd: You might well ask.

Bowling: *(who has come over)* I frequently ask myself what young Todd here might think he's doing in an acting company at all.

Molloy: I was just singing his praises, sir.

Bowling: Oh, really? And who might you think you are, young man, to be playing the critic?

Molloy: Michael Molloy, sir, from The Ragged School, Bloomsbury.

Bowling: Bloomsbury? I'd have had a guinea on Sligo!

Molloy: And you'd have won it, sir. Sligo was me home, sir, till, with the plague takin' up me time, I decided to ramble.

Bowling: *(warming to him)* A rambler eh? Good lad. And the rest of you ...

He's interrupted by the arrival of MISS RYE, the chaperone of the Ragged

Schoolboys. She appears at the same time as DUPLOYEN sidles over to listen in to the conversation.

Rye: All children from the Ragged School Union, Mr Bowlinggreen; emigrating to America for a richer and a fuller life. I enjoyed your performance, sirs. Thankyou for entertaining us. Come, Michael.

Molloy: *(As he goes, imitating her Canadian accent)* Right away, Miss Rye!

Bowling: *(Smiling, turns to DUPLOYEN)* Ah, Professor, you hear that? She enjoyed our performance.

Duployen: That bodes well for America.

Bowling: *(Flattered)* Oh! You'll find it's all in the teaching, Professor. All children are actors, you see, for all actors are children! Mind you, I'm not saying we couldn't find space for some Ragged School recruits in the troupe, eh Professor? *(He spots his "Stage-Manager" and moves off after him)* Ah, Slidey ...

Duployen: *(Half to himself)* We could use them, indeed, sir. Most valuable.

The packing away of the props etc continues upstage. A musician starts playing a quiet tune on a pipe. DUPLOYEN does not notice that ADAM TODD is still sitting quietly near him.

DUPLOYEN's mind appears to be taken up with watching the Ragged School troupe. He does not see his wife, PRUDENCE approaching him.

She is intercepted by a MESSENGER BOY.

Boy: Hey! Lady!

Prudence: Are you addressing me?

Boy: Henry Duployen?

Prudence: Yes?

Boy: You're Henry Duployen?

Prudence: No, I'm his wife. What do you want?

Boy: Letter here for him, from the Shipping Office. *(He holds it up)*

Prudence: *(Eagerly)* Ah, I'll take it.

Boy: *(Withholding it)* Confidential it says.

Prudence: Yes. Give it to me.

Boy: Sorry, lady.

Duployen: *(Seeing her, calls)* Prudence! Who's that?

Prudence: *(Relieved)* Ah, Henry. Thank heavens. This child here ...

Duployen: *(Snaps at him)* What do you want?

Boy: Letter for you. From the Shipping Office. Confidential. . .

Duployen: *(Snatching it)* Ah, thank God. *(He looks at the seal)*

Prudence: Tapscott?

Duployen: *(Smiling wryly)* Tapscott.

Boy: *(Hovering)* Will there be any reply, sir?

Duployen: (*Sharply*) Go away.

Boy: (*Turning, blows a raspberry. He leaves*)

Prudence: (*Following DUPLOYEN across the stage. He is reading avidly*) Well?

Duployen: Good! Perfectly to plan.

Prudence: Eleven posts?

Duployen: Eleven.

Prudence: And how much?

Duployen: Two hundred and fifty dollars each. (*Reads*) All contracts in New York so they can be dispensed as soon as we get there. A great demand, he says, and the more English the better.

Prudence: A great demand, eh? (*She looks around*) How many of these Ragged School children are there?

Duployen: I've spotted six.

Todd: (*Innocently - he's been listening to their conversation*) No! Seven boys, sir, and an American lady.

Duployen: (*Spinning round*) Who the devil's that?

Todd: Me, sir. Todd.

Prudence: (*Cuffing him*) Interfering snake. What are you doing there?

Todd: (*Holding his ear*) I'm sorry. I was only ...

Duployen: (*Yelling*) Hold your tongue, boy, if you value your health ...

The whole wharf is now listening. BOWLINGGREEN saves the day.

Todd: I'm sorry. I heard you talking about the boys.

Duployen: Hold your tongue, boy.

Bowling: What's the truble over here? Adam Todd!

Prudence: Meddling rat.

Bowling: It's clearly not your day. Slidey! Keep a careful eye on this one. Take him away with you.

SLIDEY is left standing over TODD.

Slidey: Yes, Mr Bowlinggreen. Come on. (*Pause*) Move your arse. Runt. (*He kicks TODD*)

Todd: Get out, Slidey. (*He avoids him*)

Slidey: Watch your mouth - and your step, Todd! Remember!

Woodrow: Poor old Toddy. Why does he always get it in the neck?

There is a sudden surge of action upstage where MOLLOY and LUCAS, having put on two of the military costumes, are in mock combat with wooden swords. The crowd gathers round.

Molloy: Turn coward! Turn.

Lucas: Avaunt, you villain!

Molloy: "Away! Thou art too ignoble for my arm!"

Lucas: (*Lunging*) Have at thy heart.

MOLLOY evades him. There are great cheers. WALTERS is about to stop them.

Walters: Molloy. Put that bloody sword down ...

Bowling: (*Restraining him*) No, boy. Leave them. Let them entertain. Remember, the play's the thing, wherein to ... um ... er ...

Molloy: Now, by St Patrick, stand and face thy doom.
You'll soon regret you left your mother's womb.

They fight again. LUCAS is wounded and falls.

Lucas: Aaaaarrgggh! You push too well. You've run me through the guts.

Molloy: Vomit up thy soul, vile braggart.
Bear off the corpse. Lop off the head
And feed it to the ravished howling wolves.
Rebellion's dead. And now, I'll go to breakfast.

Tremendous applause. Led by BOWLINGREEN.

Bowling: (*To Duployen*) An actor, by St Patrick. What do you say, Duployen?

Duployen: Very valuable.

[*MUSIC CUE No 3a*] "**MICHAEL MOLLOY**"

*Who is the fellow the rabble are crying for?
Who is the fellow the Ladies are dying for?
Who is the fellow the rabble are crying for?*

Chorus: *Sure, it's Michael Molloy - O!
He's the lad the ladies are falling for,
He's the lad the crowd are calling for.
He's the lad the ladies are falling for,
Sure to be Michael Molloy - O!*

*Who is the fellow who's frequently fiddlin'?
Who is the fellow who's dapper at dibblin'?
Who is the fellow who's frequently fiddlin'?*

Chorus: *Sure, it's Michael Molloy - O!
He's the lad the ladies are falling for,
He's the lad the crowd are calling for.
He's the lad the ladies are falling for,
Sure to be Michael Molloy - O!*

*Who is the fellow from over the water?
The fellow who fancies your fortunate daughter?
Yes who is the fellow from over the water?*

Chorus: *For sure, it's Michael Molloy - O!
He's the lad the ladies are falling for,
He's the lad the crowd are calling for.*

*He's the lad the ladies are falling for,
Sure to be Michael Molloy - O!
Sure to be Michael Molloy - O!*

*Unseen by MOLLOY and BOWLINGGREEN, WILLIAM HERRING has grabbed
Lucas' discarded sword, crept up behind Molloy and runs him through.*

Herring: Irish dog!

MOLLOY playing up, affects an agonising death.

Molloy: Ah! (*Holds the wound*) What have you done, you fool. (*Staggers*) You've stabbed me ... oww! ... help me, for God's sake ...

And to everyone's horror, he gives a final cry and dies at Bowlinggreen's feet. There is an awful silence. Everybody looks at the body, then at HERRING.

Lucas: (*Stooping over the body*) He's dead!

Herring: (*Terrified*) It was only a wooden sword, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Miss Rye: (*Having had enough*) On your feet, Michael Molloy, and stop showing off.

MOLLOY springs to his feet, grinning. A gasp and sighs of relief all round.

Bowling: Well I'll be ... (*Laughs*) Good God. He fooled me completely! Bravo!

Miss Rye: Not too much praise, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: Wonderful stuff! Where did you learn to perform like that, Michael?

Molloy: I joined a group of Players when I got to England. A Travelling Troupe. But when we got to London, well ...

Miss Rye: We draw a veil over what happened when you got to London, young man, and give thanks to the good works of the Ragged Schools Union!

Bowling: And fine rhetoric too.

Prudence: Henry! My luggage. Have it brought here.

Duployen: Yes, dearest. Child! (*WOODROW carries the case off*)

Miss Rye: (*DUPLOYEN and PRUDENCE go*) Who is he?

Bowling: Him? Oh, Professor Henry Duployen, Doctor of Euphonics and Master of the Dover Academy where I found all my young performers.

Miss Rye: The Dover Academy?

Slidey: (*To MOLLOY*) Shove off, runt.

Miss Rye: Oh, off with you Michael.

Bowling: A moment ... Slidey. That packing case. Open it.

He points to a large wooden crate which SLIDEY proceeds to open.

Slidey: Yes, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: No, Michael. Such talent shall be rewarded with nothing but the highest accolade that can be bestowed ... take care Slidey, you oaf! (*He reaches into the crate*) Now then ... there, sir.

He produces a white plaster bust of Shakespeare and offers it to MOLLOY who regards it blankly.

Bowling: You know, of course, who this is?

Molloy: Lord Nelson, is it?

Bowling: By the mass, do they teach you nothing at your Ragged School? *(Pause)*
This, child, is the Mister-Master himself. The Swan of Avon, Will Shakespeare. He could have been Ireland's greatest poet.

Miss Rye: Well, take it, Michael.

Molloy: What do I do with it?

Bowling: You revere and admire it, sir. Just as four hundred and ninety-nine fortunate citizens of America will do when they have their busts too.

Molloy: Four hundred and ninety-nine?

Bowling: Precisely. Only five hundred exist and I have them all. Bought them in Stratford-Upon-Avon and I've carried them here to Liverpool myself.

Slidey: You've bloody carried them ... !

Bowling: *(Glowering)* Slidey! Have that crate *(he points at it)* brought over to the embarkation point there - and hold your tongue.

Slidey: *(Smirking)* Yes, Mr Bowlinggreen. *(He slouches over to the box. There is a slightly awkward pause).*

Molloy: *(Coming to the rescue)* Was the "Death of Nelson" by Mr Shakespeare?

Bowling: *(Flattered)* Ah. You recognised the style, did you?

Molloy: Didn't notice any style!

BOWLINGGREEN is taken aback. MISS RYE reprimands MOLLOY. The action cuts to the other side of the stage.

Slidey: *(Who has noticed TODD sitting reading)* Todd! That crate. Get it moved over there.

Todd: Go and milk the pigeons, Slidey.

Slidey: You giving me lip, runt?

Todd: I wouldn't give you a knee in the nutmegs, Slidey.

Slidey: *(Going to kick him)* Don't you come that with me ...

Lucas: *(Who has seen the imminent confrontation and has wandered over with RAWLINGS and PITT)* What's the trouble, Slidey? Todd giving you a rough time? *(The others laugh)*

Rawlings: Bullying Slidey again, Todd? *(Laughter)*

Slidey: Run away, runts.

Pitt: Really Todd, you ought to pick on someone your own size! *(Laughter)*

Lucas: Poor old Slidey!

Slidey: *(Losing control, screams)* Little bastards. Get that crate moved over there - fast!

There is a pause as they, and everyone else on the wharf looks at SLIDEY.

Lucas: Who could resist such a charming and polite request?

Slidey: Oh, shut up, Lucas ...

Lucas: Come fellow Thespians. England expects every man to do his duty!

The others join in with the catch phrase and strut off towards the crate. SLIDEY is furious and rushes off. BOWLINGREEN is delighted, and roars with laughter, applauding them and crying "Bravo, Here, here".

Miss Rye: *(Smiling)* You were saying how mutual harmony and teamwork are the great qualities responsible for the happy working spirit of your troupe, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: *(Nonplussed)* Was I? How true! Well the truth is there's a deal of pleasure to be had from working with children and since I never had any of me own ... to speak of ... er... I've "borrowed" this lot! Six months of slog it's been and we're not doing so bad. "All the world is, indeed, a stage" - as Touchstone so frequently and touchingly reminds us, and here we are, merely its players, strettin' and fruttin' our hours upon the stage until the day of judgement - assuming we get the bookings, that is! Does that answer your question?

This is greeted with a burst of silent incomprehension from MISS RYE and MOLLOY who have been trying to follow it. MATTESON DIGGES has been examining the Shakespearean bust and eventually breaks the silence.

Digges: Can I talk to your statue, Michael?

Molloy: Fire away Matty. Tell you what, we'll talk to him together. *(Making his escape, he strolls off with DIGGES)*

Digges: What's his name?

Molloy: William Shakespeare.

Digges: Hello, William. You hungry? ...

Bowling: *(Who has been watching them, turns, amazed)* By heaven, the boy's a lunatic!

Miss Rye: Absolutely right! "Mad Matty" they call him. Simple as the day he was born - though no one knows when that was - but quite harmless, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: "Fitzgammon", Miss Rye. Do call me Fitzgammon.

Miss Rye: *(She'd rather not)* Er ... what takes you and your young friends to America?

Bowling: Ah, the theatre, Miss Rye. The theatre ... er ... may I call you Amelia?

Miss Rye: *(Taken aback)* You may, is you so wish. It's not my name, but no matter!

Bowling: Oh, a thousand pardons ...

[MUSIC CUE No 4] The instrumental introduction starts.

Miss Rye: *(Rescuing him)* Tell me more about America.

Bowling: Ah, a fine country, Ma'am, but how primitive! How illiterate! Slavery and ignorance. Terrible crimes against the human race! Praise be to God for the Union Jack, say I, for the American Eagle has laid rotten eggs, and he

who prefers the Stars richly deserves the Stripes into the bargain!
Having risen to a dramatic crescendo, he is brought back to earth by the singing of the actors who are struggling with a crate of busts.

Lucas: *Oh, would I were a tinker. I'd be a happy man.
You would find me a tinkering at anything I can.
And I'd mend me mother's frying pan, however much it rusts.
For I'd rather be a tinkering than lugging plaster busts.*

Tutti: *We'd rather be doing anything than a lugging these blasted*
Herring: *Oh would I were a sailor, I'd be a happy tar. [busts!
You would find me a navigating round the harbour bar.
For I'd sooner be upon the seas, however much it gusts.
Yes, I'd rather be a sailing than lugging plaster busts.*

Tutti: *We'd rather be doing anything than a lugging these blasted*
Archard: *Oh would I were a gentleman, I'd be a happy blade. [busts!
You would find me a dallying with every pretty maid.
I'd live with all the ladies, indulging in me lusts.
For I'd rather be a ***** than lugging plaster busts.*

Tutti: *We'd rather be doing anything than a lugging these blasted*
Lucas: *But alas I am an actor. A lazy moaning sod. [busts!
I serve the Swan of Avon like an almighty bleeding god;
But I'd rather play the Tempest, or Hamlet if you must,
Than to work for Murphy Bowlinggreen and his bleeding
[plaster busts.*

Tutti: *We'd rather be doing anything than a lugging these blasted
[busts!*

All repeat the last verse and chorus.

As it finishes, the RAGGED BOYS, who have, by now, joined in with the song, and the actors laugh and applaud each other and start chatting.

Samuel: *(As the song finishes, to ONWHYN)* Know any GOOD songs?

Onwhyn: Eh!

Tindell: Wha's the matter wiv you, Sam. Can't you niver enjoy nothin'?

Samuel: 'Eard better at Hackney Fair.

Tindell: Mean beggar!

Alfred: *(Cheerfully)* Could do you a Morris Dance if you want.

Daniel: Morris? Who's he?

Alfred: No. "Morris Dance" - you know: Floral Dance, Garland Dance, Clog Dance. You can take your pick.

Samuel: An' you can take a runnin' jump; nifty naffy stuff.

Alfred: 'Ere. What's the matter with him?

Walters: Who? Sammy Scroggs? Born on the dark side was Samuel; but they're

workin' on him!

Fanny: Where are you all from then?

Samuel: That's our business.

Walters: Oh, drop it, Sam. You're not in court now.

Fanny: In court?

Walters: From Hackney, aren't you, Danny?

Daniel: Born 'n bred.

Catherine: You his brother then?

Daniel: So they say - worse luck!

Onwhyn: Brotherly love, eh?

Daniel: Brotherly (*blows a raspberry*) ... !

Tindell: What a team, though. First met them in Tothill Fields Prison. Bin done for sharpin'.

Onwhyn: The card tricks?

Daniel: (*Perking up*) Mine was the Thimble and Pea.

Fanny: Is that a tavern?

Daniel: (*Laughing*) Nah! 'Ere, look. (*He produces three wooden boxes and a pea*) 'Ere's the thimbles ...

Fanny: They look like boxes ...

Daniel: (*Ignoring her*) An' 'ere's the pea, right? Now then. (*He pops the pea under one of the thimbles*) Even money you can't tell us where's the pea ..

(*The action cuts to MISS RYE*)

Fanny: Mmmm ...

Miss Rye: ... and your eloquent speeches about the corruption of America and its people; you wrote those yourself too?

Bowling: (*Suddenly hearing her accent for the first time*) Oh, heaven forgive me, I was clean forgetting you are ...

Miss Rye: Oh, don't worry about me, Mr Bowlinggreen. It takes a good deal more than a few melo-dramatic words to offend me. And besides, I'm not American.

Bowling: No?

Miss Rye: I'm Canadian.

Bowling: Oh, Canadia, a fine country, Ma'am.

Miss Rye: No need for platitudes, sir. Simply tell me why you are emigrating all these healthy young people to America?

Bowling: No such thing as emigration for us, Miss Rye. We all intend to come back; but to come back richer and happier. No, this is a business venture.

(*The action cuts back to DANIEL and FANNY*)

Fanny: (*Pointing to a thimble*) That one again.

Daniel: (*Revealing the pea*) The money's yours.

Fanny: (*Laughing*) It's easy this.

Samuel: (*Smiling*) Mug's game, love.

Daniel: Now then - double or quits for the final game, eh?

Fanny: I'm game.

Daniel: But usin' hard money this time ...

Walters: Danny! You're not in Hackney now.

Catherine: Well, if you always lose like that, no wonder you're in a Ragged School!

She gets a slow and knowing stare from the Ragged Boys.

Walters: You ever been to London, lady?

Catherine: I prefer Dover. It's the only place I know.

Walters: That figures.

Daniel: Well, most of us kids are from London, lady, where most of life's double or quits an' if we was all losers ... we wouldn't be here now.

Brown: Not me, Scroggs. Don't class me in your bracket.

Samuel: Ah, Joseph Brown, the Liverpool Louse.

Brown: ... and don't you forgerrit.

Woodrow: Well, why didn't you stay here?

Brown: Cos it's a cess-pit, that's why. Hadn't you noticed? An open sewer ...

Woodrow: ... that flows to America. Join the queue.

Brown: I'm in it, friend.

Onwhyn: Us too. The Grand Tour.

Tindell: You're playing? Out there?

Onwhyn: Correct. Players; Mummies, Musicians; Canvas actors.

Alfred: Morris Dancers; call us what you like.

Samuel: Bloody nifty naffys.

Walters: An' how did you get here?

Woodrow: Walked!

(The action cuts back)

Bowling: ... and so we walked all the way here from Dover by way of Canterbury, Tenterden and Norwich. All part of the theatrical circuit, you see; earning our bread as we travelled.

Miss Rye: And why Dover?

Bowling: That's where Duployen ran his school. I'd been looking all over the land for me wretched wife and it had taken me to Dover ...

Miss Rye: Your wife - did you say?

Bowling: (*Flustered*) Um ... did I? Oh! Enough of her. (*He holds his brow, as if troubled by the memory. He mutters almost to himself ...*) Inconstancy, thy name is woman ...

Miss Rye: I beg your pardon?

Bowling: What? Oh. A thousand pardons! ... Where was I?

Miss Rye: In Dover.

Bowling: Oh yes, Dover ... Duployen ... yes. Met the fellow there. He ran a school ... an Academy of Elocution and Euphonics! Dreadful place. His business had taken a nose-dive, so had my life. So here we are - a partnership, all bound for America to make theatrical history, please God.

Miss Rye: Professor Duployen must be a very astute man - or a desperate one.

Bowling: Perspicacious. That's your word.

Miss Rye: And there are those who might dub you mad!

Bowling: Aha! I am but mad North North West! When the wind is Southerly, I know a hand from a Hawkshaw! - Hamlet!

Miss Rye: Ah! Shakespeare.

Bowling: Now tell me of your charges, and am I to steal young Molloy from you?

Miss Rye: No slave-trading here, Mr Bowlinggreen. These boys are the fortunate few chosen from hundreds to be sent, at the expense of the benevolent gentlemen of the Ragged Schools Union to find a new and a better life faraway from the land of their miserable childhoods.

DUPLOYEN has appeared and is hovering beside them.

Bowling: Ah! Splendid!

Miss Rye: In terms of learning, their education doesn't amount to much, but in terms of imaginative philanthropy, why, the Ragged Schools Union is one of the noblest ventures of your troubled land.

Bowling: Brave words. Rare world! How does a Canadian governess come to be with them?

Miss Rye: I am paid by the New York Children's Aid Society to chaperone children to the New World where they will be placed into honest labour and employed by honest folk.

Duployen: So much honesty, Miss Rye.

Miss Rye: The best policy, I'm sure you'd agree, Professor.

Duployen: Indeed. Did I hear the Ragged School's Union mentioned?

Miss Rye: You certainly did. Why?

Duployen: How fascinating. I'd be interested to hear them speak.

Miss Rye: Speak?

Duployen: Merely for "Academic Interest"; a few experiments.

Miss Rye: Experiments?

Duployen: Oh, nothing harmful of course ...

Miss Rye: Of course! *(They laugh, nervously)* ...

In dumb show, DUPLOYEN invites RYE and BOWLINGGREEN to his "tent" for some refreshment. They go off.

Bowling: Of course! *(Nervous laughter)* Ah! Slidey.

Slidey: Yes, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: Professor Duployen would like a private word with Miss Rye's charges.
Kindly inform them, would you, and dismiss the rest?

Slidey: Yes, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Duployen: *(To MISS RYE)* I won't keep them up long, I assure you.

Miss Rye: Oh, good.

Slidey: *(To the children)* Orright you rabble, shove off will you. Walters, get your lot together. Professor wants to treat you to one of his sessions!

Walters: One of what sessions?

Slidey: Professor Duployen ...

Todd: *(Interrupting)* Oy, oy! I'd keep well clear if I were you ...

Slidey: D'you mind, Todd. I was talkin'. *(He shoves him away)*

Lucas: Oh, lay off him for once, will you Slidey?

Slidey: I don't like little runts like Todd who interrupt when I'm talkin'.

Todd: Oh! Silence in court! The cat's pissing!

Bowling: Todd! Be silent, will you! Slidey, take the rest of them away. Todd, you come here. I want a word with you ...

BOWLINGGREEN takes TODD to one side. The actors leave. MISS RYE takes over. SLIDEY shoves the others away. The RAGGED BOYS remain.

Miss Rye: *(Clapping her hands)* Now boys. In a line please. I want to introduce you to a real Professor.

Daniel: A real what?

Miss Rye: He is a very clever man and he wants to hear you talk.

They all erupt into a gaggle of talking. MISS RYE quietens them with a lift of her finger.

But not until he tells you. Do you understand, Mattheson Digges?

Digges: Yes, Miss Rye.

Miss Rye: What have you got to do?

Digges: Yes, Miss Rye.

Miss Rye: *(To DUPLOYEN)* Unfortunately the boy is a simpleton - but there's no one as good with his hands as Mattheson Digges. Now Professor.

Duployen: *(Walking up and down in a sinister, military way, stops behind MOLLOY and makes him jump)* You, young man. What's your name?

Molloy: Michael Molloy, sir.

Duployen: Say that again.

Molloy: Michael Molloy, sir.

Duployen: *(Placing his hands around MOLLOY's throat)* Say "A"

Molloy: "A"

Duployen: *(Beginning to tighten his grip)* "E"

Molloy: "E"

Duployen: (*Speeding it up*) “I”

Molloy: “I”

Duployen: “O”

Molloy: “O”

Duployen: “U”

Molloy: “U”

Duployen: (*Letting the boy go - MOLLOY rubs his neck and looks bewildered*)

Now, you, young man. What’s your name?

Daniel: (*Frightened*) Daniel Scroggs. My father died, then me mother died and I hate my brother - he’s a crook, and ...

Duployen: (*Slightly angrily*) Yes, all right, child. Spare me the details.

Daniel: What’s that?

Duployen: (*Holding up a primitive stethoscope*) It won’t hurt you. (*He applies it to the boy’s chest*) Now, say after me “Anger and Hunger ...”

Daniel: Anger an’ ‘unger.

Duployen: “Linger longer ...”

Daniel: Lingers longer.

Duployen: “Than a broken finger ...”

Daniel: Than a broken ... Daniel Scroggs ... me father died and then me mother died and I hates me brother ...(*He breaks down*) an’ I don’ wanna go to America ...

Miss Rye: He’s rather unhappy at the moment, perhaps we could leave him alone for a while.

Duployen: Of course, Miss Rye. (*He gets out his notebook and writes, as he moves to BROWN*) And your name?

Brown: Joseph Brown.

Duployen: Joseph, do you know any poems or rhymes?

Brown: (*Surprised*) No.

Duployen: Nothing that your parents taught you or you heard them sing?

Brown: (*Amused*) No.

Walters: I knows one, sir. Me mother taught it to me when I was three and I’ve always remembered it. She said it was lovely the way I done it.

Miss Rye: Um, not now, Richard, I don’t think Professor ...

Walters: (*Ignoring her; aggressively*)

Tell tale tit, your tongue shall be split,
And all the little puppy dogs shall have a little bit.
Put it in the dinner, put it in the stew,
Put it down your trousers and God Bless You.

Duployen: Yes, well, thank you children. I think that’s enough for one evening. I shall be seeing you again on the ship, that’s for sure.

Suddenly there is a roar off-stage.

Patrick: May heaven punish you - English bastard thieves!

There is a scurry as two Liverpoolian carriers rush across the stage carrying two feeble bundles. As they disappear, yelling, PATRICK DOYLE chases on, shouting.

Where did they go? Thieving swines!

Samuel: You won't catch them two now, me old China.

PATRICK ignores him and turns to help the rest of his family on. It is the DOYLE FAMILY, just arriving from Ireland. They are very tired, deprived of almost everything and WILLIAM, in BRIDGET'S arms, is very sick.

Patrick: Put him down here.

Bridget: Let's rest for a while here.

Mary: *(Looking round)* Sure, I think this is the right place.

Christie: *(To BOWLINGGREEN, who is approaching)* Is this right for America, sir? *BOWLINGGREEN is aghast to see they are sitting on a box of his busts. BRIDGET deposits WILLIAM on the opened packing case of the Busts. BOWLINGGREEN coughs loudly.*

Bowling: Have you any idea what is in there?

Christie: In there?

Bowling: Yes, child, in there.

Christie: Um. No sir.

Bowling: Busts of the Bard. Likenesses of the greatest dramatist the world has ever know, and you're sitting on them. So off. *(He taps PATRICK on the shoulder)* And you, my lad. Off. We're not having the likes of you smashing up my stocks.

PATRICK picks up WILLIAM, too tired to object, and lays him on the ground.

Bridget: How is it, William?

William: Mmmm. Is there any water?

Bridget: We'll try and find you some.

Mary: Well, at least we've made it to Liverpool, Willy. We'll soon have you on that boat to Amnerica.

Patrick: They call them coffin ships. Stepping on board's like stepping into your coffin.

Christie: What's a coffin?

Patrick: It's something they bury you in if you're rich.

Christie: Well, we won't have to worry then!

Patrick: Well, they can always chuck us overboard.

Bridget: Patrick!

Patrick: English bastards.

Danny: *(Who has been tending to WILLIAM)* Did they get the tickets?

Bridget: No, I'VE got them. They're safe.

Carrier: (*Entering with a bucket*) Water! Fresh water!

Bridget: Water? Here!

Carrier: (*Coming over*) Water for you my dear? Penny a cup.

Bridget: A penny?

Carrier: Times are hard. (*Takes the penny*) Hold your cup out.
She holds out her cup. He pinches it and runs off.

Christie: (*Going after him*) Thieving English ...

SLIDEY laughs oafishly.

Mary: (*Calling after him*) Christie ... forget it.

Patrick: (*Aside to DANNY*) I don't think Willy'll make it to the boat here, let alone America.

Danny: Why say that?

Patrick: Well, look at him now, Danny.

Danny: We must. If the family's to survive, we must.

Patrick: They might not let him on if he's not fit. They check up. (*He looks at the prostrate boy in DANNY's arms*) Ah, he's beginning to sleep.

DANNY settles him down and quietly starts singing. He has a very beautiful voice. He sings very gently and is completely oblivious of the fact that everyone on the wharf hears him, stops whatever they are doing and creep forward to listen.

[MUSIC CUE No 5]: "LULLABY"

Danny: *Sleep enfold you while we sing a lullaby. Lullaby.
Weaving a prayer to guard and keep you. Sing a lullaby.
Hear our cry, Mother of Jesus.
Gentle Maiden, Mary mild.
As you adored the Holy Infant,
Pray for this child.
Jesus, may thine angels hear our lullaby; lullaby.
Keeping the child from all ill dreams and singing lullaby.
Hear our prayer merciful Jesus,
Gentle Lord, whom man reviled.
By thy death and bitter passion Save thy sleeping child.*

There is a brief pause after he finishes and then tumultuous applause, led by BOWLINGGREEN. DANNY is horrified, and leaps to his feet.

Bowling: My dear young man! Praise be to the God of Music for that's sure a fine voice he's blessed you with. (*To the others*) Sure, his mother must have been a nightingale!

Danny: (*Desperately embarrassed*) Could you please talk a little quieter, sir. My little brother is unwell and needs rest.

Bowling: (*Beginning to get a bit annoyed*) I'm offering sixpence for another song -

and there'll be more after that, if you've a mind to it.

Miss Rye: (*Coming up behind him*) I think, perhaps, you should leave them, Mr ...

Bowling: But we wish to hear another song! Don't we?

(*But the rest are now unsure*)

Christie: Did you hear that Danny? Sixpence for another song?

Danny: (*Darkly*) I heard it.

William: (*Crying out*) Bridget! Some water.

Bowling: (*Overhearing*) Is it water he wants? Slidey - get some fresh water.

Slidey: Yes, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Mary: It's all right, Willy. We're all here now.

Bowling: (*As SLIDEY arrives*) Now then, here's some water for you.

Danny: You're very kind sir. Here, Willy, some water.

Bowling: We'll have the Londonderry Air.

Danny: I'm sorry, sir. We've troubles enough of our own, and I'm in no mood for singing now.

Bowling: Good heavens, child. I'm giving you water ...

Danny: (*Shouting*) Are you deaf? Will you kindly leave me brother along for pity's sake?

Bowling: What?

Miss Rye: Mr Bowlinggreen. I think they've made their point ...

Bowling: Am I deaf, did he say? Confound the child. I wasn't even addressing him.

Duployn: (*Coming forward*) Mr Bowlinggreen ...

Bowling: Don't "Mr Bowlinggreen" me, dammit. If I want music, I shall have it, by God and no arrogant Irish pauper shall stop me! Rawlings, Pitt - a song, by heaven. And make it a lively one.

There is a certain amount of consultation and then a fiddle strikes up with an Irish jig. [MUSIC CUE No 6] Though the atmosphere is forced at first, with BOWLINGGREEN encouraging things along as he swigs lavishly from a hip flask, the number plays itself out strongly. The DOYLES keep a low profile and ignore things.

Lucas: *Fred was a fiddler at Abingdon Fair.
He'd been fiddling all of his life.
But his only companion was his dancing bear -
He decided to get him a wife.
Early one morning, as bright as could be,
With his fiddle all polished and smart,
Freddy found a fair maiden who felt fancy free
And he showed her his finest vibrato!*

Chorus: *"Oh fiddle free" said the pretty young maiden
"Fiddle free, but I pray you be careful*

*Oh fiddle free, but the tune that you play may ruin me.
Oh I pray you beware”.*

Solo: *Daily he’d wait for her. Daily he’d play,
Till he’d fallen right under her spell.
But alas she confronted him one summer’s day
With a face like a fiddler’s elbow.
“Come now my dearest, the one I adore,
Hear my music”, but sadly she smiled
Saying “Dear one, now I’ll hear your music
No more, for I find I shall soon be with child.*

Chorus: *“Oh fiddle free” said the pretty young maiden
“Fiddle free, but I pray you be careful
Oh fiddle free, but the tune that you play may ruin me.
Oh I pray you beware”.*

Solo: *Fear not my dearest one, come live with me.
In a moment we two can be wed.
But she wept as she told him “Tis never to be,
For my husband will soon see you dead”
“Husband” he cried, as his heart turned to stone
And she hung her head down in despair.
So he went back to Abingdon all on his own.
Now he dances alone with his bear.*

CHORUS and VERSE 1: *repeat together.*

BOWLINGGREEN *applauds noisily. Everyone else slowly retires to their beds.*

Bowling: Bravo! Bravo! And we’ll have yet another soon!

Miss Rye: Enough is enough, I think Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: I’ll decide when we’ve had enough, madam.

Miss Rye: Come boys, time to sleep. *(She retires)*

Duployn: It’s nearing ten thirty now. We must keep the peace, I think.

BOWLINGGREEN *snorts.*

Slidey: We’ll have the law in if we disturbs too much, Mr B ...

Bowling: *(Slumping down)* I, young man, have had quite enough of the law. And the law have, I suspect, had quite enough of me.

He is unaware that nobody except SLIDEY is listening to him, and even SLIDEY slips off into the darkness after a moment. Everyone else is settling down. Only MOLLOY and TODD, who have both taken an interest in the DOYLE family, are quietly making their way round to DANNY’s side. A fiddle plays a tune quietly in the background [MUSIC CUE No 6a].

Bowling: The Law! Humph. The devils threw me in Kingston Gaol in ‘42 for playing scenes from Oliver Twist without a licence. Fourteen days in clink

wearing a white swallow-tail coat, a chintz waistcoat and a full bushy wig! **[MUSIC CUE No 7]. “LOVELY ANNIE”** (*unaccompanied recorder as BOWLINGREEN speaks*). Then I come out to find the theatre company is broken up and my confounded wife has run off with the drum-player from the pit-band. Ha! Deposed by a musician! ... the woman never did have any taste. Goddam her. So, I take to the road in The Wizard of the North. Necromany. Conjuring. I even tried a fire eating act at the City Theatre, Glasgow - burnt it to the ground! Nothing worked - and I couldn't find that damned woman - so there was nothing for it but America. Oh, my New Found Land! What a country! What fortunes to be made! Dickens; Boucicault. Shakespeare; all the rage! There's hope for the Irish yet, thinks I! And blow me down if there isn't real born and bred niggers out there making their fortunes acting Othello! Oh, there's certainly hope for the Irish yet ... (*he drinks*) ... damn the woman and damn her fancy man ... (*he drinks again*)

No, we'll make it out there, me boys. Bowlingreen; The Bard and the Busts, by God, all working to the greater glory of Ireland, England, St George and the Dragon, so help me ... Amen. (*He drinks*) By God, it's cold. Now, how about another song?

He looks around, finds everyone has deserted him. Drinks again.

Ah, a plague on all cowards, I'll sing it meself.

He drinks. Inhales, it turns into an enormous yawn, following which he falls into a sound sleep, snoring gently where he sits.

Molloy: Psst.

Todd: Hey, Irish. You all right?

Danny: Who's that?

Molloy: You all right are you?

Danny: Right as I'll ever be.

Todd: Are you cold?

Danny: Well, I'm not warm.

Todd: There are some clothes in those baskets over there, I'll get them.

Molloy: Careful, Adam.

TODD creeps over to the costume skips and removes three coats.

Danny: It's the chill coming off the water. Willy's frozen. I hope it's warmer in America.

Molloy: You're off there too are you?

Danny: We've little choice.

Todd: (*Returning*) Here you are. An Admiral, a Lieutenant and a French dog! *They wrap themselves up, DANNY choosing to stay cold, wraps up WILLIAM.*

Molloy: I wonder what America's like.

Danny: My Dad says it's the land of a million turnips.

Todd: All you Irish ever think of is turnips!

Danny: The last thing I ate was a turnip. We shared it between the seven of us. That was when Mother was alive.

Todd: Where is she now?

Danny: She died just before we left. The last thing we did was to say a requiem for her - and even that was interrupted by the bailiff.

A slight pause.

Molloy: Where are you all from?

Danny: County Donegal.

Molloy: Which part? I know it well.

Danny: On the coast by Ardara. We were thrown out by the landlord. Things were very hard when we left, and Father is in New York, ahead of us.

Molloy: I left Killybegs years ago. Took to the roads and worked my way to London. What's it like there now?

Danny: Desperate. The plague has hit the potato crop as well as the people. There's just nothing to eat. The children, the old, and the sick are dying like rats.

Molloy: Well, it wasn't always like that.

Danny: No. I remember good times - but they're a long way back. Father was a fisherman and Mother salted herrings. Then, one day, the work stopped and Father went off to America where he hoped to earn more money than on the races back home. We'd one letter from him full of promises of the fine life there, dry roofs, fresh bread, clean water in a jug and new blankets. The only thing I ever learned from my father was how to sing, bless him. The catch was good, so we sang about it. It was bad, so we drowned our sorrows with a song.

SLIDEY and some of the CARRIERS appear in the gloom, upstage. They spot TODD.

Todd: He sounds a nice man, your Dad. I never knew mine. All we've got to teach us is Duployen.

Danny: Funny name.

Todd: Funny man. Have you seen him, Michael?

Molloy: I've made noises for him. Gives me the creeps.

Todd: Me too ...

Slidey: *(Having crept up behind them)* Todd! Is that you?

In the shadows at the back SLIDEY appears, returning from a drinking bout with a couple of CARRIERS. The three of them spot the noise of the three boys and creep downstage.

Todd: ... and his sister, old Weeping Willow, used to write letters to him, care of The Dramatic Line, New York - that's the firm who own this shipping line - they'd ask me to run to the packing office with the letters. There's something

really fishy there ...

Slidey: Todd! Is that you?

Todd: *(Jumps. Looks round and sees who it is)* Sssshh!

Slidey: Don't you "ssshussh" me, runt. What are you up to?

Molloy: We're talking, that's all. Hold your peace.

Slidey: Jus' you watch your mouth, Murphy, 'nless you want my boot in it. Come on Todd! *(He kicks him)*

Todd: *(Lashing back)* Get out, Slidey.

Carrier 1: Wheyhey! The animal bites, eh?

Carrier 2: Vicious little bleeder. *(They nudge him)*

Todd: And you lay off too.

Slidey: Right, lads ...

And they lay into him. MOLLOY goes to TODD's rescue. Between the three villains, they make sure the whole wharf is up and fighting within seconds. MOLLOY and SLIDEY are tussling and TODD joins in.

At that moment, BOWLINGGREEN, having been woken up, produces a flintlock pistol which he proceeds to point in the air and blast off, bringing everything to a dead halt.

Bowling: Lights! Give me some lights!

LUCAS and PITT rush downstage with two lanterns and hold them over the grappling bodies of TODD and SLIDEY.

Molloy: *(Whispering)* Adam! Leave it.

Bowling: Away, child. Now, who do we have here? *(He separates them. SLIDEY moves to one side leaving TODD, alone)* Todd! You again!

Molloy: You mustn't blame him, sir. It wasn't ...

Bowling: Silence, boy ...

Miss Rye: Michael, come here. *(MOLLOY doesn't)*

Slidey: *(Brushing himself down)* He just flew at me sir. Found him going through my pockets!

Todd: Slidey ...

Bowling: Hold your tongue! Todd. This is the last straw. I warn you and warn you again; now I shall warn you no more. Fetch his baggage, Slidey. *(BOWLINGGREEN moves towards the boy)*

Slidey: Yes, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: Todd. You can't act. You can't behave and you clearly can't be trusted to control yourself. We have no need of your kind. *(SLIDEY arrives with the baggage).*

Slidey: His bag, sir.

Bowling: *(Giving him his bag)* There is your baggage. There is a sovereign, and there - *(he points)* is the Waterloo Road.

A pause. TODD looks at him in silence. There is a breathless atmosphere. TODD slowly takes the proffered sovereign, then his baggage, pauses, then turns and walks away. LUCAS, as he passes him, calls after him: Chin up, Toddy. MOLLOY, next to him, smashes his Plaster bust onto the floor. TODD goes off into the night. The lights fade.

INTERLUDE

[MUSIC CUE No 8 - Instrumental].

The lights come up on the wharf the next morning.

It is a bright one. Breakfast is cooking; coffee is brewing. Carriers are mingling with sailors who are carrying what is evidently cargo, thus suggesting that the boat has now come in. The DOYLE family troupes in, helping WILLIAM. They have been for a medical inspection. They are preceded by an official of The Dramatic Line. He consults a list.

Official: Miss Amanda Rye, and seven children.

Miss Rye: *(Appearing)* Right here.

Official: To the government Doctor's Office, right along there. Have your medical papers ready. *(He goes to talk with MRS DUPLOYEN as the RAGGED BOYS go)*

Danny: *(Sitting down)* Whoever would have thought that we'd be here in Liverpool, waiting to go to America?

Mary: To join Father?

Patrick: It was always a dream, but here we are.

Christie: There's a long way to go yet. The whole Atlantic Ocean to cross.

Bridget: I say it's all in the hands of God.

Patrick: Bravo. And I say it's all in the hands of St Patrick, which is much the same. He'll see us across all right. I didn't bring the rosary for nothing. Got the rosary, William?

William: I'm saying a few now.

Patrick: You hang onto it boy. It's seen us all right so far.

Mary: There's that man. *(She has spotted BOWLINGREEN)*

Christie: Pompous puff-guts. Trouble is, he's Irish. If he was English, I could hate him.

Danny: Take no notice of him; he's all noise and wind.

Christie: The human fart!

Bridget: Christie! That'll do! *(But she's smiling)*

Patrick: I can't say I mind the smell of that coffee either.

William: Me too.

Bridget: There's someone who sounds better! And they passed you on the medical.

William: They only looked at my tongue.

BOWLINGREEN wanders tentatively over.

Bowling: Good morning to you. *(No reply)* You're all fit and ready for sailing are you? *(Silence)* I should apologise about all the noise and disturbance last night. Spirits were high you understand. Will you join us in a mug of coffee? Lucas. Some mugs over here.

Danny: What happened to the boy?

Bowling: *(Thrown)* What boy?

Danny: The boy you dismissed.

Bowling: Oh, Todd! Foolish fellow.

LUCAS arrives with some mugs.

Danny: He didn't do anything.

Bowling: He's a troublemaker. *(Silence)* He's old enough to look after himself. And besides I gave him a sovereign.

LUCAS distributes the coffee. BOWLINGREEN notices the arrival of an expensively dressed stranger who is picking his way across the wharf, towards the embarkation point.

Bowling: They won't let you aboard yet, sir, if that's what you're after.

Tapscott: I'm perfectly capable of looking after myself, sir. Are these all your children?

Bowling: Good heavens, no!

Tapscott: Well, who are you to give orders, sir.

Bowling: I'm not giving orders, merely stating facts. No one aboard till all the cargo is safely stored, and my busts aren't on yet.

Tapscott: I've no need of your advice; thank you all the same. Excuse me.

He moves on, only to come face to face with DUPLOYEN who is rapidly wiping his face clean of shaving soap.

Tapscott: Excuse me, sir.

Duployen: *(Whispers)* Tapscott!

Tapscott: Who called?

Duployen: Tapscott!

Tapscott: Duployen! What are you doing here?

Duployen: Sailing on your boat. And you?

Tapscott: I had to be in England for ... urgent business. A healthy looking passenger cargo here ...

Duployen: *(Quickly; seeing BOWLINGREEN approaching curiously)* Oh, Bowlinggreen, meet an old colleague of mine, William Tapscott, owner of The Dramatic Line Shipping Company.

Bowling: The owner, by God. An honour, sir! An honour. And to think that we are sailing on "The Garrick". A felicitous name! Fitzgammon Bowlinggreen, sir,

your servant. Have a mug of coffee.

Duploien: Mr Bowlinggreen has charge of the ... er ... the acting troupe of which I ...

Tapscott: So these ARE your children.

Bowling: Not all of them sir. Just eleven of them; players, sir.

Tapscott: Splendid. Well, welcome aboard "The Garrick" and may America serve you well. Ours is a flourishing country which needs enterprise such as yours, Mr Bowlinggreen, and youth such as theirs to help it on its way.

Bowling: You like the theatre, Mr Tapscott, sir?

Tapscott: I'm not averse to a little melodrama now and again.

Bowling: Our speciality, sir. May I beg to offer you that very thing, sir, as soon as we can prepare it, for your express entertainment on the journey over.

Duploien: (*Angry*) Oh, really, Bowlinggreen!

Tapscott: On the journey?

Bowling: And why not, sir. Forty days or so is a long time for a life on the ocean wave. It may take a few days or a week to prepare, but it'll help us to pass the time below decks. I've just the thing. We'll celebrate the crossing of the Equator with it.

Tapscott: (*Amazed*) The Equator!

Bowling: Just the thing!

Tapscott: (*Amused*) That would be a rare pleasure indeed, Mr .. er ..

Bowling: Bowlinggreen, Mr Tapscott, sir. Fitzgammon Bowlinggreen.

Tapscott: Indeed? Now, if you'll excuse me. (*He moves off*) Oh, Henry, dine with me this evening. My cabin at five thirty.

Duploien: Very well.

Tapscott: (*To BOWLINGGREEN, who's hovering*) And you must dine with me too, sir.

Bowling: An honour. Of course I will. Five thirty, you said ...

Tapscott: Tomorrow, perhaps.

Bowling: Oh, tomorrow, it is - and tomorrow and tomorrow ...

Tapscott: Um ... just tomorrow, eh?

Bowling: Act five, Scene five ...

Tapscott: (*He nods to BOWLINGGREEN as he moves off and mutters to DUPLOYEN*) The man's mad!

Bowling: Till tomorrow, Mr Tapscott, sir. (*He watches him go*) A fine figure of a man, Duploien.

Duploien: (*Sinister*) Quite so.

Prudence: Henry!

Duploien: Ah, Prudence.

Prudence: (*With a pile of papers*) The tickets. There's one spare.

Duploien: What? (*They talk together*)

Bowling: (*Turning to the RAGGED BOYS who are filing back*) A clean bill of health, lads, eh? All fit?

Daniel: Well, if you call just opening your gob and sticking your tongue out at someone bein' fit - then we're all in good shape.

Walters: When are you fellows being done?

Bowling: No need for us to be "done" my boy. Only emigrees need clearing. We're all coming back.

Molloy: (*Who has joined DANNY*) How's William?

Danny: Bearing up. He passed the medical check.

Bridget: It's not infectious, you see.

Molloy: Well done, William.

Duployn: Bowlinggreen. What's this I hear about us being one short?

Bowling: Correct. Todd was dismissed last night for gross misbehaviour and we're best rid of him. Slidey, get those crates ready to load will you.

Carrier: (*Struggling past with a large heavy crate*) Make way.

1st Mate: (*It appears to be his crate*) Careful with it, damn your squint eyes. Put it in the steerage, 'tween-decks. (*He shouts to everyone*) Stir your stumps. We'll be boarding passengers in two minutes.

Bowling: One moment, my man. I have a consignment of crates to loaded first.

1st Mate: Don't you "my man" me, Spindleshanks. And I don't have no instructions about any crates so you'll have to load 'em yourself. Find space where you can.

2nd Mate: Try the life boats. Plenty of room in them.

Bowling: You are addressing a cabin-passenger and a personal friend of the owner...

1st Mate: And you're addressing the First Mate of this slave-ship, Mister, and if you want a reply it'll cost you money, so I'd plan on shiftin' your soddin' crates yourself. Right? (*He moves on*) Stand by to board.

Bowling: Base fellow! Slidey! Busts first. Women and children to follow! Come gentlemen!

BOWLINGGREEN strides forward. The bustle of boarding starts and the Second Mate calls out the names of the passengers. They board as they are called.
Play music! [**MUSIC CUE No 9**]

Music strikes up as the emigrees board the ship.

Miss Rye: Now stay together boys, please. Michael Molloy - come here!

Archard: Mr Bowlinggreen?

Bowling: Yes, Archard?

Archard: I'm feeling seasick.

Prudence: Oh, don't be stupid, child!

BOWLINGGREEN stage manages things.

One child sings a verse of the song, then everyone slowly joins in.

Tom: *So up my lads and follow, And sail upon the seas*

Group: *To lands of good and plenty Where freedom's truly free.*

Tom: *The wind is fairly blowing And calling me to ride
To Americay so far away
A-sailing on the tide.*

Full: *So up my lads and follow... ..freedom's trult free.*

Solo (Irish): *So bring your sons and daughters,
Your wives are welcome too
To one and all the waters call
"Come ride upon the blue".*

Full: *So up my lads and follow... ..freedom's truly free.*

Group: *Here's to the last of England,
I'll see my home no more,
Come join the queue for life anew
Upon that foreign shore.*

Full: *So up my lads and follow... ..freedom's truly free.
The wind is up and singing, The flags and spirits fly;
We're outward bound, oh happy sound To hear the sailors cry.*

Full: *So up my lads and follow... ..freedom's truly free.*

While the song is progressing, the OFFICIAL appears at the top of the gang-plank and, reading from his list, shouts out the names of the ticket-holders. On hearing their names, the emigrants identify themselves and go aboard.

Official: *Amelia Rye? ... Stand you by.*

Joseph Brown? ... Come down.

Samuel Scroggs? ... Join the dogs.

*Adam Todd? ... (There is no identifying cry) Adam Todd? ... Stand and nod ...
(Still no Todd. He shouts back to those on deck) No Adam Todd, strike him
off.*

Michael Molloy? ... Up my boy.

Daniel Doyle? ... Leave the soil.

Patrick Doyle? ... Leave the soil.

And so the boarding goes on.

As the quayside slowly empties, the lights fade.

*Noticeable, standing apart and watching quietly are HENRY and PRUDENCE
DUPLOYEN.*

Fade to black out.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

Steerage of THE GARRICK. It is very crowded and gloomy. The passengers, namely all those we saw in Act One, except the adults, are sorting out their "accommodation" which is simply a series of double banked berths, six foot by six foot, four to a berth! There is a central aisle of about twelve feet. This runs the length of the ship. We see about six berths.

The DOYLES have given over their top berth to WILLIAM. The RAGGED BOYS are off exploring; the ACTORS and MUSICIANS are in full flight, cheering themselves up with a jig [MUSIC CUE No 10]. Their equipment is spread everywhere.

PATRICK is trying to get WILLIAM up into the top berth. BRIDGET is shifting luggage out of the way and trying to avoid the dancers. One of the dancers, BELINDA, spins into BRIDGET, who bumps into PATRICK who all but drops WILLIAM.

Mary: *(Shouts)* Be careful, can't you?

Belinda: Make room. Make room.

Mary: *(Losing control)* For God's sake, stop, will you? *(She pushes BELINDA)*

Belinda: *(Lashing back)* Keep your lousy Irish hands off me, will you.

Mary: You arrogant bitch ... *(She piles in)* selfish ... thoughtless ... inconsiderate ...
A real free-for-all starts. The music grinds to a halt. PATRICK, helped by some of the actors, parts them.

Mary: *(As she is pulled away)* I could kill her ...

Onwhyn: *(Examining BELINDA's scratched face)* Look what she's done to Belinda!

Woodrow: *(To BELINDA)* We were only dancing Irish!

Herring: Just a bit of entertainment.

Mary: Entertainment? This is no playhouse, for God's sake. Do you people think that everyone is an audience clamouring for their deprived spirits to be raised by your "fine performances"?

(There is a stunned silence)

You and I and my family are together for some forty days, may the Lord help us, this is to be our home. Ours! We have paid for it, just as you have done. Don't you ever give a thought to those around you? We have had our fill of being squashed into a corner and trodden on. We spent our last night in our homeland huddled like beasts in a filthy ditch; six of us, sharing one blanket; but I'd rather be there than caged up inside here in this nest of leaping, squalling devils.

(A pause. She turns to the family)

How is he, Danny?

Danny: Not so bad. Not so bad, are we Willy? (*WILLIAM coughs*)

Lucas: Come on, everyone. Let's give them some air. You all right, Belinda?

Belinda: (*Nursing her face*) Bitch.

Onwhyn: Air! That's rich. They've locked it all out.

The RAGGED BOYS are returning from along the deck.

Walters: There must be a thousand people down here!

Daniel: You should smell it further along.

Herring: I can smell it here, thanks!

Samuel: It's like Smithfield market.

Brown: Only most of them are bloody Irish.

Patrick: What was that?

Brown: You heard, Paddy. Bloody Irish I said.

Lucas: Oh, keep it calm, will you? ...

But WALTERS has found his berth covered with actors' gear.

Walters: Hey! What's all this? (*He throws the gear off*) Stick to your own patch can't you? Lousy actors.

Patrick: They're spreading everywhere, like creepers!

Danny: Calm yourself, Patrick.

Samuel: Honest to God; look at this. Four to a bleedin' berth. "Come to America for a fine new life" they says, - an' then stuffs you into a bunk with Joseph Brown, the louse-ridden Scouse so you get ate to death before you're half way there, Mattheson Digges, who's screwy and your smelly little brother who pisses the bed. It's worse than the work'us.

Walters: It's all these ruddy boxes and crates.

The SECOND MATE enters with a large steaming saucepan and a ladle. SLIDEY is with him, chewing on an apple.

Slidey: Animal feedin' time.

2nd Mate: Right. Bring out your dead. That's all this stuff's fit for.

They cluster round with their tin mugs. SLIDEY distributes.

Samuel: (*Looking into the saucepan*) Good God. Who did that?

2nd Mate: Moan away, son. Just wait till we're clear of the headland. You'll all be at it.

Christie: (*Strolling over*) Do we all get some of this stuff?

Lucas: 'Course you do, Christie boy. It's part of the ticket. Two meals a day.

Samuel: Is this a meal?

2nd Mate: It's all you're getting, son - an' it's the same stuff as you'll get tomorrow; and the day after that and the day after that so you'd better get used to it. (*He has poured the ration for the area into the communal pan and he moves on down the ship*) Right. Bring out your dead.

Slidey: Where's your mugs?

Christie: What mugs?

Mary: (*Who's joined him*) We had them all stolen.

Christie: We'd everything stolen.

Molloy: Here, Christie, use these. (*Holds up some stage goblets*)

Pitt: Hey, where d'you get those from?

Molloy: Taking up valuable space in a box where I'm supposed to be sleeping!

Pitt: Those are our stage properties. Leave them alone.

Lucas: Oh, have a thought, Pitt. They're more use to them than just sitting in a box.

Mary: (*Simply*) We'd be very grateful.

PITT nods. MOLLOY hands them over to CHRISTIE and MARY.

Slidey: (*Filling them*) Only don't blame me, Pitt, if Bowlinggreen finds out.

Molloy: Oh no! We mustn't have friend Slidey being seen to slip from the straight and narrow, must we now?

SLIDEY glowers at MOLLOY. There is a gasp from CATHERINE.

Catherine: (*Who has just sipped her first mouthful*) Ugh! Where did this stuff come from. It's foul.

Daniel: Fresh from the Captain's piss-pot, sister. Classy stuff. Count yourself lucky! Your health! (*He empties his mug*)

Alfred: Oh, God! (*He thinks about being sick again*)

Catherine: (*Tartly*) Well, I'm glad I brought some apples; that's all I can say.

Samuel: Aren't we all, darlin'? 'Ere you are, Danny, catch!

SAMUEL has just "lifted" two of her apples, tosses one over to DANIEL.

Daniel: Frightfully thoughtful. (*He's imitating her*) Apples, lovely apples. Penny a pound.

Catherine: Hey! Give them back!

Daniel: Taste the lady's pippins; sweet and juicy.

LUCAS moves in and catches the apples out of the air and gives them back to the flustering but helpless CATHERINE.

Fanny: Just ignore him, Catherine. Foul-mouthed bastard.

BOWLINGGREEN appears from further along the deck.

Bowling: Now then, how's life in the steerage class? There's certainly no lack of company along there. Do I take it everybody's happy? (*ARCHARD is sick again*) Ah! A life on the ocean wave! By the Lord it's hot down here! "Cabin'd, cribb'd, confined" as the great man says. I'm told it'll be a fairly smooth passage if the present weather holds. How's the soup? (*He tastes it. ARCHARD is sick again*) That's a fair comment, by God! Where's the Professor? He was with me? (*DUPLOYEN enters*) Hold your nose, Professor, the stink's something awful.

Duploeyn: (*Wincing*) I see what you mean, Bowlinggreen. We must, on all accounts, keep them healthy.

Bowling: Pitt, we'll have to break into the food-stores for breakfast I think.

Onwhyn: Thank God for that.

Duployen: I'll go and organise some fresh air.

*But as he moves towards the hatchway, it is opened. Daylight and fresh air flood in.
There is a gasp of relief.*

1st Mate: (*Appearing*) Right. Everybody in this section on deck for a breather. See the last of England. Come on, move it - and make use of the water closet while you're up there. It's your last chance before 6.30 tomorrow morning.

Samuel: It's all right, Daniel. You can use the bed!

Daniel: Shut up, Sam!

Bowling: Hold! (*Everybody stops*) Before you all go, a brief announcement. The owner of this vessel, William Tapscott Esquire has commanded a performance by our company here on board to entertain him on the long voyage. This is, of course, a great honour. We have a week to prepare it and you will all be needed - including Miss Rye's company, who will make excellent nigger minstrels! (*Roars of laughter*) - and of course, Danny will sing for us.

Danny: No he won't.

Bowling: I think he might - if there's food for the family in it.

Danny: The Doyles can survive, Mr Bowlinggreen, without cheapening themselves.

Bowling: It's not slavery you're selling yourselves into, for heaven's sake - is it Professor?

Duployen: (*After a short, awkward pause*) Time for fresh air, I think.

1st Mate: Have you done, sir?

Bowling: Yes, for the moment, I've done.

1st Mate: All on deck then. Come on everybody - you too little lady. (*He slaps BELINDA on the backside*)

Belinda: Do you mind?

1st Mate: Today, I said. Not the week after next. Move along - (*as he goes*) - if you're going to be sick, over the side, son ...

Down below, DUPLOYEN is hovering in the shadows. He does not notice that DANNY, just as he is going up the ladder, hears WILLIAM call for him, and he clambers up into the bunk next to him. DUPLOYEN checks that the coast is clear, then gives what appears to be a code word.

Duployen: Coast clear.

Tapscott: (*Appearing from the shadows*) All gone?

Duployen: All gone.

Tapscott: Good. We'd better be quick. How lies the land?

Duployen: Better than we could ever dream. Ten healthy children from the Academy. It would have been eleven if that pompous ass Bowlinggreen hadn't

dismissed one of them.

Tapscott: Why?

Duployn: It couldn't be avoided. A pity. He was a fine fit specimen, but he kept getting in Bowlinggreen's way!

Tapscott: Rather hard to keep out of his way, I'd say!

Duployn: Exactly! The prospects are good though. As well as my ten, there are seven strapping Ragged Schoolboys who are putty in my hands, though their chaperone has to be watched. But if we can get the children they'll be worth a good five hundred dollars apiece.

Tapscott: But the woman's a problem.

Duployn: She will have to go the same way as Bowlinggreen. It's dreadful the number of people that disappear overboard during storms these days - and their bodies are never found.

Tapscott: We must pray for the weather to break. There'll be no trouble disposing of the children. New York is hungry for cheap labour. I've even had some requests for replacements - many of them sadly don't last too long when they're in the sort of employment we find.

Duployn: "Sadly?" There's no place for sadness in this business, Tapscott. Feelings don't count.

Tapscott: Well, sometimes I confess it's hard to think of the fate that awaits them.

Duployn: Don't think, Tapscott. It solves a lot of problems.

Suddenly DANNY, who has been listening aghast to all this, knocks something. Both men spin round.

Tapscott: What was that?

At this moment the FIRST and SECOND MATES appear, one with a long pole with a savage spike on the end; the other with a hammer.

Tapscott: What do you want?

1st Mate: Oh, excuse us, Mr Tapscott. Routine search for stowaways, sir.

Tapscott: They must be pretty foolish to stowaway on this ship!

Duployn: (*Looking at their "weapons"*) Those look very effective!

2nd Mate: Not much gets past them, sir. Excuse us.

They prod around. The SECOND MATE bashes loudly on many of the boxes, while the FIRST MATE prods into corners with the spike. He is just getting to DANNY's berth when the FIRST MATE tips over a crate. The lid spills open and with a cry, ADAM TODD rolls out of it.

Tapscott: What's that?

2nd Mate: Something in this barrel.

Duployn: (*Panic*) Someone listening to us?

1st Mate: Get it out.

2nd Mate: It's a boy. Out you come. (*He heaves TODD out of the barrel*)

Todd: God. I feel sick. *(He can hardly stand)*

2nd Mate: Stand up straight. *(He jerks him by the neck)*

Duployen: *(Recognising him)* Todd!

Todd: You filthy cheat, Duployen ...

Duployen: Todd! You little rat ...

Todd: *(Wrenching himself from the grasp of the SECOND MATE)* Let me go ...
(But he runs into the arms of the FIRST MATE)

Tapscott: You know this child?

Duployen: I'm afraid so. What did you hear, Todd?

Todd: Enough, you bastards. I heard quite enough, and I'm not going ...

Duployen: Keep your voice down, child.

Todd: Oh! Silence in court! The cat's ... I'll not keep my voice down ... I'll tell them ... just you wait ... you're not selling me or anyone else ...

Duployen: *(Moves in on him and shouts over his voice)* You will keep your voice down ... if you won't, I shall silence it for you ... once and for all.

Tapscott: *(When he sees that DUPLOYEN is strangling TODD)* Duployen! For God's sake! No ...

But he is too late. DUPLOYEN is still shouting.

Duployen: That should keep you quiet. Interfering snake! Children! Always underfoot; eavesdropping; listening; laughing ... that should stop it.

The boy is dead.

He turns to TAPSCOTT who turns away, holding his head.

Duployen: *(Seeing the two SAILORS watching)* Gentlemen, a sovereign a piece for your promise of silence. *(They take the money)* And it's a promise I'd keep if you want to see America.

1st Mate: That's two sovereigns he's been worth to me on this trip.

2nd Mate: Two?

1st Mate: Poor little bleeder paid me a sovereign to smuggle him on board. *(They laugh)*

Tapscott: Sssh! *(The rabble are returning. BOWLINGREEN is chattering away about the entertainment. He sees the two men, sees the body, and rushes down)*

Bowling: Who on earth is that?

Duployen: Ah, Mr Bowlingreen; I have some very sad news for you all. *(By now everyone is still and listening)* Young Adam Todd, who was quite correctly expelled from The Company for gross misbehaviour, has, I am afraid, come to a sad end. He was foolish enough to stowaway on board this ship, - he paid a sovereign to be carried aboard, hidden in this box - and he has, I am afraid, suffered most terribly for his stupidity. We found him here, just now, dead, presumably from asphyxiation. This occurs when the lungs are not given

sufficient oxygen and there is no possibility of discharging the carbon dioxide, so death was inevitable. Let this be a moral lesson to you all.

Tapscott: He will, of course, have a burial at sea. This will be done immediately to avoid any undue grief. Come Duployen.

Duployen: Take him away please. *(They go)*

Bowling: A moment please ... a moment of silent respect.

Everyone bows their heads. DANNY jumps down from his berth. With deliberation he starts to sing a lament.

[MUSIC CUE NO 11] "ALL THINGS MORTAL"

Danny: *Though all things mortal must come to nothing,
How sad the soul that leaves the world too soon,
Though every flower must have its fading,
How sad the flower cut down in bloom.
Alas the lonely who die in solitude,
Alas the innocent who die in vain:
We pray our grief may be wash'd away
With joy in heaven when we meet again.*

Bowling: We will all attend the service. Lead on, Pitt.

The body is carried out.

The children move out slowly. BOWLINGGREEN sits with his head in his hands.

Danny: Bridget, will you all go too?

Bridget: Of course we will.

Danny: And Michael, you all too.

There is a strange authority about DANNY's words which demand attention.

Christie: William had better ...

Danny: I'll look after Willie. Off you go.

The stage empties, except for BOWLINGGREEN and DANNY.

Danny: *(Bracing himself)* Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: *(Half hearing)* What? *(Looks up)* Oh, Doyle. Not now, please. I have to think. God forgive me. Poor Todd. If only I hadn't been so rash. My temper ... ah! But it's no use now; what is done cannot be undone.

Danny: It wasn't entirely your fault, sir.

Bowling: Of course it was. Mine alone.

Danny: Adam Todd was murdered.

Bowling: I know it. And I am the murderer.

Danny: Your Professor is the murderer.

Bowling: Duployen? *(He looks at DANNY. DANNY nods, silently)* What do you mean?

Danny: What I say.

Bowling: You're insane.

Danny: Professor Duployen strangled Todd with his own hands while Mr Tapscott stood by and watched.

Bowling: What?

Danny: They found him hiding in the crate. I saw it all happen - though they don't know that.

Bowling: Why in heaven's name didn't you stop them?

Danny: Me against those two brutes? And anyway, it all happened so quickly ...

Bowling: But why should Duployen want to murder Todd? This is absurd!

Danny: Because Todd had overheard the two of them talking while hidden in the crate.

Bowling: Overheard what?

Danny: They are in league, those two. They and the devil. They have a business deal concerning your children and any others they can lay their filthy hands on.

Bowling: A deal?

Danny: They're out to sell the lot of them in America for cheap labour.

Bowling: (*Amazed*) Is this true?

Danny: On my holy oath. (*A pause*) And Willie saw it too.

William: I did that.

Bowling: If this is true ... amazing ... selling them for slavery .. how dreadful. (*He is genuinely overcome with grief*) And all this has been going on under my very eyes ... and I'd no idea. Oh, Danny ... you're making me a wiser man. Tapscott too?

Danny: (*After a short pause*) Why did you do it?

Bowling: Do what?

Danny: Send Todd out into the night? (*No reply*) What did you have against him?

Bowling: (*After a long pause, says, with difficulty*) His mother was ... my wife.

Danny: (*Stunned*) You were his father?

Bowling: (*Shaking his head*) His father was a pit-musician. A common drummer. Probably still is. But his mother was ... once ... my wife.

Danny: (*Simply*) She left you?

Bowling: She left me. Ten years I hunted for her, and finally traced her child to a school in ... Dover.

Danny: He was a gentle boy.

Bowling: (*Almost in tears*) He was that, God rest his soul. He'd all her features ... I couldn't bear to look at him, you see ...

Danny: (*Quietly*) I'm sorry, sir.

Bowling: (*Suddenly flaring up*) And those fiends would have sold him into slavery? He calls himself a ship-owner?

Danny: Well, that's no Professor of Language or whatever. Just another white

slave-trader.

Bowling: They must be exposed ...

Danny: They planned to hand the lot over to be sold into service. Ship-boys I suppose.

Bowling: But how ...

Danny: On coffin ships or taken off to slave on farms away from the cities where they're never heard of again ...

Bowling: There's no Court of Law on a ship.

Danny: There's enough of us to turn on them.

Bowling: Impossible. The whole crew are in Tapscott's employ. They're probably all in on the game.

William: Sounds like one of your plays, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: It does that, William! *(He smiles at the suggestion - then is struck by a thought)* Good God! ... Like one of my plays, he said - and by heaven, it is!

Danny: Mr Bowlinggreen ...

Bowling: *(Oblivious of DANNY's voice)* Hamlet, by God ... *(he is thumbing frantically through a copy of Hamlet)* Here it is. "I have heard that guilty creatures sitting at a play have, by the very cunning of the scene, been struck so to the soul that presently they have proclaimed their malefactions!" That's it, dammit!

Danny: Mr Bowlinggreen ...

Bowling: That's it. "The play's the thing wherein to catch the conscience of the King"!

Danny: I've heard of blarney, but this is beyond me ... what are you blathering on about?

Bowling: *(Determined now)* Danny, listen now. We have no means of bringing those two rogues to justice on their own ship except by self-accusation. Are you with me? ... They must accuse themselves and hopefully punish themselves as well. "The play's the thing" - do you follow?

Danny: The entertainment?

Bowling: That's it. We mirror their hideous crime in an play of our own devising, and performed by the very children they are deceiving.

Danny: I'm beginning to understand you, sir.

Bowling: You should do, Danny. You're Irish.

Danny: What can I do?

Bowling: What can you do? I'll tell you. You are going to sing. You're going to sing a song like you've never sung in your life before. You'll drown the stage with tears, by my life.

There is a dull sound of a gun being fired up on the deck. It is followed by a splash as TODD's body is buried. The three of them cross themselves.

BOWLINGGREEN smiles to himself.

You'll drown the stage with tears!

The lights fade to a blackout. [MUSIC CUE No 12].

ACT II - SCENE II

A scene of lethargic activity. It is very hot. Most of the children are "blacked up", and in costume. Others are preparing. WILLIAM is downstage, having his face washed by MARY. BRIDGET is singing to him.

[MUSIC CUE No. 13] "MARY'S SONG"

Mary: *It was two months ago when my father did say
"Oh Mary, dear Mary, you must go away
To the fair land of promise where the stars always shine,
And leave your dear country and your true love behind."
On a ship called 'The Garrick' we all sailed away
On a bright summer's morning to Americay.
Her banners were all flying as she sailed by Culmore.
So adieu my dear country, I may see you no more.*

Bowling: *(Who has appeared and has been listening)* You never stop singing, you Doyles - and I hope you never will. *(The musician slinks off)* Aren't you hot, William?

William: No.

Bowling: We're feeling better, clearly.

William: Well, I am. Can't answer for you.

Mary: William! *(Bowlinggreen laughs)*

Daniel: Well, I'm flippin' hot. It's like an oven down here.

Christie: Funny to complain! I often wondered what it would be like to freeze to death.

Daniel: Now here you are, drownin' in your own sweat.

Tindell: It's called stewin' in your own juice. Makes you pong!

Patrick: Hey, Christie! What's all this talk of freezing to death?

Bridget: Well said, Patrick. It'll take a good deal more than a spot of cold to finish the Doyles off, won't it, William?

William: Well, I'M going to America to see Father.

Mary: That's what I call fighting talk, William. No, the Doyles will get there, even if no-one else does.

Bowling: That's right, Mary. Survivors, we Irish. Now, enough of this banter! Come along, we're work to do. Five seats, it is, Patrick Doyle - the Professor and his good wife, Miss Rye, our American friend and me good self. How's life, Alfred?

Alfred: Bloody awful. (*He's still feeling seasick*)

Slidey: (*Who is ailing too*) Can't someone stop this swell?

Bowling: Ah, Slidey. There comes a tide in the affairs of men - as the good book says.

Digges: I can smell a change in the air.

Tindell: That's not all you can smell!

Bowling: (*Ignoring TINDELL*) I hope you're right, dear boy. We could all do with a change in the weather. A week of nothing but sweltering heat and a gentle swell is bad for the bowels. (*Suddenly trying to brighten things up, rubbing his hands together*) However, we've not been rehearsing like lunatics for nothing, so come on, stir your stumps and we'll all feel better. Remember, the play's the thing. Come along.

Onwhyn: Do we really have to, Mr B?

Bowling: Have to what?

Onwhyn: Well, all this burnt cork. It's hot enough as it is ... (*He means the black negro make-up*)

Bowling: Off with your namby-pamby complaining. Get on with the job. Ah, Miss Rye! You've come to wish us luck.

Miss Rye: How's life in Drury Lane?

Samuel: Stinking hot.

Miss Rye: Samuel Scroggs! Wash your face at once. It's filthy!

Bowling: It's legal, Miss Rye!

The SECOND MATE has appeared.

2nd Mate: Mr Bowlinggreen?

Bowling: What?

2nd Mate: Mr Tapscott's compliments, but there's been a forecast for a severe change in the weather, and he's afraid he ...

Bowling: Compliments be damned. He shan't be afraid of anything. He requested this entertainment, and he shall darned well have it ...

2nd Mate: (*No longer polite*) Well, you can tell him yourself.

Bowling: Which is precisely what I intend to do, so stop gibbering man, and get out of me way. (*He strides towards the stairs*) Molloy! Musicians! Patrick! Chairs. Lucas! Actors. I'll be right back.

And he has gone.

Herring: I dunno what's come over him.

Samuel: Bloody Irish loony.

Onwhyn: Why's he so fanatical about this performance?

Rawlings: He's even been writing negro spirituals!

Danny: I don't think you realise what this means to him. It's like his first engagement in America. It could be important for yourselves too.

Samuel: You've changed your tune, Doyle.

Danny: Changed my tune? You could say that!

Molloy: Come on; let's be having everyone ready up here.

Onwhyn: God! You Irish!

Walters: Come on, Onwhyn. I'll black yours if you'll black mine!

Pitt: Shove off, chimney chops!

There is a cry from the top of the ladder.

Bowling: Action stations! (*He enters with TAPSCOTT following, a little apprehensive*) A wise change of mind, sir, to be sure. There'd have been mutiny in the steerage had you not come. Isn't that right, children?

Tapscott: Mutiny? Come now.

Bowling: They have been working very hard for you, Mr Tapscott. Clearly you have little understanding of children, sir ...

Tapscott: (*Sharply*) I beg your pardon ...

Bowling: (*Riding over him*) Come, Professor, Miss Rye, Mrs Duployen (*he ushers them over to the seats*) The seats of honour ...

Duployen: Really, Bowlinggreen! I'd no idea you were serious when you suggested this.

Bowling: Oh, never more serious, Professor. You mark my words. Sorry it's so hot and unpleasant down here.

Prudence: It's unbearable.

Bowling: The heat or the smell, ma'am?

Tapscott: Can we get on?

Bowling: (*Ignoring him*) I hear that the weather is due for a change.

Miss Rye: Overdue, I'd say.

Tapscott: Severe gales forecast.

Bowling: Ah, a turn for the worse. Well, it's an ill wind, as they say ...

Lucas: (*Appears through the curtain*) All set back here, Mr B.

Tapscott: What do you have in store for us?

Bowling: Just a brief melodrama and a little music. Nothing of great substance.

Miss Rye: A melodrama?

Duployen: One of your works, Bowlinggreen?

Bowling: A little thing, Professor, but mine own.

Prudence: It won't be long, will it?

Bowling: It would have been longer, had we still had Adam Todd here to play his banjo ... (*he pauses slightly*) ... but since I dismissed him ...

Tapscott: Come now, Bowlinggreen.

A pause.

Prudence: That's not nice to bring up now.

Bowling: Of course, Mrs Duployen. How right you are. It's not nice at all. (*She*

fans herself violently) Come now. Let's get this "entertainment" over with.
Play music.

There is a drum roll. [MUSIC CUE NO 14]. To great applause, SCROGGS steps up onto the platform and clears his throat.

Scroggs: O for a muse of fire that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention.
But pardon, gentles all - can this cockpit hold
The wasty Afric plains - or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very ships
That do sail the southern seas.
Think, when we talk of slaves, that you see them,
Toiling in the heat and stinking air,
And praying to the God of Freedom as they strive
To those who know not servitude, we pray,
Gently to hear, wisely to judge our play.

Exit.

The drum rolls again. There is a ripple of applause.

Tapscott: You wrote that, Bowlinggreen?

Bowling: With a little help from The Bard!

Miss Rye: Where there's a will, there's a way!

There is polite laughter. It is silenced by CHRISTIE as the "curtains" on the rough stage open.

Christie: Sssshhh!

A boy, (DANIEL) stands up and displays a board saying "The Quayside. Jamestown. Jamaica."

[MUSIC CUE NO 15] "ALLELUJAH"

The "curtain" opens to reveal all the children blacked up as negro slaves. They are singing joyfully of the fact that they have been freed.

FATHER HAGGERTY (Michael Molloy) is there, enjoying the singing.

Solo: *We's all agoin' to de promis'd lan'
Lord in de heb'n gonna len' his han'
Take all my brudders an' my sisters too
We can trust de Lord 'cos de Lord is true
Chillun crossin ober*

Chorus: *We's all agoin' to de promis'd lan'
Allelu
Oh len' his han'
Take all my brudders
Yes Lord
Trust de Lord*

Allelu, allelu.

*Chillun ... (interruption)**

**As the music finishes, HENRY DUCROW, Plantation owner and slave-trader (ALFRED ARCHARD) appears and yells:*

Ducrow: Enough of zat confounded caterwhauling. I may ‘ave given you your freedom, but zat is no excuse for all zis jollity. Now get yourselves ready to board zat boat to New York.

Haggerty: Oh, by St Patrick, St Bridget and all the Saints, let them sing!

Mary: *(Delighted at MOLLOY’s imitation of BOWLINGREEN and laughing along with all the others)* He’s just like you, Mr Bowlinggreen!

Christie: Only not so fat! *(More laughter)*

Bowling: *(Smiling)* Sssh!

Haggerty: Don’t be so harsh on them, Ducrow ... *(DUPLOYEN twitches)* ... Thanks to you they are going to their freedom and they’re entitled to be happy for it.

Ducrow: *(Aside)* Zey may THINK zey are going to zeir freedom, but lettle do zey know!

Hisses from the pit. A low rumble of thunder.

Duployen: What did he call him?

Duployen: Ducrow ...

Bowling: Sounds French.

Christie: Sssh!

Ducrow: *(To the slaves)* Of course, my children, Pastor Haggerty is right, you must enjoy your freedom ... *(aside)* for soon you will be slaves again. Haha!

Hisses.

Voice: *(Off)* Henry! Come here will you. We have to sort out the tickets; and hurry man!

Ducrow: *(Humbly)* Yes, ma cherie. *(Laughter)*

Prudence: *(Annoyed)* Is that supposed to be me?

More laughter. DUCROW goes off.

Bacchus: Lordy, Pastor. We’s so excited to be goin’ free.

Haggerty: All people should be free, Bacchus my child.

Jacob: Heb’n bless Massa Ducrow fo’ givin’ us our freedom from dese cottonfields down here in ol’ Jamaicy.

Moses: He mus’ gotta be de kindest slave-massa in de whole worl’.

All: Allellu! *(A rumble of thunder)*

Bacchus: An’ to tink, he we are standin’ by de quayside ready to board dat boat to freedom. No, brudders an sisters, it’s de good pastor here we would be a-praisin’ fo’ perswadin’ dat Massa to let us go free.

Bridget: Are you enjoying it, Willie?

William: I can’t understand a word! *(Laughter)*

Haggerty: No, my children. It's the Good Lord you should be thankin' - oh, and not forgettin "Will" of course.

Tom: Who's dat "Will" pastor?

Haggerty: Ah! The great William, my child. The freedom fighter, William Wilberforce. He could have been Ireland's greatest man. I have a plaster bust of him on me mantlepiece! You shall see it!

Miss Rye: Only one? (*Laughter from the ACTORS*)

Haggerty: (*As MOLLOY*) Quiet in the gallery please! (*More laughter*) (*As HAGGERTY*) Now then, are we all ready?

Isaac: Hey! Where's li'l Sambo? Dat chil', he always hidin' somewhere!

Sambo: (*Popping up from behind a crate*) Hello dere, folks. (*Applause*)

Haggerty: (*Jumping*) Now calm down, Sambo and stop playin' childish games.

Sambo: But I likes hidin' away.

Haggerty: You must take care. It'll be the death of you one day, Sambo.

Duployen: Oh, for heaven's sake, Bowlinggreen; stop this. A joke is a joke, but there are limits.

Bowling: No limits, Duployen. You ought to know that.

There is a big thunderclap and the boat judders.

Tapscott: (*Quickly*) I think perhaps I should go. It's getting nasty down here.

Bowling: It's been nasty down here for some time, Mr Tapscott. There's not much you can do to change it now.

Duployen: Bowlinggreen. Mr Tapscott is the owner of this ship. I won't have you ...

Patrick: Can you shut up, please. You're holdin' up the play.

Bowling: Well said, Patrick. Carry on, Molloy - from "It'll be the death of you one day".

Haggerty: You must take care. It'll be the death of you one day, Sambo. Get yourself ready.

Sambo: Where's we goin' den, Poppa?

Poppa: To New York, Sambo. To freedom.

All: Yea, yeah!

Sambo: An' how's we gettin' there, Poppa?

Poppa: On a big wooden ship, Sambo.

All: Yea, yeah.

Sambo: Lordy me, I could sing fo' joy!

[MUSIC CUE NO 16] "Linstead Market"

Thunder during song.

Sambo: *Carry me ackee go a Linstead Market*
 Not a quatty would sell
 Carry me ackee go a Linstead Market
 Not a quatty would sell

Chorus: *O Lord, not a mite, not a bite,
What a Saturday night.
Lord not a mite, not a bite,
What a Saturday night.
My Mamma didda tell me dat you go mango walk
You go mango walk, you go mango walk,
My Mamma didda tell me dat you go mango walk
And steal all de numba lemmon.
Now tell me Joe, now tell me for true
Now tell me for true, now tell me
Dat you don' go for no mango walk and
Steal all de numba lemmon.*

(Actors and Ragged Boys sing together:)

Actors: *My Mamma didda... ..all de numba lemmon.*

Ragged Boys: *Now tell me Joe... ..all de numba lemmon.*

At the end of the song, CUNARD arrives. An American.

Cunard: Excuse me please. Can I board my ship?

Haggerty: I beg your pardon, sir.

Cunard: Are these all your slaves?

Haggerty: No, sir. They are free men now.

Cunard: *(Aside)* This must be the batch of niggers Ducrow told me of. A fine haul
this! *(Hisses)*

Tapscott: *(Aside, to DUPLOYEN)* I'm not sure I like this.

Haggerty: And who are you, sir?

Cunard: Samuel Cunard, sir. Ship owner and trader. Now, if you'll excuse me ...

Tapscott: *(Rising)* Oh, this is positively childish. I have better things to do with my
time. *(But he is thrown back into his seat by a massive shudder of the ship)*

Bowling: *(His blood now up)* Won't be long now, Mr Tapscott. Won't be long.

Archard: I'm not feeling so well, Mr Bowlinggreen.

Bowling: *(Snaps)* Get on with it, Archard. Just one scene to go ...

Danny: And my song, sir.

Bowling: Oh yes. We mustn't forget Danny's song. Keep going.

Ducrow: Eh bien, are they all ready to board?

Haggerty: All ready, Mr Ducrow.

Ducrow: Ah, Cunard. *(Aside)* My fellow in business.

Cunard: Ah, Ducrow. *(Aside)* My partner in crime. *(To DUCROW)* Is all ready?

Ducrow: Yes.

Cunard: Good.

Voice: *(Off)* Stand by to board.

All: Allelujah!

[MUSIC CUE No 17] “ALLELUJAH”

*Chillun crossin’ ober to de Promised Lan’
De Lord is with me doin’ all He can
Lan’ of plenty, lan’ of the free
Dere’s room for you an’ dere’s room for me.
Praise to de Pastor.
Chillun crossin’ ober,
Allellu, allellu
Lord is with me doin’ all He can
Lan’ of plenty
Yeah, yeah
Allellu, Allellu, allellu.
Praise to de Pastor ... (Interruption)*

Ducrow: *(Interrupting)* One moment.

They stop singing. Thunder.

Cunard: You think you are going to freedom?

Ducrow: We are sorry to disappoint you.

Cunard: For you will be more use to us in New York as merchandise where black slaves can be sold for twice their value.

Ducrow: Zrow zem into chains ...

Cunard: I’m beginning to fear the worst, Duployen.

Prudence: I wish I knew what on earth was going on.

Duployen: Oh, for God’s sake, shut up woman.

Cunard: Foreman.

Foreman: *(Appearing)* Yes, Mr Cunard ...

Cunard: Into the cargo hold with them.

Foreman: Yes, Mr Cunard. Come on you lazy niggers. Move!

[MUSIC CUE No 18] “SEE DESE TROUBLED WATERS”

*See dese troubled waters
See de ribber wide
Pray de Lord will help us chillun
To reach the other side
On life’s troubled ocean
Hear those waters roar
Pray the Lord will help us brudders
Help us evermore.*

As they sing, they process off, now in chains. The foreman pushes them about a lot.

One of the slaves resists “No, I ain’t goin’”

Ducrow: Give him five lashes, foreman.

We hear the lashes being administered off-stage. The music continues. Little

SAMBO hides behind a crate. The stage is emptied but for the two villains.

Cunard: A good catch, Ducrow.

Ducrow: A fifty-fifty split, Cunard?

Cunard: It's a deal.

SAMBO jumps up.

Sambo: No! You shan' sell me again, Massa.

Ducrow: I shall not indeed. *(He grabs SAMBO by the neck and starts to strangle him. Chord).*

Freeze tableau.

Bowling: *(Urgently)* Danny! Up and sing.

Duployen: *(Leaping to his feet)* Stop this at once ...

Bowling: *(Screams)* Sit down, sir and hear us out!

Chord. [MUSIC CUE No 19] "HEAR A TALE"

As DANNY sings the first verse, the rest of the troupe come back on "stage" very slowly. They all have their eyes firmly fixed on DUPLOYEN.

Danny: *Hear a tale of villainy. List and lend an ear to me.
Hear a tale of villainy. A tale to shame the devil.
Men who sell their fellow men rich deserve the lion's den.
Men who sell their fellow men sell their souls to evil.*

All: *Ne'er do well. Who can tell? Human lives to buy and sell.
Send the bastards rotting to hell. Burning with the devil.
Ne'er do well. Who can tell? Human lives to buy and sell.
Send the bastards rotting to hell. Burning with the devil.*

Danny: *Once there was an evil pair. Hear their names and all beware,
Yes, once there was an evil pair. Sell you for a shilling.
Slaving was their evil trade. Couldn't care the price they paid.
Yes, slaving was their evil trade. Slavery and killing.*

All: *Ne'er do well, etc.*

As DANNY sings his third verse, the rest of the troupe break out of character as they realise he is singing an unrehearsed verse. They are even more amazed when they hear what he says.

Danny: *Unbeknown to either man, while they hatch their evil plan,
Yes, unbeknown to either man, a barrel with a boy in.
Here below the steerage deck, found him out and wrung his
[neck.*

*Yes, here, below the steerage deck, strangled by Duployen.
Adam Todd. Adam Todd. Sent too soon to meet his God.
Died a death to chill the blood. Murdered by Duployen.
Went astray. Sent away. Soon to find he'd rue the day.
Paid the price of stowing away. Murdered by Duployen.*

DUPLOYEN has slowly risen to his feet.

Storm tape.

Bowling: (*BOWLINGREEN confronts DUPLOYEN*) We knew it all, you see, Duployen. There was a pair of Irish eyes watching you all the time, with a neck you didn't manage to get your hands round.

0 seconds.

DUPLOYEN, with a howl, goes to strangle DANNY.

10 seconds.

The storm breaks. Everyone is thrown to the floor. The ship is plunged into darkness. Screams.

12 seconds.

A huge sea hits the ship. In a flash of lightning, we see TAPSCOTT, and MRS DUPLOYEN rushing up the ladder.

27 seconds.

Another crash. DUPLOYEN who is last up the ladder, is hit by a barrel rolling down from above. As he rolls back onto the deck, a beam falls from the ceiling and crushes him to death.

41 seconds.

MOLLOY has followed TAPSCOTT up the ladder. BOWLINGREEN too.

The Irish DOYLE FAMILY group together. They are all alive. Other members of the troupe and the RAGGED BOYS are lying around, hurt.

BOWLINGREEN returns, with a lantern and views the scene.

70 seconds.

Bowling: (*Without rhetoric*) Our revels now are ended ... these our actors ... are melted into air ... thin air. We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life ...

80 seconds.

He is stopped by the return of MOLLOY.

95 seconds.

Molloy: They're all gone up there. Nobody left - all swept away! ...

PATRICK lights a lantern. He sees the body of DUPLOYEN and stops.

A shout from above.

110 seconds.

A shout from above.

Sailor: Land ho! Land ho!

All the “survivors” regard each other. The Irish are thrilled.

120 seconds.

Mary: D’you hear that, Danny. America!

Bowling: (*Expressionless, looking around*) O brave New World, that hath such
people in it!

The lights begin to fade.

130 seconds.

Black out.

150 seconds.

THE END