

PARALLEL LINES

A Music-Theatre Piece

by

DAVID WENDEN, ANDY JEFFERS
and **WARD BAKER**

Music & lyrics

by

WARD BAKER and
MIRANDA POWELL

SchoolPlay Productions Ltd

15 Inglis Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3HU

PARALLEL LINES

Copyright David Wenden, Andy Jeffers, & Ward Baker 1995
Music & Lyrics Copyright Ward Baker & Miranda Powell 1995

This play and score is fully protected by copyright.

It is an infringement of the copyright to give any public performance or reading of this play or its music in its entirety or in the form of excerpts without the prior consent in writing of the copyright owners.

*Performances of musical excerpts may only be given where the appropriate licence has been obtained from
The Performing Right Society Ltd., 29-33 Berners Street, London W1P 4AA*

No part of this publication may be transmitted, stored in a retrieval system, or reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, typescript, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owners.

All rights are strictly reserved. Any enquiries about performing rights, professional or amateur, should be directed, before rehearsal, to
**SchoolPlay Productions Ltd,
15 Inglis Road,
Colchester, Essex CO3 3HU.**

No performance may be given unless a licence has been obtained.

ISBN 978 1 872475 84 4

Printed and published by
SchoolPlay Productions Limited,
15 Inglis Road,
Colchester, Essex, CO3 3HU

CAST LIST

These are the main characters, at least one of whom appear in every scene.

The Osbornes

Kate - Mother
Phillip - Father
Abbie - 16 years old
Nicky - 14 years old
Emma - 10 years old
Louise - 7 years old

The Finchleys

Pamela - Mother
Harry - Father
Shelley - 14 years old
Samantha - 10 years old
Tabitha - 7 years old

The Blacks

Sue - Mother
Peter - Father
Andrew - 14 years old
Phyllis - Grandmother

The Prentices

Margaret - Wife
John - Husband

The following characters appear as foils for the main characters . Those in capitals appear in more than one scene. In the original production, the majority of the cast were female. Many of the parts (including some of the main parts) could be either male or female, depending on resources. All named parts are speaking parts.

ALISON
Jenny
Miss Smith
Sarah
The Boss
Eleanor
Ruth
Natalie
Flo
Ellen
Naomi
Kirsty
Jane

MISS MATTHEWS
Hilary
Becca
Brenda
Teacher (off)
Man
Hannah
Mary
Catherine
Jill
Chloe
Mandy
Teacher (off)

Polly
Lydia
Katie
Sally
Vanessa
Child
Charlotte
Audrey
Liz
Stephanie
Doctor
Caroline
Teacher (off)

Plus other characters as desired.

The only named part who ideally should sing solo is SUE BLACK. All other solos can be anonymous.

BREAKDOWN OF SCENES & MUSIC

MUSIC No. 1 - Company

MUSIC No. 2 - Company (minus the FAMILIES)

SCENE 1 - The Osbornes' Breakfast -

PHILLIP, KATE, ABBIE, NICKY, EMMA, LOUISE.

SCENE 2 - The Finchleys' Breakfast -

HARRY, PAMELA, SHELLEY, SAMANTHA, TABITHA.

SCENE 3 - The Blacks' Breakfast - *PETER, SUE, ANDREW, PHYLLIS.*

SCENE 4 - The Prentices' Breakfast - *JOHN, MARGARET.*

SCENE 5 - The Classroom -

*SHELLEY, NICKY, ALISON, MISS MATTHEWS (the teacher),
POLLY, other CLASS MEMBERS.*

SCENE 6 - The Telephone -

*HARRY, JENNY, HILARY, LYDIA, BECCA, MISS SMITH,
KATIE, SARAH, BRENDA, SALLY (all office workers),
THE BOSS.*

SCENE 7 - The Lighting Box - *ANDREW, VANESSA (a friend), TEACHER (off).*

MUSIC No. 3 - Instrumental

SCENE 8 - The Lift - *JOHN, ELEANOR (his ex-wife).*

MUSIC No. 4 - Man, Child.

SCENE 9 - The School Bully -

NICKY, SHELLEY, MISS MATTHEWS (the teacher).

SCENE 10 - The Office Bully - *PHILLIP, RUTH (a secretary).*

SCENE 11 - The Playground -

*LOUISE, TABITHA, CHARLOTTE (Louise' friend), HANNAH
(Tabitha's friend), other CHILDREN PLAYING.*

SCENE 12 - The Launderette -

KATE, MARY, AUDREY, FLO (launderette workers),
STEPHANIE (the owner), *NATALIE, CATHERINE, LIZ,*
ELLEN, JILL (customers), *other CUSTOMERS if desired.*
MUSIC No. 5 - Company

SCENE 13 - The Osbornes' Tea - PHILLIP, KATE, EMMA, LOUISE.

SCENE 14 - The Finchleys' Tea - HARRY, PAMELA, SAMANTHA, TABITHA

SCENE 15 - The Blacks' and Prentices' Dinner Party -

PETER, SUE, ANDREW, JOHN, MARGARET.
MUSIC No. 6 - All FEMALE Company.

SCENE 16 - The Hamster - LOUISE, KATE.

SCENE 17 - The Father - PETER, SUE.

MUSIC No. 7 - SUE [or a soloist].

SCENE 18 - The Grandmother - PHYLLIS.

SCENE 19 - The Best Friend - EMMA.

SCENE 20 - The Pregnancy - ABBIE, KATE, NAOMI (Abbie's friend).

SCENE 21 - Infertility - MARGARET, CHLOE (her friend), **DOCTOR.**

MUSIC No. 8 - All FAMILIES

MUSIC No. 9 &

SCENE 22 - The First Ballet Class - SAMANTHA, EMMA, KIRSTY, JANE,
MANDY, CAROLINE (their friends), *TEACHER* (off), *other*
CLASSMATES if desired.

MUSIC No. 10 &

SCENE 23 - The Second Ballet Class - SHELLEY, NICKY, ALISON (Shelley's
friend), *TEACHER* (off), *several other MEMBERS of the CLASS.*

MUSIC No. 11/12 - Company.

The original production of PARALLEL LINES took place on Saturday 22nd July 1995 at Walkfares Theatre, New Hall School, Chelmsford, as part of an Anglia Summer Schools Theatre Performance Course with a group of English, Austrian, Turkish and Swedish students.

Original Cast

<i>Kate Osborne</i> -	<i>Lin Mathiasson</i>	<i>Sue Black</i> -	<i>Annabel Brown</i>
<i>Phillip Osborne</i> -	<i>Nils Zetterlund</i>	<i>Peter Black</i> -	<i>Will Reading</i>
<i>Abbie Osborne</i> -	<i>Louise Platt</i>	<i>Andrew Black</i> -	<i>Joseph Riley</i>
<i>Nicky Osborne</i> -	<i>Charlotta Åstrand</i>	<i>Phyllis</i> -	<i>Natalie Thompson</i>
<i>Emma Osborne</i> -	<i>Louise Thomson</i>		
<i>Louise Osborne</i> -	<i>Petra Seflin</i>		
<i>Pamela Finchley</i> -	<i>Eileen Veitch-Clark</i>	<i>Margaret Prentice</i> -	<i>Helena Örtby</i>
<i>Harry Finchley</i> -	<i>Gabriel Sjolin</i>	<i>John Prentice</i> -	<i>Erik Junesjö</i>
<i>Shelley Finchley</i> -	<i>Kelly Palmer</i>		
<i>Samantha Finchley</i> -	<i>Dani Snel</i>		
<i>Tabitha Finchley</i> -	<i>Crinne Tinterov</i>		

Other parts were played by:-

<i>Anna Sicking</i>	<i>Amina Husberg</i>	<i>Melanie Fiander</i>
<i>Jenny Flood</i>	<i>Elisabet Nilsson</i>	<i>Katie Lassman</i>
<i>Ruth Fisher</i>	<i>Kate Smith</i>	<i>Sarah Noble</i>
<i>Rebecca Steel</i>	<i>Maria Åkerlund</i>	<i>Kate Taunton</i>
<i>Anna Maculan</i>	<i>Elin Thunell</i>	<i>Ayfer Yilmaz</i>
<i>Rebecca Thorndale</i>	<i>Tova Ytterberg</i>	<i>Madeline Åkesson</i>
<i>Vanessa Caswill</i>	<i>Ida Bävman</i>	<i>Elin Aronsson</i>
<i>Emma Carlin</i>	<i>Maria Eriksson</i>	<i>Rose-Marie Hoffer</i>
<i>Annika Jansson</i>	<i>Maria Kapari</i>	

Director - Andrew Jeffers

Assistant Directors - David Wenden & Miranda Powell

Musical Director - Ward Baker

Choreographer - Chris Roebuck

Dialogue coaches - Charlotte Southon & Kicki Alm

Chaperone - Becky Vardy

PRODUCTION NOTES

Parallel Lines was designed as a show that can be performed in its entirety, or as a selection of scenes, or even individual scenes for workshops or GCSE work.

The original production was performed in the round, and worked extremely well, but it could work equally well on a conventional stage. The most difficult part on a conventional stage would be having the four families set up all at once. It does aid continuity if this can be achieved.

The only set and furniture we used were chairs, a bench, a desk, and a ballet bar. Indeed, the action moves from scene to scene so quickly, that any more might well hinder progress. Costumes can be kept simple, or, indeed, done in blacks as a workshop production. Props can be kept to a minimum or entirely mimed.

Most of the songs have chorus work and choreography. Some scenes have scene-change music indicated, but it can be used wherever needed. It should be taken from *No. 2 DAWN*. During *THE SILENCE OF NOW*, we used two dancers to mime in choreography the relationship SUE has had with her father, while she is singing.

The premise behind the show was to show that life throws up many challenges and problems, failures and successes, triumphs and defeats, and at each age of man, worries are relevant and no less important. We follow the lives of four families through a day. Each contrasting scene illustrates that what may appear trivial to one, may be vital to another. Each story has its antithesis; each runs on **Parallel Lines**.

It was conceived to give a large cast the enjoyment of theatre through acting, singing and dancing.

A.J., D.W., M.P., W.B.

PARALLEL LINES

by David Wenden, Ward Baker and Andy Jeffers

Music by Ward Baker

Lyrics by Ward Baker and Miranda Powell

MUSIC No. 1 - PARALLEL LINES

(The company should be split into three groups, initially, characterless.)

Company or Quartet: *Parallel Lines, Parallel Lines,
Parallel Lines, Parallel Lines.*

Group I: *Once a child with Dad and Mum,
Once a child with Dad and Mum...Dad...Mum...*

(Once a group has started, it repeats the last two words under the other groups).

Group II: *Changing friends to ones we love,
Changing friends to ones we love ... love ... love ...*

Group III: *Mum will help to make me see,
Mum will help to make me see ... Mum ... help ...*

All: *This has nothing to do with me,
This has nothing to do with me.*

Solo: *Parallel Lines will lead the way,
(Add) Parallel Lines will meet one day
(Add) Mirrored by youth, betrayed by age,
(Add) Tempers rise and passions rage,*

All: *Shut them out and close the cage.
Parallel Lines will lead the way,
Parallel Lines will meet one day.*

Group I: *Just like Dad and just like Mum,
Just like Dad and just like Mum ... Dad ... Mum ...*

Group II: *We are those who hate to love,
We are those who hate to love, ... hate ... love ...*

Group III: *Hating childhood, you and me,
Hating childhood, you and me ... me ... you ...*

All: *Time is shooting by so fast,
Time is shooting by so fast.*

All: *Parallel Lines will lead the way,
Parallel Lines will meet one day
Mirrored by youth, betrayed by age,
Tempers rise and passions rage,
Shut them out and close the cage.*

*Parallel Lines will lead the way,
Parallel Lines will meet one day.
Mirrored by youth, betrayed by age,
Tempers rise and passions rage,
Shut them out and close the cage.*

*Parallel Lines will lead the way,
Parallel Lines will meet one day.
Parallel Lines, Parallel Lines,
Parallel Lines, Parallel Lines.*

(The FAMILIES have left the stage. The rest of the company are lying on the floor, asleep. The music starts and a cock crows three times. It is dawn. The following lines are spoken or noises made rhythmically and in time, repeatedly, together with an appropriate mime as the entire company wake up and go about their morning routine).

MUSIC No. 2 - DAWN CHORUS

All:	<i>Rise and shine Beep beep (alarm clock) Oh no I've got a maths test! I need a cup of coffee (Noises of brushing teeth) Hurry up kids! You'll be late!</i>	<i>All the birds are singing Ding-a-ling (alarm clock) I want to go back to sleep (Yawns) (Singing in the shower) Coffee or tea? Don't forget your lunch.</i>
-------------	---	---

(The chairs should by now be set for the Breakfast scenes).

SCENE 1 - THE OSBORNES' BREAKFAST

(PHILLIP is reading a newspaper, ABBIE day-dreaming, EMMA & LOUISE playing with each other at the table, NICKY eating, KATE rushing around).

Kate: Come on, it's always the same every morning. Why it's down to me to organise everybody I don't know!

Abbie: There's no hurry. I haven't got an exam until this afternoon.

Nicky: I suppose you're revising with Chris all morning.

Abbie: Shut up, you! He's at work so how can I see him?

Phil: Please stop all this arguing. I've got a very busy day to-day and I'd appreciate a little quiet to prepare myself.

Emma: Louise has taken my bit of toast.

Louise: No I haven't! Mummy said I could have that.

Kate: That's enough! Your father needs some quiet. Now, if you've finished, get your coats. If you haven't, it's hard luck. You're going to be late.

Emma: } Oh mum!

Louise: }

(They leave).

Kate: *(To NICKY)* Come on, dear. You'll be late.

Nicky: I really don't want to go today.

Phil: Don't be so silly. Now get a move on!

SCENE 2 - THE FINCHLEYS' BREAKFAST

(They are all eating except for PAMELA, who is missing).

Tabitha: Is mummy coming down?

Harry: I don't know, dear.

Shelley: I suppose she got in late and drunk again.

Harry: That's not fair! Just remember she's your mother.

Shell: Mother?! She couldn't be a mother if she read a book about it!

Tab: Stop it! Stop it! You're being horrible. I love mummy and I don't care what you say.*(She runs off).*

Harry: Shelley, go and see if she's all right. Tell her you didn't mean it.

Shell: Why do I always have to go?

Harry: Just go.

(PAMELA enters looking dreadful. SHELLEY doesn't leave).

Pamela: God, what a disgusting smell! Do you have to cook first thing in the morning?

Shell: Why can't you say something nice. Just for a change. Dad does all the work around here. You never lift a finger. God, I hope I never get like you!

Harry: That's enough! *(To SHELLEY)* Now go on, hurry off to school. You don't want to be late again.

Shell: Don't I?

(She looks then leaves).

Tab: Mummy? Can I have a cuddle?

Pam: Later dear, later.

SCENE 3 - THE BLACKS' BREAKFAST

(PETER and PHYLLIS are at the table. SUE enters)

Sue: Morning dear. Morning mummy.

Peter: Morning dear. Tea?

Sue: Thank you dear. *(To ANDREW, shouting up the stairs)* Come along, Andrew you'll be late!

(ANDREW enters)

Sue: Good morning!

(She goes to kiss him. He ignores her and sits down).

Peter: Answer your mother when she speaks to you.

Andrew: Morning.

Sue: Now, you won't be home late tonight, either of you, will you? The Prentices are coming round for dinner and I DO want to make a good impression.

Phyllis: Oh yes, this is where I make myself scarce isn't it?

Sue: Are you going to see daddy today?

Phyll: Yes, I'll toddle along this morning.

Sue: I wish you wouldn't be so casual about it. He's very ill!

Andrew: Do I HAVE to be there tonight?

Peter: Of course you do. This is very important for your mother.

Sue: We haven't had the chance to entertain since we moved here, and it's important to become known and established.

Phyll: Don't worry. This is just one of a long series of embarrassing events your parents will put you through.

Sue: (*Ignoring her mother*) You haven't brought any friends home from school yet, Andrew.

(*Silence*)

Peter: Well, answer your mother.

Andrew: Not yet, no.

Sue: Well just let me know and I'll do a slap up tea for you all.

Phyll: I bet that's just what you want!

(*ANDREW storms out*).

Sue: Mother, honestly! If you haven't anything constructive to say, I wish you'd keep quiet!

SCENE 4 - THE PRENTICES' BREAKFAST

(*Silence for a while. JOHN is reading a newspaper, MARGARET is eating breakfast*).

John: Well, I'd better be off.

Marg: Have a good day. Oh, don't forget this evening.

John: Oh, no! The Blacks! Do we have to go?

Marg: Well it's a bit difficult now. She's one of those you know desperate to impress but doesn't have a clue.

John: Maybe it could be fun after all!

(*SCENE CHANGE MUSIC. The chairs are cleared, and the cast for the next scene are discovered*).

SCENE 5 - THE CLASSROOM

(NICKY OSBORNE is in class with SHELLEY FINCHLEY and other pupils and MISS MATTHEWS. POLLY enters).

Shelley: Who's that?

Alison: Polly.

Both: Pretty Polly!

Alison: Polly put the kettle on

Miss Matthews: What do you want?

Polly: Please Miss, the office sent me to tell you your photocopies are ready.

Miss Matthews: Thank you. Right. Office. Photocopies. Got to go and get them.
Back in one minute. Get on with your work and don't disturb anyone.

(She exits with POLLY).

Shelley: Thank God she's gone! Do you get any of these?

Alison: No.

Shelley: It's like a foreign language.

Nicky: Sssssh!

Alison: She's given us loads to do. I'm going to have to spend the whole weekend doing it.

Shelley: Cor! Lucky you! Doing it all weekend! *(Giggles all round)* Well I'm not bothering.

Alison: Aren't you?

Shelley: No.

Nicky: Shut up!

Alison: No!

Shelley: Are we talking to you? *(To ALISON)* Come to a party on Saturday.

Alison: Oh, cool. What time?

Shelley: About 8 o'clock, yeah?

Alison: Brill!

Shelley: Don't bring too many people, though.

Nicky: Look, will you just be quiet please!

Alison: Don't you go to parties Nicky?

Nicky: Yeah, I do.

Shelley: What do you do, then? Drink orange squash? *(Giggles)*

Alison: And play with teddy bears?

Shelley: And then have jelly and ice cream?

Alison: And then play pass the parcel?

Nicky: No! I've been to parties.

Alison: Oh, yeah, and what did you drink then?

Nicky: Shandy.

Both: Whoo!

Alison: Get a hangover?

Nicky: No. Look, why are you always picking on me? All I want to do is my work.

Both: Exactly!

(SHELLEY steals NICKY's book. There is a lot of commotion. MISS MATTHEWS enters).

Miss Matthews: Excuse me, excuse me. What's going on?

Nicky: They took my book Miss.

Shelley: No we didn't. I bet she's forgotten it.

Nicky: No!

Miss Matthews: Where is it then?

Nicky: They've got it!

Miss Matthews: Don't be ridiculous. Why would they want to do that? I think you should go and put your nose against the blackboard.

Nicky: But I've done the work. They've got my book!

Miss Matthews: Get

(POLLY enters again)

Miss Matthews: Yes, yes, YOU - speak!

Polly: Please Miss, the office say you didn't sign for the photocopies.

Miss Matthews: Thank you. Umm It's nearly the end of the lesson. Um go off umm home work hand it in um Monday. Nicky! Did you get all that?

Nicky: Yes Miss.

Miss Matthews: Good. See you on Monday. *(To POLLY)* Lead on, child, lead on!

(MISS MATTHEWS & POLLY exit).

Shelley: Oh, Nicky it's such a shame you have to redo all that work now.

Nicky: Well at least I can do it.

Shelley: Well I should get a good mark for it, seeing as it's yours.

Nicky: Look, get out of my way!

Shelley: We want to know if you're coming to the party.

Alison: Yeah!

Nicky: No, I don't think so.

Alison: Don't you want to be our friends, Nicky?

Nicky: With friends like you, who needs enemies?

Both: Whooh!

Nicky: Look, just give me my book back.

Shelley: Are you coming to the party?

Nicky: No! And I'd better have my book back on Monday as well!

(They both giggle and laugh. SCENE CHANGE MUSIC).

SCENE 6 - THE TELEPHONE

(Four separate scenes are set up on stage: The Accounts Dept.; The Personnel Dept.; The Filing Dept. and The Main Office. The action switches from one to the other. SFX of telephones ringing and typewriters typing. BECCA has some papers and is the link between each scene. She walks from one to the other. JENNY, HILARY and LYDIA are crowded round HARRY FINCHLEY at his desk. A telephone is on it. BECCA is filing, obviously listening).

THE MAIN OFFICE

Jenny: I can't believe you're so straight!

Harry: Look, it's not a question of being straight. I simply can't afford to let you.

Hilary: Oh, come on. You've let us in the past and it hasn't done you any harm.

Harry: I know, but I've decided enough is enough. I won't risk it any more.

Lydia: Give it a rest! You're so wrapped up in your own little world, you have no idea what it's like in the real world.

Harry: I have three children to look after, and I can't afford to lose my job. I know I've taken risks in the past, but I've decided I'm not going to let my 'phone be used by anyone else but me.

Jenny: But you never use anything like your quota. You could let us have half a dozen calls and no-one would be any the wiser.

(FREEZE)

THE ACCOUNTS DEPT.

(BECCA moves to behind the secretary, MISS SMITH, peering at a computer screen).

Miss Smith: Umm umm excuse me!

Becca: Oh, sorry. You'll never guess what's going on in the main office.

Miss S: I don't involve myself in other people's affairs.

Becca: Yes but

Miss S: No. I told you I'm not interested. Nor should you be.

Becca: Oh please yourself!

Miss S: Now can I have the petty cash forms, please?

Becca: Yes. Here you are.

Miss S: Thank you.

(BECCA walks to Filing Dept. and FREEZES)

THE MAIN OFFICE

Harry: That's not the point. It's against the rules and particularly with the clamp down...

Hilary: Typical. Look, I only want to ring Roger and tell him I'll see him tomorrow.

Harry: 'Phone him from home, then.

Hilary: He's in Greece and flying back tomorrow morning. Trouble is, I can't get there to meet his flight.

Jenny: Is that all? If I don't phone Rupert soon he'll think I've disowned him. I've been calling from this phone for six months and I don't see why I should stop now!

Lydia: But he's in New York!

Jenny: Well, nobody knows. We have to phone New York all the time.

Harry: But on company business.

Hilary: Don't be such a prude!

(FREEZE).

THE FILING DEPT.

Becca: Here, you'll never guess. Harry, in the main office, well he won't let

anybody use his 'phone.

Katie: Oh, no.

Sarah: Hmm I used it last week to 'phone my Bertie's brother's cousin in Australia.

Brenda: What, the one with the problem with his

Sarah: No. The one with the leg and the woman from (*deliberately mispronounced*) Koala Lumpa.

Katie: Oh, that one. Anyway, did he mind?

Sarah: What?

Brenda: That you used his 'phone.

Sarah: Oh, he wasn't there. He'd gone to the loo and I used it then. I was on it for 40 minutes.

Brenda: What, the loo?

Sarah: No, silly. The 'phone.

All: Oh.

Becca: Anyway, must be off to Personnel. Catch you later. Bye.

(*BECCA walks to Personnel Dept. and FREEZES*).

THE MAIN OFFICE

Harry: Look, if I give in to one of you then I'll have to give in to all of you, and I'm not prepared to do it. If I lose my job I don't know what I'll do.

Lydia: Perhaps you'll get a wife that knows she's got a family.

Harry: That's not fair. She's under a lot of pressure

Jenny: Don't give me that. We all know what she's like. (*Pause*). Look, just a quick call and no-one will be any the wiser.

Hilary: And all I have to do is leave a message, but I've used up my quota for this week.

Jenny: And if you were in the same position, you'd do everything possible to ring your kids if you had to.

Harry: But that's different.

Hilary: Why?

Harry: Because it's me! It would be controlled by me. Precious little else is! My wife, my kids, my life...You're all just taking advantage of me!

Jenny: (*Sympathetically*) We wouldn't do that, would we girls? We have to work with you after all. (*FREEZE*).

THE PERSONNEL DEPT.

(SALLY sitting at a computer, as at Accounts Dept., BECCA eyeing the screen).

Becca: Here's the file you wanted.

Sally: *(Timidly)* Oh, thanks.

Becca: Here, you'll never guess, Harry from the

Sally: What Harry? The tall, blonde, good-looking one?

Becca: Yes. Do you know him?

Sally: No.

Becca: Oh, you must.

Sally: Well, I sometimes see him in the canteen. He did notice me a couple of times. Once he even said "Hello".

Becca: Oh.

Sally: *(Blushing)* But I don't really KNOW him.

Becca: You fancy him, don't you?

Sally: No! What makes you think that?

Becca: Well, you've gone all red!

Sally: No, no. Here here are the reports you need.

Becca: Oh, yes. Bye.

(BECCA walks to Filing Dept.).

THE FILING DEPT

Becca: Here, you'll never guess!

(FREEZE)

THE MAIN OFFICE

(HARRY exchanges looks between the telephone and the girls).

Harry: This is the last time. I mean it. No more after this.

Jenny: *(Kissing him)* You're a darling. I won't be a minute.

(She dials the number. The BOSS walks in. JENNY hands the receiver to HARRY. They all stand silently as the BOSS stands and assesses the situation).

Boss: What's going on? (*Looking at the phone*) I think someone's talking to you Mr. Finchley.

Harry: What? Oh!

(The BOSS takes the phone)

Boss: Hello? No, I think you've got a wrong number oh, someone phoned YOU! and what number are you? in New York? No, we must have a crossed line. (*The BOSS puts the phone down*). I think we'd better have a little talk, don't you? (*The BOSS looks round the room and guesses what's been going on*). I can't imagine why you need to phone New York, Harry. Perhaps we'd better check your phone records?

(She exits. HARRY collapses into his chair looking at phone, head in hands. JENNY, HILARY and LYDIA run to the three other departments, then in unison -).

All: Here, you'll never guess

(SCENE CHANGE MUSIC as the previous scenes are cleared, and the lighting box set up).

SCENE 7 - THE LIGHTING BOX

(ANDREW BLACK and another girl, VANESSA, are operating the lights in the lighting box for a rehearsal. They are seated at a lighting desk, looking down on the action. TEACHER's voice - off).

Teacher: 5, 7, take out 22 fade up the blue. Let's stop and have a look at that scene again. Andrew, Vanessa, relax for a minute.

Andrew: Now that we've got a break, I've been meaning to talk to you. Um I was wondering if you'd like to come home for tea with me.

Van: Well, um

And: Oh I knew you'd say no. I knew you'd laugh at me . I knew

Van: All right, I'd love to. I'd love to come.

And: Do you mean it?

Van: Yes, I'd love to.

And: Do you really mean it?

Van: YES!

And: You're not joking?

Van: No!

And: Well that's great. Do you want to come now?

Van: Uh?

And: Oh, it's only eleven o'clock *(he leans forward)*.

Van: Don't lean on that *(The stage plunges into blackout. Perhaps a low blue helps to silhouette the action)*. Oh well done!

And: It's stuck! It's dark! Miss! Miss! They're not there! They must have gone! Still, as long as we've both got company it doesn't really matter, does it?

Van: No, but it's really hot.

And: Yeah, it's very, very, hot Very hot. *(He shakes, excited)*

Van: Why are you shaking?

And: Shaking?...V-very cold. Freezing. It's cold outside. Here in the lighting box it's hot. I'm hot and cold.

Van: Oh.

And: We're in the dark. No windows.

Van: No.

And: It would be a good idea to put windows in wouldn't it? You could have a window there, and there. *(He shouts as if through the window)*. "Hello! I'm in the lighting box". Especially if the lights get stuck. "Hello, the lights are stuck. Get me some help".

Van: What are we having for tea?

And: Oh, tea. I'll tell you exactly what I'm having. I'm having pickled onions and cheese sandwich with a milkshake.

Van: Er maybe we could share it.

And: Maybe we could. Yes of course we could. We can, we can. It's fine. It's fine by me. I've got no objections to that. Why should I have any objections to that? It's just that I can't decide what milkshake to have. You can get so many strawberry, chocolate, banana

Van: What's that? *(Indicating a knob)*.

And: What?

Van: That!

And: Oh I don't know. What is it?

Van: It's a knob.

And: Well push it! *(Lights come up quickly)* Let there be light! *(He laughs)*. Let's get out of here, shall we?

Van: After you.

And: Dirt before the broom *(They get up to leave)*.

Van: You didn't really think I'd go home with you!

(She presses the knob again. The scene plunges into darkness. ANDREW screams as he falls down the stairs).

MUSIC No. 3 - LIFT MUSIC (Instrumental)

(This carries on under the scene)

SCENE 8 - THE LIFT

(JOHN PRENTICE is in the lift. A lady, ELEANOR, walks in).

John: Hello, Eleanor. Oh no, the door's shut. You don't want to walk out on anybody like you did before. What floor do you want?

Elen: I'll get out on the next.

(The lift stops with a sound effect. The music also stops).

Elen: What's happened? Why has it stopped? Why has it stopped moving?

John: It appears to be stuck.

Elen: DO something! There must be an alarm or a bell you can ring. Do something. I have to go!

John: I shouldn't worry if I were you. It's always doing this. It doesn't last long, and if it does, you could always use my mobile. By the way, how's my daughter?

Elen: YOUR daughter?! She's not yours. WE adopted her and I have full custody. She's mine. You couldn't even be bothered to remember her birthday. It was yesterday.

John: Oh, I'll get her a present then.

Elen: She doesn't want your present.

John: I'll get her one anyway. How's your boyfriend?

Elen: You know very well he finished with me.

John: Oh I am so sorry. How did Jennifer take it?

Elen: It's Jessica for God's sake! Just crawl back into your hole and leave me alone.

John: Charming, I must say. How are you fixed financially? You all right?

Elen: You know very well.

John: Same old Eleanor. Here, take this.

Elen: I don't want your money.

John: Take it anyway.

Elen: I don't want it. Leave us alone. Just give me your phone. I have to phone Jessica's school to tell them I'll be late.

(The doors open with a sound effect. The music restarts).

John: *(Putting his phone away)* It's not your lucky day, is it?

(ELEANOR rushes out).

John: It was nice talking to you. Must do lunch one day.

MUSIC No. 4 - THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

Man: *Nothing really changes, nothing really matters
Through the eyes of a man
No-one sees the dangers
With a dream that shatters
Through the eyes of a man
I have tried to solve the puzzle
But instead it's just a maze
I want someone to believe in me
I need someone to see
Through the eyes of a man*

Child: *Nothing really changes, nothing really matters
Through the eyes of a child
No-one sees the dangers
With a dream that shatters
Through the eyes of a child
I don't ask the world to love me
I just want it to be there
I want someone to believe in me
I want someone to see
Through the eyes of a child*

Together: *I don't ask the world to love me
 I just want it to be there
 I want someone to believe in me*

Man: *Maybe I can be seen*

Child: *I can see*

Together: *Through the eyes of a child.*

SCENE 9 - THE SCHOOL BULLY

(NICKY OSBORNE is working at a desk. SHELLEY FINCHLEY enters).

Shell: Working hard are we?

Nicky: I always do. Why are you here?

Shell: You know why I'm here, Nicky. Is this my homework? What's this? A blot?

Nicky: Yes.

Shell: You're going to have to neaten up. I'm not going to get an A with that am I?
I'll collect it later. Oh and there's some extra biology.

Nicky: Why?

Shell: When I was away last week I told Miss Matthews I was going to the dentist.
But somebody told her I was down the arcade. Who was that, Nicky? Who
WAS that?

Nicky: Me.

Shell: Pardon?

Nicky: Me!

Shell: You don't learn, do you? You won't get that book back I took this morning.
Now I have all the stuff I need to make it look like you cheat in every class.
So you get that homework done by tomorrow.

Nicky: Is that all?

Shell: That'll do for now.

Nicky: Miss Matthews, did you get all that?

(MISS MATTHEWS appears. SHELLEY freezes dumbstruck).

SCENE 10 - THE OFFICE BULLY

(*PHILLIP OSBORNE walks into an office where a lady, RUTH is working. He is revealed as a 'sleaze-ball'*).

Phil: Working overtime?

Ruth: Richard gave me extra work to do.

Phil: Ah, Richard. I've got some good news for you. Richard won't be working here much longer. So he won't be needing you. Which means you'll be working for me. You'll get an extra two thousand a year, your own little office but you'll have to work harder much harder. But of course, all work and no play makes Ruth a dull girl. We'll have to get to know each other. I need to know how you work, you need to know how I work. We'll have to spend some time together. What are you doing this evening?

Ruth: (*She is nervous of him, not knowing what to say*). I'm not sure.

Phil: Well, we could always go out for a drink.

Ruth: (*Making up an excuse*). I think I'm seeing my boyfriend.

Phil: You THINK you're seeing your boyfriend?

Ruth: No, I AM. I've got a big day tomorrow.

Phil: Anyway, about that extra thousand.

Ruth: You said two.

Phil: Ah, well we might not be able to afford quite that much.

Ruth: I haven't seen my boyfriend for a long time.

Phil: And what does he do for a living?

Ruth: He's an engineer.

Phil: An engineer.

Ruth: With a big company.

Phil: Oh, so you don't need the extra money if your boyfriend works for a big company.

Ruth: (*Succumbing after realising he has her over a barrel*). Did you say a drink?

Phil: Uh huh.

Ruth: JUST a drink?

Phil: Well that depends on how much you want to earn, doesn't it?

SCENE 11 - THE PLAYGROUND

(LOUISE OSBORNE and CHARLOTTE, her friend, are playing a pat-a-cake game. TABITHA FINCHLEY and HANNAH, her friend, stand and watch. Various other children are playing).

Lou & Char: Grandma, grandma, ill in bed,
This is what the doctor said.
Let's get the rhythm of the head, ding dong,
Let's get the rhythm of the head, ding dong,
Let's get the rhythm of the hands
Let's get the rhythm of the hands
Let's get the rhythm of the feet
Let's get the rhythm of the feet
Let's get the rhythm of a hot dog
Let's get the rhythm of a hot dog
Put it all together and what have you got
Ding dong, hot dog
Put it all back and what have you got
Hot dog, ding dong

Tab: They're stupid.

Hannah: I don't like them.

Tab: My mummy said people like that are "iture".

Both: (*Pointing at them*) "Iture!"

Lou: What does "iture" mean?

Tab: It's when you're stupid like you are.

Lou: Well, what are you?

Tab: We're "ture".

Char: How do you become "ture"?

Tab: Well you can't play babyish games like that.

Char: Well I like babyish games.

Lou: We enjoy them.

Hann: Do you want to play hopscotch?

Lou: Is that "ture"?

Tab: Yeah.

Lou: What is "ture"?

Tab: It's when you're grown up.

Hann: Like us.

Char: Can we play?

Tab: Shall we let them?

Hann: O.K.

Lou: I'm "ture" now!

Tab: Look for a stone. I'm going first 'cos I'm the most "ture".

(She bends over to throw the stone).

Lou: We can see your knickers!

Tab: That's not "ture"!

Lou: I don't care. We can still see your knickers!

Char: My go, my go.

(She throws the stone too far. She inadvertently stamps on HANNAH's foot going to retrieve the stone).

Hann: Aaah, aahh.

Tab: Get another stone. I'm bored. Boring, boring. Have you seen what my mummy bought me? It's a Polly Pocket.

Char: A what?

Tab: A Polly Pocket, and it's in my pocket, look! *(They laugh)* Oh no it's not! I must have dropped it.

Hann: There it is!

(It is behind them on the floor where CHARLOTTE starts to practise her hopscotch. She lands on and breaks the toy).

Tab: My Polly Pocket! *(She cries, uncontrollably).*

All: *(Pointing at TABITHA)* "ITURE!"

SCENE 12 - THE LAUNDERETTE

(The customers, CATHERINE and JILL and others if necessary, are either busying themselves with their washing or sitting down, waiting. KATE OSBORNE works there and is dealing with a service wash. In one corner of the stage is the staffroom where MARY, AUDREY and FLO are making tea and chatting. Enter NATALIE, a customer).

Natalie: Good morning. I'd like this service-washed, please.

Kate: Certainly madam. I'll just get you a receipt.

(She goes into the staffroom).

Mary: *(In staffroom)* So, Audrey, I can never remember; one or two sugars?

Audrey: Two please.

Mary: And you, Flo?

Flo: Oh, just the one. I'm on a diet.

Mary: What, again?

Flo: Well, my Bert likes me trim.

(They all look at KATE and she exits from the room into the main area).

Kate: There you are, madam. It'll be ready in one hour.

Natalie: Thank you. Bye.

(She leaves).

Kate: *(Finding knickers and holding them up).* Are these anybody's knickers?

(CATHERINE grabs them, embarrassed).

Cath: Excuse me, do you have change for the drier, please?

(KATE gives her change. LIZ and ELLEN enter with basket).

Liz: Let's put it down here. Which machine can we use?

Kate: Uh you'll have to wait a minute. They're all taken.

Ellen: Well how long is it going to be?

(JILL holds up a sexy bra).

Jill: Anyone belong to this?

(CATHERINE grabs it, embarrassed and flustered again).

Jill: Is there any more powder?

Kate: Yes, just a minute. The machine's broken, I'll have to get some from out the back.

(The background business must be quite frenetic by now. She shouts to the staffroom).

Kate: Can you give me a hand?

(Busy action carries on silently as attention is focused on the staffroom).

Mary: We'll be out in a minute. *(She pokes her head out of the door).* It is getting busy out there. Kate's run off her feet.

Audrey: Another coffee?

Mary: Oh yes please. They don't pay us enough to run around.

Audrey: It wouldn't be so busy for Kate if Shona hadn't gone to Torbay for her holiday.

Mary: I know. Some people are so selfish.

(They carry on miming their coffee break. JILL recognises LIZ for the first time).

Jill: Hello! How are you? Haven't seen you in ages.

Liz: Hello. Not too bad. Been waiting here for ages though. Do you know Ellen?

Jill: No, how do you do? You can have my machine as soon as I've finished. *(Loudly).* But that'll be Christmas unless I get some more powder!

Kate: Oh, I'm so sorry. I'll get it now.

(She runs off to get some).

Liz: I don't know. This place gets worse and worse.

Ellen: Anyone would think we'd got all day to sit around here chatting.

Liz: Well, I say I'm not too bad, but I have been suffering. I've not been well.

Jill: Really? I'm sorry to hear that.

Liz: Yes women's troubles me tubes. Anyway, how's your George?

Jill: Oh don't ask. He got made redundant you know, and all he does all day is sit around and watch telly. I don't know what to do with him.

Ellen: Still, it'll all come out in the wash! *(They laugh).*

Liz: If we ever get it done that is!

(KATE reappears to hear this last comment. Enter NATALIE).

Natalie: Hello dear, is my washing ready yet?

Kate: Yes uh no. I've been a bit pushed.

Nat: Well how long is it going to be? I 'm parked on a double yellow and I really

don't have time to sit around here all day.

Kate: Well I think it's done but I haven't folded it yet.

Nat: Never mind! I'll have to take it now.

Kate: Here it is.

(NATALIE takes it and hurries out).

Kate: But you haven't paid Ohhhh! *(KATE storms into the staffroom).* Look! I need some help out here!

Mary: Yes, we're coming. *(To AUDREY).* Put the kettle on.

Kate: No! I need you out here now! I've still got three service washes to do before I go home, then I have to pick the children up and then I have to make the tea which Phillip won't eat because he's probably had a business lunch

(CATHERINE pokes her head round the corner).

Cath: Excuse me, I seem to have mislaid some tights

Kate: They're on your legs! *(She storms out to do some more washing).*

Cath: Well, really! I shan't be coming here again unless I can't find my tights.

Jill: Here Liz, I'll free my machine for you. *(She opens the door and water gushes out).* Ah!...

Kate: What have you done, you stupid woman? Couldn't you see there was still water in it?

(STEPHANIE, the manageress enters).

Kate: Honestly! You haven't got the brain cells to be allowed out alone.

Jill: Well! I've never been so *(She grabs her soaking washing and storms out).*

Stephanie: What on *earth* is going on here? I hope you can explain, Kate.

(While SUE is talking to KATE, MARY and AUDREY slip out of the staffroom and start working).

Kate: I'm sorry. I haven't stopped all day and the others have just been sitting in the staffroom drinking coffee.

Mary: How dare you? Don't go blaming your temper on us, just because you keep forgetting to charge for service washes.

Stephanie: What?!

Kate: It was only one. And the powder machine is broken, and

Stephanie: Didn't I ask you to ring the engineer about that?

Kate: Yes, but I haven't had time

Liz: Look, are we going to get this service wash done or not?

Stephanie: We've got a bit of a problem at the moment

Liz: Well it's not *our* problem. Come on, Ellen, we'll go down the road.

Stephanie: (*After a slight pause*) I think you'd better follow them, don't you? I'll send your wages on.

MUSIC No. 5 - WAIT TILL YOUR FATHER GETS HOME

(This should be sung by the whole company, split into two groups of PARENTS and two groups of CHILDREN).

All Children: *Are you coming out to play?*

Child 1: *Dare you to*

Child 2: *I bet you can't*

Child 1: *Who's got whiskers?*

Child 2: *That's my aunt!*

All Child: *Na na na na na na!*

All Parents: *Where d'you think you're going now*

Par 1: *You look stupid in that hat*

Par 2: *Don't you speak to me like that!*

All Par: *Do as your father says!*

All: *Ain't it great, ain't it grand being children?*

Isn't life just a marv'lous thing

When your mum starts to scream

'Cos the cats got curlers on it?

Wait till your father gets home!

Child 1: *Touched you then, so now you're it!*

Child 2: *You're a baby and it shows!*

Child 1: *Your dad's got a great big nose!*

All Child: *Na na na na na na!*

All Par: *Do you know what time it is?*

Par 1: *Sit up straight and eat your greens*

Par 2: *Do you know what that word means?*

All Par: *Do as your father says!*

All: *Ain't it great ain't it grand being parents?
Isn't life just a marv'lous thing
When the 'phone starts to ring
'Cos the neighbour's window's broken?
Wait till your father gets home!*

DANCE

All: *Ain't it great ain't it grand being parents?
Isn't life just a marv'lous thing
When the 'phone starts to ring
'Cos the neighbour's window's broken?
Wait till your father gets
Wait till your father gets
Wait till your father gets home!*

[This would be a suitable place for an interval if one was required].

SCENE 13 - THE OSBORNES' TEA

(The stage is set up as in SCENE I. KATE OSBORNE is serving the tea. PHILLIP has work scattered on the table. EMMA and LOUISE are the only other ones at the table. They are constantly playing).

Kate: Here you go, darlings, eat up.

Emma: Great. Potato mush - again!

Phil: Just be grateful and mind my work.

Kate: Sorry darling. So what happened to let you come home early?

Phil: Oh, a a client let me down at the last minute.

Kate: Couldn't you put your work away, dear?

Phil: Yes, just a minute. Try and control your children can't you?

Kate: Yes, darling.

Emma: Yuk!

Kate: What's the matter?

Emma: I feel sick.

Phil: What?

Louise: Nothing.

Phil: Eat your food and don't play with it.

(LOUISE pulls a face).

Kate: Louise, don't look at your father like that.

Lou: Sorry.

Kate: Aren't you two eating?

Emma: It's disgusting.

Kate: Well fine. I'll get you two something later then.

Lou: Like pizza and chips.

Phil: Kate, really.

Emma: I've got some chocolate upstairs. Do you want some?

Lou: Yeah!

Emma: Can't have any!

(They chase off to their room).

Phil: Look this has got to stop. You don't do anything about trying to control the children. You're always tired. What do you DO all day to make you so tired?

Kate: What do I do? I'll tell you what I do. I iron YOUR shirts. I cook YOUR meals. I do YOUR washing. I make YOUR bed. I clean YOUR house. And I try, not very well obviously, to look after, discipline, play and talk to OUR children. Oh. I also act as your secretary when someone *else's* secretary rings up before you get in, to say that she'd reconsidered but didn't think her boyfriend would like her being away a whole night even if she told him it was a business trip with her new boss! I'm sorry, I forgot to pass that message on!

(PHILLIP is speechless. Cross-fade to FINCHLEY's scene).

SCENE 14 - THE FINCHLEYS' TEA

(SAMANTHA and TABITHA are watching television. HARRY is off stage).

Harry: Girls, dinner's ready. turn off the T.V. Go and call your mum.

(They both shout from the table).

Sam: }

Tab: } Mum, dinner's ready!

Harry: Don't shout!

(He enters with the meals).

Sam: } *(They whisper)*

Tab: } Mum, dinner's ready!.

Sam: She hasn't come down yet, Dad.

Harry: All right. I'll go and fetch her.

Tab: Can't we start?

Harry: All right then. Pamela, are you coming down to dinner? Obviously not.

(PAMELA then staggers in as the others have started eating).

Pam: Well thanks for waiting for me.

Harry: We didn't.

Pam: What's this? I canNOT eat that. My skin will erupt!

Harry: It's egg.

Pam: Well look at that egg it's running on legs!

Harry: So what do you want to eat?

Pam: Oh, I'll get something out.

Harry: Going out again?

Pam: Again? I hardly ever go out. Not properly.

Harry: Socialising are we?

Pam: What do you mean by that? I'll need some money.

Harry: Get a job.

Pam: Get a life.

Harry: So where are you going tonight?

Pam: Oh, just give me the money. *(He does, staring at her).* Short week was it?

Harry: You have no idea

Pam: Oh, I'm not that expensive.

Harry: That's not what I've heard.

Pam: Harry, please, not in front of the children.

Harry: Just go. You've no idea just how close I am...

Pam: Bye, darling. I WOULD help with the washing up, but places to go, people to see, you know how it is *(she throws a kiss to the girls)* Goodnight.

Girls: Goodnight Mummy.

Pam: *(to HARRY)* Caio.

(Cross-fade to BLACKS' dinner party).

SCENE 15 - THE BLACKS' AND PRENTICES' DINNER PARTY

(The whole BLACK family [apart from PHYLLIS] and the PRENTICES are sitting around the table).

Sue: I'm so glad you could come. We've been trying to get together for so long.

Marg: Yes, it's not easy with John's schedule.

Sue: It must be very interesting working with computers. You must be terribly clever.

John: No, not really. Any moron could do it.

(MARGARET kicks him under the table)

John: Ow! Uh.. once they've been shown how to. I I've always admired housewives actually. Working from dawn till dusk, on your feet all day, looking after the kids

(Uneasy pause as MARGARET and JOHN exchange looks. SUE notices).

Sue: You don't have any children, do you?

Marg: No, not at the moment.

Peter: Oh, so you're giving it a go, then? Plenty of excuse for practice and no fear of outstaying your welcome! *(Laughs)*

Sue: Peter! Please! Just for once let's have a civilised evening.

Andrew: At least it's more interesting than talking about housewives and work. You won't even BUY me a computer so I can be like everyone else.

Sue: Computers are not the be all and end all, Andrew. Wasting your time sitting in front of silly games will do you no good at all.

John: I have to disagree

Marg: John, please don't start.

John: No, Sue has made a point in conversation and I'm going to question it. No matter what you may think, computers are the future, and the more practice the youngsters get, the better.

Peter: Bit like you two, eh? Practice makes perfect?

Marg: *(Beginning to get upset)* No, it's not like that.

John: No. Not at all. Unless you call four years practice with no result, progress.

Marg: John!

Andrew: *(To JOHN)* Do you mean if I practice for four years I could be as good as you?

John: Christ! You'd probably score first time!

Andrew: What?

Marg: I think we could change the subject now.

John: Which? Computers or sex? Take it from me, Andrew, sex is a damned sight easier to do, but far more difficult to get a result.

Marg: John!

Andrew: You mean you've been at it for four years and still can't do it?

Sue & Peter: Andrew!

John: I'll have you know, sonny, that it takes two to tango, and dancing with a partner who can't do the steps is not a lot of fun!

Marg: John! (*She cries*).

Sue: Please!

Peter: I think we've gone far enough now.

John: That's what I think every night!

Sue: (*Standing*) That's enough! I'd be grateful if you'd leave now. I knew I shouldn't have offered sherry before the meal. There's only a certain type of person that can take that sort of sophistication! You have managed to ruin the most important night for me this year. I won't forget this and I certainly won't forgive.

John: Right, let's go! Come on!

Marg: John!

John: Let's go and practice some more. I'll let you know how the practice goes! (*To ANDREW*) I'll see what I can do about a computer for you. It's no good being able and willing but not have the tools to do anything about it!

(*MARGARET storms out, sobbing*).

MUSIC No. 6 - TOE THE LINE

(*All FEMALE ADULTS, CHILDREN and a CHORUS*).

All Children: *When I'm grown up, come what may
I'll be free to do
All the things I wanted to
All day everyday*

Chorus: (*Glory be, glory be*)

All Child: *I'll watch the television, morning, noon and night,*

Chorus: (*Oh, Lord*)

All Child: *I'll go to pubs and parties, go to bed just when I like*

Chorus: (*My own sweet Lord*)

All Child: *Not fair being younger, can't do what I want,
But the future looks so bright.*

Chorus: *(Yes it does, yes it does).*

All Child: *So while we're marking time, we'll toe the party line,
We know the fun our parents have*

Chorus: *(Yes they do)*

All Child: *Can't wait to have it all, to party 'til we fall,
Then we'll toe the line n o more.*

Chorus: *(Glory be, glory be).*

All Adults: *Praise the Lords of all they survey
Get their tea on time
Give me strength to make their lives
One big holiday.*

Chorus: *(Glory be, glory be).*

All Adults: *They use me as a chauffeur, they use me as cook,*

Chorus: *(Oh Lord)*

All Adults: *They use me as a waitress, without a second look,*

Chorus: *(My own sweet Lord)*

All Adults: *They use me as cleaner, I love those dirty loos,
Yes I love dem jobs I doos.*

Chorus: *(Yes I doos, yes I doos!).*

All Adults: *We've waited all this time to toe the washing line
We never knew what fun we'd have.*

Chorus: *(Never knew!)*

All Adults: *A grown-up has it all, but Eve enjoyed her fall
So we'll toe the line no more.*

Chorus: *(Allelu, Allelu).*

DANCE

All: *So father, dear father, we'll toe the line
We'll toe the line no more, oh Lordy
Father, oh Father, give them a sign
'Cos we'll toe the line no more.
Amen!*

SCENE 16 - THE HAMSTER

(An empty stage apart from LOUISE OSBORNE who is kneeling).

Louise Osborne: Come on, Smartie. Wake up. Wake up. Why aren't you moving?
Wake up. You're all cold.

(She cries. KATE OSBORNE enters).

Kate: Louise, where? Louise, what's the matter?

Lou: He's dead.

Kate: Oh Louise don't get upset like this. He would have wanted you to remember the good times. He's gone to a better place now. He lived a good long life.

Lou: They'll put him in a hole.

Kate: Of course they will, dear. They always do.

Lou: But mummy, will he have plenty of room?

Kate: Yes dear. It will be quite a big hole.

Lou: Can I help dig it?

Kate: Oh, no dear. I don't think so.

Lou: But I want to.

Kate: No. It will be better if you stay here. I don't think it's something little girls should see.

Lou: Well let me choose where to bury him. I know! In the garden!

Kate: No, dear, that's already been sorted out.

Lou: You're not going to bury him are you? You're just going to throw him in the bin!

Kate: No, dear, you don't do that with people.

Lou: But Smartie's a hamster!

Kate: I well he Smartie ! I'm sorry, I thought daddy told you. Uncle Jim passed away last night dear.

Lou: Where's he gone?

Kate: He's gone to heaven darling.

Lou: Does that mean I won't see him again?

Kate: You will one day, dear.

(Pause).

Lou: He really made me laugh

Kate: Yes, dear. We all liked him...

Lou: (Pause) Especially when he ran round his wheel

SCENE 17 - THE FATHER

(SUE BLACK is in the bedroom, getting ready for bed. PETER enters having gone to answer the 'phone).

Sue: You weren't long! Who was it?

Peter: Darling, it was your mother. (They look at each other). I'm afraid your father died earlier this evening.

Sue: Oh, well (pretending to be brave). I suppose I've been expecting it

Peter: Your mother has gone round to her house to sort a few things out. I suppose it's a blessing she wasn't here for that dreadful dinner party.

Sue: Yes yes Although she would have put that nasty little man in his place, and if Daddy had been here, well (she cries) Why do I always do it so wrong, Peter? Why can't I ever make anything work or do anything the right way?

Peter: Oh, Sue.... you're a wonderful, caring mother and wife, just like yours. All you can do is try your best, and the best laid plans are destroyed by idiots like Prentice.

Sue: No it's not that! That's all you think I care about, isn't it? Making this dinner party the biggest success possible, regardless of what else is going on around me. Well, perhaps you're right. I didn't go to see Daddy today because I was preparing the dinner. He said to me yesterday "Don't worry Sue, dear, you know where your priorities are. I'll be all right. I know it's very important to you." We made a promise, you see. That we'd always talk always listen. And do you know the last words he said to me? He said, "I've had my life, you get on with yours. Besides which, you bore me stupid!" (Pause. She cries). He joked about me being boring and I stormed out feeling insulted. That's it, isn't it? I'm so wrapped up in what's important to me I've forgotten how to laugh. Daddy never forgot how to laugh I wonder how Mummy is?

Peter: She'll be fine. She's a strong woman your mother.

Sue: Stronger than me, you mean. God, I was rude to her last thing this morning.

Peter: Don't be so hard on yourself. None of this is your fault. There's nothing to feel guilty about.

Sue: Oh, isn't there? I've made so many people unhappy. That poor girl this evening, Margaret. She needed help and support. It was obvious. But no, I was much too interested in seeing my precious dinner party crumble round my table I loved my father, but I don't think I ever told him.

(She breaks down).

Peter: There's still hope for you yet, Susan Black. And we do all love you.

(PETER exits).

MUSIC No. 7 - THE SILENCE OF NOW

Sue: *It wasn't in my plans to turn the whole world inside out:
(or a soloist) To let myself forget completely everything I had.
You never played love by the rules and even now you play it cool,
And once again you cast me as the fool.*

*So many things I need to say,
But I can't find the words to start.
Remembering how you looked at me;
I see your face still torn apart.
Should I kill the question lying in your heart?
Across the years I hear your voice
Making our vow.
But what can break the silence of now?*

*The pictures in my mind return of how you loved me then,
And now I know I can't be free of what you made me feel.
You challenged me to turn away, slam the door on yesterday,
And the hate and love I have to hold at bay.*

*So many things I need to say,
But I can't find the words to start.
Remembering how you looked at me,
I see your face still torn apart.
Should I kill the question lying in your heart?
Across the years I hear your voice
Making our vow.
But what can break the silence of now?
But what can break the silence of now?*

SCENE 18 - THE GRANDMOTHER

(PHYLLIS enters. She is in the living room of her own house. She is talking as if her husband were there).

Phyllis: What a day! Our daughter kicks me out of the house so I'm not an embarrassment Sit by you all afternoon and you never say a word Still, the squeeze of my hand was enough *(She sits)*. Wonder why Sue didn't want me there tonight?... I don't know why she takes things so seriously. I don't know where she gets it from *(Looking around the room)*. This place will have to go I suppose We've had fun in here. Remember the first time we came into this room? You really liked it So did I. And you decorated it beautifully. Just the way we wanted. No more worries about kids wrecking anything just how we wanted it *(She notices a photograph on the mantle-piece and starts to cry)*. I've lost everything now, everything I ever had except memories and of course Sue, but I'm not sure she wants me now I'll have to learn to laugh on my own *(She breaks down as she speaks)*. God I wish you were still here *(She looks to the chair where he should be)*. I'll see you soon

SCENE 19 - THE BEST FRIEND

(An empty stage. EMMA OSBORNE storms into her bedroom, shouting downstairs).

Emma: It's not my fault. I didn't know I was supposed to close the gate. No-one tells me anything, and I've got a sore bottom *(She sees her 'friend')*. Oh, hi Bob. Nice of you to drop in. Do you want to help me colour? *(She settles on the floor and starts to colour in a picture)*. No you've done that wrong there Bob where do you come from? It's a secret isn't it? I bet it's better than here isn't it? I bet nobody shouts at you Why do Mum and Dad shout at me so much? I can't do anything right Maybe it's just me *(She looks round, hearing something)*. Ssh.. I think Mum's coming No, it's all right I've got to go to Nicola's party tomorrow. I don't really want to go, but she's my best friend. Well, she's my only friend apart from you, that is. We have to play those silly games and I'm always the last to be picked. *(As though BOB has answered her)*. Yes I AM! *(She sits up and looks round)*

as though BOB is disappearing). I'm sorry Bob, please don't go Jenny'll be there. She's always there. She doesn't like me. She likes it when people laugh at me *(She hears something again)*. Ssh! Mum's coming! Oh I forgot she can't hear you well that's more fool her! Let's play a trick on her so that *(She realises that he has gone)*. Bob? Don't leave me! Bob. Bob?!

SCENE 20 - THE PREGNANCY

(ABBIE OSBORNE and NAOMI, a friend, are relaxing watching the television at the Osbornes' house).

Abbie: Naomi? Naomi?

Naomi: What! I'm watching this.

Abb: Naomi I've got to talk to you.

Nao: Mmmmm.

Abb: No, seriously. Listen. Switch it off. I need to talk to you.

Nao: Oh, all right! This had better be good!

Abb: I've been to the doctor's.

Nao: I didn't know you were ill.

Abb: No, I'm fine.

Nao: So why go to the doctor's?

Abb: about the baby.

Nao: What? Your mum's having a baby? At her age? Urgh!

Abb: No! Me - I'm having a baby.

(Pause).

Nao: Oh, Abbie *(She hugs her.)* What are you going to do?

Abb: What do you mean? It's mine and Chris's.

Nao: You ARE going to get rid of it?

Abb: *(Incredulously)* No!

Nao: Don't be stupid!

Abb: What?

Nao: What did your mum say?

Abb: I haven't told her. I can't.

Nao: You've got to! I mean, I think she might notice eventually, don't you?

Abb: I CAN'T tell her, all right?

Nao: You're not seriously intending to go through with this?

Abb: Yes.

Nao: But you're only sixteen.

Abb: I know, but with Chris it'll be like a real family.

Nao: You're still at school you're just you're only sixteen!

Abb: Look, it'll be wonderful. Just think, me and Chris can get a place of our own. You can help us decorate the nursery. We can go shopping for baby clothes. Even changing the nappies could be fun. And if Chris and I wanted to go out, you could babysit for us!

Nao: Stop it! Just shut up!

Abb: What? What's the matter?

Nao: Listen to yourself. It's awful!

}repeated

Abb: What do you mean?

Nao: You haven't a clue, have you? You're throwing away the best years of your life.

Abb: Naomi, I don't

Nao: I'm sorry - I can't handle this. I'll I'll see you.

Abb: Naomi?!

(KATE OSBORNE enters as NAOMI leaves).

Kate: Abbie what's the matter?

Abb: Nothing Mum.

Kate: Come on, you can tell me.

Abb: No!

Kate: You've always told me things in the past. We don't have secrets.

Abb: Not this time, Mum.

Kate: Is it Chris?

Abb: Yes.

Kate: Have you had an argument?

Abb: No.

Kate: Well then, what is it?

Abb: Nothing.

Kate: Come on Abbie. I know you. You're not yourself. I know what well why don't YOU tell me?

Abb: Oh, mum! I'm pregnant and I don't know what to do and what if Chris says he doesn't want it and I I *(By this time she is distraught. They hug).*

Kate: There, there, you silly, silly girl. I know.

Abb: What?

Kate: I know.

Abb: How? Why didn't you say something?

Kate: I've been through it as well, remember? I knew you'd tell me in your own good time.

Abb: I'm not going to get rid of it, Mum, I'm not!

Kate: No, darling, I know.

SCENE 21 - INFERTILITY

(*MARGARET PRENTICE is at a friend's, CHLOE*).

Marg: Nice wallpaper.

Chloe: Thanks. Did you say you wanted a biscuit?

Marg: No, thanks.

Chloe: So, how are you, then?

Marg: Fine, fine.

Chloe: How's John?

Marg: Oh he's still the same. He gets a bit obsessive about children. He keeps talking about what we'll call them and how we'll dress them. We were in the park the other day and we saw all the mums and dads with their children playing really happily. He says that'll be us one day. I just don't know. We've been trying for so long now Nice picture.

Chloe: Yes, I got it from Habitat. It was in the sale.

Marg: Oh.

Chloe: He's blaming you, isn't he?

Marg: No well

Chloe: Have you thought of adoption?

Marg: He won't even consider the idea. He adopted a girl with his first wife and it never really worked out. I just don't understand, though. I've never done anything wrong. I'm a woman like the rest. I have a right to be a mother! Don't I deserve a child? I could play games with her, take her to the park, sing her lullabies even changing her nappies could be fun I I've had all the tests. Would would you come with me to find out the results? I think I might need some moral support. You see I don't want to tell John he'll only get the wrong idea and

Chloe: (*She interrupts*). Of course I'll come. It'll be all right, you'll see.

(*Scene changes to a doctor's office*).

(The chairs are turned, and a DOCTOR enters with a file).

Doctor: Mrs. Prentice?

Marg: Yes.

Doc: Your results. Here we are. I can find absolutely nothing wrong with you.
There appears to be no reason why you shouldn't have children.

Marg: So what happens now? I don't understand.

Doctor: Well I think the next step is for your husband to have some tests.

Marg: Oh, John's not too keen on hospitals and doctors and that sort of stuff.

Doc: He wouldn't have to come in. All he has to do is fill a specimen bottle.

Marg: What? With you know?

Doc: Yes.

Marg: What FILL it?

Doctor: No

Chloe: *(Interrupting)*. Margaret, don't you realise what this means?

Marg: What?

Chloe: It's John! John's the one who can't have children!

MUSIC No. 8 - PARALLEL LIVES

(All the families are involved in this song. After the initial entrances, they need to be grouped as Mothers, Fathers, Teenagers and Children in their own families so that the song becomes a scene with conversations).

Mothers: *(To Fathers)*

I'm glad you're home.

Fathers:

What a dreadful day it's been!

Mothers:

Why not just 'phone?

Fathers:

I've a pile of work to do.

Children: *(Running in)*

Oh, Daddy, Daddy can we play?

Mothers:

Let your Father get indoors!

Children:

Oh Mummy, Daddy never plays.

Mothers:

Don't be silly! Play outdoors!

Teenagers:

Tidy your room! Don't be out late!

Everything I have to do here I hate!

Mothers & Fathers: *(Spoken)*

Darling!

Teenagers:

Don't call me darling!

(The following section happens all at the same time. It is clear in the score).

Chil: *Why will no-one play with me?
It's not fair!
Don't you poke your tongue out!*

Moths: *Can you fix the iron tonight?
Shall I sew that button on?
Oh, my God, the washing!
I'll never do it! I'll never do it!
I'll never do it! I'll never do it!
Do it! Do it! Do it! Do it!
Do it! Do it! Do it!*

Ch 1: *Mummy! She hit me!*

Ch 2: *I didn't!*

Ch 1: *You did!*

Ch 2: *Did not!*

Both: *(Spoken) Shut up!*

Teens: *Got no money,
Need some money,
Got to keep up,
With changing taste,
I could die and no-one would notice.
Can't believe this place!*

Faths: *Stop it!
For goodness' sake!
I've got work to do.
I don't believe the noise in here.
The noise! x 9
(Spoken) Shut up!*

Moth/Fath/Chil: *We really love each other*

Teens: *What a flippin' joke!*

Moth/Fath/Chil: *We are the model fam'ly.*

Teens: *I don't give a damn!*

Moth/Fath: *We love our children and they love us too*

Chil: *Mummy loves me much more than you
No she doesn't, yes she does.*

Teens: *Swearing, caring, sharing, daring
Wond'ring what I should be wearing
Credibility you see is everything to us.*

Moth/Fath: *They're everything to us*

Moth/Fath/Chil: *Together now,*

Teens: *God I wish they'd go away!*

Moth/Fath/Chil: *At home we'll stay.*

Teens: *Want a bet? Not on your life!*

Moth/Fath: *You'll be like us*

Teen/Chil: *We'll be like them!*

All: *The same again!
Parallel lives*

Teen/Chil: *Oh God they mean it!*
All: *Parallel lives*
Moth/Fath: *Don't make the same mistakes as us.*
All: *Parallel lives.*

SCENE 22 - THE FIRST BALLET CLASS

MUSIC No. 9 - BALLET CLASS (Instrumental).

(SAMANTHA FINCHLEY is in her ballet class. EMMA OSBORNE is also there. The girls are finishing off a very simple movement. Ideally, a ballet bar should be used in this scene. When the music finishes, the girls curtsey).

Teacher: *(Off stage).* That's it girls. Well done. Same time next week. Get yourselves changed ready for your parents.

(The girls start to chatter. SAM demonstrates the final move to KIRSTY).

Sam: It goes like that. Got it?

Kirsty: I think so. That was really good!

Jane: We've got to go now. My mummy's coming to pick me up in a minute.

Mandy: Yeah. I'm going to her house.

Jane: Don't worry Kirsty, if you keep practising you'll get it. Bye.

(SAM sticks her tongue out. EMMA sits on the floor).

Sam: Don't worry about them. They're silly. *(To EMMA).* What are you doing on the floor?

Emma: Getting up!

Sam: Well, my mummy says that people who don't look after their backs will never be as good as me. You've got to sit straighter than that and you've got to pretend you've got a string coming from the top of your head.

(EMMA yelps as SAM pulls the top of her hair).

Sam: That's better!

Emma: *(to CAROLINE who is practising)* What are you doing?

Caroline: Samantha, could you show me the new bit, please?

Sam: Oh, you never listen.

Caroline: But you always shout at me if I get it wrong, so you should show me.

Sam: O.K. But only once. Move, I need lots of room.

(CAROLINE stares at SAM's feet).

Sam: What are you doing?

Caroline: I'm looking at your feet.

Sam: You can't do that. You've got to have your back straight and look forward.

(She does the move).

Kirsty: *(Clapping).* That was really good!

Caroline: Samantha I couldn't see that. It was too fast.

Sam: Oh, I can't do it again.

Caroline: Why?

Sam: I'm sorry. You should have watched more carefully.

Kirsty: She's saving her energy.

Caroline: Why?

Kirsty: Sugar Plum Fairy.

Caroline: Oh no. You can't be the Sugar Plum Fairy. Miss Carter said I could do it. Mummy made me a dress and everything.

Sam: No. 'Cos everyone knows I'm the best in the whole class. She's already told me and Mummy's bought my costume.

Emma: Ha, ha! Sugar BUM Fairy! She *(pointing to CAROLINE)* can be the fairy and you *(pointing to SAM)* can be the bum!

Caroline: That's rude. My mummy says you should never say that. You should say bottom.

Emma: Well it doesn't sound right if I say Sugar Bottom Fairy. *(She giggles).* Samantha, is this what you're trying to do?

(EMMA does the move perfectly).

Sam: Well, it's nearly there. But it needs a lot more practice.

Kirsty: She'll never be as good as you.

Sam: Give them hope.

SCENE 23 - THE SECOND BALLET CLASS

MUSIC No. 10 - THE BALLET

(The whole of this scene is done to music. Use as many girls as possible as dancers. SHELLEY's monologue should be timed to coincide with the changes in the music, and the cast should be choreographed packing up after a ballet class, and leaving in twos and threes. The timing is made clear in the score. NICKY OSBORNE and ALISON from the classroom scene are vital to this scene. The ballet bar is also used in this scene. The girls start by finishing off a ballet move. SHELLEY is the one who keeps getting it wrong).

Teacher: *(Off stage).* Thank you very much ladies, for wasting my time. This is going on stage in two days time . Two YEARS would be more like it. I'll see you tomorrow evening perhaps.

(The girls stare at SHELLEY).

Shelley: What? Do you think I did it on purpose? We're all tired, Kelly. We've all had a long day Oh, I keep forgetting you're Miss Perfect You're such a stuck up little bitch! You wouldn't even be here if it weren't for your parents With that posture and technique? I don't think so! The only reason is because I don't know why I bothered now Selfish cows! Well if you're so good why don't you take the lead? You're too small to be a dancer You can't even walk let alone dance! That's it, go and join Miss High and Mighty! Well what can I say? Thanks a bunch! Where were you when I needed you? Yes you! Sitting there like a couple of wimps! I'm tired as well but I've got no-one to blame We're not all like you! You're pathetic! Oh, now you're going to cry There you go, the chin's going Any minute now *(The girl cries).* There, what did I tell you? So that's my fault as well? Why don't you join her then? You're as bad as the rest of them ALISON? ALISON?

(Her best friend looks, turns, and is the last to leave. NICKY has been practising on the bar. She looks at SHELLEY).

Shelley: Well? Well? What are you looking at? *(NICKY moves from the bar and starts to dance. She indicates to SHELLEY that she should join in. SHELLEY starts to mirror/copy NICKY. Gradually, the rest of the GIRLS enter, ALISON first. SHELLEY softens, smiles at ALISON and NICKY, and they all do the whole routine, finishing as the scene began).*

SCENE 24 - THE FINAL SEQUENCE

MUSIC No. 11 - CHAOS (Instrumental.)

(The cast enter either singly or in groups and meander around the stage, repeating a line from the show. This crescendos until all the cast are on stage. They finish together on "Shut up!" As many or as few of the following can be used. Once a line has been said, it should be repeated ad lib. The whole scene is underscored).

- 1: A model family.
- 2: A day in the life.
- 3: Problems, pressure.
- 4: Similarities, differences.
- 5: Mummy, Daddy never plays.
- 6: Ner ner- ner ner ner!
- 7: It's not fair!
- 8: That's rude. They're silly.
- 9: But you always shout.
- 10: Mummy, Daddy, Mum, Dad.
- 11: Can't you control the children?
- 12: Iron the shirts, cook the meals.
- 13: It takes two to tango!
- 14: Dance with me.
- 15: You bore me stupid!
- 16: We really love each other.
- 17: Darling, darling.
- 18: Don't call me darling!
- 19: Stop hassling me!
- 20: I don't give a damn!
- 21: I'm going crazy!
- 22: (ALL) SHUT UP!

(The COMPANY leave the stage quickly, whispering their lines, leaving four on stage to deliver one line each).

- 1: A day in the life.
- 2: A model family.
- 3: Growing up, growing old.
- 4: We all love each other.

All Four: How can we be so different and similar?

(The music is continuous and they leave as the introduction to the final song starts).

MUSIC No. 12 - PARALLEL LINES (FINALE)

(The COMPANY should be divided into seven groups. They enter one group at a time, singing their line. Once they have started, they should carry on until all seven groups are on stage).

I: *Nothing really changes, nothing really matters*

II: *Age will make us older and wiser won't it?*

III: *You can on-ly read be-tween the lines*

IV: *We will try to be diff'rent*

V: *I'm going to reach upwards*

VI: *Nothing's gonna stop me, I can fly*

(This group should be divided into two).

VII: *Closer and closer ev'ry day.*

Company or Quartet: *Parallel Lines, Parallel Lines.
Parallel Lines, Parallel Lines.*

Solo: *Parallel Lines will lead the way.*

(Add): *Parallel Lines will meet one day.*

(Add): *Mirrored by youth, betrayed by age*

(Add): *Tempers rise and passions rage*

All: *Shut them out and close the cage.*

Parallel Lines will lead the way.

Parallel Lines will meet one day.

Mirrored by youth, betrayed by age

*Tempers rise and passions rage,
Shut them out and close the cage.*

*Parallel Lines will lead the way.
Parallel Lines will meet one day.*

*Parallel Lines, Parallel Lines.
Parallel Lines, Parallel Lines.*

BLACKOUT