

THE RAILWAY CHILDREN

The Musical

Adapted from the book of the same name
by E. Nesbit

by
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and
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Music by
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THE RAILWAY CHILDREN
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THE CAST

Roberta }
Phyllis } *The "Railway Children"*
Peter }
Mother
Father
Ruth *A Maid*
Man with cart
Mr Gills *The Station-master*
Mr Perks *The Porter*
Mrs Viney
Dr Forrest
The Old Gentleman
Mr Szczepansky
Engine Driver
Mrs Perks
The six Perks Children

Chorus / Crowd of passengers, villagers etc.

THE RAILWAY CHILDREN

by Robert Willis and Philip Lawson

ACT I

(The three CHILDREN sit waving to the passing train).

MUSIC 1: RAILWAY CHILDREN

Chorus: *Railway children
Watching the trains go fast,
Railway children
Waving as folks go past;
Passengers wave back on their way,
Knowing they'll see them ev'ry day,
Trains may move on but here they'll stay -
Railway children
Watching the line.*

*Railway children
Sad that their father's gone,
Railway children
Sending a message on,
"Carry our love, we don't know where,
Tell him we miss him and we care".
After the train they sadly stare,
Railway children
Watching the line.*

*Railway children
Glad that the trains go by,
Railway children,
Watching the steam-clouds fly,
Somehow the nine-fifteen's a friend
Taking each message that they send
Promising them a happy end.
Railway children
Watching the line.*

(The CHILDREN turn round and are left on stage by themselves as the passengers and station folk walk away).

Roberta: *(to audience)* Of course we weren't always railway children, not railway children at all to begin with. We were just ordinary and lived in London in a big red brick fronted villa with glass in the front door.

Phyllis: *(remembering it)* The bathroom had hot and cold water and there were electric bells and french windows and fires in the nursery with Mother Goose wallpaper.

Peter: *(joining in)* We had our own nursery maid and a dog called James, and Cook and Ruth who helped mother.

Roberta: Mother had more time in those days, but she didn't spend it paying dull calls to dull ladies. She used to read to us and play with us and even write stories for us and read them after tea.

Phyllis: She wrote poetry too, for special occasions like the christening of the kitten. And Father was never, never cross.

Peter: Except when we'd been really bad.

Phyllis: Well, perhaps then, but never for long, and he loved our games.

Roberta: And I don't suppose we ever thought about railways except as a means of getting to the zoo.

Peter: Well I did. *(Picking up his train).*

Phyllis: Yes you did, Peter - that was the day it all started!

Peter: My tenth birthday.

Roberta: And Father had given you the most beautiful new train.

(The stage begins to fill with children who have come to PETER's birthday party, music plays as they noisily give him presents. During the music, games go on and RUTH serves buns)

MUSIC 2: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, PETER

Chorus: *The special day of all the year for you
We've come here to enjoy ourselves, it's true!
But most of all we came because we knew
You'd want your friends here
On your birthday!
Happy Birthday Peter!*

*We're ready for a most exciting game
With prizes for the lucky ones to claim,*

*The game will be for you alone to name
So make your choice clear
On your birthday!*

*We'll play at blind man's buff,
A game that gets quite rough,
Until we've had enough,
And then we'll change the game.*

*We'll play at hide and seek
The seeker must not sneak
A look or dare to peak
And then we'll change the game.*

*We'll hunt and look around
High up and on the ground
Until the thimble's found
Yes that will be our game.*

*The special day of all the year for you
We've come here to enjoy ourselves, it's true!
But most of all we came because we knew
You'd want us all here
On your birthday,
Happy birthday, Peter!*

Peter: (*proudly holding his engine*) And now we are to have a demonstration.

(*Music begins.*)

Chorus: (*excited*) Oh!

Peter: A demonstration of the most magnificent (*holding engine higher*).

Chorus: (*more excited*) Oh!

Peter: Most magnilectable (*holds engine higher*).

Chorus: Oh!

Peter: Most magnificitudinous engine in all the world.

(*CHORUS applauds and gathers round.*)

MUSIC 3: RAILWAY ENGINE

Chorus: *Railway engine puffing round the little track that gets it nowhere.
How we'd like to sit inside your carriages and journey somewhere,
How we'd like to find a seaside train and climb aboard and go there.
We should sing and shout and laugh and wave and cheer until
we'd come there!*

Children: *Brand new engine
Moving fast and busy steaming,
How fine you look
Brass which shines and paint all gleaming.*

(PETER stops the train - music continues as he speaks).

Peter: Let's put some passengers in the tender.

Roberta: It's too small, silly!

Phyllis: What about Mr & Mrs Noah and some of the animals?

Peter: Of course, the Noah's Ark people. Get them Phyl.

Phyllis: *(getting them)* They'll enjoy this better than the Ark.

Peter: It'll make a change for them. *(He puts them in).* There!

(PETER sets the engine going again).

Chorus: *Railway engine puffing, etc.*

(The CHORUS and the CHILDREN sing the song once through and as they begin it again the engine suddenly blows up and everyone jumps back with a scream - then there is a silence, until PETER creeps forward)

Mother: Be careful, dear!

Peter: *(standing for a moment over his engine)* It's broken

(MUSIC 3a begins as he says this, the guests gradually turn and leave the stage during dialogue).

Peter: *(stooping to pick up the engine)* It's broken *(turns to MOTHER)* it's broken, Mother, my engine's broken. *(He takes it to her).*

Phyllis: *(going to hold ROBERTA's hand)* Oh Bobby, this is awful.

Mother: *(comforting PETER)* There, there now dear, I know it looks awful, but

I'm sure it's nothing your Father won't be able to mend.

Peter: Do you really think so Mother?

Mother: Of course I do, dear. You mustn't cry!

Peter: (*pushing his cuff into his eyes*) I'm not crying. It's the steam.

Mother: Of course dear. (*Music stops*).

Roberta: Here's Father now.

(*FATHER enters in his overcoat which RUTH takes from him as he takes it off*).

Father: Well now, what's all this - I thought I'd be in time for some games. Thank you, Ruth.

(*RUTH goes out with the coat*).

Roberta: Oh Father, something awful's happened.

Father: Something awful, Bobby? (*teasing*) Phyllis's doll hasn't been sick again has she? Or perhaps Cook forgot the birthday cake? (*He sits down*).

Phyllis: Oh no, it's much worse than that. (*She puts her handkerchief over her eyes*).

Father: Well, come on, out with it.

Peter: (*quietly, coming up to FATHER with the train in his hands*) It's my engine, Father. It blew up.

Father: (*taking the engine*) Peter, I'm sorry.

Mother: It gave them all quite a shock, dear.

Father: (*looking at the engine*) Of course.

Peter: (*nervously*) Is there any hope?

Father: (*smiling*) Hope? Rather! Tons of it. But we'll want something besides hope. A bit of brazing say, or some solder, and a new valve. I think we'd better keep it for a rainy day. In other words, I'll give up Saturday afternoon to it and you shall all help me!

Peter: Can girls help to mend engines?

Father: Of course they can. Girls are just as clever as boys and don't you forget it! Now, what about some birthday cake?

Roberta: I'll get it.

Father: How would you like to be an engine driver, Phyl?

Phyllis: My face would always be dirty, wouldn't it?

Roberta: I should just love it (*gives FATHER the cake*) Do you think I could, Father, when I'm grown up? Or even a stoker?

Father: You mean a fireman. Well if you still want to when you're grown up, we'll see about making you a fire-women.

(Loud knocking at the door).

Father: Who on earth can that be? An Englishman's house is his castle, of course, but I do wish they built semi-detached villas with moats and drawbridge.

(RUTH enters).

Father: Who is it Ruth?

Ruth: Two gentlemen wanting to see you sir, I've shown them into the library.
(RUTH exits).

Mother: I expect it's the subscription to the Vicar's testimonial, or else it's the choir fund.

Father: *(going out)* Well, we'll see.

Mother: Get rid of them quickly, dear. It does break up the evening so and it's nearly the children's bedtime.

Roberta: I wish we had got a moat and a drawbridge, then when we didn't want people, we could just pull up the drawbridge and no-one else could get in. I hope he won't be long.

Peter: Tell us a story, Mother, while we wait.

R & Ph: Yes, tell us a story.

Mother: *(sitting down - the children sit down on the floor round her)* Well, it must be a short one, it's almost bedtime.

MUSIC 4: THERE ONCE WAS A PRINCESS

Mother: *There once was a princess who lived long ago
In a castle with drawbridge and moat.
She lived with her father, a very old king,
With white hair and a beard like a goat.*

*All day she looked out of her window and sighed
For a prince who would make her his Queen
But all she could see on a large lily leaf
Was a frog who was ugly and green.*

*One day she was walking and sat by the moat
And the frog came and sat by her side.
She told him, because she had no-one to tell,
Of the Prince who would make her his bride.*

(RUTH enters interrupting the song).

Mother: What is it Ruth?

Ruth: If you please, ma'am, the master would like you to step into the library. He looks like the dead, ma'am; I think he's had bad news. You'd best prepare yourself for the worst - p'raps its a death in the family or a bank busted or -

Mother: That'll do Ruth, you can go.

(RUTH exits).

Mother: Amuse yourselves for a while children, I shan't be long. *(MOTHER exits).*

Peter: *(after a silence)* Oh dear, whatever can it be? Ruth thought someone had died.

Phyllis: Perhaps it's Aunt Emma and we shall have to look after her parrot.

Roberta: You're not to talk like that Phyl.

(RUTH re-enters looking tough).

Ruth: Come on now you children, your mother says I'm to put you to bed tonight.

Peter: Oh, but she hasn't finished the story.

Phyllis: And we hadn't said goodnight to Father.

Ruth: That's as maybe, miss, but your mother says you're to go to bed.

Roberta: What's happened, Ruth? It isn't bad news is it? Is anyone dead?

Ruth: Don't ask me no questions and I won't tell you no lies, miss. You'll know soon enough. Now then, off to bed with the lot of you.

(All exit).

(MUSIC 4a - as FATHER, in his overcoat, is brought out by two GENTLEMEN, embraces MOTHER and is taken away: MOTHER weeps and the stage darkens. Music continues as stage lightens to find the three CHILDREN and MOTHER - music ends).

Mother: Now, my darlings, I want to tell you something. Those men last night did bring very bad news, and Father will be away for some time. I am very worried about it, and I want you all to help me, and not make things harder for me.

Roberta: As if we would! *(holds MOTHER's hand).*

Mother: You can help me very much by being good and not quarrelling while I am

away, for I shall have to be away a good deal.

Peter: We won't quarrel, really we won't. But what has happened, Mother?

Mother: I want you not to ask me any questions about this trouble; and not to ask anybody else any questions. You'll promise, won't you?

Peter: (*ashamed*) I did ask Ruth, I'm sorry.

Mother: And what did she say?

Peter: She said I'd know soon enough.

Mother: It isn't necessary for you to know anything about it. It's about business, and you never do understand business do you?

Roberta: No, Mother. Is it something to do with Government? I know Father is in a Government office.

Mother: Yes, dear. Now that's enough. I must go, so you're to be good children: and you're not to worry, it will all come right in the end.

Phyllis: And don't you worry either, Mother. We'll be as good as gold.

(MOTHER exits and the CHILDREN come forward to talk to the audience).

Roberta: From then on everything was perfectly horrid. Mother was nearly always out and meals were dull and dirty.

Peter: The between - maid was sent away.

Phyllis: And Aunt Emma came on a visit. (*All groan*).

Roberta: She was preparing to go abroad as a governess and believed in keeping children in their proper places.

Peter: So we kept her in hers and spent most of our time downstairs with Cook who in a good mood would sing us songs.

Roberta: But one day when Peter annoyed Ruth with a booby trap over the bathroom door she boxed his ears and told him that if he didn't look out he'd go where his precious Father had gone. For that Mother sent her away.

Peter: Finally, one day Mother announced that we were leaving Edgcombe Villa and going to live in a little house in the countryside.

(They begin to put their coats on).

Phyllis: All week long we packed. Not just clothes like when you go to the seaside, but chairs and tables as well.

Roberta: And then we were off to the station, to a real train this time. It was the beginning of a new way of life.

(MOTHER, also in her coat, with a bag enters and the CHILDREN pick up cases. PEOPLE in outdoor clothes, PORTERS and NEWSPAPER BOYS enter as

though in the forecourt of a London station. During the song the train is revealed again, as at the beginning, and the family climb aboard).

MUSIC 5: THERE IS NOWHERE QUITE AS LIVELY

(Introduction to song as people gather and mill about).

Chorus: *There is nowhere quite as lively as a railway station platform,
It's the most exciting place that you will see.
With the people and the porters bringing luggage for the journey,
There is nowhere else you'd really want to be.*

*See the engine steam as it waits to go,
See the brasses gleam and the red lamps glow.
Some are sad to part from friends they know.
Some are keen to start as their faces show.*

*For the journey that's before them will quite take them from the city
And they'll race through ev'ry kind of country scene,
From the dirt and noise and bustle, from the brick and slate of London,
They'll arrive at destinations fresh and green.*

Mother: *(over the music)* This is our train, dears. All aboard.

Peter: *(as they climb aboard)* How exciting.

Roberta: I'm certainly going to be a stoker when I grow up.

Chorus: *See the engine jolt and shudder as the wheels begin their motion
See the carriages begin to move as well,
Hear the whistle of the guard which says the journey is beginning
As the passengers can now begin to tell.*

*For the station's gone and they're on their way
Past the buildings tall and the houses grey.
London's left behind and the fields appear
And the sun shines down from a sky that's clear.*

*There are picnics in the carriage for the passengers who travel
At a speed that is becoming very fast,
Till the sounding of the whistle and the slowing of the engine
Makes them sure they've reached their journey's end at last*

Makes them sure they've reached their journey's end at last
Makes them sure they've reached their journey's end at last.

(The PEOPLE leave the stage, which is rather dark, and MOTHER and the CHILDREN move downstage).

Mother: Here we are, dears, we're here.

Roberta: Brr, it's cold.

Peter: There's a man there with an old hard cart.

(MAN enters with cart).

Mother: He'll be the man who's come to carry our boxes. Good evening.

Man: Good - evening, Ma'am.

Mother: Did Mrs Viney send you?

Man: Aye, that she did ma'am. I've come for the luggage.

Mother: It's over there, we'll follow you.

Man: Righto, ma'am. *(Exits with cart).*

Phyllis: Who's Mrs Viney?

Mother: She's the woman I engaged to clean the place and put the furniture straight and get us some supper.

Peter: I could do with some supper, I'm starving! But where's the cab?

Mother: Don't be silly Peter, there are no cabs here.

Peter: Then how do we get to the house?

Mother: We walk, get along with you.

(All exit. The cart, now full of boxes and with a lantern hanging off the front leads them back on).

Mother: Is this the house?

Man: Aye, that it is ma'am. Three Chimneys it's called.

Roberta: There are no lights in any of the windows.

Mother: Knock at the door, Peter.

Peter: I can't see the door.

Man: 'Ere, 'ave the lamp young man.

(He hands him the lantern and PETER knocks at the door but there is silence).

Phyllis: There's no-one there.

Man: 'Appen as Mrs Viney's gone 'ome, yer train was late.

Mother: But she's got the key. What are we to do?

Man: She'll have left it under the doorstep. Folks do hereabouts.

Peter: (*looking*) Yes it's here.

Man: I thought as much. Open up an' I'll unload your boxes. (*Does so*).

(*They go inside and gather round the table which PETER shifts across*).

Mother: Wait, I'll light a candle. I thought Mrs Viney would have lit a fire.

Phyllis: I'm cold.

Peter: I'm hungry.

Mother: (*lighting a candle*) There, that's cheerful.

Roberta: What's that scratching noise.

Man: (*putting down last of boxes*) It's only rats.

(*ROBERTA and PHYLLIS shriek*)

Man: I'll be leaving you then. Goodnight. (*Exits*).

Phyllis: Oh dear, I wish we hadn't come!

Peter: ONLY rats!

(*They each light a candle*).

Mother: (*pulling herself together*) What fun! I'm sure they're only mice, not rats at all. Now let's all look for the supper Mrs Viney left us, I asked her to bring bread and butter and meat, so let's find the dining-room.

Peter: (*with a candle in hand in one corner*) Here's the dining-room but there's nothing in it.

Mother: Then let's look in the other rooms.

Roberta: There's nothing here.

Phyllis: And nothing over here.

Peter: And there are no other rooms are there, Mother?

Mother: What a horrid old woman! She's just walked off with the money and not got us anything to eat at all.

Phyllis: Then we shan't have any supper!

(*PETER groans*).

Mother: Oh yes we shall - it will be rather a strange supper, but we shall eat. Peter, open that box with the label on the side.

Peter: But we've no hammer, Mother.

Mother: Then use the coal-shovel. We must learn to make do.

Phyllis: I wish Father was here.

(ROBERTA kicks her)

Phyllis: What are you kicking me for, Bobby?

Mother: Now children, stop arguing, we're about to have a feast.

MUSIC 6: A SUPPER WE'LL SPREAD

Mother: *(reaching things from the crate)*

*A supper we'll spread without any bread
But with biscuits and tins of sardines.
Though meat we have not dried raisins we've got
And we'll feast here like kings and like queens.*

Children: *A supper we'll spread etc.*

Mother: *Here's marmalade too and what would we do
Without treacle and good candied peel?
With fine ginger wine our faces will shine
And full and content we shall feel.*

Children: *Here's marmalade too etc.*

Mother: *Then here's to our house and here's to each mouse
The crumbs of our feast they can share.
With candles that shine, with food and with wine,
Our table will never be bare.*

**Children }
& Mother}:** *Then here's to our house etc.*

Mother: *(laughing with the children)* Come along dears, let's carry it through to the dining room.

(They take the table and exit. Music as the stage is still in darkness and gradually all becomes light as it is morning and the children are walking down to the railway exploring).

Peter: I thought it was perfect having apple pie for breakfast! Much better than breakfast at Edgecombe Villa used to be.

Roberta: I don't think it will be like that every day Peter, it's only because Mother found the room which we couldn't find last night where Mrs Viney left supper.

Phyllis: And we're not allowed any more to have jam and butter on our bread, it has to be jam or butter - Mother says we have to learn how to be poor.

Peter: But this countryside is much jollier than the garden we used to have.

Roberta: It's very beautiful. We'd better not go back in yet while Mrs Viney is helping Mother to straighten out the house. What shall we do?

Peter: I vote we go along the railway to the station.

Phyllis: Let's do that.

Peter: Here's the line here. How funny it is to see a real railway line.

Roberta: It sounds as though a train is coming. Listen. What time is it Peter?

Peter: It's almost 9.15. Let's wait and see it go by.

Phyllis: Let's wave to it. Maybe it's going where Father is, it could take our love to him.

Roberta: Here it comes - let's wave.

(The train rushes past and they all wave).

Children: *(waving)* Take our love to Father.

Phyllis: It was like a great Green Dragon, I'm sure it will take our love to Father.

Peter: Dragons don't carry people's love, they'd be above it.

Phyllis: Yes, they do, if you tame them thoroughly first. They fetch and carry like pet spaniels and feed out of your hand. I wonder why Father never writes to us.

Roberta: Mother says he's been too busy but he'll write soon.

Peter: I say, did you see someone wave back to us from the train?

Roberta: Yes, an old gentleman, he waved his newspaper. Let's go on to the station.

(They move off and folk begin to come on - the porter PERKS, MR GILLS the station-master, various PASSENGERS for the 10.07 am and a group of PEOPLE waiting for the train's arrival. During the music there are "Good Mornings" exchanged until all are gathered, except the children, and the song begins).

MUSIC 7: THE SIGNALS TELL US THAT THE TRAIN IS NEAR

Chorus: *The signals tell us that the train is near
And round the corner it will soon appear.
The puffs of steam already are in sight
The ten-o-seven will be here just right.*

*We wait with great excitement
For the coming of the train,
For some of us will travel
And some meet old friends again.*

*The whistle's sounding and it's nearly here
The engine's puffing we can hear quite clear,
The train is slowing and it soon will stop
The gates are open and the signals drop.*

*(Music continues as train pulls in and passengers alight, PERKS rushes forward to
take their luggage, MR GILLS surveys the scene and the CHILDREN enter).*

Peter: *(over the music)* This is exciting!

Mr Gills: *(shouting)* Ready Mr Perks?

Perks: Ready Mr Gills.

(Guard's whistle blows).

**Chorus & } *As right on time another engines goes*
Children }: *The green flag's waving and the whistle blows.
The wheels are turning and the steam clouds rise.
The train is moving out before our eyes.***

*Farewell to all who travel
For the train is moving on
It's gathering such speed now
It will very soon be gone!*

*The signals tell us that the train has passed.
The glimpse we catch of it will be the last.
The clock here tells us that the time's just right
The ten-o-seven has gone out of sight!*

(Some of the people go, MR GILLS goes back to his office offstage and PERKS is left with the CHILDREN. He is busy with luggage).

Peter: *(to PERKS)* How do you do?

Perks: *(looking up and all round to see who is being addressed)* Eh? What me? Oh, how do you do, young gentleman?

Peter: Peter, my name is Peter.

Perks: *(wiping his hand on his waistcoat)* Oh, I see, er, Perks I am, Albert Perks, but folks hereabouts mostly calls me Perks. How do you do? *(Shakes hands).*

Peter: These are my sisters Roberta - er, but folks hereabouts mostly calls her Bobbie.

Perks: *(nervously shaking hands)* Oh, pleased to meet you Miss Bobbie, I'm sure.

Phyllis: And I'm Phyllis.

Perks: How do you do, Miss?

Peter: We live at Three Chimneys.

Perks: Oh, you're the new family from there are you? Mrs Viney said as how London folks was coming. You here with your mother are you?

Roberta: No, Mother's at home. She's straightening the house with Mrs Viney but she says that generally she'll be very busy. She's going to write stories, you know, and get them put in books.

Perks: Oh your Mother writes stories does she, miss?

Phyllis: The beautifulest you ever read!

Perks: You ought to be very proud to have such a clever Mother.

Peter: Yes but she used to play with us more before she had to be so clever.

Phyllis: That was before Father went away.

Perks: *(nervously)* Oh yes, I did hear tell that your Father weren't with you.

Roberta: But he will come back, one day.

Perks: Yes, miss, I'm sure he will. Well I must get on.

Peter: Are you a porter?

Perks: I am, master Peter, and on a station like this it's a very busy life.

Phyllis: But what d'you do?

Perks: What do I do, miss? Now there's a question! It would be easier to ask me what I don't do!

MUSIC 8: I'M A MOST USEFUL MAN

Perks: *Whatever there is to do, young miss, I do it.
Whatever there is to take, young sir, I take it.
I fetch and I carry for Tom, Dick and Harry.*

*I wait for each signal then walk up the track.
I close the big gates and I wait for the engine
Then on its arrival I walk swiftly back.
The passengers ask me a great deal of questions
I answer them all as polite as I can
I help with their luggage and heed their suggestions
I'd say, all in all, I'm a most useful man.*

All: *Whatever there is to do, young Miss, he'll do it
Whatever there is to take, young Miss, he'll take it.
He'll fetch and he'll carry for Tom, Dick and Harry.
He waits for each signal and walks up the track,
He closes the gates and he waits for the engine
Then on its arrival he walks swiftly back.*

*The passengers ask him a great deal of questions,
He answers them all as polite as he can
He helps with their luggage and heeds their suggestions
We'd say, all in all, he's a most useful man.*

Perks: (to PETER) Now then, young sir, I must get on or the 10.55 will be along and she'll find we're not ready for her.

Phyllis: Who's she?

Perks: Why, the train of course, miss - it's the proper way to address an engine.

Peter: Even a model engine?

Perks: Yes, I suppose so, even a model engine. Why, do you have a model engine?

Peter: I do, but unfortunately it's I mean she's broken.

Perks: Broken?

Phyllis: She blew up with a huge explosion.

Roberta: Father would have mended it, but he had to go away.

Perks: I see.

Phyllis: Maybe you could mend it Mr Perks? You must know everything there is to know about engines.

Roberta: Phyllis, it's not polite to ask people to do things for you.

Perks: No, that's all right, miss. She means very well. And it may be that I could help.

Peter: Could you?

Perks: I'm not promising mind, but bring her down and I'll have a look.

Peter: (thrilled) Oh thank you!

Phyllis: Could you answer another question about trains, Mr Perks?

Perks: I'll try, miss.

Phyllis: What happens if you pull that thing in the carriages where it says on it: "Five pounds for improper use."?

Perks: Well that's very serious, miss. If you was to improperly use that, the train 'ud stop.

Roberta: And if you used it properly?

Perks: It 'ud stop just the same, I suppose. But it isn't proper use unless you're being murdered. There was an old lady once - someone kidded her on it was a refreshment-room bell, and she used it improper, not being in danger but just hungry. When the train stopped and the guard came along expecting to find someone weltering in their last moments, she says: "Oh please Mister, I'll take a glass of stout and a bath bun," she says. And the train was seven minutes behind her time it was!

Peter: What did the guard say to the old lady?

Perks: I dunno, but I lay she didn't forget it in a hurry, whatever it was!

Mr Gills: (*entering*) Perks, is that box for the 10.55 ready?

Perks: (*flustered*) No Mr Gills, well, that is, yes Mr Gills, in a manner of speakin'.

Mr Gills: Well, which?

Perks: Well, ready but not on the platform.

Mr Gills: Well, see that it is. (*Exit*).

Perks: Yes Mr Gills. (*To the CHILDREN*) I must go, you come back sometime and we'll have another chat.

Phyllis: Yes we will!

Perks: (*going*) And see that you bring along the little engine. (*Exit*).

Peter: Yes, I'll bring it I mean her. Oh dear, what a lot of things there are to learn about trains.

Roberta: (*coming forward as a table and chair are brought on*) But gradually we did learn them, we learned the sound of the station bells and what they meant and we learned what the signals meant too. Most important of all we learned what times the trains went by; they became our best friends; they seemed to help us in our sadness for losing Father. But of all the trains the most special was the 9. 15 which we waved to every morning shouting: "Take our love to Father". For on that train sat our own old gentleman who always waved back.

(*MOTHER has entered and is sitting at the table, MRS VINEY is there standing by her and PETER and PHYLLIS are sitting on the floor. ROBERTA sits by PHYLLIS*).

Mother: (*to MRS VINEY*) And you could call in at the baker's and get some buns for tea.

Mrs Viney: Buns, Mum?

Mother: Yes buns, Mrs Viney. I've managed to sell one of my stories so we'll have a little treat.

Children: Hooray!

Mrs Viney: You work too hard at them stories, Mum. You'll make yerself ill sitting up at night by candlelight with no fire.

Mother: I shall be all right, Mrs Viney. Now see that you get the buns.

Mrs Viney: Yes Mum. I'll set off when I've done the washing up. (*Exit*).

Peter: Mother.

Mother: Yes dear?

Peter: Mother did you know that every engine has a different number written on it?

Mother: Does it dear?

Peter: Yes. Mr Perks says that he once knowed a young gent what wrote them down in a book.

Mother: (*shocked and looking up from her writing*) Peter - you mean he KNEW a young GENTLEMAN WHO wrote them.

Peter: Yes - a young toff with a green notebook what 'ad silver corners.

Mother: Peter where did you learn to speak like that.

Phyllis: It's how Mr Perks talks.

Mother: Well it's not how we talk, so that's enough darling.

Peter: But Mother, I thought as how you might have a book I could use for numbers.

Roberta: Peter can't you see that Mother's tired?

Mother: (*passing a hand over her eyes*) It's all right dear. As a matter of fact I do have a book. It doesn't have a green cover and silver corners but I think it will do. I'll get it for you. (*She goes off*).

Roberta: Mother doesn't look well.

Phyllis: I expect it's the cold. In the old house we had fires in every room.

Peter: She sits up all night writing.

(*MRS VINEY enters hurriedly*).

Roberta: What is it Mrs Viney?

Mrs Viney: Miss Roberta you'd best run for Dr Forrest - your mother's been taken poorly.

Children: Mother?!

Mrs Viney: I'm sure it'll be all right, but you'd best go quickly.

Phyllis: But what is it Mrs Viney?

Mrs Viney: Nothing to worry about I'm sure, but just get Dr Forrest. (*She goes*).

Peter: Come on, we must run. (*They go off*).

(Various STREET FOLK and SHOPKEEPERS begin to come on. MR GILLS is there talking to the GROCER).

MUSIC 9: RAILWAY INSTRUMENTAL *(optional)*

(CHILDREN enter in a panic).

MUSIC 10: WHERE'S THE DOCTOR?

Children: *Where's the doctor? Where's the doctor?
For our Mother's fallen ill,
Dr Forrest, he must really come at once!*

Chorus: *Why whatever can it be
For the children's faces seem
Like the face of one afraid
Of a terrifying dream.*

Children: *Send the doctor, send the doctor
For our Mother's very ill,
Dr Forrest, he must come without delay!*

Chorus: *Railway village now awake
With the cries the children make.
We must find the doctor soon
For their poor dear Mother's sake.*

Mr Gills: *You're the children from Three Chimneys
Why whatever can be wrong?
Do you tell us that your Mother's very ill?*

Chorus: *Knock on Dr Forrest's door
He will come without delay
If there's someone feeling ill
What is wrong he soon can say.*

(They knock & Dr Forrest comes out).

Children: *Dr Forrest, Dr Forrest,
You must come with us at once
For our mother has been taken very ill!*

Dr Forrest: *Let me fetch my hat and coat
And my bag I need as well*

*I will come with you at once
What she has I'll quickly tell.*

(DR FORREST gets his hat, coat and bag and follows the children).

Chorus: *Hurry up now, Dr Forrest,
For the children cannot wait
They are anxious to be at their Mother's side.
You must go without delay
And must very quickly say
What is ailing her today
Go at once and do not stay
Go at once and do not stay
Go at once and do not stay.*

(The PEOPLE go off and the three CHILDREN come on).

Roberta: The doctor's been with her an awful long time.

Phyllis: He seems very nice. I like him.

Peter: He talked to me on the way up the hill about all kinds of things. He seems very sound on railways.

Roberta: Hush, he's coming.

(DR FORREST enters with his bag).

Dr Forrest: Well now, children.

Phyllis: Will she be all right?

Peter: She won't have to go to hospital will she?

Dr Forrest: *(sitting down)* Now, now, you mustn't worry. Your mother has influenza.

Peter: Is that bad?

Dr Forrest: It is bad if we don't look after her, young man, but we shall, shan't we?

Peter: Yes, doctor.

Dr Forrest: *(to Roberta)* And you, Lady Grave-airs, you shall be head nurse.

Roberta: *(smiling)* Of course, doctor.

Dr Forrest: Well then, I'll send down some medicine. Keep up a good fire in the bedroom. Then *(to Phyllis)* write this down.

Phyllis: Yes, doctor.

Dr Forrest: You'll need some good beef to make strong beef tea for her when the

fever goes down. Then some grapes, beef essence, soda-water, milk and a bottle of the very best brandy. Cheap brandy is worse than poison. Have you got all that written down?

Phyllis: Yes, doctor.

Dr Forrest: Good. Now I'll look in again tomorrow and meanwhile you're not to worry?

Roberta: Yes, doctor. Thank you, doctor.

Dr Forrest: Goodbye.

Children: Goodbye, doctor.

(Dr FORREST goes out).

Roberta: But this is hopeless, we can't possibly afford all these things.

Peter: We could eat less ourselves and pay for it out of the money we save.

Roberta: Don't be silly, Peter. Even if we ate next to nothing we still couldn't afford coal and best beef and brandy.

Phyllis: Oh if only Father were here.

Roberta: *(fiercely)* Well he isn't, and he would want us to do the very best for Mother that we could possibly think of.

Peter: We really need someone to help us. Some friend who would lend us the things just until Father comes back.

Roberta: But we only know Mrs Viney and Perks the Porter and they're as poor as we are.

Phyllis: *(full of inspiration)* I know!

Peter: What do you know?

Phyllis: I know who we could get to help us.

Roberta: But who, Phyl?

Phyllis: The old gentleman.

Peter: The old gentleman?

Phyllis: The one on the train who waves to us every morning.

Peter: But we don't know him: and anyway how could we possibly speak to him.

Phyllis: We could give him a letter when the train stops at the station.

Roberta: I don't know that it would be right Phyl.

(MRS VINEY enters).

Mrs Viney: Put the kettle on Miss Roberta and I'll make some tea when I come down. I must see to your poor mother.

Peter: How is she Mrs Viney?

Mrs Viney: She's very weak, master Peter, we must look after her *(Exit)*.

Roberta: Right, that settles it. There's no other way, we'll write a letter to the old gentleman asking for his help. Come on.
(*Exeunt*).

(*Music as various passengers begin to gather on the station platform to await the coming of the 9.15 am. PERKS and MR GILLS are also there.*)

MUSIC 11: THE SIGNALS TELL US THAT THE TRAIN IS NEAR
[Reprise]

Chorus: *The signals tell us that the train is near
And round the corner it will soon appear,
The puffs of steam already are in sight
The nine-fifteen will soon be here just right.*

(*Children enter*) *We wait with great excitement
For the coming of the train,
For some of us will travel
And some meet friends again.*

(*Train appears*) *The whistle's sounding and it's nearly here.
The engine's puffing we can hear quite clear,
The train is slowing and it soon will stop
The gates are open and the signals drop.*

(*The CHILDREN run up to the window at which the OLD GENTLEMAN is sitting reading "The Times"*).

Phyllis: Hello, hello!

O.G.: (*looking with surprise*) I beg your pardon, are you talking to me young lady?

Phyllis: (*breathless*) Yes, yes, we ran all the way, Peter was slow with his breakfast and we thought we'd missed you

O.G.: I recognise you now, you're the three children who wave to me each morning.

Peter: Yes, we're really sorry to trouble you but we knew as how you'd understand.

Phyllis: You mustn't say that Peter: he means we knew you'd understand.

O.G.: Understand what?

Perks: Stand away from the train!

Children: (*distressed*) Oh!

O.G.: Understand what?

Perks: Ready Mr Gills

(MR GILLS blows whistle).

Roberta: *(quickly handing him the letter)* It's all in here. Please read it. We feel awful about bothering you but we couldn't think of anyone else.

O. G. : I'll read it. Goodbye.

Children: Goodbye! *(They wave).*

Chorus: *As right on time another engine goes
The green flag's waving and the whistle blows,
The wheels are turning and the steam clouds rise
The train is moving out before our eyes.*

*Farewell to all who travel
For the train is moving on,
It's gathering such speed now
It will very soon be gone!*

*(Children exit) The signals tell us that the train has passed
The glimpse we catch of it will be the last,
The clock here tells us that the time's just right
The nine-fifteen has just gone out of sight. (Exeunt)*

(Empty stage until we hear the sound of PERKS whistling the tune of MUSIC 8 - he enters with a large hamper on a trolley).

Perks: Hello, hello there, is there anyone at home?

Roberta: *(entering)* Hello, oh hello Mr Perks, it's you.

Perks: It is miss. I've brought something up from the station.

(PETER and PHYLLIS run in).

Phyllis: What's that?

Perks: It's a hamper miss, what the old gent on the train asked me to fetch straight up here.

Peter: *(rather pompous)* Thank you very much. *(PERKS lingers).* I'm most awfully sorry I haven't got twopence to give you like father does - but

Perks: *(offended)* You drop that if you please! I wasn't thinking of no tuppences. I only wanted to say I was sorry your Mam wasn't so well, and to ask how she

finds herself this evening. I've fetched her along a bit of sweetbrier, very sweet to smell it is. Tuppence indeed! (*Takes the sweetbrier out of his hat*).

Phyllis: Oh, that's just like a conjuror. Thank you.

Peter: Yes, thank you very much, and I beg your pardon about the tuppence.

Perks: No offence then.

Roberta: (*having opened the lid*) Oh! Look! It's from the old gentleman. It's everything we need! Mrs Viney, Mrs Viney, come and see.

(*MRS VINEY enters*).

MUSIC 12 (as the hamper is unpacked): FIRST THERE'S STRAW

Roberta: *First there's straw and there's shavings
And there's shavings and there's straw
To make sure that nothing's broken
It's just like a lucky draw.*

Phyllis: *Here are port wine and peaches
Why, we never asked for those
Nor these two lovely chickens
Nor these bottles, nor this rose.*

Peter: *Here's the beef and the brandy
And the grapes as we can tell
All the things that we asked for*

All: *Which will make poor Mother well.*

Mrs Viney: Well I never did! We'll soon have your Mother on her feet again with all this. Give me a hand into the kitchen with it Miss Roberta.

Roberta: Of course, and then I'll take the roses up to Mother.

Phyllis: And the sweetbrier!

Roberta: And the sweetbrier. Thank you Mr Perks.

(*She goes out with MRS VINEY*).

Perks: Well I'd best be getting back. Oh, by the way, I was forgetting. That engine of yours you gave me to look at.

Peter: Yes.

Perks: Well, I've brought 'er back. (*Reaches on to the trolley*). I think she's as good as new.

Peter: (*opening the shoe box*) Wow, Phyl, look at this. My engine, ready to go again. Mr Perks you're a brick!

Perks: Thank you sir.

Phyllis: We're planning a birthday party for Roberta next week. Mrs Viney says it's to be a secret.

Peter: She's got Dr Forrest to take her round with him to show her what real nurses do, but really to get her out of the house while we get ready.

Phyllis: We hope Mother will be well enough to sit up for it.

Peter: And we want you to be there!

Perks: Me sir?

Peter: Yes.

Phyllis: If, if you'd like to that is.

Perks: Why, miss, I wouldn't miss it for worlds.

Peter: (*as they go off*) Good, then that's settled!

(*Exeunt*).

(*MUSIC covers the change as Dr FORREST and ROBERTA walk on*).

Dr Forrest: So do you still want to be a head nurse after seeing all those patients?

Roberta: Yes, I think I do, even more than ever.

Dr Forrest: Well that's fine, and you'll do it very well! But we must be getting you home for tea, it's been a long day.

Roberta: I'm not at all tired. It's been a very special day. Mother is almost well now thanks to you.

Dr Forrest: Not at all, thanks to you, head nurse.

Roberta: And thanks to our old gentleman who helped us. He was so good and kind that despite Mother being very angry that we asked him, I feel that if we were in trouble I could ask him to help us again. But, Dr Forrest, there's something I have to ask you.

Dr Forrest: Out with it then.

Roberta: Well, you've spent an awful lot of time with Mother, and I know that doctors are very expensive. I shouldn't be saying this, Mother says we're not to go telling everyone we're poor. But you're not everyone are you?

Dr Forrest: Not at all. Well?

Roberta: Well Mrs Viney told me that her doctoring only cost her twopence a week because she belonged to a club. What I was wondering was, couldn't we be in your club too, just until Father comes home?

Dr Forrest: You're very sensible, head nurse.

Roberta: You're not cross with me for asking, are you?

Dr Forrest: Cross? How could I be cross? Now you're not to worry. I'll make it all right with your Mother even if I have to make a special brand-new club for her. Now come on, they'll be expecting you at home.

(Exeunt).

(The Birthday Song music begins as PETER and PHYLLIS bring in a table decorated in a white cloth and flowers. MOTHER comes in and MRS VINEY puts a chair for her. PERKS, MR GILLS and various VILLAGERS gather. As DR FORREST enters with ROBERTA the birthday song begins).

MUSIC 13: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BOBBIE

All: *The special day of all the year for you
We've come here to enjoy ourselves, it's true!
But most of all we came because we knew
You'd want your friends here
On your Birthday!
Happy Birthday, Bobbie!*

*The special day of all the year for you
We've come here to enjoy ourselves, it's true!
But most of all we came because we knew
You'd want your friends here
On your Birthday!
Happy Birthday, Bobbie!*

(Music continues).

Roberta: *(said)* Oh Mother, it's wonderful.

Peter: *(presenting his engine full of sweets)* Happy Birthday, Bobbie!

Roberta: Oh, Peter, your engine.

Peter: No just the sweets! Well maybe you can share a bit of the engine.

Roberta: Thank you, Peter.

Phyllis: Happy Birthday, Bobbie! *(Gives her a little gift).*

Roberta: Thank you, Phyl, when did you make this?

Mrs Viney: Happy Birthday, Bobbie! *(Gives a little gift).*

Roberta: Oh thank you, all of you, thank you. Oh Mother if only Father was here.

All: *The special day of all the year for you
We've come here to enjoy ourselves, it's true!*

*But most of all we came because we knew
You'd want your friends here
On your Birthday!
Happy Birthday, Bobbie!*

END OF ACT I

ACT II

(The station platform and passengers are milling about, PERKS and MR GILLS are there. It is wet; umbrellas and capes are there in plenty).

MUSIC 14: SEE THE ENGINES

Chorus: *Though the rain comes down
See the engines keep on steaming;
On each window pane
See the water quickly streaming.
Though the wind may blow
And the signal wires are strumming
On the bright, wet line
See the engines keep on coming.*

*Though the sky grows dark
In this most unpleasant weather
And the folk who wait
Huddle very close together,
Nothing interferes
With the railways busy humming
For in rain and wind
See the engines keep on coming.*

(Music continues as the CHILDREN enter in capes).

Phyllis: Oh, this weather is awful, we should never have come.

Peter: Don't be silly, it's only a little rain.

Roberta: Mother will be glad that we've come to meet her off the train. She set off early this morning and she'll be very tired.

Phyllis: Where do you think she went?

Peter: Do you think she goes to see Father?

Roberta: I don't know, but I feel we mustn't ask. When she wants to tell us she will. Let's have some of that toffee you made Phyl.

Phyllis: *(searching for it)* It's a bit sticky.

Roberta: Never mind, the rain will wash our hands.

(PERKS and MR GILLS get ready).

Peter: Here comes the 7.20.

Chorus: *Though the rain comes down
See the engines keep on steaming;
On each window pane
See the water quickly streaming.
Though the wind may blow
And the signal wires are strumming
On the bright, wet line
See the engines keep on coming.*

(During the song the train arrives and passengers get off, among them MR SZCZEPANSKY who comes forward a few paces and collapses).

All: *(They gather round)* What's happened? Look out

Mr Gills: Stand back, stand back.

(The CHILDREN are slightly to the side).

Phyllis: What's happened?

Peter: I can't see.

Perks: He's coming round. Stand back now.

Mr Szczepansky: Prahsteetyeh.

Farmer: What's ee say Bert?

Perks: Search me.

Mr Szczep: Vi gahvahreetyeh pah rooskee?

Mr Gills: Sounds like French to me; I once went to Boulogne for the day with Mrs Gills and they spoke like that there.

Peter: *(who has come forward)* It isn't French.

Farmer: What is it then.

Peter: I don't know what it is but it isn't French, I know that.

Mr Gills: Try him with French if you know so much about it.

Peter: Parlay voo Frongsay?

Mr Szczep: Ah, oui, oui, mon petit, je parle français un peu *(He grasps Peter's hand)* mais il faut que vous m'aidez.

Peter: There, that's French!

Perks: What does he say?

Peter: I don't know, but it's French.

Mr Gills: Now stand back, I'll deal with this. No comprenny, monsieur, no comprenny.

Roberta: Take him into your room, Mr Gills. Mother is coming on the next train and she can speak French.

Mr Gills: Very well, miss. Now then monsieur, come along with me.

(He grasps the man's arm but he pulls back terrified).

Mr Szczep: Non, non monsieur, non, non, je vous implore. *(He coughs and trembles as he collapses on a seat).*

Roberta: Oh don't! Don't you see how frightened he is? He thinks you're going to lock him up, I know he does. Look at his eyes!

Farmer: Like fox's eyes when the beast's in the trap.

Roberta: Let me try. I know one or two French words if only I could think of them. *(She sits by him)* Vous attendre, monsieur, ma mère parler français. Nous - what's the French for "being kind"?

Peter: I don't know.

Phyllis: "Bong" is good.

Roberta: Nous être bong pour vous.

Mr Szczep: Merci, mademoiselle, merci beaucoup. *(He pats her hand and smiles).*

Mr Gills: By rights I should send for the police!

Phyllis: Oh don't. Look! Mother's train's come in on the other platform. I'll go over the bridge and hurry her along. *(She goes).*

Roberta: I'm sure he hasn't done anything wrong. He looks very ill.

Mr Gills: Well I don't mind giving him the benefit of the doubt till your Mamma comes. I should like to know what nation's got the credit of him, that I should. Perks you run next door for Dr Forrest.

Perks: Yes, Mr Gills *(Exit)*

Peter: Here I've an idea! *(He pulls an envelope from his pocket).* Show him these stamps Bobbie, he may recognise one.

Roberta: All right. *(Shows him).* Monsieur, regardez.

Mr Szczep: *(looking)* Non, non. *(Shakes his head).* Non. *(At last he recognises one)* Dah, dah, rooskee!

Peter: Russian, he's Russian.

(PHYLLIS and MOTHER enter).

Peter: Mother, Mother we've found a Russian, but he speaks French, and he's ill!

Mother: Peter, calm down. What is this? Mr Gills, what's going on?

Mr Gills: It's true, Mam. This character here got off the 7.20 and fainted on the platform. It seems he speaks French but he's from Russia. I reckoned I

should have sent for the police but the children begged me to wait for you. I sent Perks for Dr Forrest.

Roberta: Monsieur, je présente ma mère.

Mr Szczep: Ah Madame, enchanté Madame, enchanté. *(He kisses her hand then coughs again).*

Mother: Asseyez-vous donc, monsieur.

(MOTHER sits by him and begins to talk).

Perks: *(entering with Dr FORREST)* Here's the doctor.

Roberta: Dr Forrest we've found a Russian.

Dr Forrest: A Russian, head nurse?

Roberta: Yes a Russian, he got off the train.

Peter: He looks very ill, Mother's talking to him.

Roberta: You will help him, Dr Forrest won't you? Only, I'm afraid he'll have to belong to your club.

Dr Forrest: Let's have a look at him.

(He goes to the seat where MOTHER stands and begins to explain things - Dr FORREST and MOTHER talk and ask the Russian questions. The doctor examines him briefly. Meanwhile Mr GILLS begins to clear the people leaving PERKS and the CHILDREN at the front of the stage).

Mr Gills: We'd best let Dr Forrest look after this. Clear the platform now ladies and gentlemen, please.

Farmer: We was gonna see what come o' this!

Mr Gills: Time enough for that when the Doctor's had time to see. Clear the platform please.

(The people go off on both sides talking and MR GILLS goes too).

Peter: Have you ever met a Russian before, Mr Perks?

Perks: Met a Russian, Master Peter? Why I can remember when a train went through here carrying the Tsar of Russia himself together with the Duke and Duchess of York - it didn't stop, mind you, but it went through.

Phyllis: Gosh, Mr Perks, you must have met someone from most countries in the world.

Perks: I daresay I have, Miss Phyllis. You never know who you'll meet on this here railway of ours.

MUSIC 15: YOU SEE THE WORLD ON RAILWAYS

Perks: *We gets passengers from Russia on the train,
We gets Portuguese and passengers from Spain,
We gets Irish and Rumanians
And even Transylvanians
And where they live it's tricky to explain.*

Children: *Do you ever get a Dutchman or a Greek
Wanting tickets in a language you don't speak?
Are there groups of Serbo-Croats
Or some Eskimos in snow hats
Trav'ling northwards to their igloos ev'ry week?*

Perks: *We gets Chinamen and Indians as well,
And I think a train once stopped here for a spell
Which was carrying a man
Who'd be Emp'ror of Japan.
Oh, you see the world on railways I can tell!
Oh, you see the world on railways I can tell!*

(Dance).

All: *We gets Chinamen and Indians as well,
And I think a train once stopped here for a spell*

Perks: *Which was carrying a man
Who'd be Emp'ror of Japan.
Oh, you see the world on railways I can tell!*

All: *Oh, you see the world on railways*

Perks: *I see the world on railways*

All: *You see the world on railways I can tell!*

(PERKS goes off).

Mother: *(coming forward as Dr FORREST helps the Russian offstage behind).*
Now then children, Dr Forrest says our Russian friend is simply worn out
and needs a great deal of care.

Roberta: Where's he taking him?

Mother: I've asked him to take him up to Three Chimneys. We shall look after
him.

Phyllis: How exciting!

Mother: It seems that he's a rather famous writer who has written wonderful books to support the poor people in Russia. But the officers of the Tsar accused him of making trouble and locked him up alone for three years.

Roberta: How dreadful to be locked up. That's why he looked so afraid.

Peter: Perks once saw the Tsar.

Mother: After that they sent him to Siberia in chains but eventually he managed to escape.

Roberta: But why has he come to England?

Mother: Because he has heard that his wife and children are here somewhere. They escaped here and now he is looking for them but he has no idea where they are.

Peter: And meanwhile he's coming to stay with us!

Mother: Yes dear, and you must be especially kind to him. You must always be especially kind to those who have been locked up and separated from their families.

Phyllis: Why especially kind, Mother?

Mother: Because because well because they need our kindness dear. Now Phyllis, Peter run along ahead and tell Mrs Viney to light a nice fire in the bedroom for our guest.

Peter & Phyllis: (*going*) Yes Mother.

Roberta: (*turning to her MOTHER*) Mother, Father is alive isn't he. He will be coming back.

Mother: (*coming to her*) Bobbie dear, of course he's alive. And of course he'll be coming back to us. Now, why don't you tell Mr Gills what's happening and then run after me.

Roberta: Of course I will, Mother.

(*Exit MOTHER. ROBERTA comes forward*).

Roberta: The Russian gentleman got better very quickly once he was settled comfortably into the guest bedroom with a warm fire. Mother found some of Father's old clothes for him and very soon he was sitting out in the garden in the afternoon sunshine. He had a kind face when he smiled and we wished that we could speak to him properly just as his own children would have done.

(*PETER and PHYLLIS re-enter*).

Phyllis: I wish we could do something to cheer him up a bit.

Peter: The only thing that would really cheer him up would be to find his wife and children.

Roberta: Mother's written no end of letters to people but no-one seems to know where they are.

Phyllis: But if we could do something while we're waiting, just to show that we like having him with us.

Peter: I know, we could go and get some wild cherries for him.

Roberta: Wild cherries?

Peter: Wild cherries, you know, in the cutting just down there (*pointing*) where the mouth of the tunnel is.

Phyllis: Peter that's a good idea.

Peter: Let's climb down the steps here onto the side of the line and from the steps we shall easily reach the cherries. Come on, Bobbie.

(FX of the train begins).

Roberta: Hang on Peter, the 11.15 is coming. Let's stay here and wave.

(FX gets louder).

Phyllis: Here it comes.

(They begin to wave).

All three: Take our love to Father! Take our love to Father!

(The train goes on but the FX gets louder and more menacing).

Peter: Look, look the trees are moving! It's an earthquake!

Phyllis: They're moving onto the track.

Roberta: It's a landslide, the train must have dislodged the earth!

(The FX climaxes in a great crash and then there is silence. The CHILDREN walk into the middle of the stage).

Peter: Golly! It's right over the down line.

Roberta: That'll take some sweeping up!

Peter: Yes. (*Suddenly he realises*). But the 11.29 is due. We must let them know at the station, or there'll be a most frightful accident.

Roberta: Let's run.

Peter: *(looking at his watch)* We'd never get there, there's no time.
Phyllis: Couldn't we couldn't we climb up a telegraph post and do something to the wires?
Peter: We don't know how.
Phyllis: They do it in the war. I know I've heard of it.
Peter: They only cut them, silly, and that doesn't do any good. And we couldn't cut them even if we got up, and we couldn't get up. If we had anything red, we could go along the line and wave it.
Phyllis: We might wave, anyway.
Peter: They'd only think it was just us, as usual. We've waved so often before. If only we had something red.
Roberta: But we do.
Peter: What?
Roberta: We do, we have our red flannel petticoats. Come on Phyl, take them off, we'll wave them. Here you are Peter.

(PETER takes Roberta's petticoat and begins to tear it)

Phyllis: You're not going to tear them!
Peter: *(sternly)* Shut up. Give me yours. We want six flags, two each.

(FX begins again).

Roberta: Hurry Peter, here's the train, I can hear it.
Peter: Here, take these and stand on the track until it's near us and wave like mad.

(FX gets faster and louder as the train approaches).

Children: *(over the FX)* Stop, stop, stop, the line is blocked! *(They wave frantically).*
Peter: Get off the track! Stop! Stop!
Roberta: They don't see us, they won't see us, it's all no good!
Peter: Bobbie get off the track!
Roberta: *(waving and in front of the train)* Stop, stop!
Phyllis: *(screaming)* Bobbie! !

(A squeal of brakes as the train stops and BOBBIE faints).

Phyllis: *(running to her)* Bobbie! Bobbie!

(ENGINE DRIVER, FIREMEN, PASSENGERS etc. enter from the train).

Engine Driver: What's the meaning of this?

MUSIC 16: THE LINE IS BLOCKED

Peter: *The line is blocked, the line is blocked,
The trees are on the track,
A landslide happened as we watched
We had to turn you back.*

Fireman: *It's as he said, no doubting it,
For reasons quite obscure,
The track is blocked, there would have been
An accident for sure.*

(BOBBIE sits up and rubs her eyes).

Engine Driver: *The little maid has fainted but
'Twas very bravely done
Without your flags into that mound
The engine would have run.*

(As BOBBIE stands up with PETER and PHYLLIS).

Chorus: *Our thanks to you brave children
We very gladly pay.
The Railway Board shall hear about
Your bravery today!*

*(The three children are led off to the cheers and the thanks of the passengers.
Exeunt OMNES. Enter PERKS whistling tune of MUSIC 15 with a letter in
his hand; MRS VINEY comes in from the other side).*

Perks: Good morning, Mrs Viney.

Mrs Viney: Good morning, Mr Perks. What brings you up to Three Chimneys?

Perks: Oh, it's this 'ere letter what's come for the children.

Mrs Viney: For the children?

Perks: Yes, something to do with their 'aving saved the train. Are they in?

Mrs Viney: I'm sure they are. I'll go and find them.

(Exit. PERKS whistles again).

Roberta: *(entering)* Good morning, Mr Perks.

Perks: Oh, good morning, miss. I brought this letter for you.

(He gives it to her as PETER and PHYLLIS run in).

Perks: That's a likely little brooch you've got on.

Roberta: Yes, Mother gave it to me for my birthday.

Perks: Oh have you had a birthday?

Roberta: Yes. *(Opens letter and reads it as they talk).*

Phyllis: When's your birthday, Mr Perks?

Perks: My birthday? I give up keeping my birthday long afore you was born, miss.

Peter: But you must have been born sometime, you know, even if it was twenty years ago - or thirty or sixty or seventy.

Perks: *(laughing)* Not so long as that, master Peter. If you really want to know, it was thirty two years ago, come the fifteenth of next month.

Phyllis: Then why don't you keep it?

Perks: I've got something else to keep besides birthdays.

Phyllis: Oh! What? Not secrets?

Perks: No - the kids and the Missus!

Roberta: Just listen to this!

Peter: What?

Roberta: It's addressed to the three of us. *(She reads).* "Dear Sir and Ladies - It is proposed to make a small presentation to you in commemoration of your prompt and courageous action in averting a terrible accident. The presentation will take place at the Station at 3 o'clock on the 30th of this month if this is convenient to you." And it's signed: "Jabez Inglewood, Secretary of the Railway Company".

Phyllis: How exciting!

Perks: Well it's no more than you deserve. Now I must be getting back. So long!

All: Goodbye, Mr Perks!

(Exit PERKS).

Roberta: It seems horrid that nobody keeps Perks' birthday. Couldn't we do something about it? After all, he's the best friend we have.

Peter: I'm sure we can think of something.

Phyllis: Let's go and tell Mother about our presentation. Come on!

(Exeunt. Triumphant music as a table is brought and a banner saying "Thank you to

the Saviours of the Train" held by two folk. A crowd gathers, PERKS and MR GILLS are there).

MUSIC 17: OUR THANKS TO YOU

Chorus: *Our thanks to you brave children
We very gladly pay.
The Railway Board rewards you for
Your bravery today.*

(The CHILDREN enter with MOTHER and MRS VINEY).

*An accident averted,
A rail disaster saved.
With courage and quick thinking
The coming train you braved.*

(The DIRECTORS enter, among them the OLD GENTLEMAN).

*Our thanks to you three children
We gather now to give.
Your lives you risked without a thought
That passengers might live.*

Roberta: Why look it's our own old gentleman!

Peter: Golly, he must be very important!

O.G.: Ladies and Gentlemen, we have gathered to thank Roberta, Phyllis and Peter, the Saviours of the Train!

All: Hooray!

O.G.: And on behalf of the Directors of the Railway Company I would like to present them with these watches inscribed with their names and the date of their brave deed.

(Applause as ROBERTA, then PHYLLIS, then PETER come forward and receive the watches).

Peter: Ladies and Gentlemen ... um ... Ladies and Gentlemen it's most awfully good of you, and we shall treasure the watches all our lives - but we really don't deserve it because what we did wasn't anything really. At least, I mean it was awfully exciting, and what I mean to say - thank you all very, very

much.

All: Hooray! (*applause*)

MUSIC 17a: OUR THANKS TO YOU [Reprise]

Chorus: *Our thanks etc.*

(As the people go away ROBERTA approaches the OLD GENTLEMAN. PHYLLIS goes too - only ROBERTA and PETER are left).

Roberta: Excuse me, but do you think we could speak to you quietly - I mean, on our own.

O.G.: Well of course, of course my dear - why don't we find a seat for ourselves just here and you can tell me whatever you want to tell me and ask me whatever you want to ask me. (*Sits down*) Now then, what is it?

Roberta: Oh, please!

O.G.: Yes?

Roberta: What I mean to say....

O.G.: Yes?

Roberta: It's about our Russian.

O.G.: Do you learn Russian?

Roberta: No, no. It's about the Russian who is staying with us. He was a prisoner you see, but he escaped from Siberia.

Peter: His name's Szczepansky. He writes books.

O.G.: Szczepansky? The writer?

Roberta: Yes. Do you know him?

O.G.: Well I know of him, my dear. I've read his books - in translation, of course. But is he here?

Roberta: He's staying with us but he's looking for his wife and children. They're in England somewhere but we don't know where.

Peter: Mother has written to ever so many people but no-one seems to know.

Roberta: And we thought that you.....

O.G.: You thought that I might be able to help you. Now what made you think that?

Roberta: It's just that you helped us before, when Mother was ill.

O.G.: I did. And quite by chance I think I may be able to help you again. I don't promise mind but I know a great many Russians in London, and your friend Mr Szczepansky is well known to them all! I'm sure we'll find his family.

Roberta: Oh, I knew you'd help.

(PHYLLIS enters with a large and dreadful tin can and a huge wedge of bread and butter).

Phyllis: Afternoon tea. *(She presents it to the OLD GENTLEMAN).*

O.G.: Er, thank you! Bless my soul! It's very thoughtful of you.

Phyllis: I got it from Perks.

O.G.: I'm sure you did.

Roberta: You might at least have got a cup and saucer, Phyl!

Phyllis: Perks always drinks out of the can. I think it was very nice of him to give it to me at all - let alone cups and plates!

O.G.: So do I. *(He sips a little tea and eats a little bread).* But we'll all share it. *(He hands it to PETER).*

Peter: Thank you.

O.G.: Now you must walk over to the other platform with me or I'll miss my train, and as we go I want you to tell me all about yourselves and about your Mother and more especially about your Father.

Phyllis: Oh but Father's not here, he went away.

O.G.: So I have discovered. Tell me as we go.

(Exeunt. The stage begins to fill with SHOPKEEPERS and VILLAGERS).

MUSIC 18: YOU SEE THE WORLD ON RAILWAYS

[Optional Instrumental Reprise].

(ROBERTA and PHYLLIS enter with PETER pushing a pram full of presents for PERKS).

Peter: There's just the shovel to collect from Mr James the ironmonger and then we've got all the presents we were promised for Perks' birthday.

Mr James: *(stepping forward)* There we are, master Peter, one shovel as promised, and wish Albert Perks many happy returns from me, it's a pleasure to make a shovel for one we all respect.

Phyllis: Thank you, Mr James. Thank you, all of you. Mr Perks will have a really happy birthday.

Villagers: *(as they go off)* That's all right miss. Wish him happy birthday etc. etc.

Roberta: I hope this is going to be all right.

Peter: But why shouldn't it? We've presents from nearly the whole village!

Phyllis: And lovely iced buns with his initials on them.

Roberta: I only hope he won't be offended and think it's charity.

Peter: But why should he? Especially with those labels we wrote with all the nice

things people said about him. Come on, we'll be late.

(Exeunt. Enter from the other side with a table and pile of plates the six PERKS CHILDREN and MRS PERKS).

Mrs Perks: Get that table laid Arthur, or your Dad'll be 'ome before we're ready.

Roberta: *(entering with the others)* May we come in, Mrs Perks?

Mrs Perks: Come in, Miss, and welcome. I'm a bit late owing to me having had an extra clean up today, along o'Perks happening to name its being his birthday. I don't know what put it into his head to think of such a thing. We keep the children's birthdays, of course; but him and be - we're too old for such like, as a general rule.

Peter: We knew it was his birthday and we've brought these presents.

Phyllis: And some iced buns from Mother.

Mrs Perks: Presents? *(In wonder as she looks)* For Perks, new tools and flowers and a perambulator and clothes for the kids. *(She puts her apron over her face and cries).*

Peter: *(After the three have looked at each other in horror)* Don't you like them?

Mrs Perks: Oh don't mind me, master Peter. It's just we'm not used to such kindness *(sniffs)* 'Ere, Arthur, lay out them buns.

(ARTHUR does so sheepishly).

Arthur: 'Ere's Dad now!

Mrs Perks: Lor' bless us, 'e's early!

Roberta: Oh, let's hide in the kitchen and when he sees everything we'll come in and shout, "Many happy returns!" *(They go).*

Perks: Hello, old woman! *(He enters).* Why here's a pretty set out!

Mrs Perks: It's your birthday tea, Bert. And here's a ounce of yer extry particular tobacco.

Perks: *(pleased)* Good old girl! That's nice that is. *(Sees the pram).* But what's this pram doing here? And what's all this stuff?

Mrs Perks: Them's presents, Bert.

Perks: *(crossly)* Presents. Who from?

Mrs Perks: Steady now Bert. They means well. It's them children from Three Chimneys what you makes a fuss of.

Perks: I don't care who 'tis. We've got on all right all these years without asking favours and I'm not going to begin these sort of charity goings on at my time of life.

Mrs Perks: Hush, Bert, they'll hear you. They'm in the kitchen.

Perks: *(striding furiously over to the kitchen door)* Then I'll give them something

to listen to. Come out 'ere and tell me what you mean by this. 'Ave I ever complained o' being short as you comes this charity lay over me?

(The CHILDREN enter dismally).

Phyllis: *(almost tearful)* Oh! I thought you'd be so pleased; I'll never try to be kind to anyone else as long as I live. No, I won't, not ever. *(She bursts into tears).*

Peter: We didn't mean any harm.

Perks: It ain't what you means so much as what you does.

Roberta: Oh don't! We thought you'd love it. We always have things on our birthdays.

Perks: A few things, yes. It's there being all this heaps and heaps o' things that I can't stand. No - nor won't neither.

Peter: But they're not all from us. Bobbie forgot to tie the labels on. They're from all sorts of people in the village.

Perks: *(very severe)* So you've been round telling the neighbours we can't make both ends meet? Well, now you've disgraced us as deep as you can, you can just take the whole bag o' tricks back where it came from. And if you don't mind I'd rather not be acquainted with you any longer. *(He turns his back on them).*

Roberta: Look here this is most awful.

Perks: That's what I says.

Roberta: We'll go if you like - and you needn't be friends with us any more but -

Phyllis: We shall always be friends with you however nasty you are to us.

Peter: Be quiet, Phyl.

Roberta: But before we go let me read you these labels - *(PERKS is silent and does not turn)*. Mother wrote: "Clothes for Mrs Perks' children - I'd like to do some little thing for him as he's so kind to you."

Perks: That's all right. Your Ma's a born lady. We'll keep the little frocks and what-not, Nell.

Roberta: Then there's the shovel: Mr James said: "You tell Mr Perks it's a pleasure to make a little trifle for a man as is much respected."

Perks: James is a good enough chap.

Roberta: But they all said things like that, they gave them because they liked you and nothing was said about charity or anything horrid like that. I thought you'd love to know how fond people are of you - and - and I never was so unhappy in my life. Goodbye. I hope you'll forgive us some day. Come on both of you.

(The three begin to go).

Perks: Stop. I take back every word I've said contrary to what you'd wish. Nell, set on the kettle.

Peter: We'll take it all away if you're unhappy.

Perks: I'm not unhappy about them. I don't know as ever I was better pleased, now I know they comes with the kind respect of our neighbours. That's worth having, eh, Nell?

Mrs Perks: I think it's all worth having, and you've made a most ridiculous fuss about nothing, Bert, if you ask me.

Perks: No, I ain't. If a man didn't respect himself, no-one wouldn't do it for him.

Roberta: But everyone respects you. Happy Birthday, Mr Perks.

All: Happy Birthday, Mr Perks!

MUSIC 19: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MR PERKS

All: *Your neighbours send their kind respects to you
Their sentiments and fond goodwill are true*
Children: } *We've } brought the gifts we give because we knew*
Others: } *They've } " " " they " " they "*
All: *You would enjoy them
On your Birthday!*
Children: } *Happy Birthday, Mr Perks.*
Perks Children} *" " , Father.*
Others: } *" " , Albert.*

(Music continues as all go off laughing and then gradually begins the music for the HARE and HOUNDS. The Chorus enter some as runners and others as observers).

MUSIC 20: LAYING THE TRAIL

Chorus: *Chasing the hare on an autumn day
Over the hills go the hounds.
Paper will fly out to lay the trail
Onward with leaps and bounds.
Mile after mile over hedges, through streams,
Fences and ditches they'll cross.
Into the wind the resourceful young hare
Handfuls of paper will toss.*

*Laying the trail
Laying the trail
Puffing and panting
The hounds on his tail.
Leaping and bounding,
His heart in his mouth,
Running like lightning, the hare.
Running like lightning, the hare.
Running like lightning, the hare.*

(The race begins and the music continues. The people go slowly off after the runners and the CHILDREN enter and stand in the middle of an empty stage. The music stops).

Peter: Let's stay just here on the side of the railway track and wait for the 3.15 to come out of the tunnel.

Roberta: It will be a while yet; it's only 2.45 by this special watch the old gentleman gave us.

Phyllis: I don't care, I'm tired of walking. Let's wait for the train, we can wave to it.

Peter: It was jolly clever of the old gentleman to find Mr Szczepansky's wife and children.

Phyllis: He looked so happy when he got on the train to go to London to join them. I felt sorry for Mother. I think she was thinking of Father.

Peter: Perhaps the old gentleman could help bring Father back. He seems awfully clever at putting things right.

Roberta: Look here comes the hare.

(Music begins again and the HARE runs across the stage).

Peter: *(over the music)* He's run into the tunnel.

Phyllis: Isn't that rather dangerous?

Peter: No, there's plenty of room between the track and the wall, and anyway the 3.15 isn't due yet.

Roberta: Here come the hounds. Let's count them.

(The CHILDREN count them aloud as they go past. One is wearing a red jersey).

Peter: I know, let's run over the top and see them out - the tunnel twists a bit, we shall easily get there before they do.

Roberta: *(As they go off stage right)* Right, come on Phyl.

(Music continues and the HARE comes out of the tunnel and crosses the stage then the CHILDREN reappear stage left).

Peter: Here we are we're just in time. Here's the first hound.

(They count aloud but make one fewer than before - the HOUND in the red jersey is not there. The music stops and there is silence).

Roberta: There's one missing.

Peter: Yes, the one that was wearing the red jersey.

Phyllis: He must have been there, you must just have missed him.

Peter: No Phyl, he hasn't come out. *(He shields his eyes).* He's still in there somewhere.

Roberta: We ought to go and have a look.

Phyllis: Oh no, I'm hungry, let's go home.

Peter: Look Phyl, that red jerseyed hound may have fallen across the line and if a train should come along

Phyllis: Oh no!

Roberta: Peter you go in and see if you can see anything. I'll wait here with Phyl.

Peter: Right, here goes. *(He goes off).*

Roberta: *(shouting)* Can you see anything?

Peter: *(shouting from off)* Nothing yet!

Phyllis: Oh, I'm hungry.

Roberta: Shut up, Phyl. This is more important than your stomach! *(shouts)* Anything yet? *(No answer).* Here, Phyllis, have a sandwich and stop moaning.

Phyllis: Thanks.

Roberta: *(shouting)* Can you hear me Peter? *(to PHYLLIS)* There's no reply. Perhaps I should go in after him.

Phyllis: No, Bobbie!

Peter: *(shouting from off)* I've found him, but he's hurt his leg. Run and get help. I'll stay with him until you return.

Roberta: *(shouting)* Righto, Peter. We'll be as quick as we can. *(to PHYLLIS)* Come on Phyl, we'll run up to the farm and get help. *(She goes off).*

Phyllis: *(mouth full of sandwich following)* Wait for me!

(Exit PHYLLIS. Enter MOTHER and DR FORREST).

Dr Forrest: I've set the leg and it will begin to mend but it will take a fair time.

Are you sure you can cope with him here at Three Chimneys for that length of time?

Mother: Of course it will be all right. He is very brave.

Dr Forrest: Very brave - but so too are your three children who braved the tunnel to find him.

Mother: I've sent a message to his grandfather, who seems to be his nearest relative. He should be here at any time but I think it would be unwise to move him back to school.

Dr Forrest: Certainly it would be better if he could stay here.

(The three CHILDREN enter).

Roberta: He will be all right, Dr Forrest?

Dr Forrest: He will be quite all right with the right amount of care and attention, head nurse.

Peter: And will he stay here?

Mother: He will stay here as long as he needs to.

Phyllis: Hooray!

Peter: It'll be nice to have another man in the house!

Roberta: Peter!

(A knocking on the door).

Mother: There now, that will probably be Jim's grandfather, he said he'd be here on the 3.15.

(The OLD GENTLEMAN enters).

O.G.: May I come in?

Children: Oh, it's you! *(They go over to him).*

Mother: Children that's not very polite.

O.G.: Oh come now, we are old friends; and it seems we are to be even better friends now that you are looking after my grandson Jim. *(To MOTHER)* How do you do, madam and my profound thanks to you for all that you have done for him.

Mother: Well this is strange! But I know that we're all very pleased that Jim is YOUR grandson.

Phyllis: Yes we are! When you think of the lots of old gentlemen there are in the world - it might have been almost anyone.

Peter: It's just like a book, isn't it Mother?

Mother: Well, Peter, things do happen in real life that are rather like books, sometimes.

Dr Forrest: Well now, I must be on my way.

Mother: Thank you, doctor, I'll see you out.

Peter & Phyllis: We'll come too!

Mother: Not all of you. Bobbie you take Jim's grandfather in to see him.

Roberta: Yes Mother.

O.G.: Goodbye, Dr Forrest, and thank you.

(Exeunt MOTHER, DOCTOR, PETER and PHYLLIS).

O.G.: Now then, where is this injured hound?

Roberta: He's through here, but before I take you in might I just ask a favour.

O.G.: Why, of course.

Roberta: You see, you were so helpful over our Russian, and I just wanted to ask you

O.G.: Yes?

Roberta: Well it's about Father.

O.G.: Your Father?

Roberta: Yes. The others think that he's gone away, but I found an old newspaper when I was collecting clothes for Perks. I know what's happened to him, they've put him in prison and said he's done terrible things - sold state secrets and so on. But I know it's not true.

O.G.: And you've kept this secret from the others?

Roberta: They wouldn't understand. But you helped us with the Russian, couldn't you do something to help Father?

O.G.: There's no need to ask, my dear. When I read about your Father's case in the papers at the time, I had my doubts. And ever since I've known who you were, I've been trying to find out things. I have hopes, my dear - yes, I may say, I have great hopes.

Roberta: Oh!

O.G.: But keep your secret a little longer. It wouldn't do to upset your Mother with a false hope, would it?

Roberta: Oh, but it isn't false! I know you can do it!

O.G.: Well, we'll see. Now I must go and see Jim.

MUSIC 20a: RAILWAY INSTRUMENTAL [No. 9 optional Reprise]

(Exit OLD GENTLEMAN. Music begins as ROBERTA comes to the front of the stage).

Roberta: Life at Three Chimneys was never quite the same again after the old gentleman's visit. He made sure that Mother had all that she needed to look after Jim and we spent our time doing lessons with him and making sure he wasn't bored. We seemed to be Railway Children hardly at all in those days, and as the days went on each of us had an uneasy feeling about this which Phyllis expressed one morning.

(The music stops as PETER and PHYLLIS enter).

Phyllis: I wonder if the Railway misses us?

Peter: If we're quick we could wave to the 9.15 like we used to. Come on!

Phyllis: My bootlace has come undone.

Peter: When you're married your bootlace will come undone going up the church aisle, and your bridegroom will tumble over it and smash his nose and stop the wedding.

Phyllis: I shouldn't mind marrying a man with a smashed nose.

Roberta: Oh, come on you two, or we'll never get to the station on time.

(VILLAGERS begin to enter among them MRS VINEY with a newspaper).

Mrs Viney: Good morning children, what good news, we're all so pleased!

Peter: Good morning, thank you.

Phyllis: What's she mean?

Peter: I don't know.

Mr James: Good luck to the three of you, and yer dear Mother, she do deserve it.

Roberta: Thank you.

(MR GILLS enters and goes up and shakes them by the hand).

Mr Gills: Good morning. We knew you'd be here this morning. We wish you well, very, very well.

Peter: Thank you Mr Gills.

Perks: *(entering)* The train's right on time. God bless you all! I see'd it in the paper and I don't think I was ever so glad of anything in all my days!

Phyllis: *(to Peter)* Saw what in the paper?!

Roberta: I don't know, but I bet it has something to do with the old gentleman.

Peter: The train's coming!

(People lean out of the windows and cheer; people on the platform cheer too and wave newspapers as the OLD GENTLEMAN and FATHER get off the train).

All three Children: *(over the music)* Father! Father! It's Father! *(They rush into his arms).*

Roberta: *(Turning to the old gentleman).* I knew you could do it!

MUSIC 21: OUR THANKS TO YOU [Reprise]

Chorus: *Our thanks to you brave children
We very gladly pay.
The Railway Board rewards you for
Your bravery today.*

Children: *We thought we'd lost dear Father,
We thought he'd gone away.
But just as hope was fading fast
You came and saved the day.*

Chorus: *Our thanks to you, kind sir,
Have been very richly earned.
Your selfless actions have made sure
That Father has returned.*

MUSIC 22: RAILWAY CHILDREN [Reprise]

Chorus: *Railway children
Watching the trains go fast,
Railway children
Waving as folks go past.
Passengers wave back on their way
Knowing they'll see them ev'ry day,
Trains may move on but here they'll stay
Railway children
Watching the line.*

(Dr FORREST leads MOTHER in - she and FATHER embrace).

*Railway children
Glad that their father's home,
Railway children
Now that the answer's come*

*Brought by the nine-fifteen, their friend
Taking the love each day they'd send
Bringing them now a happy end.
Railway children
Watching the line.*

(All stand waving to the audience with the family in the middle, ROBERTA has her arm through the OLD GENTLEMAN's and PHYLLIS and PETER stand with PERKS).

THE END

