

RED SOCKS

A Musical

by

ANTHONY LEE

Music by

**ANTHONY LEE and
GARETH PRICE**

SchoolPlay Productions Ltd

15 Inglis Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3HU

RED SOCKS

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RED SOCKS

ACT I

Scene 1 The Old Classic Dance Hall (Saturday afternoon)

‘RED SOCK BOOGIE’

‘LEAVE IT TO MY IMAGINATION’

Scene 2 The Office of Vernon Chance (that evening)

‘AN EYE TO THE MAIN CHANCE’

Scene 3 The O.C.D.H. (Sunday)

‘I KNOW A GIRL CALLED STEAMY SAL’

Scene 4 The O.C.D.H. (Monday morning)

‘JUST FOR A DAY’

Scene 5 Chance’s Office (Monday afternoon)

Scene 6 The Green Palm Palais Room at the O.C.D.H. (Monday evening)

‘COME BREAKING’*

ACT II

Scene 1 The local Police Station (Monday night after the dance)

‘SHE MAY NOT BE ’

Scene 2 The same (Tuesday morning)

Scene 3 Chance’s Office (Tuesday morning)

‘BAD BOY RAP’*

‘ANOTHER SAD SONG’*

Scene 4 The Town Hall (Tuesday evening)

‘ECOREG’

‘OVER TO YOU’

‘RED SOCK BOOGIE’ reprise

**Music for these numbers is by ANTHONY LEE and GARETH PRICE*

‘RED SOCKS’...has nothing to do with baseball teams, Moira Shearer or Loud Footwear Sales Promotions. Red Socks are a mark of distinction occasionally awarded to deserving members of The Old Classic Dance Hall (O.C.D.H.). This Community Centre - a privately owned establishment, like many others which have become a feature of society - caters for youths in their leisure time. This story covers four days in the lives of some of those associated with the O.C.D.H.

CAST:-

Members of the O.C.D.H.:

GARY LISTER
LIZZIE CHANCE
BOFF SPECTRE
ANDY
PERRY
GEOFF
MARKO
WINSTON
BORIS
SAM BINGO-METHUSELEH (*Red Sock*)
Mr. WILLIAM PARKER (*Group Leader*)

The Bebops:

STEAMY SAL
SEMBLANCE
DULCIEBELLE
RAMONE
VERNON CHANCE (*Lizzie's uncle; owner of Main Chance Enterprises and the O.C.D.H.*)
BAGSHAW (*his side-kick*)
MISS FISHKIN (*his secretary*)

Chance's heavies:

PAOLO GAMBINI
ALBERT MARROW
CYRIL FAIRBROTHER (*Council Head of Contracts*)
PETER EAST (*a well-known commentator*)
SIR TONY TOWNSEND (*Committee Chairman*)
MARGARET TANDY (*Committee Member*)
CECIL FORMAN (*Committee Member*)
GABRIELLA VICKS (*Leader of WOSPs*)
CECILIA WINTERBOTTOM (*Leader of BEES*)
POLICEMEN
CHORUS of General Public

RED SOCKS

ACT I

SCENE I

(The dance-room of the Old Classic Dance Hall - O.C.D.H.)

Intro to song - RED SOCK BOOGIE - with dancers, bebop chorus, GARY, BOFF, PERRY, GEOFF, WINSTON, MARKO, ANDY, LIZZIE, SAM.

RED SOCK BOOGIE: *(MAIN GROUP, BEBOP CHORUS, DANCERS)*

*I wear the latest in fashion
My shoes are best crocodile
But when it comes down to passion
I'm clearly not in her style
She's such a great little mover
When she gets out on that floor,
But I'm just not her kind of groover
Red socks are what she adores
Red sock boogie shiwup shiwup shiwup
Red sock boogie shiwup shiwup shiwup*

*I work out all morning
I go to the pool
So when the night time is dawning
I'm looking cool
I've got a black belt at judo
I've got the Duke's gold award
I wear a purple tuxedo
By half the world I'm adored
But when I step to the disco
I feel my legs on fire.
For she'll answer me with a no no
Those red socks are what I desire
Red sock boogie shiwup shiwup shiwup
Red sock boogie shiwup shiwup shiwup
Red socks are what I desire
Red socks are what I desire
Down at the Old Classic Dance Hall
Down at the Old Classic Dance Hall*

(At end of song DANCERS exeunt leaving MAIN GROUP. BOFF sits quietly with

radio, filling in pools coupon.)

Andy: I think this Red-Sock business is a load of hooley.

Gary: That's only because you haven't got them.

Perry: None of us is likely to get them - nothing ever happens around here - not like the old days when there used to be riots and strikes and good things like that.

Andy: Yeah, but 'Red-Socks'; what do they mean anyway?

Winston: You know the citation, 'For conspicuous achievement in the field of Social Harmony'. Go and get us some Cokes, Andy. Who knows, it might get you a favourable mention in your Red-Sock potential file!

Andy: Aw nuts. Boris!

Boris: Yes?

Andy: Get us some Coke.

Boris: Okay.

Perry: Good boy, Boris.

Gary: I'd give anything to get the Red-Socks.

Lizzie: You'll get them one day, Gary, I know you will.

Andy: I'm surprised you haven't got them, Lizzie, what with your uncle owning this place.

Gary: Cut it out, Andy. That's not fair!

Andy: Oh I'm so sorry, Sir Galahad.

Sam: Hey, you guys, keep, cool. Let's have a little coolth round here.

Andy: Thus spake Sam Bingo-Mehuselah, Red Sock.

Sam: (*exiting*) With a hyphen.

Andy: Sorry, Sam Bingo Hyphen Methuselah; mighty queller of riots.

Marko: Well, you can't take it away from him - he's got them: we haven't.

Andy: Yeah, and what did he get them for?

Geoff: You know very well. He stopped what was potentially one of the worst riots ever single handed.

Andy: Look, all he did was grab a megaphone and announce that Viv Richards had scored 673 in one day and that the highlights were about to be shown on T.V.

Boff: Hey! Quiet, you lot. We're doing rather well here.

(A pause, during which the radio is turned up and the football scores are audible. A couple go round behind BOFF)

Gary: Nine out of nine so far. Not bad!

Andy: Aw, we're never going to win the pools.

All: Ssh! etc. (*two or three more results*)

Boff: That's another. All we need is this one!

Radio: Doncaster 5: Reading 4.

All: Oh no! etc.

Radio: I do beg your pardon, there's a correction to that last result which should read Doncaster 4: Reading 4. The official pools forecast is that dividends should be very high. And now the rugby results....(*radio turned off*)

(*Silence*)

Boff: Ladies and gentlemen. At a rough and ready calculation, taking into account the official forecast and the fact that we have maximum points on a treble-chance multispiral accumulator...

Marko: Get on with it!

Winston: How much?

Boff: Somewhere between one and a half and two million pounds.

(*Silence*)

Boff: With twelve of us in Mr. Parker's group, that makes at least £125,000 each.

(*Silence*)

Winston: I can buy a megaton ghetto-blaster!

Marko: I can buy a new B.M.X.!

Andy: A thousand B.M.Xs!

Perry: A first division football team!

Geoff: Enough Mars bars to fill a warehouse!

Boff: The biggest micro-computer in the world!

Gary: The world!

Gary: Never had two pennies to rub together. Mum blew the housekeeping on the bingo, and Dad was in the betting shop more often than not.

Marko: We never had a decent holiday; once went through the Channel tunnel but the France railway workers were on strike so we came straight back and had fish and chips in Folkestone instead and my sister was sick all over the pavement.

All: We're going to be rich.

Andy: What do you do when you suddenly learn that you've got more money than you ever thought existed? I once wrote an essay on it and said that I'd divide it all between Aunt Mavis and the cats' home. I hope Aunt Mavis didn't see it!

Perry: I never imagined this happening. You read about it in the papers and wonder what Mr. Fred Arbuckle of Blackburn could do with all that cash. And now it's happened to me.

We're going to be rich and what will we do?

LEAVE IT TO MY IMAGINATION: (*MAIN GROUP, CHORUS*)

All: *Leave it to my my my leave it to my my imagination. (X4)*
When you think your life is set, round the corner there's a
[rainbow]

*Turn that corner, don't forget, throw your troubles through the
[window.*

Pick up that pot of gold.

Cut loose before you're old.

Just think what you could do with all that cash to blow

Leave it to my my my leave it to my my imagination. (X2)

*When you've got the deepest blues, fortune's wheel might be
[turning*

*When your toes come through your shoes, you might find some
[cash for burning*

Sit back and close your eyes

Wait for that big surprise

*It might just come your way today (think of all the things that
[you could do)*

Shoo Wop Be Bop (X2)

Leave it to my.....(X2)

Sit back and close your eyes

Wait for that big surprise

*It might just come your way today (think of all the things that
[you could do)*

Leave it to my.....(X2) (X4 over....)

*When you think your life is set, round the corner there's a
[rainbow*

*Turn that corner, don't forget, throw your troubles through the
[window*

*When you've got the deepest blues, fortune's wheel might be
[turning*

*When your toes come through your shoes you might find some
[cash for burning*

All that cash to blow (think of all the things that you could do)

Leave it to me.

Leave it to my my my

Leave it to my my my

Leave it to my my my

Leave it to my my my

Leave it to my my my leave it to my imagination

Leave it to me.

(Re-enter BORIS with a bag of coke - fire type)

Boris: Your coke, Andy. One lump or two?

Andy: You moron! Boris, we've just won the football pools.

Boris: But football is played on grounds, not in pools.

Perry: Boris, old boy, you can have a new brain. We can buy anything.

(Enter SAM)

Sam: Hey, you guys. Mr. Parker wants to see you in Room C.

Winston: He must have been listening to the radio too. Come on.

SCENE 2

(The office of VERNON CHANCE)

(VERNON, PAOLO and AILBERT. Enter BAGSHAW.)

Bagshaw: The information you requested on The Old Classic Dance Hall, V.C.

Chance: Ah, thank you, Bagshaw. It's about time we made something of that prime site.

Bagshaw: Right, as usual, V.C.

Chance: I know, Bagshaw, I know. Have the For Sale notices gone up?

Bagshaw: Yes. Being done now, V.C. Do you really think anyone will want to buy the dump though?

Chance: No, not for minute. However, people will squeal if I knock down a Community Centre to replace it with a Main Chance Superstore without even offering it on the market. This way at least I'll be seen to be doing the right thing.

Ms Fish: *(on intercom)* There's a Mr. Parker and some youths from the Old Classic asking to see you, Mr. Chance.

Chance: Ah! The first of the whingers. News travels fast. Show them in, Miss Fishkin *(into intercom)*. Smile sweetly, Bagshaw, and let me do the talking. If you have to say anything, mutter about the inevitability of progress etcetera, etcetera.

(Enter Mr. PARKER and BOYS)

Chance: Ah, Mr.....

Parker: Parker, William Parker, Mr. Chance. One of the Group Leaders from the O.C.D.H.

Chance: To be sure, Mr....Parker. Now, I know why you're here, of course, and let me make it absolutely clear that it nearly broke my heart making this decision to scrap - I mean to sell the O.C.D.H. as you call it, and if I could have done anything to keep it out of the hands of the unscrupulous developers who will doubtless want to scoop it up, I would have done. However, the economic climate being what it is....

Parker: Mr. Chance.

Chance: Er...yes?

Parker: How much are you asking for the O.C.D.H.?

Chance: Mr. Parker, I am sure you will appreciate that the purchase price is a matter that must remain a confidential one between me and any prospective buyer.

Parker: Yep, that's us.

Chance: I beg your pardon?

Parker: We want to buy it.

Chance: Mr. Parker. I'm a very busy man. Now, I appreciate your concern but....

Parker: We'll offer you one and a half million pounds.

Bagshaw: One and a half million pounds!....

Chance: Bagshaw! You'll have to excuse Mr. Bagshaw's surprise, Mr. Parker, but the sum you mention is ...er....very much below what we had been envisaging. However, I do have a soft spot for your centre - indeed my niece, Lizzie, seems to spend most of her spare time sitting around that old tree in the courtyard, or dancing. Still it seems to keep her out of trouble....so if you give me some time to consider, I may just see my way clear to doing some sort of deal with you, though of course I can promise nothing now. May I ask how you propose to raise the money?

Parker: We won the pools. We haven't heard the details yet but we expect it to be in excess of the figure I mentioned. We were just celebrating when news of your selling the O.C.D.H. came through. It was the Kids' idea to use the money to save the place. You'll understand that it means a great deal to them. It's not just a building, it's a way of life.

Chance: Very worthy, I'm sure. Well, Mr. Parker....gentlemen....You're Gary, aren't you? Yes, Lizzie has mentioned you. Well, gentlemen, thank you for coming here. I shall be in touch. Good day to you.

Parker & Boys: Goodbye.

(Exeunt)

Bagshaw: Hell's teeth! A million and a half bazonkers! They must be mad! How do you do it, V.C.?

Chance: You know my motto, Bagshaw - 'An eye to the main chance'. Though I must admit this seems an extraordinary piece of luck. The thing is to get this deal pushed through at top speed, before the idiots change their minds.

Bagshaw: Or get a survey done.

Chance: Or get a survey done. We must strike while the iron is hot. *(He makes as if for a song, but during the pause after the intro bar, the intercom buzzes. He returns to his desk and presses button).* Yes, Miss Fishkin?

Ms Fish.: There's a Mr. Fairbrother from the Council to see you, Mr. Chance.

Chance: Show him in please, Miss Fishkin.

(Enter FAIRBROTHER)

Cyril, how nice to see you again!

Fairb.: Hello, Mr. Chance I...er....have a little information for you. Confidential information, that is.

Chance: Well, let's hear it, Cyril. Don't worry, you can speak freely in front of my associates.

Fairb.: Well it's like this, Mr. Chance. I happen to have caught a glimpse at the minutes of a meeting which took place recently about a proposed new link road.

Chance: And how might that interest me?

Fairb.: The route chosen happens to be straight through one of the properties you own: The Old Classic Dance Hall. Can't go any other way: river to one side, shopping centre to the other. If it's approved it would mean a compulsory purchase, which is normally rather less than the market value.

Bagshaw: Hell's teeth!

Chance: Don't panic, Bagshaw. Mr. Fairbrother and I have a certain understanding in these matters. We scratch each other's backs so to speak.

Fairb.: You've always been very good to me, Mr. Chance. Now I must slip away. It wouldn't be healthy if anyone from the office knew I'd been here. Oh, one other thing. An open enquiry has been fixed at the town hall for Tuesday. Seems they're a bit worried about closing down a Community Centre, even a privately owned one, and they want to satisfy themselves that the need for the road outweighs the value of the Centre. Must fly. Cheerio. (*Exit*)

Chance: Good day, Cyril, and thank you.

Bagshaw: Hell's teeth.

Chance: Fret not, my dear Bagshaw.

Bagshaw: But....

Chance: But nothing. We are three-way winners with this wretched place. Consider. We sell the dump to Parker and his kids for a vastly inflated price. Failing that we knock it down and put up one of our superstores, which in this area would go like a bomb..

Bagshaw: But the enquiry and the compulsory purchase....?

Chance: Ah! There's the third beautiful possibility. If they decide to go ahead with this road scheme then certainly the compulsory purchase price will be nothing to celebrate, but, you forget that I do also own a road construction company, and the agreement I have with our Mr. Fairbrother, who happens to Head of Contracts at the Council, would see us clean up very nicely on the link road project. So you see, Bagshaw, we have three beds of roses waiting for us to jump into, and all three smelling as sweetly of profit as each other.

Bagshaw: How do you do it V.C.?

Chance: It's what you and I would call a talent for the main chance, my dear old Bagshaw.

*AN EYE TO THE MAIN CHANCE: (CHANCE, with BAGSHAW,
PAOLO and ALBERT)*

Chance: *An eye to the main chance puts you at the front
A little to enhance helps you in the hunt
Here a useful contact, there a little nudge
Sign another contract, don't forget the small print
Read between the lines; drop 'em a broad hint
Just to clinch the deal.*

Bagshaw: *Try a little smile; confidence should ooze*

Chance: *Play the good guy*

Bag: *Tell a white lie*

Chance: *Don't be too shy*

Bag: *Don't be too fly*

Chance & Bag: *Stay just the right side of the law.*

Chance: *An eye to the main chance puts you one ahead
Allow it to slip and you might as well be dead
Make yer man an offer, one he can't refuse
If your man's a goffer fly him to St. Andrews
Buy the wife a mink, offer a world cruise
Push him to the brink.*

Bag: *If yer man is naughty: has a second thought*

Chance: *Send the boys in*

Paolo: *Put the boot in*

Albert: *Fill his face in*

Bag: *Really chase him*

All: *Stay cool, the world's your oyster*

Stay cool, a bed of roses

Stay cool, if you pursue the main chance.

SCENE 3

(The leisure room at the O.C.D.H. The MAIN GROUP.)

Winston: Where's Boris?

Perry: I saw him chatting up a vacuum cleaner by the canteen.

(Enter SAM)

Sam: Hey, you guys! What you are doing with that money you won is extremely very cool indeed oh yes, no question!

Gary: Thanks, Sam. We couldn't stand by and see the old place disappear, could we?

Sam: Well, I'm moving off to higher things fairly presently myself, but I shall be glad to think that the place where I spent much of my brilliant youth is still

going strong.

Andy: What do you mean, Sam, 'moving off'?

Sam: Comes a time when a man's gotta get his act together and be a man, man. Gonna get me a job in the record industry; be a megastar and hit the bright-light scene, me and steamy Sal.

Sal: You talking 'bout me, boy?

Sam: Well, the way I sees it, Sal, you can hang round here chitting and chatting with Ramone, Semblance and Dulciebell, or you can come along with me and make it champagne and mink every day.

Dulcie: Wouldn't suit me: the bubbles get up my nose.

Ramone: And I have an allergy to fur.

Semblance: This boy's all mouth. He's just shooting the breeze and trying to catch the wind.

I KNOW A GIRL CALLED STEAMY SAL (SAM, BEBOPS, MAIN GROUP)

Sam: *I know a girl called Steamy Sal*

Bebops: *(Run away Sam 'cos you know you didn't ought to)*

Sam: *She doesn't know but she's my gal*

Bebops: *(She may as well be the President's daughter)
(Ooh)*

Sam: *And in the course of time*

Bebops: *(Wa wa ooh)*

Sam: *She's gonna be all mine*

Bebops: *(Oh yeah)*

Sam: *Aim for the moon and maybe you'll reach a star*

I'm gonna buy her things to wear

Bebops: *(Take more than that to win her, I tell you)*

Sam: *She'll be Huggy, I'll be Bear*

Bebops: *(Give her your number maybe she'll bell you)
(Ooh)*

Sam: *And when she sees me dance*

Bebops: *(Wa wa ooh)*

Sam: *She doesn't stand a chance.*

Bebops: *(Oh yeah)*

Sam: *It'll be stars for her when she sees my moon*

Used to hang out with losers

No-good fellers, meths boozers

Now I choose to set my sights a little higher

I'm gonna get me a pin-stripe suit

Bebops: *(Get away boy you were born in the gutter)*

Sam: *Find me a job and make some loot*

Bebops: *(Who do you think you're kidding, you nutter)*
 (Ooh)
Sam: *I'm going to look so fine*
Bebops: *(Wa wa ooh)*
Sam: *And when my red socks shine*
Bebops: *(Oh yeah)*
Sam: *I'll be her man in the moon and she'll be my star*

SCENE 4

(The same. Monday morning. The GANG)

Perry: Anyone got a disprin? My head's killing me after all this celebrating.

Gary: Lizzie's got some in her bag. *(LIZZIE delves)*

Perry: Boris, go and get me a glass of water.

Boris: Can I have a disprin? I've got brain-ache.

Perry: It was rather a complicated instruction, wasn't it?

Boris: I'll see what I can do. *(Exiting)*

(LIZZIE returns disprins to bag and discovers unposted pools coupon. Sits staring at it. Enter Mr. PARKER)

Parker: Hey, listen to this. Special delivery from Mr. Chance. *(Reading)* 'Dear Mr. Parker and members of his group' - that's you lot - 'Further to our discussion of Saturday evening I have pleasure in telling you that I am prepared, in the interests of the Centre of course, to accept your offer to buy The Old Classic Dance Hall for the amount proposed and am keen to complete proceedings as soon as possible. I should, therefore, be grateful for a meeting with you at your earliest convenience. Yours most sincerely, Vernon Chance.' How about that!

Andy: Lizzie's uncle isn't such a git after all.

Parker: Come on, Andy. Have some respect. The only thing that's worrying me is that we haven't heard from the Pools people yet. Winners are normally notified first thing Monday morning, and we need to know what we've got before we can settle with Mr. Chance. Who knows, we might have a fair bit to share out over and above what we pay for the O.C.D.H. I'll ring them.

Lizzie: Mr. Parker.

Parker: Yes, Lizzie?

Lizzie: I've got some rather awful news.

Winston: Probably can't bear the thought of paying her share to her own uncle!

Gary: What is it, Lizzie?

Lizzie: You remember when we filled the pools in?

Marko: Yeah, I said that letting Sam throw darts at a duplicate copy would bring us luck!

Lizzie: And you remember I was given the coupon to post because I was going home past the Post Office?

Parker: Yes? (*LIZZIE holds up envelope*) Oh Lizzie.

Geoff: What is it?

Andy: It's the perishing pools coupon. She didn't post the pools coupon! You stupid old cow!

Perry: Thanks very much, Lizzie.

Lizzie: I'm sorry.

Andy: Sorry! Oh that makes it all right then! Two million quid down the drain and the O.C.D.H. off to the knacker's yard courtesy of your profiteering uncle and all you can say is 'I'm sorry'.

(*Exit LIZZIE at tearful pace*)

Gary: If we wrote and told them what had happened, wouldn't they understand?

Winston: Dumbo. Don't you know anything? (*Exit GARY in pursuit of LIZZIE*).

Parker: Well. That's that then. I'd better phone Mr. Chance and withdraw the offer. The rest of you, try to be philosophical about it: we haven't actually lost anything - just not gained it. Try to think of it as rather a nice dream that's gone now.

Marko: Rather a nice dream....

JUST FOR A DAY (MAIN GROUP)

Just for a day

The grey drew aside,

Just what I always thought could happen

Just for a day I saw my rainbow,

Saw my whole horizon glow with the break of day.

Only a day, Lord of the world;

I was sun and moon,

Sea and mountain.

Only a day,

Over the ocean my dream flew away.

Just for a day

The sky was alive,

Streets were all paved with more than flagstones.

Just for a day I felt the starshine

Heard the hopeful whisper roar to a chord of gold.

Only a day,

Only the blink of an eye, was mine:

Mine the future.

Only a day

Here in the palm of my hand lay my life.

SCENE 5

(*CHANCE's office. ALBERT and PAOLO*)

Albert: My heart is very heavy, Paolo.

Paolo: Why's that, Albert, my old mate?

Albert: I don't think I'm getting job satisfaction.

Paolo: One of the by-products of the socio-economic climate, old son.

Albert: I'd have thought it was more a case of quasi-leisure-orientated labour regimens in juxtaposition to urban degeneration.

Paolo: You may just be right, old son, you may just be right. Unless of course it's just that old man Chance hasn't got anyone else left for us to lean on.

Albert: What, on account of us already having leant on them with exceeding heaviness you mean?

Paolo: Yeah. But I do sympathize with you, Albert. I can feel my foot itching to tickle someone's kidneys and my fist longs for that satisfying crunch of yielding jaw-bone.

(*Enter CHANCE*)

Chance: I've got a job for you boys.

Paolo: It's not going out to buy some roses for Miss Fishkin again is it boss?

Albert: Or handing round the sausage-rolls at one of your parties?

Chance: No, no. This is something a little more up your street.

Paolo: (*assuming a professional air*) Give us the name, boss, and we'll lean on 'im so hard he'll spend the rest of his days looking like the tower of Pisa.

Chance: Well it's not quite like that. You see, that ridiculous offer that Parker and his kids made has fallen through and of the two options left, the road one with it's contract for the construction side of my business looks the more lucrative. The enquiry's been set for tomorrow evening, and it strikes me that they won't go ahead with the project if the Centre is seen to be doing a valuable job.

Albert: You want us to burn it down with everyone in it, chief?

Chance: No, Albert, contain yourself. My niece, Lizzie, told me between sobs that there's a dancing fixture tonight between the O.C.D.H. and some other lot calling themselves the Odeon Offbeats. I want you two to go along to the dance and stir up trouble. Think you can do that?

Paolo: Paolo's the name: trouble's the game. Consider it done, Mr. Chance.

Albert: I feel better already!

SCENE 6

(*The Green Palm Disco Room at the O.C.D.H. Dance music - COME BREAKING - Disco couples etc. Commentator - PETER EAST - with microphone*)

East: Hello, and welcome back to Lords for the final session of the fourth day of

the third Test, or is it the first session of the third day of the fourth Test, I can't remember....where's Richie?....Ah....yes....sorry: as you were it's the other thing isn't it. Here we are again, ladies and gentlemen, at the Green Palm Palais Room of the Old Classic Dance Hall for another exciting evening of 'Come Breaking'. Now, before the individual bouts we'll have all the contestants on the floor if you please, just to get the old feet moving, and I'll be introducing some of them to you. Remember that tonight we have the home team from the O.C.D.H. (*cheers*) against the visitors who are the Odeon Offbeats (*cheers and boos*) (*music restarts*) And straightaway I can see Gerald and Doris from the Offbeats moving smoothly through their paces there. Gerald is a trainee mechanic and Doris wants to be a hairdresser and own a donkey farm. From the way she's moving it ought to be an elephant farm, but there you go. Ah, there's the local boy, Gary Lister partnering Lizzie Chance who, I'm told, is the niece of the owner of this establishment. It might not be the bossanova but I think we can safely say that Gary's in with a chance this evening.

(Enter ALBERT and PAOLO who during the following proceed to engineer a fight)

Over to Gary's left I can see Sam and Sal. Sam is a holder of the coveted Red-Socks, or should I say a wearer of them and.... Ah, we seem to have some action over here; this must be a new form of dance, it's new to me anyhow but then most things are these days. Seems to be good energetic stuff: I can see one chap who seems to be pretending to hit another chap on the head and very realistic it is too. Must be some sort of mime dancing. And there's a nice touch; a young lady swinging another around by the hair in a sort of triple axle. And, ow! That was my leg, sir if you don't mind. Ladies and gentlemen I....Unhand me, young man....Ladies and gentlemen, is there a policeman in the house?....

(Free for all. Enter POLICE. Whistles etc).

(Lights, exeunt).

END OF ACT I

ACT II

SCENE 1

(A prison cell. The last of the people from the previous scene are being shepherded in)

Perry: Well this is a great end to a great day. We lose a fortune and end up in jug.

Marko: Who started the fight anyway?

Winston: Must have been the Odeon lot.

Andy: It's all Lizzie-blinking-Chance's fault. She and her precious uncle have rotted things up very nicely.

Gary: We all make mistakes.

Andy: Ha! Mistakes! If you ask me she's one big mistake. And if you fancy her, Gary, then you must be soft in the head. Anyway, we may as well try to get some sleep. Goodness knows how long we'll be in this dump.

SHE MAY NOT BE: (GARY)

*She may not be going to set the world on fire
But she makes life warmer for me when she's there
Let others talk and look out for something higher
I'll be safe and sure and I'll look no further than her
The days we have are as short as time is long
Blink your eyes and everything's gone suddenly
If you don't take what is there all along,
You will wake one day and your life has drifted
Away on the tide, away on the tide*

*The day is a bird that flies
The night is a sea
Be there as my haven in the storm, in the storm
If I should run and look round for somethong new
I would spend my life wondering why, wondering why
But I'll keep faith and hold on to something true
Wrap your fears away I'll be here tomorrow
To face life with you
To face life with you, with me*

SCENE 2

(The same, next morning. Enter POLICEMAN with LIZZIE)

Policeman: Right. Rise and shine you lot. Young lady here has put up bail money and you're free to go, but mind you keep out of trouble.

Perry: Hey. Well done Lizzie.

Lizzie: No time for that. Listen. Mr. Parker's waiting for you at the Centre. It seems that there's to be some sort of public enquiry this evening about the future of the O.C.D.H. Apparently the Council want to put a road through it now and it all hinges on whether or not some committee thinks that we're more important than a new road.

Geoff: After last night's little effort we don't have a price.

Winston: It never rains but it pours.

Boff: The odds would appear to be stacked against us.

Gary: Come on, fellers. Let's not go down without a struggle. You lot, see what support you can whip up before this evening. Some of your parents are bound to help.

Andy: And what'll you and Little Miss Mistake do?

Gary: Well, I've got an idea. It's to do with something that we told in a local history lecture once.

Winston: You mean you listened to that drivel?

Gary: Boff. You and I need to pay a visit to the Public Library. Lizzie, you go and see if you can't work on your uncle. I'm sure he doesn't really want to see us with nowhere to go in our spare time. We'll all meet up at the Town Hall this evening. Let's go!

SCENE 3

(Chance's office. PAOLO and ALBERT. Enter LIZZIE)

Lizzie: Hello Paolo, Albert. How are you?

Paolo: Oh, very bad; thank you for asking, Miss Lizzie. Very bad indeed.

Lizzie: You take a pride in being bad, don't you.

Albert: It's not our fault, Lizzie. It's what they call force of circumstances.

BAD BOY RAP: *(ALBERT and PAOLO)*

Albert: *I was nasty as a nipper, made the Ripper look a saint
But reflecting on my childhood I have a complaint to make
What's that?*

It's that

In the way that I related

I was incapacitated

By a lack of understanding from me dear old dad

Paolo: *Oh yeah?*

Albert: *That's why, that's why I'm bad.*

Chorus: *Bad boy, bad bad boy; bad boy, bad bad boy*

Bad boy, that's why he's such a bad bad boy

Paolo: *I was battered as a baby,*

*I was battered as a lad
I was consequently prone to batter everybody else like mad
That's bad
That's bad
I'm a bad boy but I would like to be good
If I could just be, be understood
I've a certain reputation, education is to blame
I am really just a softie but I have a sense of shame deep down*

Albert: *Why's that?*

Paolo: *It's that
In a form of twenty-seven at the age of just eleven
I developed quite a passion for the lady who taught art
She said get lost*

Chorus: *Bad boy, bad bad boy; bad boy, bad bad boy
Bad boy, that's why he's such a bad bad boy (TWICE)*

Albert: *That's why I'm such a bad boy*

(Enter CHANCE and BAGSHAW)

Chance: Well done, boys! Good work.

Albert: Thank you, Sir. Not too testing really.

(LIZZIE remains, but unobserved)

Chance: Perfect timing. I can just see old Tony Townsend and the rest of his committee finding for the road on the spot the moment they hear that half the members of the precious O.C.D.H. spent the night in gaol after a particularly unpleasant and unprovoked fight. You alerted the press didn't you, Bagshaw?

Bagshaw: Of course, V.C.

Paolo: Seems a bit of a shame for those kids really.

Bagshaw: They've got their homes to go to.

Paolo: Yeah, but, that place does a pretty good job for the youngsters in this area: gives 'em somewhere to go: keeps 'em off the streets and all that. Look at the way the crime rate's dropped since this centre and others like it opened up, right, Albert?

Albert: Yeah. Tragic reading those crime figures make. But you're quite right, Paolo. We never had anything like that when we was nippers. Reckon we might have turned out a bit better if we had.

Chance: For goodness sakes! You two are going soft. I don't pay you to think. If you're going to start questioning me I'll find some others to do my dirty work.

Albert: Well if that's your attitude you know what you can do with your dirty work, Mr. Chance.

Paolo: Nicely spoken, Albert. As a matter of fact me and Albert was thinking of going into business ourselves anyway.

Chance: Oh yes? Doing what, might I ask?

Paolo: We was thinking of opening up an antique shop actually, Mr. Chance. You meet a classier sort of person in that line. Good day to you, Mr. Chance, and may you stew in your own Machiavellian machinations.

(Exeunt with dignity)

Chance: Good riddance. God preserve me from heavies with hearts.

Bagshaw: What's the next move, V.C.?

Chance: The next move is to sit back and wait for the inquiry to give the road scheme the thumbs up and then trust to Councillor Cyril Fairbrother to do his stuff with the contracts.

Bagshaw: And what if they find against it?

Chance: They won't. But even if they do, there's still the third bed of roses waiting for us: knock the place down and put up a superstore. I do own it don't forget.

Bagshaw: An eye for the main chance, eh, V.C.? Gosh you're brilliant! You ought to be in politics.

Chance: And you're an obsequious toad, but you have your uses. As for politics, that's a mug's game, all that kissing babies and pretending to be sincere. Come on, I'll buy you lunch to celebrate. Meet me at Giovanni's at one o'clock.

(Exeunt. Enter LIZZIE)

Lizzie: So that's what it comes down to. We can't win. And I'm the biggest loser of the lot. I mucked up the pools; the monster who's going to end the life of our O.C.D.H. is my own uncle and guardian, and Gary will never want to look at me again. I hate being this age: nothing ever seems to go right.

ANOTHER SAD SONG: (LIZZIE)

Hard, cold words fly in every direction today

Friends smile ice-smiles and quietly move further away

*They sing a new song; the lullaby's gone; the lyrics are way out
of line*

Used to a childhood of safety and comfort I never envisaged

The tune could turn into another sad song

*They say that I'll learn; the wheel will turn; but saying is all very
fine*

*Just when I wanted room to run free, suddenly I found the rope
too long*

All I hear are the words of another sad song.

Too young; too old, I can't run for help anymore

Too big; too small, a foot either side of the door

*It doesn't seem fair; there's no-one to share; there's no-one to
help me along
They seem to expect, I'll learn from neglect: experience shows
that they're wrong
Now looking over a view of my future the wind seems to give me
the note to sing, starting another sad song
Sooner or later things will improve: pendulums always swing
back one day
Till then I'll sing the words of another sad song.*

(During which CHANCE re-enters unseen)

SCENE 4

(The Town Hall. The COMMITTEE - Sir TONY TOWNSEND, MARGARET, TANDY, Cllr. CECIL FOREMAN, also CHANCE, PARKER et alia)

Townsend: So, to recap briefly on what we have heard up to this point, it appears that the Council have put forward a strong case for the new link road which will connect the North and South by-passes. Against that we've heard that the only building to suffer in the scheme would be the Community Centre known as the Old Classic Dance Hall, which is owned by Main Chance Enterprises. Mr. Parker has given us an eloquent defence of the Centre, of what it offers to the local youth and its value to them. However, I am bound to have to report that as recently as last night several members of the Centre spent some hours in police custody as a result of violence during a dance at the very place under discussion. I think I can speak for my colleagues when I say that such reprehensible behaviour is hardly conducive to our looking favourably on the case for keeping the O.C.D.H. open.

Marko: What's he on about?

Winston: I don't know, but from Parky's face it's bad for us.

Townsend: Order please. So unless anyone has anything further to add, I think we can safely....

(At this point a commotion at the back of the hall heralds the arrival of GABRIELLA VICKS and her Women Opposed to So-called Progress - WOSPS - chanting and waving banners)

WOSPS: Save our Centre....Save our Centre.

Townsend: *(hammering on table)* Order, please, order. Madam, if you have something to say could you perhaps say it rather than shout it?

Gab. Vicks: I say it's a diabolical shame! That Centre's done more for our kids than anything else. They've got things to do and a place to go to. What's a new road going to do for them?

Mag. Tandy: Might it not be fair to say that being put in prison for brawling is not

a wholly desirable option to be offered by a Community Centre?

Winston: We didn't start it, it was that lot from the Odeon!

Mag. Tandy: Whoever started it, I don't think we can deny the unsavoury nature of the incident. In my opinion the children should be cared for more by their parents....

(Another commotion at the back. This time CECILIA WINTERBOTTOM leads her Ban Everything Ecologically Suspect group - BEES - to the stage)

BEES: No More Roads! Bar the Car!

Townsend: Ladies! Ladies! Some decorum if you please. Say what you have to say, Madam.

Cec. Wint: We, The BEES, are totally against the proposed road link.

Cllr. Foreman: Why is that?

Cec. Wint: *(reading)* We, The BEES represent the human race in our abhorrence at the rapid erosion of the natural world in which we live. The wanton destruction of flora and fauna beneath the iron boot of expanding road systems and building development is creating an ecological imbalance that threatens the very existence of this our world.

ECOREG: *(BEES - A, WOSPS - B, COUNCIL - C, OCDH - D)*
(A,B,C,A, A+B, A+B+C, A+B+C+D)

A: *The world is an okay place, we want it to stay that way
The future's a flat disgrace, we can't even have our say
They want to clear all the green, and spread it with tar
And where all the flowers have been, there's only a scar*

B: *These kids are all we've got to see we carry on
You hear a lot of rot that all they do is wrong
The generation gap is just the same as what it was
Why get in such a flap? It's just a game*

C: *All this talk of standing still
Progress is a bitter pill
What we build is what we are
This is our parameter*

D: *All we want is O.C.D.H., all we want is O.C.D.H.....*
(Enter GARY, BOFF et al.)

Cllr Foreman: But madam, there is no countryside involved here: we are knocking down a rather shabby old building in order to put in a section of road which will greatly ease traffic pressure in the area.

Gary: There's a tree.

Townsend: I beg your pardon?

Gary: You'd have to cut down a tree.

BEES: Shame!

Cllr Foreman: I believe there is a tree in the courtyard, but it's very old and hardly the ecological highlight of the area.

Gary: That's exactly it. It is very old. Boff Spectre and I have been at the library all day and we have found out some interesting facts about our tree.

Townsend: Such as?

Gary: Legend has it that from the 'Freedom Tree' as it used to be known, Queen Boadicea watched her warriors defeat the 2nd Legion during the rebellion of the Iceni. The historian A.A. Halfbrick established beyond doubt that William the Conqueror gave his orders for the Domesday Survey to be carried out while sitting in the shade of the same tree and during the 2nd World War a bomb lodged in its branches without exploding which led Winston Churchill to say that the Freedom Tree represented the people of England who would never give in to oppression. A carbon 14 dating-check by Boff here has ascertained that the tree is, well, you tell them, Boff.

Boff: A cross-dating correlation using dendrochronology drawn from X-rays taken of the trunk confirm that the Freedom Tree is well in excess of two thousand years old. It's all in this report. Furthermore, archaeological evidence from an excavation by Sir Moribund Cartwheel in 1947 suggests that the tree was the centre of a druidical shrine in the pre-Roman period....

Townsend: Enough! why was I not informed of all this earlier? Clearly, if this is all as the young gentlemen say then there can be no question of destroying such a valuable part of our heritage. This information casts a very different light on the matter.

Women: Hooray!

(ALBERT and PAOLO step forward)

Albert: Begging your worship's pardon, but there's another matter what requires a shedding of light upon so to speak.

Townsend: Oh?

Paolo: No names, no packdrill and no stories out of school as it were me lud, but if you'll accept the word of two honest antique dealers as was present at the aforementioned fracas at the Dance Hall last night, the said rumpus was nothing, if not rather less than that, to do with the members of that hestabishment.

Albert: To foreshorten a story of some length and not to put too fine a point on matters, we started the fight on orders from above, the nature of which must remain unrevealed, but I trust you will accept that this young man and his associates was as blameless as the driven snow.

Townsend: I am delighted to accept your version of events. Certainly it seems to me that these young people have emerged from today with a great deal of

credit. We shall adjourn now to draw up our report but, strictly off the record, I think we can all look forward to the prolonged existence of the Old Classic Dance Hall Community Centre.

All: (*applause etc.*)

(*Exeunt COMMITTEE, WOSPS, BEES, et al. Others group round GARY to congratulate. CHANCE remains at rear of stage talking with LIZZIE*)

Parker: Well done, Gary. That was brilliant!

Andy: You've saved the Centre!

Winston: O.C.D.H. 1, Main Chance Enterprises 0. Final score!

Gary: I'm rather afraid that it's not.

Perry: What do you mean?

Gary: Lizzie overheard her uncle this morning and it seems he's still determined to pull the place down and put up a superstore. He'll have to leave the tree alone, but that won't be a problem for his architects.

Perry: Oh grief!

Andy: The rotten old money-bags. I'd like to....to....

(*CHANCE has come forward*)

Chance: Hang on, hang on! Before you think up some suitable fate for me, hear what I've got to say. Until today I had thought of the O.C.D.H. purely as a potential site for making money. It never struck me that the people there were more important than the place itself.

Bagshaw: V.C.....!

Chance: Shut up, Bagshaw, I know what I'm doing (*aside*). Lizzie has convinced me, and after your victory today and the way you fought for it, I'm as keen to see the old place survive as you are. I admire guts and enterprise. You have my promise ... as a politician ... that no one will touch the O.C.D.H. What's more, I propose to put a lot of money into the place and make it the best Centre in England.

Gary: It's already that, Mr. Chance, but thanks. Somehow I always thought that Lizzie's uncle couldn't be that bad.

Bagshaw: V.C., are you sure you're doing the right thing? I mean, kissing babies and pretending to be sincere?

Chance: Bagshaw, as prospective Member of Parliament for this area, this is a heaven-sent situation.

Bagshaw: Hell's teeth, V.C. The old main chance again, eh?

Chance: And there's one last thing. I've had a chat with Mr. Parker and he agrees. As owner of the O.C.D.H. I think I've got the right to present you with something that I believe represents an outstanding achievement. You deserve them.

(*BAGSHAW photographs award of Red Socks. Congratulations etc.*)

As I said, it's the people in a community that really matter. What happens to the place now and in the future depends on your effort and teamwork. It's over to you.

OVER TO YOU: (GARY and the COMPANY)

Gary: *Over and over as time tumbles by
Fate, like the seasons, is as changeable as clouds in the sky
Ever and ever tides turn again
Turn with the tide and you can question the winds that blow,
Though the answer you'll never know.*

All: *Destiny: what do you hold for me?
Show me the shadows on the face of the sun,
Tell me where and why the rivers will run,
I know the song you sing
Over to you.*

Gary: *Day after day sheds the fear of the turn
Safely the reasons re-establish that we've nothing to learn
Just as the pattern seems to be clear,
'Wrong' cries the future; 'are you the master of where you go
Do you think that you really know?'*

All: *Destiny: what do you hold for me?
Show me the shadows on the face of the sun,
Tell me where and why the rivers will run,
I know the song you sing
I know the song you sing,
Over to you.
Over to you.*

REPRISE (last verse to end) RED SOCK BOOGIE

FIN