

# **RUNAWAY GIRL**

The second play in a Trilogy

by

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**SchoolPlay Productions Ltd**

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**[www.schoolplayproductions.co.uk](http://www.schoolplayproductions.co.uk)**

RUNAWAY GIRL

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ISBN 978 1 902472 21 8

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

## CAST

### in order of appearance

FRANK	<i>a newspaper vendor</i>
SHIRLEY SUTTON	<i>a 16 year old runaway</i>
PAUL	<i>a teenage mod</i>
MAX	<i>a worldly-wise busker</i>
RUTH	<i>a teenage waitress</i>
PATSY	<i>a teenage waitress</i>
JACK	<i>a 15 year old street kid</i>
JIM	<i>a teenage mod</i>
BOB	<i>a teenage mod</i>
ELLA	<i>an aristocratic bag lady</i>
DEC	<i>a lovesick teenage mod</i>
ALFREDO	<i>an over-worked café owner</i>
LYDIA	<i>his long-suffering wife</i>
NORMAN	<i>their sickly pot washer</i>
DAWSON	<i>a thug in a suit</i>
DOYLE	<i>a thug in a suit</i>
TOMMY KING	<i>a businessman</i>
BETTY BLACK	<i>his floozie</i>

**Runaway Girl** is set in London, February 1963.

The action is based in and around Alfredo's, a late night café in Dean Street, Soho.

A production should make use of pop music from the early 60s.  
It also features *Lili Marlene* (Schultze - Leip - Dietrich).Original Cast

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

**Runaway Girl** is the second of three youth plays created for Young Perspectives theatre company. They can be read and performed as separate plays or as a trilogy.

We didn't set out to follow the character of Shirley Sutton over three plays and twenty-odd years but, like Shirley herself, the idea just kept on running.

We first met Shirley as a 16 year old schoolgirl, just one of the characters in **Twist & Shout**, which re-created the night in 1963 when The Beatles first played Mansfield. At the end of the play, the pregnant Shirley runs away to London. When I was asked to write a second play for Young Perspectives, we felt there was scope for a sequel. **Runaway Girl** followed Shirley into the exciting and dangerous world of 1960's Soho.

The writing of both plays had been a collaborative process. Director Anne Clifford and I devised a storyline, members of the youth theatre work-shopped ideas and I wrote the scripts based on those sessions. The writing process continued during rehearsals and beyond. This version of **Runaway Girl** has been revised since its last performance.

We took **Twist & Shout** and **Runaway Girl** to the National Youth Arts Festival in Devon. On the last night of **Runaway Girl**, Anne said "I think Shirley becomes a cabaret singer". Not for the first time, it was as if she'd read my mind. From that moment on, we knew we still had a story to tell. Working from improvisation with three young actors, we set out to discover what happened to Shirley 21 years after we first met her. In **Shirley's Song**, her story comes full circle.

*Amanda Whittington*

FRANK - David Tryner

SHIRLEY SUTTON - Tracey Cajkler

PAUL - Robert Tryner

MAX - Jason Zadrozny

RUTH - Dawn

PATSY - Lucy McCormack

JACK - Andrew Jackson

JIM - Matt Murphin

BOB - Carl Dennett

ELLA - Amie Ryan

DEC - James Hurrell

ALFREDO - Stephen Towson

LYDIA - Lisa Huckelby

MITCH - Richie Kuncyusa

NORMAN - Matthew Bell

DAWSON - Thomas Allen

DOYLE - Jonathan Jarvis

TOMMY KING - Drew Sutton

BETTY BLACK - Jodie Parker

MR.ROMANOVSKI - Richie Kuncyusa



# **RUNAWAY GIRL**

**by Amanda Whittington**

## **ACT I**

*SCENE 1. ST. PANCRAS STATION, LONDON. Early evening.*

*(We hear a whistle blow and the sound of a steam train grinding to a halt. Enter SHIRLEY SUTTON, carrying a suitcase. She looks around the station in awe. The station fills up with people, all caught up in their own affairs - meeting friends, rushing home from work and buying a copy of the London Standard from FRANK, the newspaper vendor.*

**Frank:** Standard, Evening Standard!

*(SHIRLEY tries to catch the attention of passers-by).*

**Shirley:** Excuse me -

**Frank:** "Worst Winter for A Century Brings Britain to its Knees".

**Shirley:** Can you tell me -

**Frank:** "Profumo Scandal Rocks Corridors of Power".

**Shirley:** Do you know where -

**Frank:** "JFK Shot Dead". *(to the audience)* 1963 - what a year it's gonna be.

*(Enter PAUL, to buy a paper).*

**Paul:** What's the forecast, Frank?

**Frank:** More of the same, son.

**Paul:** *(looking at the headline)* The fog's killed three hundred, so they say.

**Frank:** So you watch your step.

**Paul:** Always do, Frank.

*(Exit PAUL. SHIRLEY takes a letter from her pocket and approaches FRANK).*

**Shirley:** Excuse me?

*(FRANK gives SHIRLEY a newspaper).*

**Frank:** That's a penny to you, gal.

**Shirley:** Can you direct me to Dean Street?

**Frank:** Take the tube to Tottenham Court Road.

**Shirley:** Tottenham Court Road?

**Frank:** West End.

**Shirley:** West End?

**Frank:** Standard, get your Standard!

**Shirley:** Excuse me?

**Frank:** I'm trying to earn a crust, 'ere.

**Shirley:** I'm sorry. But which end is this?

**Frank:** North.

**Shirley:** *(to get her bearings)* Never-Eat-Shredded-Wheat.

**Frank:** North, South, East, West. Or if you want to be particular, North, East, West, South: News. Some towns make textiles, some towns make steel - this town makes news.

**Shirley:** I just want to make it to Dean Street. I've come to see my mother.

**Frank:** Take the Piccadilly Line and change for Tottenham Court Road. Head straight up Oxford Street and left into Soho.

**Shirley:** Oxford Street? Like the one in Monopoly?

**Frank:** You'll need Monopoly money to shop there.

**Shirley:** So there really is an Old Kent Road and a Park Lane and a Marylebone Station?

**Frank:** Blimey girl, where've you bin all your life?

**Shirley:** Mansfield.

**Frank:** And where's that?

**Shirley:** Behind me now.

*(FRANK points across the platform).*

**Frank:** See that red circle with the blue line across? The Underground - that's where you're heading.

**Shirley:** Thank you. Thank you very much.

*(SHIRLEY picks up her suitcase).*

**Frank:** And don't be dragging your heels, all right?

**Shirley:** I won't.

**Frank:** 'Cos it ain't a night to be out on your own. It ain't a town to be out on your own. Well, not unless you knows it like I do. And for them who knows it - I mean really knows what it's about - it's the best town in all the world.

SCENE 2. DEAN STREET, SOHO. Continuous action.

(FRANK remains as in Scene 1. Busker MAX plays his accordion outside Alfredo's Café as the street comes to life. Waitresses RUTH and PATSY stop to throw a coin in MAX's hat before going into the café. Street kid JACK watches from the shadows).

**Frank:** London; home of royals and reprobates, galleries and gangsters, theatres and thieves. London; the town where you can lose yourself and find out who you are. Fleet Street, Regent Street, Anywhere You Wanna Go Street. And then there the place where all them streets are heading; where the highlife meets the lowlife and the good times never end. Welcome, my friends, to savvy, sleazy, sensational Soho!

(Enter BOB, JIM and PAUL, with his newspaper).

**Paul:** (to FRANK) Didn't I see you at the station?

**Frank:** I'm on every corner, mate.

(Enter ELLA, clutching a bottle of spirits in a brown paper bag and a discarded portion of fish and chips, wrapped in newspaper. She stops to listen to MAX).

**Ella:** When music sounds, all that I was, I am.

**Frank:** How's tricks, Ella?

**Ella:** Ere to this haunt of brooding dust I came.

**Frank:** You've not graced us with your presence for a couple of days?

**Ella:** We've been away to the country.

(ELLA settles down in her favourite spot).

**Frank:** (to the audience) She had it all, so they say. Title, the lot. (To ELLA) So you wrap up warm tonight, my lady.

(FRANK offers her a pile of newspapers).

**Ella:** We couldn't possibly-

**Frank:** It's yesterday's news. I'm a man of the moment.

(ELLA puts the newspapers inside her coat and FRANK goes into ALFREDO'S. BOB and JIM look anxiously down the street).

**Jim:** I'm telling you mate, she's a right goer.

**Bob:** Tell us again what she's got.

**Jim:** Horizontal barrel.

**Bob:** Cool.

**Jim:** Front fork dampers.

**Bob:** Nice.

**Jim:** And a top speed of fifty.

**Bob:** Fifty miles an hour?

**Jim:** All the way to Margate.

**Bob:** Hear that, Paul? We can get her up to fifty.

**Jim:** We're talking frame breathers. We're talking square-and-bore configuration.  
Lads, we're talking ...

**Jim }**

**Bob }** Mod.

**Paul }**

*(ELLA has laid out the fish & chips on the step. She calls to MAX).*

**Ella:** Minstrel? You play so beautifully. Will you join us for supper?

**Max:** Why, I'd be delighted. Are we formal?

**Ella:** Naturally.

*(MAX takes out a bowtie from his pocket).*

**Max:** I found this tied to a railing on New Year's Day. I've been trying to figure it out ever since.

**Ella:** Father showed me the way.

*(ELLA ties MAX's bowtie. Enter DEC, carrying a scooter mirror).*

**Jim:** If that scooter were a girl, she'd be Dusty Springfield. Venus on ten inch wheels.

**Bob:** Here's Dec.

**Paul:** And he's got the .... mirror?

**Jim:** Where's the Lambretta, Dec?

**Bob:** Did you not raise the cash?

**Dec:** I raised it, all right. Then I gave Jim's mate the cash and rode it out the garage. I rode it right down the Holloway Road. I would have ridden it all the way here if it hadn't seized up when I hit twenty miles an hour.

**Jim:** It just needs running in.

**Dec:** Running in? It's karked it! I'd get to Margate quicker on my Ma's Hoover.

*(DEC walks off towards ALFREDO's).*

**Jim:** Dec?

**Dec:** Three months wages on a mirror.

*(DEC throws the mirror to the floor and goes into Alfredo's).*

**Jim:** Dec!

**Bob:** *(sarcastically)* Dusty Springfield?

**Paul:** Venus on wheels?

**Jim:** Shut it.

*(JIM retrieves the mirror and puts it in his pocket. BOB, PAUL and JIM follow DEC into Alfredo's. ELLA and MAX bow their heads in prayer).*

**Ella:** For what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful.  
Amen.

*(ELLA and MAX begin to eat).*

**Max:** Amen, indeed. If God's looking down, I'd like to know why He's sent us a winter like this.

**Ella:** Ours is not to reason why.

**Max:** As if we don't suffer enough.

**Ella:** Our suffering is nothing.

**Max:** Compared to who?

**Ella:** Mr. Profumo.

**Max:** How do you know about that?

**Ella:** One reads the gutter press.

*(ELLA gives a newspaper to MAX. He puts it inside his coat. ELLA savours the fish and chips).*

**Ella:** I do think the salmon has been marvellous this year.

**Max:** Freshly caught today, I believe.

*(Enter SHIRLEY, looking for a door. ELLA holds out her hat).*

**Ella:** Help the homeless?

*(SHIRLEY reaches in her pocket for change and drops it in ELLA's hat).*

**Ella:** Well, one tries to.

*(SHIRLEY looks at the door next to the cafe and puts her suitcase down).*

**Shirley:** Number 34. Flat C.

*(SHIRLEY looks at the letter in her hand then summons up the courage to knock on the door. As she waits, JACK sneaks up, picks up her suitcase and runs away, unnoticed. No-one answers the door).*

**Shirley:** Is she in, do you know? Jessie Sutton.

**Ella:** Distinguishing features?

**Shirley:** She's .... well, she's 40 or thereabouts. Blonde hair, blue eyes, I think. I haven't seen her in a while.

**Ella:** We see a great many blue-eyed blondes.

**Shirley:** I've got a photograph.

*(SHIRLEY hands a photograph to ELLA).*

**Ella:** Charming.

**Shirley:** Do you know her?

**Ella:** Minstrel?

*(ELLA shows MAX the photograph. He shakes his head).*

**Shirley:** That was her wedding day. She'll have changed a bit since then.

*(MAX hands the photograph back to SHIRLEY).*

**Max:** Never seen her.

**Shirley:** Like I said, she'll have changed.

*(SHIRLEY bangs on the door and waits for a reply).*

**Max:** She's changed her address, I know that much.

**Shirley:** I've got another picture. In my .... case.

*(SHIRLEY goes to pick up her suitcase. Seeing it has gone, she frantically looks around).*

**Shirley:** Where's my case?

**Ella:** Over the hills and far away.

**Shirley:** I've got to find it.

**Max:** All you'll find down here is trouble. So do yourself a favour. Turn around and go home.

**Shirley:** I am home.

*(Exit SHIRLEY, searching for her case).*

**Max:** Remember when we all thought the streets were paved with gold?

**Ella:** The young have aspirations that never come to pass.

**Max:** And what did you aspire to, Lady Ella?

**Ella:** True love, dear boy. But they sent him to war. One can still close one's eyes and see his pianist hands, sinking in the mud.

*(MAX starts to play Lili Marlene. MAX sings the first verse, ELLA the second. Enter JACK with SHIRLEY's suitcase. He goes to his corner and opens the case, pulling out clothes in search of something valuable. He finds a letter and begins to read. What SHIRLEY has written intrigues him).*

*SCENE 3. ALFREDO'S CAFÉ, DEAN STREET. Later that night.*

*(Like its owners ALFREDO [ALF] and LYDIA, the café has a shabby warmth. ALF reads the paper behind the counter and LYDIA makes up wage packets. Waitress PATSY paints her nails as RUTH clears the tables. BOB, PAUL, JIM and DEC occupy their usual table. JACK is at one table with a cup of tea and FRANK goes up to the counter).*

**Paul:** *(reading)* "An 'arley Street doctor warns teenagers against the Twist. The dance can lead to spinal displacement, loss of libido and premature death".

**Frank:** A bit like your tea, Alf.

**Alf:** Tuppence.

**Frank:** Back to the salt mine.

*(Exit FRANK).*

**Alf:** Last of the big spenders.

**Lydia:** It's tuppence more than if he'd gone elsewhere.

**Alf:** *(nodding to the Mods)* And we could do without them making one cappuccino last a lifetime.

**Lydia:** They're skint.

**Alf:** They're bone idle.

**Lydia:** They've been laid off the building site since Christmas 'cos of frost.

**Alf:** We're not a caff, we're a soup kitchen.

**Lydia:** There's plenty 'round here who'd be glad of the trade.

**Alf:** Like who? The Sally Army?

**Lydia:** You'd be lost without 'em and you know it.

**Patsy:** He'd have nothing to moan about.

*(ALF surveys the café).*

**Alf:** Candles - that's what we need. Candles in Chianti bottles. Bring in the theatre crowd, would that. A nice new bit of lino and candlelight.

**Ruth:** Then they won't see the muck.

**Alf:** Ragazze giovane! You have no respect!

**Ruth:** Respect is earned, Alfredo.

**Alf:** So are wages - or haven't you heard?

**Ruth:** Wages, what's them?

**Alf:** Enough to keep you in new outfits.

**Ruth:** Good job mini-skirts are in, that's all I can say.

**Alf:** You get tips, dont'cha?

**Ruth:** We did get a tip once. What was it, Patsy?

**Patsy:** Don't eat the food.

*(Enter SHIRLEY. She looks around nervously for a table).*

**Bob:** Pull up a chair, luv?

**Lydia:** *(to BOB)* Oi! Don't scare the customers.

*(SHIRLEY sits down at JACK's table. JACK starts to watch her. SHIRLEY tries to ignore him but JACK can't take his eyes off her. The MODS are also staring over).*

**Bob:** So what would you give her out of ten, boys?

**Jim:** Body? Eight.

**Paul:** Threads? Two.

**Bob:** Dec?

**Dec:** What?

**Bob:** What do you reckon to the new girl?

**Dec:** I dunno.

**Paul:** Look, son. It's about time you put your rod back in the water, know what I mean?

**Dec:** I hate fishing.

**Paul:** There's more sardines in the sea than Betty Black, mate.

**Dec:** (*wistfully*) Betty Black.

**Jim:** (*to PAUL*) Now you've done it.

**Dec:** You know, I always promised Betty I'd buy a Lambretta. And I had this stupid idea that when she saw I'd finally done it, saw I'd finally got something to show for myself that she'd .... that she'd ....

**Bob:** Go all the way?

**Dec:** Come back, if you must know. Leave Tommy King and come back to me.

**Paul:** There's only one thing that girl wants, mate. Filthy lucre.

**Dec:** So what should I do? Get on me bike and rob a bank?

**Bob:** Or a big house up in Knightsbridge.

**Paul:** Or a mail train.

**Bob:** A mail train?

**Paul:** I overheard a fella talking in a pub. They carry two million quid in used notes, so he says.

**Dec:** It's dirty money. We'd be no better than King.

**Bob:** We'd be rich like King.

**Jim:** King might be rich. But he's not got a Series 1 Lambretta.

**Dec:** Nor have I. I've got no cash, no wheels, no Betty.

**Jim:** Wanna bet?

*(JIM leaves the table).*

**Dec:** Where's he going?

**Jim:** The Holloway Road. I ain't gonna let that scooter die.

*(Exit JIM, followed by BOB, PAUL and DEC. LYDIA taps PATSY on the shoulder).*

**Lydia:** Patsy, petal? Can I trouble you to take the lady's order?

**Patsy:** I'm on my break.

**Lydia:** No, love. That finished in October.

**Patsy:** I can't pick nothing up.

**Lydia:** Why?

**Patsy:** My nails ain't dry. Do you like the red?

*(PATSY holds out her hand to show her nail varnish).*

**Lydia:** It matches your eyes - now wake up and get to work.

*(PATSY reluctantly goes to take SHIRLEY's order. Enter NORMAN, from the kitchen).*

**Norman:** Alf .... ?

**Alf:** What have you got, Norman?

**Norman:** Flu.

**Alf:** Pots.

**Norman:** Me glands are up again.

**Ruth:** Aah, let's have a look at you.

**Norman:** Me mum says I shouldn't have come in.

**Ruth:** Where does it hurt?

**Norman:** Everywhere.

**Patsy:** Does this make it better?

*(PATSY pulls NORMAN's elasticated bow tie).*

**Norman:** I hope it's contagious.

**Alf:** Pots!

**Norman:** But Alf .... ?

**Alf:** What do I pay you for, Norman?

**Norman:** Pots.

*(NORMAN goes back to the kitchen and LYDIA comes to the counter).*

**Lydia:** Lay off him, will you?

**Alf:** Lay him off, don't you mean?

**Lydia:** He's the best kitchen hand we've ever had.

**Alf:** That's like saying 'this is the best rash I've ever had'.

**Lydia:** At least he turns up. Where's this new waitress you promised me?

**Alf:** She's not coming.

**Lydia:** Since when?

**Alf:** We're overstaffed.

**Lydia:** Overstaffed? We've not had a night off since Christmas.

**Alf:** We're breaking our necks just to break even. We can't afford her.

**Lydia:** You promised me a holiday in Spain.

**Alf:** Why do you want Benidorm when you've got me?

**Lydia:** You know what, Alfredo? I wish you changed your underpants as often as your mind.

**Alf:** Meaning?

**Lydia:** If I don't get a waitress, you won't have a wife.

*(PATSY stares into space as SHIRLEY reads the menu).*

**Shirley:** What's Spaghetti Bolog-naise?

**Patsy:** Four shillings.

**Shirley:** I'll have that. With chips.

**Patsy:** *(shaking her head)* Northerners.

*(PATSY gives ALF the order. She and RUTH take off their aprons).*

**Alf:** And where are you going?

**Patsy:** I've finished me shift.

**Alf:** We've got customers.

*(Enter NORMAN, sniffing).*

**Norman:** Alf?

**Alf:** Later, Norman.

**Norman:** Alf?

**Alf:** Don't sniff in front of customers.

**Norman:** *(whispering to ALF)* There's two fellas ....

**Alf:** I've heard your jokes before. They ain't funny.

**Norman:** At the back door. In suits.

**Alf:** Health inspectors?

**Norman:** Sharp suits

**Alf:** How sharp?

**Norman:** You'll cut yourself looking.

*(Enter DAWSON and DOYLE, from the kitchen. They stare menacingly at ALFREDO).*

**Alf:** Who's sent 'em?

**Norman:** Who do you think? Tommy King.

**Alf:** King of Soho.

*(DAWSON beckons ALFREDO over).*

**Norman:** What does King want with a greasy spoon?

**Alf:** If my spoons are greasy it's 'cos you ain't washed 'em.

**Patsy:** All right if we get off, then?

**Alf:** Yeah, yeah.

*(PATSY and RUTH look at each other in amazement).*

**Lydia:** I'd go now, girls - before he changes his mind.

**Ruth:** It's pay-day.

**Alf:** Ain't it just?

*(LYDIA takes two wage packets from her apron pocket and hands them to PATSY and RUTH. ALFREDO checks that LYDIA isn't watching then sneaks through to the kitchen. JACK smiles at SHIRLEY).*

**Shirley:** *(exasperated)* What?

**Jack:** I knew you'd come.

*SCENE 4. DEAN STREET, SOHO. Later that night.*

*(FRANK reads the newspaper).*

**Frank:** *(reading)* "Film star Diana Dors cuts the ribbon on the latest venture for Soho businessman Tommy King, who says there will be 'glamour on tap' at his new nightclub, The Pink Flamingo. Mr. King, who has many business interests in and around the West End, is also known for his charitable work. He has already pledged to hold his annual Barnardo's Childrens Party at the glittering new venue, 'but with lemonade corks popping instead of champagne', he reassured our correspondent".

*(FRANK folds up his paper).*

**Frank:** He buys his paper from me. Well, his floozie does. But Tommy always nods when he's passing. Knows everyone, does Tommy. Knows Barbara Windsor. Personal, like. I saw her leaving his place the other morning. That one didn't make the papers.

*(FRANK gestures that he has received a backhand payment).*

**Frank:** He lives up on Brewer Street. Penthouse flat. Got a pile in Surrey, an' all. With a pool. Most folk look where they're going when they walk down this street. When Mr. King's around, they look where he's going. Well, if they know what's good for 'em, they do.

*SCENE 5. TOMMY KING'S OFFICE, SOHO. Later that night.*

*(TOMMY is alone in his office, listening to a record of **Nessun Dorma**. He lights a large cigar, sits back and loses himself in the music. Enter BETTY BLACK).*

**Betty:** Tommy?

**Tommy:** Sshhh.

**Betty:** But Tommy ....

**Tommy:** Hear that?

**Betty:** What?

**Tommy:** Claaass.

**Betty:** Klaus Who?

*(TOMMY turns down the music).*

**Tommy:** How did it go, babe?

**Betty:** Oh, Tommy. I'm gonna be a star!

**Tommy:** You got the job?

**Betty:** The director says I'm just what he's looking for.

**Tommy:** What did I tell yer?

**Betty:** And guess what? He's heard of you.

**Tommy:** Little me?

**Betty:** Sends his regards.

**Tommy:** Nice.

**Betty:** And he said that he was sure that my lack of any formal kind of dance training would not detract from my performance.

**Tommy:** See? You're a natural.

**Betty:** I know. And he's going to reveal it to the world.

**Tommy:** Didn't get fresh with you, did he?

**Betty:** 'Course not. He's a consummate professional, he said so himself.

**Tommy:** So long as he knows better than to consummate my girl.

**Betty:** I hope you're prepared, Tommy. Life will never be the same again.

**Tommy:** No.

**Betty:** This show is going to catapult Betty Black into an object of desire.

**Tommy:** There's only two things you need to be a star.

**Betty:** What's that, Tommy?

**Tommy:** Presence, babe. And passion.

**Betty:** Show me, Tommy. Show me.

*(TOMMY turns up **Nessun Dorma** and sings the vocal to BETTY).*

**Betty:** Oh, Tommy. You send shivers up me spine.

*(As TOMMY reaches the climax, enter DAWSON and DOYLE. When he reaches the end, they give a polite round of applause).*

**Doyle:** Bravo, boss.

**Dawson:** Brings a tear to the eye.

*(TOMMY nods, returns to his seat and gestures for DAWSON and DOYLE to enter. TOMMY takes a key from his pocket and gives it to BETTY).*

**Tommy:** There's champagne on ice at the club, babe. Go home and make yourself beautiful.

**Betty:** Can we have strawberries? All the stars have strawberries with champagne.

**Tommy:** I'll pick you up in an hour.

**Betty:** Tommy?

**Tommy:** I got a bit of business to see to.

**Betty:** When you say beautiful?

**Tommy:** Strapless red dress. Long white gloves. Mink stole.

**Betty:** Hair up or down?

**Tommy:** You know how I like it.

**Betty:** Yes, Tommy.

*(Exit BETTY).*

**Tommy:** Lovely girl.

**Doyle:** Bright future.

*(TOMMY takes a brown envelope full of money out of his desk and gives it to DOYLE).*

**Tommy:** Feels good to be a patron of the arts.

*(DOYLE smirks and puts the envelope in his inside pocket).*

**Tommy:** Now; Spaghetti Joe.

**Doyle:** We paid him a visit.

**Tommy:** Is he speaking our language?

**Dawson:** We told him there were big countries and small countries.

**Doyle:** That the small countries need the big countries to protect them.

**Doyle:** If they ain't got no defence, they might get attacked.

**Tommy:** It's a nasty world we live in.

**Doyle:** "Tommy King rules a big country. You need his face on your stamp".

**Dawson:** "Or we'll stamp on your face".

**Tommy:** So is he taking out insurance?

**Dawson:** We explained the advantages.

**Doyle:** Set reasonable terms.

**Tommy:** And what did he say to you?

**Dawson:** No.

**Tommy:** No?

**Doyle:** Says he can't afford to.

**Dawson:** We said he can't afford not to.

**Doyle:** But he still said no.

**Tommy:** To such a tempting offer?

**Dawson:** He's thick, boss.

**Tommy:** I hope you didn't say that to his face?

**Doyle:** No, boss. Honest.

**Tommy:** Our Italian friend should invest in his future. Why, Dawson?

**Dawson:** Er ....

**Doyle:** Cos you never know what's ....

**Dawson:** Round the corner, boss.

**Tommy:** So, boys? How can we convince him of that?

**Dawson:** Break his cooking arm.

**Tommy:** Be nice to him.

**Dawson:** Nice?

**Tommy:** Be so nice, he can't say no. Got it?

**Dawson:** }

**Doyle:** } Yes, boss.

**Tommy:** And boys?

**Dawson:** Yes, boss?

**Tommy:** Get the lady strawberries.

**Doyle:** Strawberries?

**Tommy:** Red things. With stalks.

**Dawson:** At this time of night?

**Tommy:** You'll find 'em, boys. For me.

*(TOMMY turns his music up. Exit DAWSON and DOYLE).*

*SCENE 6. ALFREDO'S CAFÉ. Later that night.*

*(The only people left in the café are SHIRLEY, JACK and LYDIA, who is shutting up for the night. JACK is still watching SHIRLEY, who is finishing her meal).*

**Jack:** I knew you'd find me.

**Shirley:** Look, I've told you; I don't know you.

**Lydia:** Leave the lady alone, all right?

**Jack:** *(to SHIRLEY)* I knew you'd come.

**Lydia:** All right, Jack. On your bike.

*(LYDIA grabs JACK and drags him out).*

**Jack:** I'm not Jack. I'm John.

*(LYDIA slams the door on JACK. Enter NORMAN, zipping up his anorak).*

**Norman:** Night, Lydia.

**Lydia:** Where's Alfredo when I need him?

**Norman:** Gone to bed.

**Lydia:** Bed?

**Norman:** He must have caught my cold.

**Lydia:** I'll see you tomorrow, then.

**Norman:** *(sniffing)* Don't count on it.

*(NORMAN builds up to a huge sneeze. SHIRLEY takes a handkerchief from her pocket and gives it to him to sneeze into. NORMAN smiles and offers it back).*

**Shirley:** Keep it.

**Norman:** *(touched)* Can I?

*(Exit NORMAN. LYDIA goes to take SHIRLEY's teacup and gestures to JACK, who is hanging around outside).*

**Lydia:** He's been out there too long, that's all. Are you done?

**Shirley:** Can I have another, please?

**Lydia:** Ain't you got no home to go to?

**Shirley:** I'm stopping with my mother. She'd let me stay out all night if I wanted to.

**Lydia:** Don't she know what it's like round here?

**Shirley:** 'Course she does. She knows everything, my mother.

*(LYDIA looks into SHIRLEY's teacup. She turns the cup over, pours the dregs into the saucer then sits down to read the tea leaves).*

**Lydia:** Mmm .... interesting.

**Shirley:** What do you see?

**Lydia:** A woman. Early forties, I'd say.

**Shirley:** Is she blonde?

**Lydia:** Yeah, she is. And she's stood at a window. She's looking for someone.

**Shirley:** Is she looking for me?

**Lydia:** I can see that she's worried. What has she got to be worried about, I wonder?

**Shirley:** Nothing.

**Lydia:** Well, why don't you go home and tell her? We're closed.

*(LYDIA picks up SHIRLEY's pots and takes them through to the kitchen. As soon as she is out of sight, SHIRLEY makes a move towards the door but LYDIA seems to have eyes in the back of her head).*

**Lydia:** Spag Bol, chips, treacle pudding and three cups of tea. That's five shillings and sixpence.

*(SHIRLEY puts her hand into her coat pocket).*

**Shirley:** Five shillings and how much?

**Lydia:** Sixpence.

**Shirley:** That's strange. I can't find my purse.

**Lydia:** Keep looking.

*(SHIRLEY takes a sixpence from her pocket and hands it to LYDIA).*

**Shirley:** Here's sixpence. Can I owe you the rest?

**Lydia:** Fancy her sending you out just with sixpence.

**Shirley:** Who?

**Lydia:** Your mother.

**Shirley:** I had a ten shilling note. I lost my bag.

**Lydia:** So how will you get home?

**Shirley:** I'll walk.

**Lydia:** All the way?

**Shirley:** Yes.

**Lydia:** Where is home exactly?

*(Awkward silence).*

**Shirley:** I'll see you right, I promise. First thing tomorrow, I'll get myself a job. I'll pay you back, every penny, I swear.

**Lydia:** How old are you?

**Shirley:** Twenty-one.

**Lydia:** Try again.

*(Beat).*

**Shirley:** Sixteen.

**Lydia:** What's your name?

**Shirley:** You won't call the police, will you?

**Lydia:** What's your name, love?

**Shirley:** Shirley. Shirley Sutton. Please don't call the police, they'll only send me back.

**Lydia:** Runaway girl, are you?

**Shirley:** I'm looking for my mother, she used to live next door. Jessie Sutton?

**Lydia:** Don't ring a bell.

*(SHIRLEY gives LYDIA the letter from her pocket).*

**Shirley:** She wrote to my father. She gave that address, look.

**Lydia:** Yeah, in 1956.

**Shirley:** She might come back.

**Lydia:** She might not.

**Shirley:** But I will. Just as soon as I'm sorted. I give you my word.

*(SHIRLEY goes to the door, where JACK is waiting outside. LYDIA picks up an apron).*

**Lydia:** The hours are shocking, the money's worse and you'll never get a thank-you from the boss. But meals are in and there's a bedroom upstairs. It's not much to write home about -

**Shirley:** I'm not planning to.

**Lydia:** If you graft like you talk, you're the answer to my prayers.

*(LYDIA smiles and hands SHIRLEY the apron).*

**END OF ACT I**

## ACT II

*SCENE 1. ALFREDO'S CAFÉ. Next Day.*

*(SHIRLEY is hard at work cleaning tables. RUTH and PATSY watch her suspiciously. ALFREDO can't take his eyes off the door, LYDIA is watching ALFREDO and NORMAN is collecting pots. BOB, DEC and PAUL are at their usual table).*

**Patsy:** Ain't it time you took a break, Shirl?

**Shirley:** I don't want a break.

**Patsy:** Can I have it, then?

**Shirley:** Feel free.

*(Enter JIM, in overalls).*

**Bob:** What's the news?

**Paul:** Will she pull through?

**Jim:** Her ignition's lost it's spark, her kick-start's stopped, her exhaust is exhausted.  
I'll be honest with you, Dec. It's touch and go.

**Dec:** All right - how much?

**Jim:** Ten quid for a fighting chance.

**Dec:** Ten quid?

**Paul:** Do you want Betty back or don't you?

*(DEC sighs and gets out his wallet).*

**Lydia:** *(to ALF)* Expecting someone?

**Alf:** No. 'Course not. I'm not expecting no-one.

**Bob:** 'Ere, Shirl? Are you coming out with us tonight?

**Shirley:** No, ta.

**Bob:** Why not?

**Shirley:** I've got work to do.

**Bob:** You're in swinging London, Shirl.

**Paul:** It's time you learned to swing.

**Shirley:** There is one thing I'd love to see.

**Bob:** Name it.

**Shirley:** The changing of the guard. You know from Winnie the Pooh? My mother used to read it to me.

*(The MODS and WAITRESSES groan).*

**Bob:** What? *(BOB pulls out a chair and sits down, with the back of the chair facing forwards).* The Changing of the Guard? Climb aboard.

**Shirley:** You what?

**Bob:** We can't keep her Majesty waiting. Lads?

*(PAUL, JIM and DEC line their chairs alongside him. SHIRLEY sits on the back of BOB'S chair).*

**Paul:** Want a ride, girls?

*(PATSY, RUTH and LYDIA climb on the back of PAUL, JIM and DEC's chairs).*

**Bob:** Music.

*(NORMAN turns on the radio and the MODS ride the chairs as if they are scooters).*

**Bob:** Out of Dean Street and left onto Shaftesbury Avenue - home of the West End theatre.

**Paul:** 'To be or not to be' ....

**Bob:** Round Piccadilly Circus ....

**Dec:** Ere, Eros ....

**Bob:** Down Piccadilly, round Hyde Park Corner and stop at Buck House.

*(NORMAN stops the music. The MODS stand up and salute).*

**Paul:** Commoners, I give you the Queen.

**Dec:** *(as the QUEEN)* Bow and scrape, bow and scrape.

**Paul:** 'Ere, your maj? You know them guards of yours? This girl wants to see 'em changing.

**Dec:** Young men changing? What a vulgar mind she has! Off with her head!

**Bob:** Lets get out of here!

*(The music starts up and the MODS ride on).*

**Bob:** Birdcage Walk, Parliament Square and the Palace of Westminster. Cross Trafalgar Square, dodge them black cabs along the way and what's this?

**Paul:** Madame Tussauds.

**Jim:** Home of the world's great dummies.

*(The MODS each strike a pose).*

**Paul:** Elvis Presley.

**Dec:** Marilyn Monroe.

**Bob:** Winston Churchill. We'll fight 'em on the beaches.

**Paul:** I didn't know he was a mod.

**Bob:** From Tussauds, we'll take in The Planetarium.

**Dec:** Ten bob, mate.

**Bob:** Ten bob to see the stars? We can lie on our backs and look at 'em for free.

*(NORMAN turns the music down. The MODS look up to the sky).*

**Jim:** What's the bright one?

**Bob:** That's the pole star. And the square to the left, that's Ursa Minor.

**Paul:** Look at that!

**Shirley:** What?

**Paul:** A shooting star.

**Bob:** Go on, Shirley - make a wish.

**Shirley:** I wish.

**Bob:** Don't say it out loud.

**Shirley:** *(to herself)* I wish ....

*(Enter TOMMY KING with BETTY on his arm. Following them are DAWSON and DOYLE, who stand guard at the door).*

**Tommy:** Be careful what you wish for, girl. It might just come true.

**Dec:** Betty?

*(BETTY ignores DEC).*

**Lydia:** What d'you want?

**Tommy:** Tea for two.

*(SHIRLEY whispers to BOB).*

**Shirley:** Who's that?

**Bob:** Tommy King. And Dec's ex.

**Shirley:** What does he do?

**Bob:** What don't he do? Nightclubs, rackets, girls, pills ....

**Shirley:** What kind of pills?

**Bob:** Well, you can bet they ain't aspirin.

**Tommy:** Alfredo?

**Alf:** That's me.

*(TOMMY hands ALFREDO a business card).*

**Tommy:** My card.

**Alf:** I know who you are.

**Lydia:** And what have you come for?

**Alf:** *(to LYDIA)* You heard what he said. Tea for two.

*(Exit LYDIA, to the kitchen. TOMMY walks slowly around the café. TOMMY takes a good look at SHIRLEY, who is the only one who looks directly back. DEC whispers to BETTY, who daren't take her eyes off TOMMY).*

**Dec:** How are you, Betty?

**Betty:** On top of the world. My showbiz career starts tonight.

**Dec:** What showbiz career?

**Betty:** I'm dancing. In a nightclub.

**Dec:** Which one?

**Betty:** The Pink Flamingo.

**Dec:** The Pink Flamingo? That's not a nightclub, it's a -

**Betty:** Stepping stone, Tommy says.

**Dec:** Yeah. Into the gutter.

**Betty:** I owe it all to Tommy. He treats me like a Queen. I've never been happier in all of my life.

*(BETTY takes out a mirror and checks her make-up. TOMMY takes ALFREDO to one side).*

**Tommy:** Nice little business you've built up, Alfredo.

**Alf:** We do all right.

**Tommy:** But you could do better. With a little bit of help.

**Alf:** I don't need no help.

**Tommy:** Remember Mickey Parnham? Had a paper shop on Frith Street? I offered to help him once. He turned me down. And then would you believe it? Electrical fault. The place went up like a tinderbox.

**Alf:** He was unlucky.

**Tommy:** I'll say. He didn't have no insurance.

**Alf:** Insurance? You mean extortion.

**Tommy:** That's a nasty little word to chuck about.

**Alf:** Words are all I've got, Mr. King.

**Tommy:** Got a nice girl, ain'tcha? A pretty girl. Lets hope she stays that way.

**Alf:** If you go anywhere near her ....

**Tommy:** I won't touch an hair on her head. Can't speak for the boys, though.

*(Beat).*

**Alf:** How much?

*(TOMMY whispers to ALFREDO).*

**Alf:** I can't get my hands on that kind of money.

**Tommy:** I'm a reasonable man, Alfredo. I'll give you 'til tomorrow.

**Alf:** You can give me 'til Doomsday. I ain't got it.

**Tommy:** Betty?

*(BETTY takes TOMMY's arm. Enter LYDIA, with a cup of tea).*

**Lydia:** Dont'cha want your tea, then?

**Tommy:** I'll come back for it tomorrow.

**Lydia:** That'll be sixpence.

**Tommy:** It says tuppence on the menu.

**Lydia:** Inflation.

*(TOMMY takes a note out of his pocket and puts it on the counter).*

**Tommy:** Keep the change.

*(DEC steps in front of TOMMY).*

**Dec:** I know your game.

**Tommy:** And who are you?

**Dec:** Declan Jones. And I know what kind of star you want her to be.

**Tommy:** *(to BETTY)* Is he a friend of yours?

**Dec:** More than a friend. We'd been sweethearts since school.

**Mods:** Sweethearts?

**Dec:** So you'd better take care of her, you'd better treat her right.

*(TOMMY gives DEC a hard stare but DEC holds his gaze).*

**Tommy:** Ain't you showed your friend the diamond?

**Betty:** No.

**Tommy:** Show him the diamond.

*(BETTY reluctantly holds out her hand to display a diamond ring on her engagement finger).*

**Tommy:** I take care of her. I take care of everyone. Alfredo.

*(Exit BETTY and TOMMY, with a nod to ALFREDO. Exit DAWSON and DOYLE, with a cold stare around the café).*

**Norman:** He ain't no King.

*(Exit NORMAN, to the kitchen).*

**Alf:** Right! Everybody out. We're closed.

**Lydia:** Closed?

**Alf:** Go on. Hit the town.

**Ruth:** What with?

*(ALF opens the till and stuffs money into RUTH and PATSY's hands).*

**Alf:** There. Now go.

**Ruth:** Thanks, Alf.

**Patsy:** Nice one. Coming Shirley?

**Shirley:** No, ta. I want an early night.

*(Exit PATSY and RUTH).*

**Dec:** *(to PAUL)* One of these days, I'm gonna rip that ring off her finger. Rip it off and throw it in the Thames.

**Paul:** She's not worth it, mate.

**Bob:** Not when the drinks are on Alfredo.

*(Exit DEC, PAUL, JIM and BOB, following PATSY and RUTH).*

**Lydia:** What's going on, Alf?

**Alf:** Nothing.

**Lydia:** Nothing? You barely pay them girls to be here, now you're paying 'em to

go.

**Alf:** Remember Benidorm?

**Lydia:** Our holiday?

**Alf:** Well, we're going. We're going tonight.

*(Exit ALFREDO, through the kitchen).*

**Lydia:** Alfredo? Alfredo!

*(Exit LYDIA, following ALFREDO. SHIRLEY is alone in the café. She picks up TOMMY KING'S business card from the counter and takes a long, thoughtful look at it. SHIRLEY picks up the telephone and dials).*

**Shirley:** Tommy King, please. No, it's personal.

*SCENE 2. ALFREDO'S CAFÉ. Later that night.*

*(SHIRLEY sits in the darkness. She is startled by a noise in the back of the café. Enter NORMAN).*

**Shirley:** Norman! I thought you'd gone home.

**Norman:** I had pots.

*(NORMAN goes to lock the front door).*

**Shirley:** It's all right. I'll lock up.

**Norman:** Suit yourself.

*(NORMAN hesitates, as if he has something to say).*

**Shirley:** Goodnight then, Norman.

**Norman:** Is it hard - running away?

**Shirley:** *(unconvincingly)* It's not hard at all. It's the best thing I've ever done.

**Norman:** Could I do it, do you think?

**Shirley:** What have you got to run away from?

**Norman:** Nothing much. S'pose that's why I want to.

**Shirley:** You've got to have somewhere to go.

**Norman:** I like the look of Whitby. I saw it on a calendar.

**Shirley:** And what would Alfredo do without you?

**Norman:** Alfredo's finished. He'll have to hand this place over to King, just wait and see.

**Shirley:** Is he really that bad?

**Norman:** He'd sell his own mother if the price was right.

**Shirley:** Go on, now. You'll miss your bus.

**Norman:** I can stop if you like? Keep you company?

**Shirley:** I'm all right.

**Norman:** You weren't this morning. I heard you throwing up.

**Shirley:** I had food poisoning.

**Norman:** I s'pose that's what you get for eating here.

**Shirley:** Don't tell Lydia, will you?

**Norman:** Kaolin and Morphine, that's what you want. Settles me down every time.

**Shirley:** Goodnight, Norman.

**Norman:** Goodnight, Shirl.

*(Exit NORMAN, through the kitchen. Outside, MAX idly plays Lili Marlene. SHIRLEY goes to the door and listens to MAX. On seeing she is there, MAX sings to her. JACK watches from the shadows as MAX sings the third verse to SHIRLEY. As MAX sings of true love coming her way, SHIRLEY puts a coin into MAX's hat).*

**Shirley:** Well, let's hope so.

**Max:** Any requests?

**Shirley:** I knew a boy who sang like you.

**Max:** Back home?

**Shirley:** Yeah. He was good. And good to me, too.

**Max:** So what are you doing down here?

**Shirley:** What are you?

**Max:** Me? I came looking for the Seven Wonders of Soho.

**Shirley:** Did you find them?

**Max:** The first I came across was April Alexander. She went to Casablanca a chorus boy, came back a showgirl. The second? Kevin by day, Stella by night. Stands six foot two in her high-heeled shoes.

**Shirley:** Boys dressed as girls?

**Max:** Then there's Bill and Jack from the Black Cat. They've been together since the war, bless 'em. The fifth is the Honourable Member. Spends his days in the House but calls the Black Cat home. The sixth wonder of Soho is that

scruffy busker on Dean Street. Plays for pennies in the street but he dines out every night on experience.

**Shirley:** And the seventh?

**Max:** Oh, I'm still waiting for him to come along.

**Shirley:** Him?

**Max:** Mr. Right. Where are you, Mr. Right?

**Shirley:** Sssh! There's a law against that.

**Max:** They can lock me up and throw away the key. It won't stop me being who I am.

**Shirley:** Or doing what you have to.

**Max:** What do you have to do?

**Shirley:** Forget that boy. Forget it all. And find my mother.

*(MAX sings the last verse of Lili Marlene to SHIRLEY. She joins in the final chorus. Exit MAX, with a wink to SHIRLEY. SHIRLEY goes back into the cafe. From the darkness, she is shocked to hear a voice she recognises).*

**Tommy:** Nice voice.

*(SHIRLEY puts on a light to see TOMMY KING sitting at a table with a bottle of gin and two glasses).*

**Shirley:** *(shocked)* You?

**Tommy:** I could do something with that voice.

**Shirley:** I thought you'd send one of your fellas.

**Tommy:** Like you said - this is personal.

*(TOMMY offers SHIRLEY a glass of gin).*

**Shirley:** What is it?

**Tommy:** Mother's ruin.

*(SHIRLEY takes the glass from TOMMY but doesn't drink from it).*

**Shirley:** Have you brought them?

**Tommy:** I always deliver.

**Shirley:** Good. So what do I owe you?

*(TOMMY finishes his glass of gin).*

**Tommy:** Just an explanation.

**Shirley:** Why?

**Tommy:** This is big stuff for a little girl. You could get me into trouble.

**Shirley:** You say you're a businessman?

**Tommy:** That's right.

**Shirley:** Well, this is my business.

**Tommy:** Won't he marry you - the father?

**Shirley:** Does it matter?

**Tommy:** Can't he marry you?

**Shirley:** I can take care of myself.

*(TOMMY reaches into his inside pocket and takes out a roll of fifty pound notes and throws it across to SHIRLEY).*

**Shirley:** What's this?

**Tommy:** Five hundred pounds. It should be enough.

**Shirley:** Enough?

**Tommy:** To put a roof over your head. Food on the table. For a big blue pram with silver wheels that you can push around the park.

**Shirley:** I asked you for pills -

**Tommy:** There's no guarantee they'd do the job.

**Shirley:** You said you'd bring me pills.

**Tommy:** I said I'd help you.

**Shirley:** Yeah. Help me get rid of it.

**Tommy:** *(nodding to the money)* There's more where that came from. Plenty more if you want it.

**Shirley:** I don't.

**Tommy:** Not the pills. The kid.

**Shirley:** I'm just a kid myself.

**Tommy:** But you've got me to see you right.

**Shirley:** All I came here for was to Jessie. But she's not here, is she? So I'll do things my way.

*(SHIRLEY gives the money back to TOMMY. He puts it in his pocket).*

**Tommy:** Jessie who?

**Shirley:** Jessie Sutton. My mother. She lived round here once.

*(SHIRLEY takes her mother's photograph out of her pocket and gives it to TOMMY. He looks at it then gives it back).*

**Tommy:** You're alike.

**Shirley:** Do you think so?

**Tommy:** I didn't know a Jessie Sutton. But I knew Jessie Lloyd.

**Shirley:** Lloyd? That's her maiden name.

**Tommy:** Blonde girl. Lived next door. Worked for me.

**Shirley:** 'Til when?

**Tommy:** September '61.

**Shirley:** Is she living round here? Has she moved on?

**Tommy:** Yeah.

**Shirley:** Where to? I was four years old when she left us with my father. Please, Mr. King, I've got to find her.

**Tommy:** Why?

**Shirley:** 'Cos I'm sixteen and pregnant and she'll know what to do.

**Tommy:** What if she don't want to be found?

*(SHIRLEY takes her mother's letter out of her pocket).*

**Shirley:** *(reading)* 'If the girls are in trouble, I'll be here. Maybe then, they'll understand why I left'.

*(SHIRLEY gives the letter to TOMMY. He reads it then hands it back).*

**Tommy:** Jessie liked a party but it played with her nerves. The quack prescribed her something but she mixed it with gin. She never meant to take so many. She just wanted to sleep.

**Shirley:** Sleep?

**Tommy:** Yeah. And you're right. She would have known.

*(SHIRLEY sits down, devastated by what TOMMY has told her. TOMMY waits in the silence. Eventually, he takes a packet of pills from his pocket and puts them on the table).*

**Shirley:** How many do I take?

**Tommy:** I'm not a doctor.

**Shirley:** What do I owe you?

**Tommy:** Nothing.

**Shirley:** Nothing?

**Tommy:** Protection. That's my game.

*(Exit TOMMY, through the kitchen. Slowly, SHIRLEY picks up the pills).*

SCENE 3. DEAN STREET. Next Morning.

(FRANK is selling newspapers from his usual pitch. Enter BETTY, wearing sunglasses. She buys a newspaper from FRANK).

**Frank:** Standard, get your Standard. Model in Gunshots Case. Man Accused of Shooting at Keeler Goes to Trial.

**Betty:** Keeler?

**Frank:** Christine Keeler.

**Betty:** Weren't she a showgirl at that club 'round the corner?

**Frank:** That's her. And now some fella's tried to bump her off.

**Betty:** Why?

**Frank:** She's mixed up with all sorts, take my word. There's more to all this than meets the eye.

**Betty:** How do you mean?

**Frank:** (*whispers*) There's rumours she's been at it with a Government Minister.

**Betty:** No?

**Frank:** (*whispers*) And at the same time as him, she had a Russian.

**Betty:** It's a free country, I suppose.

**Frank:** Not for our Christine. There'll be no escape from this lot, that's for sure.

**Betty:** But at least it's made her famous.

**Frank:** That won't help her when the bomb drops.

**Betty:** Don't you want to be famous?

**Frank:** Me? Who'd sell the papers if we all made the news?

(Enter PAUL, JIM, BOB, PATSY, RUTH and DEC, looking slightly worse for wear. BETTY hides behind her newspaper).

**Paul:** Morning, Frank.

**Jim:** We've been up all night.

**Frank:** I'd never have guessed.

**Jim:** We saw the best group on the planet, Frank. They'll be on the front page before long.

**Mods:** 'Talking 'bout my g..g..generation'.

(BETTY peers from behind her newspaper).

**Betty:** Dec?

**Dec:** Betty.

**Jim:** (*to DEC*) We'll see you in Alfredo's.

*(PAUL, JIM, BOB, PATSY and RUTH stagger into Alfredo's).*

**Dec:** So - how's the highlife?

**Betty:** I made my showbiz debut last night.

**Dec:** Big hit, were you?

**Betty:** A very big hit.

*(BETTY lowers her sunglasses to reveal a black eye).*

**Dec:** What happened? Was it Tommy?

**Betty:** Sshh!

**Dec:** His men? It was one of his men?

**Betty:** I had to dance topless. That's how everybody starts, so Tommy says. I closed my eyes so I couldn't see the men. Then I fell off the stage, banged me head and got the sack.

**Dec:** *(smiling)* You did?

**Betty:** Everyone was laughing. Everyone but Tommy. He says it's the end, Dec. The end of my career, the end of me and him. He wants his ring back and everything.

*(BETTY looks at the ring on her finger. DEC takes her hand).*

**Dec:** And what Tommy wants - Tommy gets.

*(DEC pulls her diamond ring off and throws the ring as far as he can).*

**Betty:** You shouldn't have done that, Dec.

**Dec:** If he wants it, he can find it in the gutter.

**Betty:** It belonged to his mother. You don't know what he's like about his mother.

**Dec:** All I know is that I'd be the richest man in London if you'd come back to me.

**Betty:** You don't want me. Not after what I've done.

**Dec:** Do you know what I want, Betty Black? Jellied eels off Stepney Market, remember?

**Betty:** We ate 'em under the arches 'cos it rained.

**Dec:** And that's not all we did there, do you remember?

**Betty:** Dec!

**Dec:** You told me you were going to be a star and what did I say?

**Betty:** That I was.

**Dec:** And you always will be in my eyes.

**Betty:** Oh, Dec.

**Dec:** Oh, Betty.

**Betty:** Oh, the ring!

*(BETTY runs off in the direction of the ring, followed by DEC).*

*SCENE 4. ALFREDO'S CAFÉ.*

*(Continuous action. LYDIA is hard at work in the café. Enter ALFREDO, carrying suitcases).*

**Alf:** Lydia? What are you doing?

**Lydia:** Same as I do every day.

**Alf:** We've got a plane to catch.

**Lydia:** I've said me piece on that.

**Alf:** And do you want to end up in a pasta?

**Lydia:** King rules by fear, that's all. If we ain't scared of him, there's nothing he can do.

**Alf:** But we are scared.

**Lydia:** He don't know that.

**Alf:** I think he's got a fair idea.

**Lydia:** He's a bully. All that makes him in my eyes is a frightened little boy.

**Alf:** So what are you going to do when he comes for his dosh? Smack his wrist and send him home?

**Lydia:** Nothing.

**Alf:** Nothing?

**Lydia:** We're going to open up and do an honest days work.

**Alf:** This time last week, all you wanted was a holiday.

**Lydia:** And what would you and me do all day in Benidorm?

**Alf:** It'd be that honeymoon you never had.

**Lydia:** And why didn't I? 'Cos we put every last farthing we had into this place. Now, it might not look like much but it's ours, Alfredo. This is where we belong. And I'm not leaving it. Not for Tommy King or no-one.

*(Enter SHIRLEY, wearily tying her apron).*

**Shirley:** Morning.

**Lydia:** Holy Mother! What's up with you?

**Shirley:** I didn't sleep very well.

**Lydia:** Get yourself a coffee, quick. You put the punters off their pizza.

**Alf:** Lydia?

**Lydia:** What?

*(ALFREDO takes LYDIA aside as SHIRLEY pours herself a coffee).*

**Alf:** Did you say you like it here?

**Lydia:** 'Course I like it here.

**Alf:** With me?

**Lydia:** Who else?

**Alf:** I thought ....

**Lydia:** What?

**Alf:** Well, I never amounted to much, did I? Me and my backstreet caff.

**Lydia:** Café.

**Alf:** Yeah - café.

*(LYDIA puts her arms around ALFREDO).*

**Lydia:** Ti amo, Alfredo.

**Alf:** Ti amo anch'io

**Lydia:** Why don't we go up and unpack?

*(Exit LYDIA and ALFREDO through the kitchen, with suitcases. SHIRLEY forces down a coffee. Enter JACK, carrying SHIRLEY's suitcase).*

**Jack:** Are you ready?

**Shirley:** That's my suitcase.

**Jack:** It's my suitcase. You gave it to me.

**Shirley:** No, I didn't.

*(SHIRLEY tries to grab the suitcase but JACK pulls it away).*

**Jack:** Yes, you did. You wanted to tell me.

**Shirley:** Tell you what?

*(JACK takes a letter out of his pocket and reads it).*

**Jack:** "Dear, John".

**Shirley:** Give it back.

*(SHIRLEY tries to grab the letter but JACK steps back).*

**Jack:** That's me, John. They call me Jack but my real name's John. No-one knows my real name but you.

**Shirley:** You're mistaken, do you hear me? You're wrong.

*(As SHIRLEY listens to the letter, her anger turns to resignation. As JACK reads the letter, everyone in the café starts to listen).*

**Jack:** "Dear John, I love you. We have to be together. I'm carrying something that belongs to you. Meet me by the back door and I'll leave with you tonight. Once we're away from here, I know it will be all right. All my love, Shirley."

**Shirley:** That's not for your eyes.

**Jack:** I'm John, aren't I?

**Shirley:** You're not John Lennon.

**Jack:** John Who?

**Shirley:** John Lennon. He's a pop star. You must know him?

**Jack:** Do you?

**Shirley:** No. No, I don't.

*(SHIRLEY sits down, unsteady on her feet).*

**Jack:** What's the matter?

**Shirley:** He came to Mansfield with his group and I thought .... I thought .... oh, God, I don't know what I thought.

**Jack:** Tell me?

*(SHIRLEY takes the letter from JACK and reads it again).*

**Shirley:** I fell pregnant, all right? I fell pregnant by a lad back home and said it was John Lennon's. It didn't seem so frightening, then. It didn't seem real. I told myself it was his, then I told other people and you know what - they believed it. In the end, even I believed it. John came to town with his group so I packed my bags. And once you've done that, there's no going back.

**Jack:** You're a liar.

**Shirley:** And a fool. What would John Lennon want with me? What would anyone want with me?

**Jack:** I want you.

**Shirley:** For the last time, I don't know you.

**Jack:** You didn't know him.

**Shirley:** And I won't make that mistake twice.

**Jack:** But we're leaving today. You wrote me a letter. We're leaving tonight.

**Paul:** Are you all right, Shirl?

**Jack:** I've been waiting and waiting and I can't wait any longer. No-one wants us so we're going.

*(JACK takes out a knife and points it at SHIRLEY. Everyone in the café freezes with fear. Only SHIRLEY appears calm).*

**Shirley:** Put the knife down.

**Jack:** We're getting out, you and me. We're going far away from here. To a place where no-one can find us.

*(JACK walks towards SHIRLEY. Behind him, from the kitchen, enters TOMMY KING. TOMMY pulls out a gun and fires a single shot. JACK falls to the floor).*

**Shirley:** Jack!

**Jack:** John.

*(JACK dies. SHIRLEY goes to him. The gunshot brings ALFREDO, LYDIA and NORMAN running into the café. Behind them come DAWSON and DOYLE).*

**Lydia:** What the hell's going on?

**Shirley:** He's dead.

**Tommy:** No name, no home, no future. He's been dead since the day he arrived.

**Shirley:** But it was you who pulled the trigger. You shot him in the back.

**Tommy:** I saved your bacon, lady. So don't get ideas about squealing to the pigs. There's the law of the land and the law of the streets. I think we both know which side you're on.

**Shirley:** All I know is this, Mr. King. If it's a crime to be lonely or frightened or wrong, then load the gun. You'd better shoot me as well.

*(There is a rumble of agreement from the crowd. TOMMY looks around at the hostile faces).*

**Tommy:** So what should I have done? Let the little rat run wild? Leave him to feed in your dustbin and live in your backyard? 'Cos that's the reality, my friends. They come here with nothing and they're preying on you. That's why you need me. That's why you need protection.

*(Enter ELLA and MAX).*

**Ella:** And who protected you, Mr. King?

*(TOMMY gives ELLA a coin).*

**Tommy:** Alfredo? We've got business to attend to.

**Ella:** Thomas Kingsley?

*(TOMMY turns and ELLA holds up the diamond ring. TOMMY goes to take it but ELLA closes it back into her hand).*

**Tommy:** Where did you find that?

**Ella:** In the gutter.

**Tommy:** Gutter? It's worth a fortune.

**Ella:** Fortune, misfortune. 'Tis a fake.

**Tommy:** You what?

**Ella:** A fake, dear boy. A remarkably good one. But a fake nonetheless.

*(ELLA takes a gin bottle from her pocket and scratches the ring down it).*

**Tommy:** Oi?

*(ELLA shows TOMMY the bottle).*

**Ella:** Not a scratch, you see. A diamond would have left its mark.

*(TOMMY tries to grab the ring but ELLA keeps hold of it).*

**Tommy:** It's my mother's engagement ring.

**Ella:** Indeed. She was a rose by name and nature.

**Tommy:** How do you know my mother?

**Ella:** Rose Kingsley was our parlour maid. One day, we found her crying on the stairs. She'd met a soldier. Saw him once but he never came back. Nine months later, their baby was born. Rose called him Tommy. She bought herself a ring and swore she'd never, ever tell him that the diamond was glass.

**Tommy:** My father gave her that ring. He was a rich man, a powerful man. He wanted to look after us, she told me.

**Ella:** Of course she did. She was protecting you. With love, with compassion, with not a penny to her name but a heart of solid gold. Rose was the bravest

young woman I've ever known. But for her courage, you'd be running with the rats.

*(ELLA gives TOMMY the ring and exits to her favourite corner of the street. TOMMY looks at the ring then nods to DAWSON and DOYLE).*

**Tommy:** Boys.

*(DAWSON and DOYLE pick up JACK. Everyone bows their heads as they carry him out through the kitchen. SHIRLEY draws TOMMY away from the crowd while their heads are bowed).*

**Shirley:** Your mother was like me?

**Tommy:** She was nothing like you. She had guts.

**Shirley:** You need guts to take what you gave me, Tommy. And you're right - I don't have 'em.

*(SHIRLEY puts the packet of pills in TOMMY's hand).*

**Tommy:** The pills?

**Shirley:** They're all there. Every one.

**Tommy:** I knew you wanted it.

**Shirley:** There's only one thing I want now.

*(SHIRLEY picks up her suitcase).*

**Tommy:** Where are you going?

**Shirley:** Where are you?

*(Exit SHIRLEY, unnoticed by everyone except TOMMY. When JACK has gone, ALFREDO clears his throat and steps forward).*

**Alfredo:** Mr. King? We can forget about what happened here today - if you can forget we need insurance.

*(Beat).*

**Tommy:** What insurance?

*(Exit TOMMY, into Dean Street).*

**Alf:** You know what? I think he's gone. He's really gone.

*(ALFREDO and LYDIA hug each other, hardly able to believe what has just happened. On Dean Street, TOMMY runs into BETTY and DEC. Watching them is ELLA).*

**Betty:** Tommy? I've got something to tell you.

**Dec:** We've got something to tell you.

**Betty:** You won't like it. You won't like it at all.

**Tommy:** You lost the ring.

**Dec:** Yeah. So hit me now and we'll say no more about it.

*(DEC puts his chin out to TOMMY, who reaches into his inside pocket).*

**Betty:** He said hit him, not shoot him!

*(TOMMY takes out his wallet, pulls out a wad of notes and gives them to DEC).*

**Dec:** What's this?

**Tommy:** Enough to buy you that scooter.

**Dec:** And what do we have to do in return?

**Tommy:** Enjoy the ride.

**Ella:** Help the homeless.

*(ELLA holds out her hat. TOMMY puts in a handful of notes. ELLA takes just one and gives the rest back to TOMMY).*

**Ella:** Money is the root of all evil, Mr. King. And contrary to popular belief, it cannot buy you love. Not even in your Soho.

*(Exit TOMMY. DEC takes BETTY by the hand and enters the café).*

**Dec:** Alfredo? Two of your finest cappuccinos.

**Alf:** On the house.

*(Everyone in the cafe cheers. LYDIA turns on the radio, which plays **One Fine Day** by The Chiffons. They all get up and dance to the music).*

SCENE 5. ST. PANCRAS STATION.

(Sound of a steam train and a whistle blowing. FRANK is selling newspapers. Enter SHIRLEY. She looks at her watch and up at the Arrivals board).

**Frank:** For every train coming in, there's another going out. Heading north, south, east, west and away from the smoke. A second chance on a third class ticket. Makes you wonder sometimes, I tell you. Makes you think ....

(A whistle blows and a voice calls 'all aboard'. Enter TOMMY KING. He approaches SHIRLEY).

**Tommy:** What are you waiting for?

**Shirley:** My train. It hasn't come yet.

**Tommy:** I take flowers to my mother every Sunday. She says 'they're all very well, son. But when are you gonna bring a nice girl home?'

**Shirley:** You and me?

**Tommy:** Why not?

**Shirley:** I'm not a nice girl.

**Tommy:** Nor was she. But she's the best mother I know. And she's got a bed made up, if you want it.

**Shirley:** What I wanted was to take them pills. I wanted to so badly.

**Tommy:** It wouldn't have mattered if you had. All they'd have got rid of was a headache.

**Shirley:** What were they?

**Tommy:** Aspirin.

**Shirley:** Aspirin?

**Tommy:** And a chance to wipe the slate clean. To start afresh. That new life you came looking for? It's inside you, Shirley Sutton.

(TOMMY puts the diamond ring on SHIRLEY's finger. She looks at the ring).

**Shirley:** It's beautiful.

**Tommy:** It is now I know what it's worth.

(SHIRLEY looks up at TOMMY).

**Shirley:** I don't love you, Tommy.

**Tommy:** But what good has love done you?

**Shirley:** I don't even know if I'll love this child. But I feel something. I feel it

stronger than a gunshot and harder than a diamond.

**Tommy:** You'll love it.

**Shirley:** How do you know?

**Tommy:** Trust me.

*(SHIRLEY can't help but smile. Enter a YOUNG GIRL carrying a suitcase and looking around the station in awe. SHIRLEY watches her approach FRANK).*

**Girl:** Penny for 'em?

**Frank:** Sorry, darling. I was miles away.

*(FRANK hands her a newspaper and she pays him a penny).*

**Girl:** Are there jobs in tonight - and rooms to rent?

**Frank:** There's jobs and rooms and theatre and nightclubs and fashion and politics, money and crime. There's who's in, who's out, who's up, who's down, who does, who don't and who ought to know better.

**Girl:** London Standard. I've arrived!

*(Exit YOUNG GIRL. SHIRLEY picks up her suitcase and hands it to TOMMY).*

**Shirley:** Take me home.

*(Exit SHIRLEY, followed by TOMMY).*

**THE END**







