

# **A DAY AT THE SEASIDE**

A Music-Theatre Excursion into Edwardian England

by

**JEREMY LUCAS**

Original music by

**WARD BAKER**

**SchoolPlay Productions Ltd**

15 Inglis Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3HU

A DAT AT THE SEASIDE

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## **GREAT YARMOUTH IN 1904**

*On 9<sup>th</sup> July, the Yarmouth Independent reported that the next Saturday would “appear like a Bank Holiday” with some 20 special excursion trains scheduled to arrive at the town’s three stations.*

*Mr. H. Bateman, manager of the Pioneer Motor Company, introduced the motor charabanc to England on the town’s sea-front. The vehicle, built in Paris, made demonstration trips along the Marine Parade during July and August.*

*The D’Oyly Carte Opera Company’s principal repertory company tour for 1904 included a week at the Royal Aquarium Theatre, Great Yarmouth, starting on 11<sup>th</sup> July.*

*The Yarmouth Mercury announced that from 11<sup>th</sup> July, Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway Company “expresses” to London would leave Yarmouth Beach Station at 9.20 a.m., 1.30 p.m. and 2.45 p.m. each Saturday. The journey took approximately six hours!*

*An application to open a “Singers’ Ring” on the beach at Gorleston (a small resort adjoining Great Yarmouth) was rejected by the council “as an effort is being made to keep Gorleston select”.*

*Electric tramways, first introduced in 1902, had almost superseded the horse-drawn ones, which eventually disappeared in 1905. A maximum of 52 passengers could be carried on the double-decker trams, which plied between the town and the sea-front; fares ranged from 1d to 3d, with reductions for workmen and children.*

*Following the reconstruction of the Britannia Pier (in 1902) and the Wellington Pier (1903), on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1904 the Winter Gardens building was opened. Purchased second-hand for £1500 it was transported to Great Yarmouth and re-erected for £1115.*

## **SNETTISHAM GRANGE**

*was founded at the turn of the century and was a boarding school for about twenty-five boys. The two men did all the teaching, Mr. Cameron Hillman taking the Classics. Mr. Prosser was a ‘modernist’ who taught French and Mathematics; by 1908 he was the Headmaster of the school and was elected a member of the Association of Preparatory Schools. He was very keen on ‘food reform’ and on helping the less fortunate, especially through the Save the Children Fund. He remained in charge of the school until it closed towards the end of the First World War.*

**THE CAST**

**Lady Browne ffolkes**

**Laura, Countess Hochpied**

**Mr. Cameron Hillman - Headmaster of Snettisham Grange Preparatory School**

**Mr. Prosser - His assistant**

***Snettisham boys:-***

**Barraclough**

**Bolingbroke**

**Browne ffolkes**

**Fanning**

**Grubb**

**Harvey-Butler**

**Hitchcock**

**Hutchinson**

**Hoskyns**

**Lumley-Dodd**

**Tomline**

***Cockney children:-***

**Ada**

**Arthur**

**Elsie**

**Harriet**

**Herbert**

**Josie**

**Lionel**

**Madge**

**Reg**

**Walter**

***Pierrots/Pierrettes ("The Jolly Bloaters")***

**Stanley Gold**

**Billy Styles**

**Don**

**George**

**Dick**

**Fanny**

**Victoria**

**Miss Makins** - *In charge of the Cockneys*

**Charles Bliss** - *Shop owner*

**Violet Bliss** - *His wife*

**Bloxham** - *The station master*

**Wilson** - *Butler to Lady Browne ffolkes*

**Various holiday-makers, street vendors, etc.**



## **A DAY AT THE SEA-SIDE**

*A music-theatre excursion into Edwardian England*

**Book and lyrics by JEREMY LUCAS**

**Original music [marked \*\*] by WARD BAKER**

### **ACT I - Prologue:**

*Yarmouth Beach Railway Station, a Saturday morning in July 1904, 11.00am.*

*As the lights go up and the band strikes up, the PIERROTS leap on, setting up their boards: "The Jolly Bloaters", "By The Pier at 12.00, 3.00 and 7.00 daily", etc. They sing:-*

*MUSIC [1] - THE JOLLY BLOATERS PIERROT SHOW \*\**

*Whenever you start out on a train ride  
To have a jolly spree,  
Just think about the troupers who'll provide  
The laughter and the glee  
By dancing, (or prancing), by skipping, (or tripping),  
We'll give you more than a tuppence worth of fun, you know,  
By singing and joking, your applause we'll be provoking.  
We're the Jolly Bloaters Pierrot Show.*

*We're really on our holidays as well,  
From London's greatest shows,  
Though who we are is very hard to tell,  
As ev'ry punter knows,  
We're resting, (he's jesting), reposing, (who's posing?)  
We give you more than a tuppence worth of fun, you know,  
With false names like Fanny, to deceive our dear old granny,  
We're the Jolly Bloaters Pierrot Show.*

*Whether we're just strolling in the park;  
The best dressed men in town,  
Or in our bloomers for a merry lark  
Our skirts all falling down.*

*By leaping, (or peeping), by blinking, (or winking),  
You'll get far more than tuppence worth of fun, you know,  
By smiling, (or leering,) our attire you'll be revering,  
We're the Jolly Bloaters Pierrot Show.*

*(Much noise and commotion; the train is heard above the shouts of porters, hawkers and general din. Holiday makers arrive. In choreographed poses, led by a Pierrot, they sing:-)*

*MUSIC [2] - A DAY AT THE SEA-SIDE \*\**

**All:** *A day at the sea-side,  
The great British outing,  
The joy and the shouting,  
The pierrots, the puppets and the band.  
A day at the sea-side,  
The theatre, the circus,  
The gentry, the workers,  
All build their castles out of sand.*

*(The cockney boys and girls rush in)*

**Pierrot:** *Cockney kids are here,  
Just for one day in the year,  
On a charity holiday trip.*

**Cockneys:** *Yippee!*

**Pierrot:** *They've never been before,  
To stand on the sea shore,  
Or a prom, or a pier, or a ship.*

**All: REPEAT CHORUS**

*(CAMERON HILLMAN leads on the Snettisham party, Prosser at the rear)*

**Pierrot:** *Here from Snettisham,  
Come the sons of gentlemen,  
Others stare at them  
As they sport their Eton suits.*

**Cockneys:** *I say!*

**Pierrot:** *See the prep school boys,  
With their manners and their poise,  
High class in their voice,  
And from collars down to boots.*

**Pierrot:** *Families of course,  
Are here today in force,  
With their picnics, buckets and spades,*

**Crowd:** *Hurrah!*

**Pierrot:** *Bringing lots of hope,  
And certainly the scope  
To the hawkers and merchants of trades.*

**Together:** {Snettisham party: *Here from Snettisham etc.*  
{Others: *Repeat Chorus.*

*(At the end of the song all exeunt. Black out.)*

*SCENE 1 - A train is heard arriving at the station.*

**Ticket Collector:** Yarmouth Beach Station. All change. Yarmouth Beach Station.  
*The COCKNEYS rush at the ticket barrier, shouting and yelling, blocking the way. The TICKET COLLECTOR refuses to let them through; MISS MAKINS, their escort, is trying to reach the front. LADY BROWNE ffOLKES and LAURA, COUNTESS HOCHPIED, are seen approaching from the other direction, followed by BLOXHAM, the Station Master.*

**Lady B ff:** Now where ARE all these children, Bloxham? This way, Wilson. Come along, Laura - how did you get that dreadful name, dear, it's SO unbecoming.

**Bloxham:** Over here, your ladyship, my ticket collector has kept them behind the barrier; my apologies, your ladyship.

**Lady B ff:** Best place for them. Where's the woman who's supposed to be with them? Why can't people do their jobs properly, I should like to know?

*MISS MAKINS has brought the children through the barrier and is looking around.*

**Miss M:** Ah, good morning, Lady Browne ffolkes. I'm Miss Makins. The Children's Excursion Charity Committee and the children...*(She looks round for them but they have stopped and are staring in amazement).*

**Lionel:** 'Ere, what's all this lot? What's going on?

**Arthur:** It's them ladies what they told us about; coming to the sea-side with us.

**Miss M:** Children, over here at once. Lady Browne ffolkes, the children would like to express to you their gratitude; it is so very generous of you to give them this excursion. Elsie, step forward and make your presentation to Lady Browne ffolkes. Hand over your sampler.

*ELSIE burst into tears.*

**Ada:** She can't, Miss, she ain't got it no more.

**Elsie:** *(Sobbing)* On the train...

**Miss M:** If you have left it on the train you must go and fetch it, you foolish girl.

**Elsie:** *(Sobbing more)* No, Miss; Walter, he threw it out the window.

**Walter:** Weren't my fault, Miss, I was...*(REG stands over him and WALTER stops).*

**Lady B ff:** If you expect me to speak to these children - let us get on with it; Wilson, Laura, you'd better stand by me and watch that they don't rob me.  
*(To MISS M)* Come along, woman.

**Miss M:** I'll speak to you later.

**Lady B ff:** I beg your pardon?

**Miss M:** Oh no, not YOU, Lady Browne ffolkes.

*The boys and girls, amused by MISS M, gather round.*

**Herbert:** *(Seeing LADY B ff)* Blimey, look at that lady, bet she's worth a bob or

two.

**Madge:** (Pointing to LAURA) What about THAT one, cor, she's as fancy as them singers up at the Empire.

**Josie:** Shh, these is society ladies, they don't mix with Music Hall people.

**Harriet:** Herbert, you keep your thieving eyes off; if you goes and gets pinched up here...

**Lady B ff:** I am here today to bid you welcome to Norfolk...

**Lionel:** To where? We was coming to Yarmouth; that train brought us to the wrong place, Miss...

**Ada:** No, Lionel, it's all right, they're the same place - like London and Bow.

**Lady B ff:** You are here thanks to an At Home which I arranged to provide you, the needy, with an excursion. (*She looks up and sees CAMERON HILLMAN leading the Snettisham boys*) - Good heavens, there's Cameron Hillman with some of the Snettisham boys, including that wretched son of mine. (*She crosses to them, the COUNTESS and WILSON following*). Really, it's too bad. One sends one's children to boarding school and all they do is follow one across the countryside. Morning, Cameron Hillman, what on earth are you doing in Great Yarmouth?

**C H:** (*Embarrassed*) My dear Lady Browne ffolkes, we are here to attend a matinee of "The Yeomen of The Guard"; the D'Oyly Carte are here, you know.

**Lady B ff:** Oh, really?

**Prosser:** Good morning, Lady Browne ffolkes, how pleasant to see you again.

**C H:** Ah, you know my assistant, Prosser.

**Lady B ff:** Ye-es, I believe I do.

**Prosser:** (*Enthusiastically*) Before we go to the theatre, I intend to show the boys some of the wonderful engineering works which have recently been carried out in the town and we MAY witness a run of the latest invention, the motor charabanc.

**Lady B ff:** I sincerely hope not. But Gilbert and Sullivan, now there is something worth seeing. Don't you agree, Laura? Oh, but may I introduce you?

**Laura:** (*Showing interest in PROSSER*) I should be delighted.

**Lady B ff:** Mr. Cameron Hillman, headmaster of Snettisham Grange, and, er, Mr. Prosser: the Countess Hochpied.

*They all bow. The COCKNEY KIDS have become very restive; MISS M is becoming agitated.*

**Madge:** (*Looking at walnuts on a hawker's tray*) Look at them funny chestnuts.

**Herbert:** Why, do you want some? I'll get some for you.

**Ada:** They're called walnuts; they make furniture out of them.

**Reg:** How long have we got to stand here, Elsie?

**Elsie:** (*Crying*) I don't know, Reg, how should I know?

**Reg:** (*Threatening*) Well find out then. Ask the Miss.

**Herbert:** Here, Madge, I got some of them chestnuts but they're old; they're all crinkled.

**Harriet:** Herbert, you've been nicking again; put them back; we don't want the coppers on us as soon as we get here.

**Reg:** What are they? I'll have one of them.

*A scuffle breaks out between REG, HARRIET, and HERBERT.*

**Miss M:** Children, please. Lady Browne *ffolkes* will not wish to see you behaving like that.

**Arthur:** Please Miss, when are we going to the sea?

*The SNETTISHAM BOYS have formed another group, at a distance from the COCKNEYS.*

**Tomline:** I say, Bolingbroke, look at that bunch of oiks over there.

**Bolingbroke:** Oh, aren't they awful?

**Hoskyns:** Tomline, I don't think we should.

**Browne ff:** Are you being wet again, Hoskyns? Rather early, aren't you? We haven't even reached the sea yet. (*The others laugh*).

**Hoskyns:** Tres drole, Browne *ffolkes*. I just don't want to gaze at the local riff-raff.

**Hitchcock:** I don't think they are local, actually, I've never seen...(*He stops. The others look at him in surprise*).

**Barraclough:** Hitchcock, how should you know where anyone comes from?

**Hitchcock:** It's just that, er, I saw them coming off the platform.

**B ff:** Are you sure they didn't crawl up from between the tracks? (*More laughter*) I suppose some Charity brought them here - the sort of thing that Pross would support and my mater might actually DO.

**Barraclough:** Well, why don't we be charitable? Let's give them some money. I (*He shouts to them*) I say, you charity kids, would you like some? (*He throws some ha'pennies at them; B ff and others join in.*)

(*C.H., LADY B ff etc. are still talking*).

**Prosser:** (*To LAURA*) My tour with the boys will finish at the Winter Gardens; they could make their own way back along the promenade. Would you care to meet me there?

**Laura:** I should be very happy. Might we ask Lady Browne *ffolkes* and Mr. Cameron Hillman to join us?

**C H:** (*Unenthusiastically*) Madam, I am sure neither of us could refuse such an invitation.

*LADY B ff, about to contradict him, is interrupted by MISS M who has been flitting to and fro alternately trying to gain LADY B ff's attention and to quell the impending riot between the two groups of children.*

**Miss M:** Excuse me, your ladyship, but the children have become very fidgety after

their long train journey and...

*BARRACLOUGH and B ff, tiring of that game, turn their attention to one of their own number, HUTCHINSON, who has been engrossed in a book throughout.*

**Barraclough:** I say, Hutchinson, what is that you're reading? You've had your face buried in it since we got on the train this morning.

**Grubb:** Oh, don't you know? It's the book his uncle gave him - he printed it.

**Hutchinson:** Actually it's my Great Uncle, who happens also to be my godfather, if you really want to know, Grubb, and he's a PUBLISHER, not a printer. And since you're so inquisitive, Barraclough, it's called '52 Stories of Grit and Character for Boys'.

**B ff:** 52 stories; well, I suggest you read one a week. *(More laughter).*

**Barraclough:** *(To GRUBB)* ROTTEN luck, maggot, wrong again.

**Hutchinson:** *(Grabbing the book back from the others who try to look at it)* No, you can't look because it hasn't been published yet and my godfather said it was for me ONLY.

**Bloxham:** *(Stepping forward)* Good morning Mr. Bliss. Your goods are at the parcels office.

**Bliss:** Thank you, Mr. Bloxham. I'm glad they've arrived. Beach balls and water rings. They're selling VERY well this hot weather, you know.

**Bloxham:** Brisk trade, eh? Very good. If you'll come with me, we'll get them for you.

*They depart. HITCHCOCK has been darting round the back of the group, having spotted MR.BLISS passing among the crowd and seemingly not wanting to be noticed.*

**Tomline:** What's up with you, Hitchcock? Who was that man? Do you know him?

**Lumley-Dodd:** Was Hitchcock trying to avoid somebody? Perhaps it's a detective. Had he tracked him all the way from India, do you think? It is India you live in, isn't it, Hitchcock?

**Hitchcock:** Yes it is, as it happens.

**Barraclough:** That's why he has so many Indian stamps.

**B ff:** From all the letters his mother writes.

**Hitchcock:** Shut up, Browne ffolkes. You do have some pathetic fancies, Lumley-Dodd - and you, Tomline. I don't know what man you are talking about; I was just, er, trying to get a look at Hutchinson's book.

*C.H. and the other adults return to the boys.*

**C H:** Gentlemen, our visit is uplifted by the presence of an esteemed parent, Lady Browne ffolkes.

*B ff jumps round in amazement.*

**Lady B ff:** *(Gushing)* Charles, darling, what a marvellous surprise. I come to Yarmouth to do my duty - and find my own son here as well.

**Miss M:** PLEASE, Lady Browne ffolkes. I...

**Lady B ff:** Oh, bother the woman, one is so dictated to when one offers to help.  
*She leaves the Snettisham party with MISS M at her heel.*

**B ff:** *(To BARRACLOUGH)* So it IS my mater who brought the Great Unwashed to Norfolk today; what a rotten show.

**C H:** *(To PROSSER and LAURA)* A charming lady and so beneficent. Now, gentlemen, *Ars Longa vita brevis* - Grubb?

**Grubb:** Art is long, life is short, sir.

**Barraclough:** *(To B ff)* Have you noticed how maggots always crawl?

**C H:** *(Not hearing BARRACLOUGH)* Correct. *(The boys laugh; C.H. looks surprised)* So to the seafront where Mr. Prosser will instruct you about the day's proceedings. Follow me.

*They depart. LADY B ff is again trying to address the COCKNEYS who are very restless.*

**Madge:** There goes an undertaker and his 'prentices.

**Ada:** No, they're from one of them posh schools, where they all speak Latin and Greek.

**Josie:** Oh, look, one of 'em's got a book.

**Herbert:** Do you want a book, Josie? I'll get you one later.

**Harriet:** Herbert!

**Lady B ff:** ...such has been the generosity of your benefactors...

**Lionel:** The what?

Harriet. Just listen.

**Lady B ff:** Wilson, where are you? Now mind you guard that hamper. *(She turns to cockneys again).* Such is the generosity of your benefactors that you will be provided with free luncheon upon the beach and...*(her words are drowned in a tremendous shout from the COCKNEYS. They burst into 'I Do Like to be Beside the Sea-side', rushing off, cheering and singing).*

**Reg:** What? Free grub? I reckon it's all right this sea-side lark.

**Arthur:** Da-da da-da

**Reg:** Da-da da-da

**Both:** Da-da-da da-da . . . . *(Exeunt)*

*SCENE 2 - The beach, near the bandstand.*

*The band is heard, playing the same tune. The beach and promenade are full of people, joining in the song.*

*MUSIC [3] - I DO LIKE TO BE BESIDE THE SEA-SIDE*

*Oh, I do like to be beside the sea-side,  
I do like to be beside the sea.*

*I do like to stroll along the prom, prom, prom,  
Where the brass bands play, tiddely-om-pom-pom!  
So just let me be beside the sea-side,  
I'll be beside myself with glee;  
And there's lots of girls beside,  
I should like to be beside,  
Beside the sea-side, beside the sea.*

*C.H. strides on leading the prep school party, with PROSSER again at the rear.*

**C H:** Now pay careful attention to what Mr. Prosser has to say.

**Prosser:** Thank you, headmaster. First we shall visit the Revolving Tower where a steam driven system of wire ropes and weights propels upwards a car which revolves around the tower. From the top we shall observe the countryside...

**Hoskyns:** How do they control its descent, sir?

**Prosser:** Excellent question, Hoskyns. The attendant, you will see, operates a system of patent brakes. Next we shall make our way past the Aquarium...

**C H:** Where we shall take luncheon in the First Class Dining Room at one o'clock.

**B ff:** The Aquarium. Oh, it's fish for lunch.

**Fanning:** But it's Saturday, not Friday. *(The others groan).*

**Prosser:** Certainly, headmaster, but by then we shall also have visited the Hippodrome.

**Barraclough:** *(To B ff)* This is beginning to sound like a tour of the zoo.

**B ff:** I'm not surprised; most of those who come here are only animals. *(Muffled laughter from the boys).*

**Prosser:** The Hippodrome provides circus performances throughout the year.

**Bolingbroke:** *(To BARRACLOUGH)* You were wrong, Barra, it's a circus.

**Barraclough:** *(Referring to C.H. and PROSSER)* I know; and today the clowns are here as well. *(More giggles).*

**C H:** But the performance we are here to see is of course of a much higher order.

**Harvey-Butler:** What is that, sir?

**C H:** The D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, Harvey-Butler, whom we shall enjoy this afternoon.

**Prosser:** Thirdly, I shall escort you to the Winter Gardens...

**Fanning:** Please sir.

**Prosser:** Yes, Fanning?

**Fanning:** But it's the middle of the summer, sir. *(They groan).*

**Prosser:** A building made of iron and glass which even in winter allows the pleasure of sitting in the sunshine. This structure was originally assembled at Torquay but has been removed here to Great Yarmouth...

**Harvey-Butler:** Gosh.

**Prosser:** Once we have viewed this splendid piece of engineering you will divide

into groups and make your way back along the promenade...

**Harvey-Butler:** Is it very far, sir?

**Prosser:** No, not far and you may even be fortunate enough to catch sight of the wonderful new motor charabanc, which is being demonstrated here today.

**C H:** If so, stand well back. You will also remember at all times that you are sons of gentlemen and as such you will not associate with the indulgences of *hoi polloi* - Bolingbroke?

**Bolingbroke:** Greek, sir, the common people.

**C H:** Yes, indeed, for the benefit of whom there are many unseemly distractions upon the beach here - entertainments by low-grade comedians and inferior singers. You will ignore all of these and will refrain from entering all places of trade, with which no true gentleman or his son would wish to be associated.

**Grubb:** Oh, we wouldn't do THAT, sir.

**Barraclough:** Creepy, crawly maggots. (*To C.H.*) Is a publisher a person in trade, sir?

**C H:** I think not, Barraclough. It's an intellectual pursuit. The son of a true gentleman is distinguished from the boy whose father has disgraced himself by earning his own bread or by connecting himself with vulgar employments. *Bene natus, bene vestitus, moderate doctus* - Hitchcock?

**Hitchcock:** Well born, well dressed, not very well taught, sir. (*The boys giggle*).

**C H:** I'll have no impertinence from you, Hitchcock, take two stripes. *Moderate* means moderately, that is to say not excessively or oppressively taught...

**B ff:** (*To Barraclough*) More like AGGressively taught, I'd say.

**C H:** Stop muttering there. A true gentleman has ancestry, income, manners and must be generous...

**Barraclough:** (*To B ff*) As in the giving of stripes, I imagine.

**B ff:** But only to sons of OTHER gentlemen. (*They laugh*).

**Bolingbroke:** Naturally.

*LADY B ff and LAURA are seen arriving; PROSSER and LAURA exchange smiles.*

**Prosser:** Ladies, how delightful to see you again so soon, but I must immediately absent myself. I am about to take the boys on a tour; this way, gentlemen. (*He departs with most of the boys; HUTCHINSON continues to read his book; HITCHCOCK lingers*).

**C H:** Meanwhile, ladies, perhaps you will content yourselves with my aged company. (*They depart, talking politely*).

**Hitchcock:** Are you going to shirk the tour, Hutch?

**Hutchinson:** (*Looking up for the first time*) What, what tour?

**Hitchcock:** Pross is taking everybody around all the sights of Yarmouth. Up the revolving tower and so on. Shall we stay here?

**Hutchinson:** That's a bit stupid; you've got enough stripes already. Why don't you want to go?

**Hitchcock:** (*Hesitating*) Can I tell you, in confidence?

**Hutchinson:** Yes, if you like.

**Hitchcock:** Well, you see, my people have relatives in this area, and if we happened to meet them...well, you know what Browne *ffolkes* and Barra are like.

**Hutchinson:** Oh, is that all? I thought you were scared of heights, or something.

**Bolingbroke:** (*Running on*) Come on, you chaps, Pross is getting very impatient. (*They go*).

### SCENE 3 - The Singers' Ring.

*On a decorated platform the professionals of the Concert Party are performing; it is near the end of their 11.00am show. Those in the audience who have paid 2d are sitting on benches; others stand around the outside and from them the performers will attempt to collect by 'bottling' at the end of the performance. The COCKNEY KIDS join those standing watching. The PIERROTS are doing a ragtime dance routine (MUSIC [4]) at the end of which the spectators applaud loudly.*

**Interlocutor:** Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

**Pierrot:** I say, did you hear about the drunk standing at the end of the Britannia Pier watching an angler trying to land a big 'un?

**Interlocutor:** No, what happened?

**Pierrot:** The angler lost his balance and fell in. "I can't swim", he shouted. "I can't swim". The drunk leaned over the edge and called back: "I can't play the piano but I'm not shouting about it!" (*Laughter*)

**Interlocutor:** So, ladies and gentlemen, the end of our morning show; back again at 3 o'clock and at 7 o'clock, but to round off this performance, from that wonderful show *The Geisha*, two of the cast of Mr. George Edwardes' original London production: Mr. Stanley Gold and Mr. Billy Styles:-

*MUSIC [5] - CHIN CHIN CHINAMAN*

**Stan:** *Chinaman no money makee allo lifee long!  
Washee-washee once me takee washee-washee wrong!  
When me thinkee stealee collars p'lice manee come;  
Me get finee fivee dollars plenty muchee sum!*

**Chorus:** *Chin chin Chinaman, muchee muchee sad.  
Me afraid allo trade wellee wellee bad.  
Noee joke brokee broke, makee shutee shop;  
Chin chin Chinaman, chop, chop, chop.*

**Billy:** *When me gettee catchee cheatee playing piecee card,*

*Chinaman the allo beatee kickee wellee hard!  
When me takee nicee placee makee plenty tea,  
Gettee me in more disgrace up they sellee me!*

**CHORUS**

**DANCE**

**All Pierrots:** *REPEAT CHORUS TWICE.*

*At the end of the song the other PIERROTS go amongst the crowd 'bottling'; the crowd thins out, COCKNEYS vanish. C.H., LADY B ff and LAURA are seen passing at that moment. BILLY looks at them as if in a daze; STAN suddenly spots them.*

**Stan:** Billy, Billy, look. That lady walking along there; I could have sworn it was Laura.

**Billy:** What? Where?

**Stan:** Laura. Laura Coleman. You remember, at Daly's, in "The Geisha"; the understudy for the French part. Remember, of course you do, you had quite a way with her.

**Billy:** No, Stan. Doing that number must have brought it all back to you. Come on, I'll buy you a drink.

**Stan:** *(As they go)* Maybe. But I'd swear that was her.

*SCENE 4 - Beyond the bandstand.*

*The Prep school boys appear, minus HOSKYNS and GRUBB who follow behind in earnest conversation with PROSSER.*

*HERBERT, LIONEL and REG linger in hiding, watching the Snettisham boys. HUTCHINSON is still reading his book.*

**Fanning:** I say, going up that tower was absolutely spiffing; I can't wait to tell my people about it when I write my Sunday letter tomorrow.

**Harvey-Butler:** I agree, really A.1. But all those weights and things; Pross is so jolly enthusiastic he forgets that we don't know what he's on about.

**Bolingbroke:** Well here's a machine that works with weights - perhaps you two silly asses can understand this notice.

**Harvey-Butler:** *(Reading from sign on weighing machine)*

*"Whenever you come to Yarmouth Town  
Your weight you must have tried,  
To see if you should gain or lose  
While down at the Sea-side.  
My beam is just, my weights are true,  
Come sit in the CHAIR and let me WEIGH YOU."*

**Barraclough:** Well, well, just look - Folkes' Weighing Machine. I knew you lived

in Norfolk, Browne *ffolkes*, but I never guessed that it was on Yarmouth beach.

**B ff:** You rotter, Barraclough. You know perfectly well that is NOT how my name is spelt.

**Barraclough:** (*With pretended innocence*) Oh really?

**B ff:** My name begins with a double 'f' - in SMALL letters - and anyway my family is in no way connected with trade.

**Barraclough:** (*Imitating PROSSER*) Quite right, headmaster, my apologies. But a gentleman may be permitted to take an interest in these inventive gadgets. See how a dolt such as Fanning sits on the weighing machine and it immediately counteracts him by the use of these heavy weights.

(*The other boys laugh during this speech.*)

**B ff:** (*Now joining in the 'game' and imitating C.H.*) Very interesting, Pross, my dear chap; no doubt as usual you could go on *ad infinitum* but today instead of beating Latin in through your arse I am going to knock *ars* into your cranium by taking you to the jolly old theatre for a dose of *D'Oilus Cartus*. Hutchinson.

**Hutchinson:** (*Looking up from the book for the first time*) Eh, what's that?

**B ff:** (*Still as C.H.*) Put that book down and come here at once. (*HUTCHINSON does so*) How dare you read whilst I am speaking - take fifty stripes.

**Hutchinson:** What are you on about, Browne *ffolkes*? (*They freeze.*)

**Herbert:** Right, you two stay here. (*He darts forward and grabs the book.*)

**Reg:** Give it here.

**Herbert:** No, that's for Josie, that is.

**Lionel:** Cor, Herbert, you aren't half clever. (*They run.*)

**B ff:** What, more insults, doubled to a hundred. Come to my study tomorrow morning so that, *cum canna flexissima* I can deliver them *ad corpus*.

**Hutchinson:** Pardon?

*PROSSER arrives with HOSKYNS and GRUBB.*

**Prosser:** So you see, the counter balance works in much the same way as a weighing machine.

**Hoskyns:** Oh yes, sir, I understand.

**Grubb:** Oh look, Hoskyns, here is a weighing machine. (*They look at it.*)

**Prosser:** (*To all*) Gentlemen, we shall now proceed to the Hippodrome and thence to the Winter Gardens, after which you will come back past here to the Royal Aquarium for luncheon.

**Hutchinson:** Aah, where's my book? Which of you has hidden it? It's very secret, you know, until it's published. Give it back or I shall have to tell my folks.

**Harvey-Butler:** Your folks?

**Fanning:** Eh? No, he's not *ffolkes*, HE is...(*They groan.*)

**Prosser:** Gentlemen, we've very little time. If one of you has this book, hand it back.

**Lumley-Dodd:** I bet Hitchcock's got it; that's probably why the detective was after him.

**Bolingbroke:** Don't be an idiot, Lumley-Dodd. Anyway, the book wasn't even missing when Tomline saw that man at the station.

**Lumley-Dodd:** In that case Hitchcock's probably going to smuggle it out of the country in one of those fishing boats or exchange it for secret info.

**Prosser:** Come along, now, we have no more time to waste.

**Hutchinson:** Sir, please can I stay here to find my book? It's very important, sir.

**Hitchcock:** Yes sir, I'll stay and help him and we'll cut through The Lanes and catch you up at the Hippodrome.

**Barraclough:** Hitchcock, for someone who lives in India you seem to know a great deal about this town.

**Tomline:** Yes, and I'm sure you recognised that man at the station.

**Lumley-Dodd:** I know, Hitchcock is a spy and that man at the station was his contact.

**Prosser:** Be quiet, all of you. Now, for the walk back you will divide into three groups; Bolingbroke, Tomline, Fanning, and Harvey-Butler will form one group; Hutchinson, Lumley-Dodd, Hoskyns and Grubb another, and Browne ffolkes, Barraclough and Hitchcock the third. I shall join the headmaster and then meet you outside the Royal Aquarium and remember - you are not to concern yourselves with beach entertainment nor to enter any place of trade.

**Barraclough:** Well since you're so knowledgeable, Hitchcock, you should be able to get us back without any difficulty.

**B ff:** You mean without a Hitch. *(They both laugh).*

**Prosser:** *(Starting to lead boys off)* Now the first hippodrome was built here only six years ago and last year a new ring was constructed...

*PROSSER sets off enthusiastically talking at great speed as he strides ahead. The boys follow but HUTCHINSON lingers to have a further look for his book; HITCHCOCK sees him hesitate and remains with him.*

**Hutchinson:** I'm dreadfully bothered about my book, Hitchcock. If my godfather knew the book was missing he'd be furious.

**Hitchcock:** It can't be far, Hutch.

*HARRIET and JOSIE have appeared and are watching the other two whilst they search.*

**Josie:** Lost something?

**Hitchcock:** Yes we have, actually. Or at least Hutch has.

**Josie:** Who has?

**Hitchcock:** Hutch.

**Josie:** Funny name.

**Hitchcock:** Well, it's not my REAL name; it's a sort of nickname.

**Harriet:** Why? What is he? Sort of rabbit or something?

**Hitchcock:** No. It's just a short form of his name, Hutchinson. He's Hutch, I'm Hitch.

**Harriet:** Itch? Oh, lice. (*She shrugs*) What you lost, anyhow?

**Hutchinson:** It's a book.

**Harriet:** Oh, nothing valuable then.

**Hitchcock:** Oh but it is. It's a brand new book and Hutch got it from his great uncle and he's not meant...(*HUTCHINSON kicks him*) Sorry, it's a red book. You haven't seen it, have you?

**Josie:** No. (*Wistfully*) I'd love to have a book.

**Harriet:** Shall we help you look for it?

*BOLINGBROKE comes running on.*

**Hitchcock:** Thanks very much. That's jolly decent of you.

**Bolingbroke:** Hitchcock, Hutchinson, hurry along will you? Pross is chafing like mad. Oh! Whatever are you doing?

**Hutchinson:** (*To COCKNEYS*) Sorry, we must go. We're not really meant to be talking to you, you see.

*The Snettisham boys leave, running; the COCKNEYS look at each other.*

**Harriet:** Well, I like that. (*She shouts after them*) Toffs!

**Josie:** Oi, Hutch. Don't stick your nose up TOO high, snob! *They depart.*

*SCENE 5 - Inside the Winter Gardens.*

*MUSIC [6] - The string quartet is playing, there are tables and chairs, most of which are occupied, ladies and gentlemen having tea or coffee. Seated at one of the D.S. tables are C.H., LADY B ff and LAURA.*

**Laura:** Where was Mr. Prosser taking the boys, Mr. Cameron Hillman?

**C H:** To the Hippodrome which, like all things new, he finds pleasing. I love a circus but no modern building will estrange my affection for the old canvas tent.

**Laura:** But are they seeing a performance?

**C H:** Certainly not. This afternoon they will be treated to Gilbert and Sullivan's finest work, "The Yeomen of The Guard".

**Lady B ff:** Nonsense. "Ruddigore" is far superior - more Sullivan, less Gilbert. But it was all THEATRE: so different from this dreadful "musical comedy" which is all one can find in London nowadays. Don't you agree, Laura?

**Laura:** (*Embarrassed*) I really haven't seen much recently.

**Lady B ff:** Don't blame you. You once had connections in the London theatre, did

you not? In the days when it WAS theatre, of course.

**Laura:** Yes; yes I did.

**Lady B ff:** Must be particularly trying for you to see all this nonsense being so successful. What's the name of that Gaiety Theatre man - Edwardes is it? - makes his fortune by putting rows of pretty girls in the chorus so I'm told.

**Laura:** (*Trying hard to hide her embarrassment*) I'm sure they all try their hardest.

**Lady B ff:** My dear, you are SO good natured; I am sure I should admire you for it. And I dare say you may be right. Like Cameron Hillman here; you have a way with those boys.

**C H:** There are many, madam, who might not think so.

**Lady B ff:** But you do so much for them - an outing like this for instance - and they respect you for it.

**C H:** Compared to fifty years ago, the youth of today is well regarded.

**Lady B ff:** He certainly is; even an impudent young scallywag like mine.

**C H:** But I can assure you, dear ladies, that there are now many voices, raised in the name of education, claiming appeal to reason as all that is required to induce a boy to good learning.

*During this conversation STAN and BILLY have entered and are moving from table to table speaking briefly and handing out leaflets; they are also seen to be discussing LAURA, who has not noticed them.*

**Laura:** And what is the true answer, Mr. Cameron Hillman?

**C H:** The truth, madam, is that no two boys are fashioned alike. One should suspect uniformity as one should beware modernity; (*He sees PROSSER arrive*) though some might not agree with me, eh Prosser?

**Prosser:** What was that headmaster?

**Laura:** Ah, Mr. Prosser, how nice to see you. I trust your tour with the boys was a success?

**Prosser:** Thank you, yes. With the exception of one foolish boy who delayed us in searching for a book which he claims to have lost. I think that they have all derived something from our discoveries.

*The string quartet begin to play THE TOY MONKEY (MUSIC [7]) from "The Geisha".*

**Stan:** Listen, Billy, 'The Toy Monkey' from "The Geisha" - and there's that lady. I still think it's Laura; let's put it to the test! (*Sings*)

*Poor little maiden, who loves a bit of fun,*

*Learns her propensity to rue!*

*Just look at me, what a pretty thing I've done!*

*Here's a delightful how-de-do.*

*They whisk her to her feet; forgetting herself she joins in.*

**Laura:** *A precious pickle I'm in.*

**Billy:** *Foolish little Molly, punished for your folly,  
A wooden monkey climbin', isn't on a stick like you!*

**All:** *(Chorus) Click! Click! I'm a monkey on a stick!  
Anyone with me can play.  
And my antics he'll enjoy, till he finds a newer toy,  
When he'll wish me a polite good-day.*

**DANCE**

**CHORUS**

*During all this the others register first shock, then horror, then talk to each other about how dreadful it is, always hoping that they have not been noticed with LAURA. At the end of the song they rise from the table.*

**C H:** Come, Prosser, we must re-join the boys. There are indeed more than enough indecorous proceedings on this seafront.

**Prosser:** Please excuse us, Lady Browne *ff*olkes.

**Lady B *ff*:** I must leave as well. What does the woman think she is doing? If one marries into the aristocracy one really must learn how to behave.

**C H:** I trust, Prosser, that we may rely upon the boys to adhere to the behaviour of gentlemen?

**Prosser:** I think so, headmaster, I did remind them of your injunction.

**Lady B *ff*:** Not so, I fear, those London children - and with that woman looking after them. I fear my butler may give me notice before he even opens the picnic hampers; I shall have to go and sort them out, I don't doubt. Really, all this is too much.

*They all leave. LAURA, talking excitedly with STAN and BILLY, sees LADY B *ff* sweeping out. She tears herself away and rushes after her. But she is too late and BILLY catches her at the door.*

**Billy:** Laura, don't go. Tell me about yourself; was that your husband?

**Laura:** What? Which one? *(She laughs a little)* No, neither; the Earl may be middle-aged but he's not as old as Mr. Cameron Hillman - nor as young as Mr. Prosser.

**Billy:** Who is Mr. Prosser?

**Laura:** Him? Oh he's just a master at a private school; I only met him today. He's quite charming, don't you think?

**Billy:** I've thought about you Laura; wondered what might have been if his lordship hadn't whisked you off your feet. You certainly made the right choice - look at me now, just a pierrot on the beach. That wouldn't have been much of a life for you.

**Laura:** I'm not sure, Billy, and even if it WAS right I've certainly blown it now. Lady Browne *ff*olkes disapproves of anything. My fall from grace will be all round the county. I can't come back to you, Billy, it's too late for that. I'm

just an ex-Gaiety girl who tried to rise above her station.  
*She runs off in distress, leaving BILLY also upset.*  
**Stan:** *(Coming over to BILLY)* Come on, old fellow; we've got a show this afternoon.  
*They leave together.*

*SCENE 6 - The Marine Parade and Beach. There are shops behind including CHARLES R. BLISS, FANCY GOODS EMPORIUM.*

*The COCKNEY KIDS are discovered playing street games.*

**Herbert:** Here, Josie, here's the book you wanted. *(He hands over HUTCHINSON'S book).*

**Reg:** Let me have a look. *(He grabs it)* Where's the pictures?

**Herbert:** There aren't any.

**Lionel:** Must be a good book though; it's got gold pages.

**Arthur:** *(Calling to those playing the game)* Bread, bread, honey, wedding cake, honey, etc.

*The game continues D.S.; those U.S. turn towards the shops.*

**Josie:** *(To LIONEL)* Oh Lionel, a real book; full of writing. Isn't Herbert clever? Where did he get it?

**Lionel:** Shh. *(JOSIE starts to try to read the book).*

**Reg:** What's this place, Herbert?

**Herbert:** *(Reading shop sign)* Fancy God's Emp - emp - emperor. Yeah, I think I do. Let's go and have a look. *(They enter the shop; they are soon flung out by MR. BLISS).*

**Bliss:** Clear off; hop it; keep your thieving little fingers off my goods.

**Herbert:** Get your hands off me; I ain't done nothing.

**Bliss:** Maybe, but not for the want of trying; I know your games.

**Lionel:** We got some good ones, mister; you can join in if you like.

*BLISS returns to his shop; the games continue; HERBERT and LIONEL now join in but REG grabs WALTER and leads him across to the shop.*

**Harriet:** Clockwork statues.

**Elsie:** *(Crying)* I can't do it, Harriet.

**Arthur:** It's easy, you just have to move like you was something else.

**Lionel:** Elsie is something else.

**Harriet:** My choice; your turn first, Ada. *(Laughter and applause. ADA moves as a puppet).*

**Herbert:** Clown.

**Arthur:** No, she's a ballet dancer.

**Reg:** *(To WALTER)* Stand here, Walter, we're going to have a spitting match. I bet I

can spit harder than you.

**Bliss:** (*Appearing in doorway just as WALTER spits at it*) None of that here; off my doorstep.

**Walter:** It weren't my fault, mister, Reg, he made me...(*REG grabs him*).

**Bliss:** Disappear before I call the police. (*He goes inside*).

**Josie:** (*Handing book back to HERBERT*) It's no good, Herbert, I can't read most of them words. They must be in that Greek.

**Arthur:** I've got it - puppet! (*The others applaud*). My turn. (*He moves with big, heavy steps*).

**Madge:** Elephant.

**Ada:** Policeman.

**Lionel:** Is he a dinosaur?

**Reg:** What is it, Elsie?

**Elsie:** (*Sobbing*) I don't know, Reg.

**Arthur:** Give up then? (*They do; he starts to sing:*)

*MUSIC [8] - FOLLOWING IN FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS.*

*I'm following in father's footsteps,  
I'm following my dear old dad.  
He's wobbling along the front, you see,  
And 'pon my word, he's worse than me.  
I don't know where he's going,  
But when he gets there I'll be glad!  
I'm following in father's footsteps, yes,  
I'm following my dear old dad.  
At Yarmouth with Papa I toddled out  
To have a good old swim.  
I didn't know the proper place to bathe,  
So I left it all to him.  
I found myself among the ladies,  
And enjoyed it, so did Pa!  
Till Ma yelled "Arthur, fie for shame!"  
Said I, "It's all right, Ma!"  
I'm following in father's footsteps,  
I'm following the dear old dad.  
He's just out there with the fair Elsie,  
To show me how to hold girls, see.  
I'm going to hold her next, Ma,  
But when he gets there I'll be glad!  
I'm following in father's footsteps, yes,  
I'm following the dear old dad.*

*(During the song the two groups, each of four prep school boys, appear and watch).*

**Bolingbroke:** Here are those oiks again.

**Tomline:** They seem to be turning into beach entertainers.

**Fanning:** Does that mean we're not allowed to watch them?

**Harvey-Butler:** Actually they're rather good. They must have a better dancing teacher than we do.

**Grubb:** My mater says that the lower classes do these things naturally; I don't suppose they've had any lessons.

**Harvey-Butler:** Really? I say. I wouldn't mind being able to dance like that. *(He makes an attempt; the others laugh).*

**Fanning:** Are they allowed to sing and dance wherever they like?

**Hutchinson:** Look; over there. That boy's got my book.

**Bolingbroke:** Oh not your book again, Hutchinson. That's caused enough trouble already.

**Tomline:** I think he's right. We must investigate.

**Lumley-Dodd:** Hey - perhaps if you put on a disguise, Tomline, like a detective, you could follow all the clues and they would give up and hand it over.

**Hutchinson:** Oh shut up, Lumley-Dodd. You do have the wildest notions.

*MISS M appears.*

**Miss M:** Ah, there you are, children. *(The COCKNEYS all start talking at once).*

**Madge:** Miss, I got all sand in my clothes.

**Elsie:** *(In tears)* I want to go for a paddle but the sea's too far out.

**Lionel:** Yeah, why does the water keep going away, Miss?

**Reg:** I'm hungry.

**Walter:** What do we get for dinner, Miss?

**Ada:** Fresh fish and chips, Walter. This is where they catch it. Look, there are some of the fishing boats.

**Walter:** Cor, wait till I tell Dad what I saw. He said chips was potatoes.

**Miss M:** Children children, attention please. We shall now return to the pier bandstand, where Lady Browne ffolkes has arranged a luncheon hamper for us. *(They rush off).*

**Elsie:** *(Shrieks)* No, no, I hate rats and mice.

**Ada:** No, Elsie, not a hamster - a hamper. They've put the dinner in it.

**Elsie:** Why?

**Ada:** Because we're at the seaside - it's what sailors sleep in on boats. *(They go).*

**Tomline:** You've lost it now, Hutch. They've gone.

**Hoskyns:** I think we should tell Mr. Prosser; he'll help to get it back.

**Bolingbroke:** He was pretty peeved about it earlier on.

**Grubb:** I agree with Hoskyns.

**Bolingbroke:** That's no surprise; you usually do.

**Grubb:** We should ask Pross to help us; so first we should go back to the rendezvous.

**Fanning:** I thought we were meeting him at the Aquarium. *(They groan. They set off, trying to explain to FANNING. Meanwhile, BARRACLOUGH, B ff and HITCHCOCK have arrived, the first two stand, obviously plotting).*

**B ff:** He'll have to come with us otherwise he might give the game away.

**Barraclough:** You wouldn't SNEAK, would you, Hitchcock?

**Hitchcock:** *(Obviously uneasy)* What? Sneak? About what?

**B ff:** No, don't you see, supposing Pross or the Head Man were to see him out here on his own while we were inside.

**Barraclough:** Right. Come on, Hitchcock, we're going into this shop.

**Hitchcock:** *(Petrieved)* No, no, not in there, no.

**B ff:** Why not, are there wild animals on the loose?

**Barraclough:** He's just scared of getting caught.

**B ff:** Oh yes, he's already got two stripes today, hasn't he?

**Barraclough:** Frightened of the visit to the study tomorrow, eh?

**B ff:** It's not wild animals he's frightened of; it's wild headmasters. HITCHCHICKEN.

**Hitchcock:** No. It's not that, really.

**Barraclough:** Right. Come on then. *(They grab him and drag him into the shop).*

*SCENE 7 - Inside the Fancy Goods Emporium.*

**Mrs. Bliss:** One o'clock, Charles; time to shut up shop.

**Bliss:** Very well, my dear.

**Mrs. Bliss:** Lunch is all ready. I'll give you a hand.

**Bliss:** Thank you, my dear; it won't take us long.

**Mrs. Bliss:** Then off to the matinee. The Yeomen - my favourite. *(They look at each other and smile).*

*MUSIC [9] - I HAVE A SONG TO SING, O*

**Bliss:** *I have a song to sing, O.*

**Mrs. Bliss:** *Sing me your song, O.*

*They sing to the song to 'la' and tidy the shop in a choreographed routine. As the song ends the three boys bang on the door.*

**Bliss:** *(Looking through the door)* Oh no you don't, I've had enough of you London scamps today making a noise and seeing what thieving you can do. *(He looks at the boys).* Oh.

**Mrs. Bliss:** *(Offstage)* Something wrong, dear?

**Bliss:** It's all right, dear, it's some young gentlemen. *(He opens the door)* My apologies, young sirs; we're about to close, Saturday being our half day, but

if I can help you...

**B ff:** (*Entering*) Thank you. We would like to examine your stock. (*He moves in, followed by BARRACLOUGH pulling in HITCHCOCK, who has been trying to hide his face from BLISS*).

**Bliss:** Good heavens above. Violet, come quickly, why look here, it's our young nephew Jonny come to visit us - and trying to use his friends to catch us by surprise, by the look of it.

**Mrs. Bliss:** (*Hurrying on*) What? Well Jonathan, this IS a treat. (*BARRACLOUGH and B ff have reeled back in horror; HITCHCOCK looks miserable*).

**B ff:** I say, did I understand you to say that Hitchcock here is a relative of yours?

**Bliss:** Well, of my wife's rightly, her sister's boy, but he always calls us Uncle and Aunty, don't you Jonny?

**B ff:** Good Lord!

**Barraclough:** This is awful.

**B ff:** We must go and warn the others.

**Barraclough:** To think that the fellow has got relatives in trade.

**B ff:** Come on, Barra. Let's hope we can get to them before the Head Man arrives. (*They rush out of the shop*).

**Mrs. Bliss:** Whatever is going on?

**Bliss:** Why so miserable Jonny?

**Mrs. Bliss:** You haven't run away from school or done something dreadful have you, Jonathan? (*To her husband*) I do hope I haven't got to send bad news out to India.

**Hitchcock:** No, no, it's nothing like that. It's just that (*He starts to cry*) it's just that at school they never knew - about YOU. (*He bursts into tears*).

**END OF ACT I**

**ACT II - Prologue:** *The seafront.*

*The crowd is strolling by or watching things out at sea. They sing and dance:*

*MUSIC [10] - A DAY AT THE SEASIDE*

**All:** *Families of course, are here today in force,  
With their picnics, buckets and spades.  
Hurrah!  
Bringing lots of hope, and certainly the scope,  
To the hawkers and merchants of trades.  
A day at the seaside,  
The great British outing,  
The joy and the shouting,  
The pierrots, the puppets and the band.  
A day at the seaside,  
The theatre, the circus,  
The gentry, the workers,  
All build their castles out of sand.*

*SCENE 1 - The Singers' Ring.*

*HITCHCOCK wanders on alone, enters the ring and sings:*

*MUSIC [11] - WHAT HAVE I DONE?*

*What have I done, that I am made an outcast?  
Sneered at and scorned, I wander all alone.  
What title has he to judge upon my past,  
To throw me aside like the grass new-mown?  
Far from my family, left without a friend,  
How shall I bear the weeks which lie ahead?  
Hoping this torment will soon be at an end,  
Trying to drop the wish that I were dead.  
I'll dream, mother dear, until we meet once more.  
Daydreams of happiness again in store.  
Dreams of a future that my life may hold,  
Back in the comfort of your love untold.*

*(He sits on a bench and cries).*

*END OF SCENE 1*

*SCENE 2 - The beach, near the bandstand.*

*The COCKNEYS are having their picnic.*

**Miss M:** Now children, one sandwich each.

**Reg:** Oi, Walter, yours is different; I'll have some of that. *(He tries it)* Here, Elsie,

what's in these sandwiches?

**Elsie:** (*Crying*) I don't know, Reg.

**Lady B ff:** (*To BUTLER*) Now, Wilson, I suppose everything is under control?

**Wilson:** Everything, your ladyship, except the children and the lady who accompanies them.

**Lady B ff:** Oh dear, how tiresome, I knew that woman was incapable.

**Miss M:** Don't take chicken legs AND hardboiled eggs at the same time; they don't go together, you know.

**Arthur:** Well, they did once. (*They all laugh*).

**Walter:** (*To LIONEL*) How far can you throw, Lionel? (*He aims to throw a chicken bone*).

**Reg:** (*Grabbing it*) Not as far as me. (*Another scuffle breaks out*).

**Miss M:** No, no, boys.

**Herbert:** (*To WILSON*) I'll help you collect the plates.

**Harriet:** Don't let him do that, mister, not if you want them back proper.

**Lionel:** (*Breaking away from the scuffle*) No, he'll lick the gold off the pattern.

**Lady B ff:** Yes, do check everything back into the hamper, Wilson, it seems I can depend on no-one these days.

**Wilson:** Thank you, your ladyship.

**Miss M:** What a wonderful day this is, your ladyship, the children are enjoying themselves SO much.

**Lady B ff:** You are, I suppose, entitled to that opinion; I do not see it that way. Unexpected school outings and women trying to rise above their station; I find it all most disarming.

**Miss M:** Oh, I am sure that I meant no offence, your ladyship.

**C H:** (*Arriving with PROSSER*) Lady Browne ffolkes, Prosser and I would be so glad if you would accompany us to luncheon at the Aquarium.

**Lady B ff:** Thank you. I should indeed be pleased to be rescued from the bedlam which exists here. (*She points to another scuffle; MISS M hastens over to it*).

**C H:** Prosser, be so kind as to hurry ahead and organise the boys. (*He goes. To LADY B ff*) I am sorry that you do not think well of The Yeomen. (*They move slowly*).

**Lady B ff:** I do not think badly of it. It has some delightful melodies.

**C H:** "I have a song" for example?

**Lady B ff:** Indeed - and there is that other duet in Act II. (*She sings:*)

*MUSIC [12] - RAPTURE, RAPTURE.*

**Lady B ff:** *Rapture, rapture! When love's votary,  
Flushed with capture, seeks the notary,  
Joy and jollity then is pollity;  
Reigns frivolity. Rapture, rapture!*

**C H:** *Doleful, doleful! When humanity  
With it's soul full of satanity,  
Courting privity down declivity  
Seeks captivity! Doleful, doleful!*

**Lady B ff:** *Joyful, joyful! When virginity  
Seeks, all coyful, man's affinity;  
Fate all flowery, bright and bowery,  
Is her dowery! Joyful, joyful!*

**C H:** *Ghastly, ghastly! When man, sorrowful,  
Firstly, lastly, of tomorrow full,  
After tarrying, yields to harrying  
Goes a-marrying. Ghastly, ghastly!*

**Both:** *Rapture, rapture! etc.*

*(As they finish, PROSSER re-appears with most of the boys).*

**Prosser:** I am sorry, headmaster, but this business about Hutchinson's missing book is becoming very awkward. It seems the boys have seen it in the hands of one of these - er - London children.

**Hutchinson:** I am sure it was my book, sir, because it's not available yet.

**C H:** What do you mean, boy? How can one have in one's possession something which is not available?

**Hoskyns:** He means it's a pre-publication copy, sir.

**Hutchinson:** So you see, sir, no-one but me could have had one yet, sir.

**Tomline:** I don't think those oiks thought much of it.

**Lumley-Dodd:** Are you going to arrest them, sir? Have you got lots of handcuffs and a truncheon, sir?

**C H:** Lady Browne *ffolkes*, I am sorry to turn to you in this way but I think I must ask you to use your good offices to discover the truth in this matter.

**Lady B ff:** Very well, I shall do as you ask. But whilst I seek your missing book perhaps you could establish why my son is no longer amongst your party?  
*(She moves over to talk to MISS M).*

**C H:** *(Looking around angrily)* What is that? Prosser, where is the boy?

**Bolingbroke:** Barraclough and Hitchcock are missing too, sir. *(He turns to PROSSER)* You put them in a group together, sir, do you remember?

**Harvey-Butler:** Perhaps they've got lost on the way back.

**Fanning:** But I thought Hitchcock was the one who knew his way about.

**Lumley-Dodd:** I told you there was something suspicious about him. I expect Hitch and that man are holding the other two hostage, then they'll send a ransom note and the Head Man will have to pay thousands of pounds and...

**Tomline:** I don't think so, Didders, here come your two 'hostages' now. But there's no sign of Hitchcock.

**Lumley-Dodd:** Then he's escaped to give the information to foreign powers, I bet he's...

**Others:** Oh SHUT UP Lumley-Dodd!

**Hoskyns:** (*To PROSSER*) Sir, where is that other lady who was with you earlier?

**B ff:** (*Breathless*) Quick you chaps, listen - ghastly news.

**Bolingbroke:** What's happened?

**Fanning:** Has there been an accident?

**Barraclough:** No, it's not like that.

**B ff:** But we've discovered something dreadful about Hitchcock. (*They whisper*).

**Hoskyns:** (*To PROSSER*) Who was that lady, sir? The one with Browne ffolkes' mater?

**Prosser:** (*Ignoring him*) Browne ffolkes, Barraclough, where have you been - and where is Hitchcock?

**B ff:** Sorry sir. We got rather confused on the way back, sir.

**Prosser:** Confused? Rubbish - it was straight along the seafront.

**Barraclough:** Actually, sir, we were trying to work out which was the most advanced piece of engineering of all the things you had shown us today, and Browne ffolkes said it was the Winter Gardens because of all the glass, but I thought it was the Revolving Tower. Which do you think, sir?

**Prosser:** Well, since you ask, I think probably...

**C H:** Never mind that, Prosser, WHERE IS HITCHCOCK?

**B ff:** He went into a shop, sir. It seemed as if he knew it.

**Barraclough:** We tried to stop him, sir, but he struggled away from us.

**B ff:** We reminded him what you had said, sir. (*He signals to the others who act up to support him*).

**C H:** He did what? Wait till I get that boy back to school. Where is this shop?

**Lady B ff:** (*Returning to group*) Ah, Charles, there you are. I was concerned for you.

**Hutchinson:** Excuse me, but have you recovered my book?

**Lady B ff:** Not as yet, although the children have a book and I feel sure it is the one - but I cannot persuade the woman without what she calls 'proper evidence'. You'll have to send the boys over to her, Cameron Hillman.

**C H:** Oh, very well. Prosser, you take Hutchinson and any other 'witnesses' with you. The rest of you come with me to find Hitchcock. (*He departs with his group; the others cross to the COCKNEYS with LADY B ff*).

**Hutchinson:** Look there it is - '52 Stories of Grit and Character for Boys' - I say you fellows, give it back, will you?

**Harriet:** Hey, Josie, here's that bloke wanting his book again.

**Josie:** Hallo there, Hutch. Ada, let me introduce you to Hutch; he's looking for his book, what's just under his nose, but he can't see that 'cos he keeps his nose

stuck up in the air.

**Miss M:** Josie, do you know about this book?

**Josie:** Only that he told us that he'd lost it.

**Harriet:** Then he remembered he weren't supposed to talk to the likes of us.

**Josie:** (*Longingly*) Oh, I wish I could read a book like that.

**Ada:** Anyway, it's sitting in front of him now, miss.

**Herbert:** Yes, miss, Walter just put it there.

**Walter:** Weren't my fault, miss. I was...(*REG threatens him*).

**Miss M:** Children, children, I am most upset. Return the book at once. Now you must not take things which belong to other people.

**Reg:** The toffs should look after themselves better, shouldn't they?

**Herbert:** He put it down. We thought he'd finished with it. (*The PIERROTS are seen walking back towards their platform*).

**Harry:** Look, there's them clowns again. Let's go and watch them.

**Ada:** They're called Pierrots: that's 'cos they perform beside the pier.

*With shouts etc. and more singing, most of the COCKNEYS rush off whilst MISS M and WILSON clear up and depart also; MADGE and JOSIE remain.*

**Josie:** Always in a hurry, them lot.

**Madge:** You enjoying yourself, Josie?

**Josie:** Yeah. Never seen the sea before.

**Madge:** Nor me. Dreamed about it. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see it every day.

**Josie:** Or just to come whenever you wanted.

**Madge:** The toffs do that. Wearing their fancy clothes. Like them ladies we saw this morning. Wouldn't you like to have clothes like them, Josie?

**Josie:** I wish I could read like them.

**Madge:** What?

**Josie:** The toffs can all read, can't they? Like that book the boys took. I'd love that. Think, Madge, if you could read and write proper, you could write all about the lovely things you seen today and then, whenever you wanted, you could read it again and imagine every detail.

**Madge:** Just imagine being rich.

**Josie:** What - and go round with your nose stuck in the air. No thanks; I'm happier like we are. (*She turns and struts off*).

**Madge:** (*Following*) Josie. Josie.

*Some of the crowd wander along; MRS. BLISS is amongst them, hurrying; MR. BLISS is some way behind her; he stops.*

**Bliss:** Not so fast, Violet, my dear, we've plenty of time.

**Mrs. Bliss:** (*Stopping and turning*) I like to be punctual, Charles.

**Bliss:** Certainly, my dear, but we have over forty minutes and it's only half a mile. Let's stop for a breather.

**Mrs. Bliss:** Very well; this beautiful hot summer does make one tired, especially after the disturbance this morning. What do you think those youngsters were up to, Charles?

**Bliss:** Young thieves; after anything they could get.

**Mrs. Bliss:** What, boys like those?

**Bliss:** Definitely. I read about some of them in the “Mercury” last week - stealing chocolate, neckties, scent - even Hymn and Prayer books. I am not at all sure these charity outings are a good thing - even though they may be supported by the gentry.

**Mrs. Bliss:** The Snettisham boys on a charity outing? I hardly think so, Charles.

**Bliss:** No, not them, my dear, those London children we had round earlier. That’s whom I mistook the young gentlemen for.

**Mrs. Bliss:** But they’re the ones I am talking about; the two boys who came in with Jonny. What were they rushing off to tell their friends? And why did Jonny burst into tears and rush out after them?

**Bliss:** (*Hesitantly*) I...er...I rather think it may have been me, my dear.

**Mrs. Bliss:** You Charles?

**Bliss:** One of them spoke about ‘relatives in trade’; and I THINK Jonny said that at school ‘they did not know about us’.

**Mrs. Bliss:** Oh Charles what will happen to him?

**Bliss:** I’m not sure. They are very particular at these private schools, you know.

**Mrs. Bliss:** You don’t think he’ll have to leave Snettisham, do you?

**Bliss:** I don’t know, Violet; the Headmaster seemed very angry when he came looking for him and I think he might have a hard time from some of the young gentlemen there.

*LAURA wanders into view and stops, looking out to sea, a few paces from them.*

**Mrs. Bliss:** It’s hard to know which really are the young gentlemen nowadays. Or the ladies. (*She eyes LAURA*) Some of them dress as if they are married to an earl and turn out to be from the back row of the chorus.

*LAURA, hearing this, looks round guiltily and moves on.*

**Bliss:** Careful, my dear, I think she may have heard you; and many people like to dress up a bit when they are on holiday. Remember that song:

*MUSIC [13] - THE BIG HEAVY SWELL OF THE SEA*

*As you may suppose when you look at my clothes,*

*I’m prince of all nautical swells...*

*The fellows I meet take a very back seat*

*Whenever I flirt with the belles...*

*No Marquis or Earl stands a chance with a girl*

*When in competition with me,*

*It is always so, because don’t you know,*

*I'm the big heavy swell of the sea.  
The fellows look upon me with a jealous eye;  
The ladies all adore me as I saunter by,  
They titter and they blush, then after me they rush,  
For heaviest of heavy seaside swells am I.  
But weeks two or three see an end to my spree.  
My bills as a rule I don't pay...  
And flitting it down, measure ribbon in town  
And dine upon ninepence a day...  
So if you should pop in to some draper's shop  
And be served by a fellow like me.  
You'll know, more or less, that's the London address,  
Of the big, heavy swell of the sea.*

**C H:** A fine mess this is now, Browne ffolkes, and you and Barraclough are at least in part responsible.

**B ff:** Us, sir? But we tried to stop him, sir.

**C H:** I'm not so sure about that. But were you aware, young man, that this shop-keeper is - er - connected with Hitchcock?

**B ff:** What do you mean, sir?

**C H:** I mean that when I spoke just now to the man Bliss he told me that he and his wife were related to the boy.

**Barraclough:** (*With feigned surprise*) Related sir?

**Fanning:** Yes, Barra, as you told us when... ah!(*BARRACLOUGH kicks him*).

**C H:** It is clear you two know more than you have said. Now where is Hitchcock?

**B ff:** We really don't know that, sir. We left him at the shop.

**C H:** Well we must find him - and quickly. He has already made us late for luncheon and we are in danger of being late for the performance too.

**Prosser:** Ah, headmaster, we have recovered the book.

**C H:** Never mind the book, Prosser, you have lost us a boy and possibly this afternoon's entertainment. Take a search party, man, we MUST find him.

*They set off to search.*

**Hoskyns:** (*To PROSSER*) Oh, do we HAVE to, sir? We don't want to miss the opera.

**Prosser:** Precisely, Hoskyns, and therefore we must find Hitchcock quickly.

**Tomline:** He'll make his own way, sir; remember, he knows his way around here.

**Bolingbroke:** Yes, he's the local expert; I expect he's an errand boy during the hols.

**Tomline:** Oh, Bolingbroke, do you really think so? How ghastly.

**Bolingbroke:** Well he's certainly not one of us.

**Tomline:** He's like those oiks who had our book.

**Hutchinson:** Well, I like that, Tomline; it is certainly not your book.

**Tomline:** At least it wasn't Hitchcock's.

**Bolingbroke:** He can jolly well move out of our dorm; perhaps he can go in with the babes; they probably wouldn't notice. I'll ask the Head Man when we get back.

**Hoskyns:** Better wait till he's cooled down a bit, Bolers, otherwise he might thrash you as well as the others. Do you think Hitchcock will actually stay at the school, sir?

**Prosser:** Unless we find him quickly, Hoskyns, I rather doubt if any of us will. We must seek him out.

**Lumley-Dodd:** I'm sure he plotted something with Hutchinson, sir. I expect they...

**Prosser:** Is that so, Hutchinson? Do you know where Hitchcock may be - or why?

**Hutchinson:** What, sir? No, I've no idea. But it's unlike him; he's never on his own.

**Tomline:** That's true, sir. He always follows Browne *ffolkes* and Barraclough - and they were very secretive when they came back.

**Lumley-Dodd:** I know - they've had a fight and left him badly injured.

**Prosser:** I think it most unlikely, Lumley-Dodd, that Hitchcock has been hurt. Now come with me, gentlemen, and let us solve this mystery.

*They depart.*

*END OF SCENE 2*

*SCENE 3 - The Singers' Ring.*

*LAURA enters, dejected, not seeing HITCHCOCK on a bench. She goes to the stage. She sings:*

*MUSIC [14] - C'EST MOI*

**Laura:** *C'est moi, c'est moi,  
You surely do not forget.  
C'est moi, c'est moi,  
Your own little Juliette.*

*HITCHCOCK jumps up, startled, she stops singing. Both are embarrassed.*

**Laura:** Oh, I'm sorry; I didn't expect anybody to be in here.

**Hitchcock:** Were you rehearsing?

**Laura:** *(Laughing a little)* Not exactly, no.

**Hitchcock:** Do you perform here?

**Laura:** *(Sadly)* No, I don't perform, any more.

**Hitchcock:** I know that song, my mother taught it to me.

*He sings:*

**Hitchcock:** *C'est moi, c'est moi,  
You surely do not forget.*

*C'est moi, c'est moi,  
Your own little Juliette.*

**Both:** *Not one of your Geisha girlies,  
Not one of your Belles Anglaises,  
It's someone you know  
Just peep down below  
C'est moi, la petite Francaise.*

**Hitchcock:** That song comes from a show called The Geisha.

**Laura:** Yes, that's right.

**Hitchcock:** (*Brightening*) My mother said it was lovely. She saw it THREE times.

**Laura:** She MUST have enjoyed it then.

**Hitchcock:** Didn't you? Didn't you enjoy it.

**Laura:** Oh yes, I enjoyed it very much indeed.

**Hitchcock:** How often did you go?

**Laura:** I went...many times, very many times. But what are you doing here - aren't you one of the boys I saw this morning with Mr. Cameron Hillman?

**Hitchcock:** Yes but...but I'm on my own, just at the moment. We are allowed, you know.

**Laura:** Are you? But surely you should rejoin the others soon? You are all going to the theatre, aren't you?

**Hitchcock:** How did you know?

**Laura:** I met your masters this morning when I was with - the mother of one of the boys. I expect you know him, his name is Browne *ffolkes*?

**Hitchcock:** Yes, I know him.

**Laura:** What's he like?

**Hitchcock:** Oh, he's - he's like all the others really. Why are you here on your own?

**Laura:** I was just taking a stroll.

**Hitchcock:** I remember now, I saw you at the station with Browne *ffolkes*' mater. (*Suddenly alarmed*) Is she here too?

**Laura:** No. (*She smiles wryly*) She would never come to a spot like this. But why? Do you WANT to see her?

**Hitchcock:** No, definitely not. I just wondered if he had told her...

*The PIERROTS appear, striding back to their Ring, calling out and followed by the COCKNEYS.*

**Dick:** Here we are, The Jolly Bloaters, next show in a few minutes.

**George:** We'll be there, missus, how about you?

**Lionel:** Are you going to sing some new songs this time, mister?

**Arthur:** No, let's have them ones you done this morning.

**Walter:** I like that dance when they fall over.

**Ada:** That's called Fumbling, Walter, like when they throw lots of oranges up in the air at the same time.

*A group of holiday-makers have begun to form a queue for seats, whilst the PIERROTS set up for the show.*

**Don:** I'll take the gate, George, you do the programmes.

**George:** As you like, Don. Two here already. *(To LAURA)* Just you and your son, lady, that's four-pence please. Take the money to my friend over there, sonny, then your mother can keep you the best seats.

**Hitchcock:** Oh, but this is not...*(The crowd starts to pour in and sit down).*

**Laura:** Go on, it's simpler to give them the money...but I don't even know your name.

**Hitchcock:** My name is Hitchcock, Jonathan Hitchcock. It's very kind of you but I don't think I ought to stay. I ought to be going back to face the others, really.

**Laura:** Why, what has happened? Have you done something wrong? What did you think Browne ffolkes might tell his mother?

**Hitchcock:** It's not really what I've done, though I shall be in terrible trouble from the Head Man; it's more who I am. You see the others have discovered - something about my family.

**Laura:** Not quite in the Browne ffolkes' class, is that it?

**Hitchcock:** Yes, and he was the one who discovered it.

**Laura:** Now I understand - probably better than you do.

**Dick:** Here we are, ladies and gents, The Jolly Bloaters, about to perform for you again.

**Reg:** Why are they called Bloaters, Elsie?

**Elsie:** *(Crying)* I don't know, Reg.

**Reg:** Walter...

**Walter:** It's no use asking me, Reg.

**Ada:** They're called Bloaters 'cos of them hats they wear.

**Hitchcock:** You see, I am really rather worried; I am sure they will never talk to me again.

**Laura:** You mustn't think that.

**Hitchcock:** Oh, but I do. They can be very beastly, you know, and the Head Man is the same. I expect I shall have to leave.

**Laura:** Perhaps you could be happier at another school?

**Hitchcock:** But my mother would be so upset - my people are out in India, you see, my father's a Colonial Officer, so HE'S all right. I'm sorry, I shouldn't be saying all this; it's not your problem.

**Laura:** Not quite, perhaps, but it's remarkably close; I don't know where I belong either.

*MUSIC [15] - YOU CAN DO A LOT OF THINGS AT THE SEASIDE*

*The music begins and the PIERROTS dance on, singing their opening number.*

**All Pierrots:** *You can do a lot of things at the seaside  
That you can't do in town.  
Fancy seeing mother with her legs all bare  
Paddling in the fountains in Trafalgar Square,  
Bobbing up and down in the water,  
'TWould make the p'liceman frown.  
You can do a lot of things at the seaside  
That you can't do in town.*

**Solo lines:** *Have you ever noticed when you're by the sea  
The things that you can do there with impunity?  
If you did the same things when you're up in town  
Moral Mrs. Grundy on her face would wear a frown.  
Father, mother, all the family,  
Travel down to have a little paddle in the sea.  
Mother takes her stockings off upon the sandy shore  
And shows a lot of linen that she'd never shown before.*

**Chorus:** *You can do a lot of things at the seaside  
That you can't do in town.  
Fancy couples sitting in the Strand all day  
Cuddle-ing and kissing in the seaside way!  
Percy tickle-ickling Polly  
Her hair all falling down.  
You can do a lot of things at the seaside  
That you can't do in town.*

**DANCE SEQUENCE**

**Billy:** Look who's in the front row, Stan.

**Stan:** What's she here for?

**Billy:** Must be to upset us.

**Stan:** What, Laura? Surely not.

**Solo lines:** *(Quietly) Bashful little maidens, modest as can be  
Like to have a nice splash when they're by the sea  
In a bathing dress all pretty frills and bows,  
You see more for nothing than you see in penny shows  
They'll mix-bathe 'mongst all the fellows there,  
Lots of people looking on but still they never care.  
They'll splash each other for a lark and splash each other too.  
It's most surprising by the sea what modest maidens do.*

*(The COCKNEYS speak above the song)*

**Lionel:** Look, there's one of them posh kids.

**Ada:** He's with that fancy lady.

**Herbert:** I'll get a bit closer.

**Harriet:** Herbert, you stay here. Look Arthur, it's our friend, Hitch.

**Arthur:** So it is.

**Reg:** Let's keep an eye on him.

**Chorus:**           *You can do a lot of things at the seaside  
That you can't do in town.  
Fancy seeing mother with her legs all bare  
Paddling in the fountains in Trafalgar Square,  
Bobbing up and down in the water,  
'Twould make the p'liceman frown.  
You can do a lot of things at the seaside  
That you can't do in town.*

*C H appears on the opposite side with some boys; he spots HITCHCOCK but cannot get to him. HITCHCOCK sees him.*

**Hitchcock:** *(To LAURA)* I'm very sorry; I've got to go; thank you very much; goodbye.

*He crawls across and escapes through the COCKNEYS.*

**Herbert:** He must have got his hands on something. *(He chases HITCHCOCK).*

**Harriet:** Come on, Arthur, Herbert's chasing after the snob kid.

*They set off and the COCKNEYS join in. C H and the prep school boys come behind and LAURA, worried by HITCHCOCK's action, moves too. The chase builds into chaos, through the auditorium, disturbing the show, so that the crowd move, re-setting the scene, leading to SCENE 4 - Britannia Pier.*

**END OF SCENE 3**

**SCENE 4 - Britannia Pier.**

*A few people are strolling as HITCHCOCK runs on, looking back; he tries to hide.  
MR. and MRS. BLISS enter.*

**Bliss:** *(Looking at his watch)* We are still in very good time, my dear.

**Mrs. Bliss:** Good; just so long as we are not late.

**Bliss:** Have no fear, my dear.

*The COCKNEY kids push past them.*

**Mrs. Bliss:** What dreadful children.

**Bliss:** Up to no good, I'll be bound.

*They stop and turn back and are met by the prep school boys, also running.*

**Bliss:** They look like some of the Snettisham boys. Where are THEY going?

*From behind them are shouts from the COCKNEYS: 'There he is', 'Snob', 'After him', etc. HITCHCOCK emerges, runs, climbs on to the rail and holds on to*

*a post.*

**Arthur:** What are you doing up there, toffee-nose?

**Walter:** Must be getting ready for a NOSE-DIVE. *(They laugh).*

**Lionel:** Click, click, he's a monkey on a stick.

**Reg:** What's he doing up there, Elsie?

**Elsie:** *(Crying)* I don't know, Reg.

**Bolingbroke:** Oh, I say, Hitchcock's entertaining the charity kids.

**B ff:** Well, he knows he's for the high jump so he's getting in some practice.

**Barraclough:** I expect he's got an uncle who's one of those stunt men.

**Hitchcock:** Shut up, you two. I HATE you.

**B ff:** Who do you think he is addressing, Barra?

**Barraclough:** I really don't know; probably his equals - these charity kids.

**Reg:** *(Turning on them)* What did you say?

**B ff:** We weren't talking to you, actually.

**Ada:** *(Sarcastically)* Oh, I say.

*The two groups face each other aggressively; C H rushes up, followed by LAURA.*

**C H:** What are you boys doing? Kindly remember who you are. Hitchcock, come down from there AT ONCE.

**Laura:** Jonathan, what are you trying to do? Come down, I'll buy you a lemonade; you can still talk to me.

**C H:** Madam, this boy is under my authority and I will allow no such thing.

**Laura:** But, Mr. Cameron Hillman, he has been hurt and he needs our understanding.

**C H:** What he needs, Madam, is a severe thrashing and that is precisely what he is going to receive. So, I suspect, will his friends, Browne ffolkes and Barraclough.

**B ff:** Oh, sir, we're no friends of HITCHCOCK, sir.

**Barraclough:** We do try to do what you say, sir, about avoiding plebs.

**C H:** I am agreeably surprised that you know the word, Barraclough.

**Barraclough:** Oh yes, sir; it means the lower classes.

**Harriet:** Here, you, lay off us, will you?

**B ff:** Oh shut up. You're only here today because my mother paid for you.

**Herbert:** She may have bought our train tickets but she didn't buy us with them.

*PROSSER and his party appear at the entrance to the pier.*

**Tomline:** There he is, sir, standing on those railings; it looks as if he's entertaining the crowd.

**Prosser:** *(Rushing forward)* Hitchcock, come down at once; that's a very dangerous position.

**Laura:** Oh, Mr. Prosser, YOU will take Jonathan back, won't you.

**Prosser:** *(Ignoring her)* Hitchcock, do you hear me? COME DOWN.

**Laura:** Please, Mr. Prosser, I implore you.

**Prosser:** I beg your pardon. I don't think I understand you.

**Laura:** Jonathan, Jonathan Hitchcock; you will allow him to return to your school, won't you?

**Prosser:** It is hardly a question of allowing, Lady Hochpied; at the moment it is he who is refusing.

**Hoskyns:** Can't we just pull him down, sir?

**Harvey-Butler:** Yes, sir, do let's. He is wasting our time, sir.

**Laura:** So will he be able to return to your school, will he, Mr. Prosser?

**Prosser:** That, my lady, is not a matter for either of us; it will be the Headmaster's decision. I suggest you address your plea to him.

*MR. and MRS. BLISS approach, as LAURA turns towards HITCHCOCK.*

**Bliss:** I do believe you are right, my dear, it IS Jonathan.

**Mrs. Bliss:** And there is that woman we saw just now on the Marine Parade. What has she got to do with him?

**Barraclough:** I say, Browne ffolkes, here come aunty and uncle. *(They laugh. LADY B ff arrives and approaches C H).*

**Lady B ff:** Ah, there you are, Cameron Hillman; I have been standing outside the theatre, awaiting you, for fully twenty minutes.

**C H:** Lady Browne ffolkes, my apologies, my sincere apologies, I.er..I.

**Lady B ff:** *(Seeing HITCHCOCK and LAURA)* It would seem you now prefer your boys to join the ranks of the public entertainers. Are we to endure yet another display of terpsichore?

**Laura:** *(Seeing BILLY and STAN approaching)* Billy, Stan, please help us to get Jonathan down from that railing.

**Stan:** Is that the boy who was with you in the Ring just now? *(She nods).*

**Billy:** Come on, Stan. *(They run towards HITCHCOCK who panics and falls off).*

**Mrs. Bliss:** *(As he begins to overbalance)* Jonathan, are you all right? Jonathan!

*The crowd moves forward; PROSSER and LAURA look over the rail.*

**C H:** Where is he, Prosser? Is he all right?

**Prosser:** I fear not, Headmaster. He's fallen on some rocks; I think he may be badly hurt.

**Billy:** Come on, Stan. *(He climbs over the rail and descends).*

**Hutchinson:** This is your fault, Browne ffolkes.

**B ff:** Barraclough kept being rotten to him.

**Barraclough:** Well, you all enjoyed it.

**Tomline:** We weren't the ones who chased him here.

**Bolingbroke:** *(Looking at the COCKNEYS)* No, that's right.

**Harry:** You kept calling us names.

**Ada:** And throwing things at us.

**Walter:** And making all that fuss about a book.

**Elsie:** (*Crying*) I want to go home.

**Lionel:** I wish we hadn't come.

**B ff:** I wish my mater...

**Lady B ff:** (*Moving forward*) Yes, Charles?

**B ff:** I wish...I wish my mater...

**Lumley-Dodd:** I think we should all be very decent to Hitchcock for the rest of the day.

**Hutchinson:** Yes, I agree.

**Fanning:** I'll sit next to him at the theatre.

xx

IF THE FOLLOWING ENDING IS NOT ACCEPTABLE,  
AN ALTERNATIVE FOLLOWS

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**Billy:** (*Emerging*) I am afraid not, lad. There's nothing more you can do for him now.

**C H:** What?

**Billy:** He hit his head on that rock. Just as I reached him, he died.

*There is stunned silence; LAURA sings unaccompanied and slowly:*

*A day at the seaside, The great British outing,  
The joy and the shouting,  
The pierrots, the puppets and the band.*

**All:**  
*A day at the seaside,  
The theatre, the circus,  
The gentry, the workers,  
All build their castles out of sand.*

*During the song BILLY moves over and puts his arm round LAURA.*

*Final tableau.*

**CURTAIN**

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**ALTERNATIVE ENDING**

**Barraclough:** The idea was to be decent to him, Fanning.

**Bolingbroke:** Shut up, Barraclough; all you ever do is sneer at chaps.

**Tomline:** Yes, Barra, stop being beastly.

**C H:** Stop arguing you boys. This is no time for squabbling.

**Fanning:** Did Hitchcock fall because of us, sir?

**C H:** I fear we may shoulder some of the blame for the accident, Fanning.

*STAN and BILLY emerge with a dazed HITCHCOCK.*

**Laura:** Stan, how is he?

**Stan:** Not too bad, I think. Who is in charge of him? *(To LADY B ff)* Are you his mother, ma'am?

**Lady B ff:** No, not I.

**C H:** Hitchcock, are you hurt, my boy? *(HITCHCOCK recoils; C H turns to BILLY and STAN)* Sirs, I am most grateful to you.

**Mrs. Bliss:** *(Running forward)* Jonathan, Jonathan! *(He recoils again).*

**Mr. Bliss:** No, no, Jonathan, no need for that now.

**Prosser:** Indeed not, Hitchcock; but I think we have all had a salutary lesson today, Headmaster.

**Billy:** And it was a close thing. If he had hit his head on that rock...

**Mr. Bliss:** I think my wife and I will take Jonathan for the present, Headmaster. You can then inform us of your intentions for him.

**C H:** Yes, yes, Mr. Bliss, certainly.

**Hitchcock:** Oh, but can't I go to the theatre? Please.

*They all look at each other.*

**Mr. Bliss:** Perhaps we ARE all heading in the same direction after all then, Headmaster? *(He sings unaccompanied and slowly. During the song he gets quicker until he is up to speed by the time everybody and the band joins in).*

*A day at the seaside, The great British outing,  
The joy and the shouting,  
The pierrots, the puppets and the band.*

**All:** *A day at the seaside,*  
**& Band** *The theatre, the circus,  
The gentry, the workers,  
All build their castles out of sand.*

*During the song BILLY and PROSSER move over and stand either side of LAURA.  
Final tableau.*

**CURTAIN**