

SEPIA SERENADE

A Musical Comedy

© 2006

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SEPIA SERENADE

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SEPIA SERENADE

CHARACTERS

Producer

Grandpa

Richard (Grandson).....

Sarah (Granddaughter)

Lighting Technician.....

Stage Manager

Producer's Girlfriend

Dad

Mam

Rhonwhen (daughter).....

Mrs Jenkins (midwife)

Schoolchildren

Mr Reece (teacher).....

Sisters

Alice

Chapel Preacher

Jones

Army Recruiting Sgt

Fight Compere

Billy Bosch

Brian Bulldog

Fight Expert

1st Soldier

2nd Soldier

1st Woman

2nd Woman

3rd Woman

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ACT 1

(The audience is in, the curtains are closed, the houselights dim and all is quiet. The first person we see is an old man who comes shuffling down the aisle clutching an old wooden slide projector. He looks around him and then sees three seats at the front (which have been reserved). He waves to his two grandchildren and they come down the aisle to join him. He speaks to the children, telling them to stay there and we see him go up some steps onto the stage to speak to the producer of the show behind the curtains. We then hear the sound of the producer's voice raised in anger arguing with him behind the curtains, unaware that the audience is listening...)

Producer No! No! No! No! NO! For the last and final time we do not want you or your magic lantern. Do you understand? The show goes on in two minutes – there's an audience out there waiting – waiting to see a show – a modern show – they don't want to see you and your dusty old lantern slides – they're like you old man, past it – so why don't you just relax, go and find yourself a seat and enjoy a modern show! Go on!

Grandpa But it wouldn't take long, I've got everything with me.

Producer No! I repeat "No!" How many more times do I have to tell you?

Grandpa It doesn't take a minute to set up.

Producer Go on with you, the seats for the audience are that way ...

Grandpa (Comes from behind the curtains looking very sorry for himself. He clutches his sacred magic lantern and goes to sit next to his two grandchildren at the front (lit up by a follow spot). (Big "aah" from the audience)

(To grandchildren) He wasn't interested. He says he doesn't want to use my lantern ... "old-fashioned" he called it ... (To producer) I used to be the caretaker here once you know ... there's lots of things I could have helped you with.

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Producer I don't care, I don't care what you used to do! You and your slides are past it so just sit down and let us get on with our show.

(Grandpa reluctantly sits down)

Grandpa (To Grandchildren in next seats) Just keep your eye on this for me, will you, I won't be long

Sarah Where are you going?

Grandpa Never you mind.

(We see Grandpa hobble off to one side, go through a door and after a few moments he reappears with a sly grin on his face)

Richard Where've you been?

Grandpa Ask no questions and get no lies

Producer (Reappears at the curtains) Right then, now we've got the old fellow out of the way, is everybody ready? We've got a show to run ... Are the lights ready Les?

Les Yeah!

Producer Curtains ready, Doug?

Doug Yeah!

Producer OK, lets hit it!

(The pianist's keyboard light begins to flash with a fault as he/she plays the intro for "Everything's Coming Up Roses.")

The cast appears from the rear entrance of the hall and come down the central aisle singing)

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All Things look swell, things look great,
Gonna have the whole world on a plate,
Starting here, starting now,
Honey everything's coming up roses

(They throw paper flowers to audience)

Clear the decks clear the tracks,
We've got nothing to do but relax,
Blow a kiss, take a bow,
Honey everything's coming up roses ...
Now you're winning, stand the world on it's ear,
Set it spinning – that'll be just the beginning,
Curtain up, light the lights,

(The curtains open and the stage lights come on but there seems to be a fault as these too are flashing spasmodically)

We've got nothing to hit but the heights,
We'll be swell, we'll be great,
I can tell, just you wait,
That lucky star I talked about is due,
Honey everything's coming up roses for me and for you!

(At the end of the song the flashing lights all blow out together with bangs, sparks and resulting chaos)

Producer Cut! Cut! Curtains Doug! Emergency lights, Les!

(The emergency lights come on in the hall and we hear people anxiously talking behind the scenes. The producer sticks his head through the curtains, talking to the audience, at the same time liaising with the lighting manager)

Producer Er ... ladies and gentlemen ...I'm very sorry but there appears to be a slight technical hitch (A couple of the lights come on, lighting only the sides of the stage)

(To the lights person) Is that all you've got?

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(To audience) We're doing our best to rectify the situation but while we're waiting we'll give you some music (The pianist doesn't take the hint so he shouts) WE'LL GIVE YOU SOME MUSIC! (Which wakes up the pianist who starts playing "Abide With Me")

(Grandpa begins grumbling and heckling from the front)

Grandpa (Singing) Why are we waiting? Why are we waiting ?

Producer Do you mind!

Grandpa I told you electricity was no good – "Never catch on," I said and I was right wasn't I?

Producer Will you please be quiet!

Grandpa What are you going to do now then, clever clogs?

Producer I'll tell you what I'm going to do, I'm going to get rid of you for a start, I'm going to have you thrown out.

Grandpa There's no need, Willy Bach, I'm going anyway – I'm not stopping here to watch you bobbing in and out like a cuckoo.

Producer Good!

Grandpa (To grandchildren) Come on you two

Richard But Grandpa?

Grandpa Come on, there's nothing going off here tonight (Turns to the producer) Do we get our money back?

Producer If it gets rid of you, yes. Give them their money, Diane.

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(The old man begins walking down the aisle clutching his lantern with the grandchildren following. The producer's girlfriend comes to whisper something to him, which makes him think twice and shout for the old man to stop)

Producer Hang on, Granddad!

Grandpa What do you mean, "hang on"? You've just told me to go.

Producer I know but we all say things on the spur of the moment, things we don't really mean.

Grandpa You sounded as if you meant it to me.

Producer I didn't, honestly I didn't.

Grandpa So you don't want me to leave?

Producer No

Grandpa But there's nothing to stay for, is there?

Producer That's where you come in.

Grandpa Me?

Producer Yes, you and your magic lantern

Grandpa What about it?

Producer Well it doesn't use electricity you said ...

Grandpa That's right

Producer What does it use then?

Grandpa Gas.

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Producer Gas?

Grandpa And limelight of course, you have to burn the lime

Producer Of course ... You wouldn't er ...?

Grandpa Wouldn't what?

Producer You couldn't ... You couldn't see your way clear to letting us borrow it for the evening?

Grandpa Borrow it? Borrow my lantern?

Producer Yes. We'd take great care of it, we wouldn't harm it. All we want, you see, is some more light.

Grandpa (Hurt) That's all you want is it, "more light"? Well you'd better go and buy yourself a torch from the hardware (begins to leave)

Producer No, you don't understand, what I meant was ... What did I mean? (His girlfriend whispers to him) What I meant was we want you to put your slide show on for us, your magic lantern slides, if you wouldn't mind that is?

Grandpa You do?

Producer (Being nudged by girlfriend) We do.

Grandpa All of them?

Producer (After looking at girlfriend) Yes, all of them. If you give us a list of your slides, then we'll try and improvise some scenes to go with them.

Grandpa Well that's different. By a strange coincidence I happen to have all my equipment with me. OK then, you're on. (To grandchildren) Give me a hand, you two.

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(Grandpa grabs a table and begins to assemble his lantern halfway down the hall. There are two gas bottles with pipes leading to the lantern. A screen is erected at the side of the stage for the slide show)

Producer Ladies and gentlemen, there will be a slight change to tonight's programme. You will now see a revised version of what you were going to see, with the help of this gentleman and his wonderful magic lantern.

(Grandpa comes to the front, gives the producer a piece of paper with the list of his slides and then gives his own speech)

Producer Is this the list of the slides? Let me see ... Yes, I think we can do something with this ... Just give us a minute or two

(Goes to talk to cast and re-appears shortly)

Grandpa I would like to say from the very beginning that I have nothing to do with what they are going to do up there. What you see on the slides is my responsibility ... the rest is his.

Sarah (Helping to set it up) How does it work, granddad?

Grandpa Well, this is what they had before they had any electricity.

Richard Did you say it burns gas?

Grandpa That's right, there are two pipes that send in hydrogen and oxygen to make a flame and there's a stick of lime that burns white hot. When it glows, the light comes out there (points to lens).

Sarah Is that why they call it limelight?

Grandpa That's it.

Richard It's amazing.

Sarah Amazing.

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- Producer (Emerging) It will be if it works. We're ready if you are, Pop.
- Grandpa Ready? I've been ready for half an hour.
- Producer It's all yours then.
- Grandpa (Clearing his throat) This magic lantern's got a lot of history behind it. It was bought by my father on the day that I was born and it's been with me ever since.
- Richard What was your dad like, Granddad?
- Grandpa I'll show you if you like. (He puts on a slide, which is either shown on the curtains or on a screen at the side) That's him – a giant of a man he was, a man amongst men.
- Sarah Have you got any pictures of your mother?
- Grandpa Of course I have ... (Puts on another slide) There she is.
- Sarah She's very pretty
- Grandpa Dad used to think so. (Puts on another slide) And this is a slide of our house on the very day that I was born.
- Richard When were you born granddad?
- Grandpa I was born at a very early age in a little place in Wales that I'm sure you've heard of, the one with the unpronounceable name.
- Sarah Oh you mean Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysilio gogogoch (she says it correctly)
- Richard Yes, Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysilio gogogoch. We've done it at school.

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Grandpa Actually it was Cardiff! ... I've often heard stories about the day I was born ... My dad had just come off the afternoon shift ...

(The curtains open to reveal a woman with her hands supporting her back, looking very pregnant. A door opens and in comes father in his pit clothes from the pit)

Dad Are you all right then Gwyneth?

Mam I don't know Gareth, I keep getting these pains.

Dad Pains. Woman? You mean you've started?

Mam I think so

Dad Well don't just do something, stand there!

Rhonwhen Should I go for Mrs Jenkins, Ma?

Mam I think you'd better, Rhonwhen

(The girl dashes off)

Dad You'd better go and lie down (He helps her off)

Mrs Jenkins (Coming in) Where is she?

Dad She's in there. (She looks in the side room) Should I send for the doctor?

Mrs Jenkins It's too late for doctors. Get me some hot water and I'll need a candle.

Dad A candle?

Mrs Jenkins Yes, it's pitch black in there. I can't see a hand in front of my face.

(She goes off and he takes in a kettle and a lighted candle)

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(He comes out and paces up and down then we hear a baby's cry and Mrs Jenkins comes out holding a bundle)

Mrs Jenkins Congratulations Gareth, you've got a boy!

Dad A boy? A boy? Well what do you know, I'm the father of a boy! This deserves a drink (goes for a glass)

(Mrs Jenkins goes back into the room and after a few moments comes out again)

Mrs Jenkins Do you think I could have another candle?

Dad Another one?

Mrs Jenkins Yes, please.

(He gives her a second lighted candle and she goes back in)

(There is the sound of another baby crying and she comes out carrying another bundle)

Mrs Jenkins You'll never believe it, Gareth, but you've got twins! A little girl!

Dad Twins? Twins did you say? (he gulps down his drink)

Mrs Jenkins That's right – I'll need another candle

Dad Another one? (Goes and comes back with another lighted candle, gives it to her and has another drink while he waits) Twins? Would you believe it? Etc

(There is the sound of a third baby crying)

Mrs Jenkins I think you'd better sit down, Gareth, it's not twins after all- it's triplets – another girl!

Dad Another one?

Mrs Jenkins That's right. I'll need another candle

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Dad You're not having any more, I won't let you, do you hear?

Mrs Jenkins What do you mean, you wont let me?

Dad I mean what I say, no more candles

Mrs Jenkins But I need more

Dad Well you're not having them – can't you see, woman – it's the damned light that's attracting them!

(The cast dressed as neighbours come on to look at the new baby and sing "Baby Face")

Cast Baby face, you got the prettiest little baby face
 There isn't another one to take your place
 Baby face
 You got my heart a jumpin'
 You sure have started something

Baby face, I'm up in heaven when I'm in your firm embrace
I didn't need a shove,
I just fell in love
With your pretty little baby face

You got my heart a-jumpin'
You sure have started something

Baby face, I'm up in heaven when I'm in your firm embrace
I didn't need a shove,
I just fell in love
With your pretty little baby face,
Pretty little baby face,
Pretty little baby face.

(Curtains)

Grandpa And that's how I came into the world

Sarah Did you have many brothers and sisters, Grandad?

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Grandpa Yes. There were fourteen of us in all

Richard Fourteen? That's a lot.

Grandpa I know, but they couldn't stop at thirteen, dad was superstitious ... This is a slide of me on the day that I was christened (Shows slide) ... and this is me on my first day at school (shows another) ... I didn't want to go to school so Mam bribed me with a tennis racket. She said if I went to school I could play tennis there all day ... I never even hit a ball ... I can't remember much about my early days except that we used to give everybody nicknames ... we had Morgan the Organ, Jones the Bones and we had this teacher that we were all afraid of called Reece the Beast ...

(The curtains re-open on a small schoolroom scene with the children naughtily drawing on the blackboard.)

Grandpa You could tell when he was coming because the whole room used to shake (there are sounds of giant footsteps and the children run to their seats)

Davis He's coming!

(The footsteps stop and the door swings open. We see the mildest little man in specs come in)

Reece Good morning children

All Morning Mr Reece.

Reece Are we all well then?

All Yes, thank you.

Reece We will begin with the register. When I call your name I want you to answer ... Davis?

Davis Sir!

Reece Drummond

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Drummond Sir!

Reece Evans?

Evans Sir!

Reece Jones?

(A row of kids all answer one after the other)

Jones Sir! Sir! Sir! Sir! Sir!

Reece Williams?

(No reply)

Now then, where is Williams?

Davis He's late sir

Reece Late?

Evans He's doing a job for his Dad

Reece A job?

(At this moment his Dad appears at the door, black-faced from the pit. He walks with a limp and has a stick, carrying books in his other hand.)

Reece Mr Williams, I was just asking the class if they'd seen your boy

Dad He wont be in today

Reece Why not, for heavens sake?

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- Dad Because I hurt my foot at work
- Reece He wont be in because you hurt your foot? What do you mean?
- Dad I mean that he's doing my digging so I've come to do his learning!
- Reece You've come to school in his place? But that's impossible
- Dad Maybe so but I'm here. Now where do I sit?
- Reece Well I suppose you'd better sit in your boy's place (he points)
- (He does so elbowing a smaller pupil out of the way, looking huge next to them)
- This is most unusual, most unusual ... Our first lesson today will be arithmetic. We'll begin with the tables ... Wilson can you do the two times.
- Wilson One's two is two, two twos are four, three twos are six ...
- Reece That's enough – Humphries, the three times
- Humphries One's three is three, two threes are six, three threes are nine, etc
- Reece Good – Parker, the four times
- Parker One's four is four, two fours are eight, three fours are twelve, etc
- Reece Very good – now then Mr Williams, can you do the nine times for us?
- Dad Er ... One's nine is nine, da da da-da, da da da-da (sing-song copying of earlier children)
- Reece Just a minute, what's all this “da da da-da”?
- Dad Well I know the tune, but I 've forgotten the words!

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(Laughter from class)

Reece Right then, we'll do some adding up

(He begins to write sums on the board and the children sing as he does so)

All (Inchworm song)
"Two and two are four,
Four and four are eight,
Eight and eight are sixteen,
Sixteen and sixteen are thirty-two,
Inchworm, inchworm,
Measuring the marigold,
You and your arithmetic,
You'll probably go far,
Inchworm, inchworm,
Measuring the marigold,
Seems to me you'd stop and see
How beautiful they are, etc" ...

(The curtains close at the end of the song)

Richard When you were young, what kinds of toys did you have, granddad?

Grandpa Toys? We didn't have toys like you have today. We didn't have the money that you have so we used to go to the butcher's, get a sheep's stomach and blow it up for a football

Sara Yeuk! It sounds awful

Richard Wasn't there ever anything you really wanted?

Grandpa There was one thing ... I'll show you (Shows slide of a dog). A dog ... I always wanted my very own dog. I had thirteen sisters and after a while you get fed up playing with prams and dolls houses. I wanted a dog that I could run with, have fun with and

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take for a walk ... I didn't really care what breed it was, as long as it was kind to me and I was kind to it. I tried all ways to get Dad to buy me one but he wouldn't listen

(Curtains open and cast sings "Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow" by Joseph Tabrar)

I love my little cat, I do
With soft black silky hair
It comes with me each day to school
And sits upon the chair
When teacher says "Why do you bring
That little pet of your's?"
I tell her that I bring my cat
Along with me because

Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow! bow wow!
Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow! bow wow!
I've got a little cat
And I'm very fond of that
But I'd rather have a bow wow wow!

We used to have two tiny dogs
Such pretty little dears
But daddy sold 'em 'cause they used
To bite each other's ears
I cried all day, at eight each night
Papa sent me to bed
When Ma came home and wiped my eyes
I cried again and said

Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow! bow wow!
Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow! bow wow!
I've got a little cat
And I'm very fond of that
But I'd rather have a bow wow wow

I'll be so glad when I get old

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To do just as I "likes"
I'll keep a parrot and at least
A half a dozen tykes
And when I've got a tiny pet
I'll kiss the little thing
Then put it in its little cot
And on to it I'll sing

Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow! bow wow!
Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow! bow wow!
I've got a little cat
And I'm very fond of that
But I'd rather have a bow-wow-wow

(Curtains close)

Grandpa Dad was a very practical person so I pointed out how useful a dog would be to guard the house. "We've got nothing worth pinching," he said. "'It'd be company for you," I said. "Company?" he said, "With fourteen children I need company?"
I really wanted one of those big Saint Bernard dogs so I played my master stroke and showed him some old pictures we had of the "Dogs and Monks of Saint Bernard" ...
"When you're up in the mountains," I said, "And you're walking in the snow you can easily get frozen to death ... they have avalanches and all kinds of things ... then they have to go out looking for people that are buried ... the dog finds the little children, carries them on its back and takes them back to the monastery ... they can even smell when somebody's under the snow so the monks can find them and save them ... so you see they do have their uses" ... I think it must have got him thinking

(Curtains open to find Dad sitting in a tin bath having a wash in front of the fire. He appears alone and sings to himself as he washes himself. There's a knock at the door. He reaches for a towel and goes to the door. Next to the door there's a chair, which allows the audience to see his top half and his legs but not the part covered by the towel. As he opens the door the towel accidentally drops, a woman is heard to scream and he picks up his towel and goes back into the bath. The wife appears wearing dad's boots)

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Mam Was that somebody at the door Gareth?

Dad Yes, it was a lady

Mam A lady? What did she want then?

Dad I don't know, she didn't say.

Mam Strange ... Gareth, I don't want you to think I'm complaining ... you know I don't mind breaking your boots in for you – but I really don't think I can get along with these teeth!

Dad (Washing himself) Did you hear about Dai Davis?

Mam Him who works at the brewery?

Dad Yes, they say he drowned last week in a vat of beer

Mam No?

Dad It's right

Mam Did he suffer much?

Dad I don't think so, he got out three times to go to the toilet!

Mam You're having me on.

Dad I'm not, I'm not. He was always in trouble that man. He used to swear something rotten, you know. I remember when I was playing rugby with him against Pontyprid ... it was his job to take the kicks and he kept missing sitters ... Every time he missed he used to say, "Bloody 'ell!" – just like that ... the preacher was refereeing and told him not to swear so much ... Dai had another kick and did the same again ... "Bloody 'ell!" he said ... eventually the preacher came over to him and said, "If you want the Lord's help you should say, "Oh dear, what a pity" ... and you know, he had this kick in the final minute, we needed it to win the match ... he kicked the ball and it was going miles

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wide again ... Dai was just going to swear when he remembered the preacher's words ... "Oh dear," he said, "What a pity" and the ball seemed to stop in mid-air with a judder and swerved like a boomerang straight between the posts ... the preacher couldn't believe it

Mam What did he say?

Dad He just kept shaking his head and muttering, "Bloody 'ell! Bloody 'ell!" (pauses for laughs) ... Will you do my back for me?

(At this moment the kids come running in)

David Dad, Dad, Mr Edwards says that you've bought a dog! Is it true dad? Is it?

Dad Yes, its true right enough. He's tied up in the back yard. Go and get him if you want

(They rush out)

Mam You didn't tell me Gareth

Dad I wanted to surprise you

Mam I thought you didn't like dogs, that you couldn't see a use for them.

Dad That was till David put me right

Mam You haven't bought a Saint Bernard, for goodness sake?

Dad Don't be daft, woman, something much more useful than that ...

(The children appear with a greyhound and begin stroking it as the curtains close behind them)

Grandpa I used to call the dog "Flash" but it was the slowest greyhound that I'd ever seen ... never won a race in its life... I couldn't understand it till one day I saw dad before the race giving it three bowls of porridge. "It'll never win on that, I said. "I know," he

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said, “But just wait till next week.” It was the big race the next week and Flash was one hundred to one outsider in the betting and you know I’d never seen it run so fast, He hadn’t fed it for days you see and dad was there waiting at the finishing line with a big lamb chop up his sleeve ... Flash won by a mile ... made him a fortune ... “training” I think they call it!

Sarah I don’t like the way they make them chase that stuffed rabbit round the track and never let them catch it

Grandpa Ah but Flash used to catch real ones

Richard Real rabbits?

Grandpa Of course, in those days we were so poor that dad had to do a bit of poaching for the Sunday dinner ...

(The cast then does a routine to “**Run Rabbit**,” with one of the cast acting as the rabbit)

On the farm, Ev'ry Friday
On the farm, It's rabbit pie day
So ev'ry Friday, that ever comes along
I get up early and sing this little song ...

Refrain 1

Run, rabbit, run, rabbit, run, run, run
Run, rabbit, run, rabbit, run, run, run
Bang, bang, bang, bang! goes the farmer's gun
Run, rabbit, run, rabbit, run, run, run

Refrain 2

Run, rabbit, run, rabbit, run, run, run
Don't give the farmer his fun, fun, fun
He'll get by without his rabbit pie
So run, rabbit, run, rabbit, run, run, run

Verse 2

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On the farm, No poor rabbit
Comes to harm, Because I grab it
They jump and frolic, Whenever I go by
They know I help 'em, To dodge the rabbit pie!

(Then sing refrain twice more)

(They go off with the dog)

Richard If there was no electricity there'd be no television. What did you do without
Coronation Street?

Gran I sometimes wonder, Richard

Sarah You must have done something to pass the time?

Gran We did. Something that's unheard of today

Richard What was that?

Grandpa We used to talk to each other!

Sarah We do that today on our phones.

Grandpa I know, but its not the same, not the same at all. When it was light we went out to play
and when it was dark we went to bed – I can't ever remember being unhappy.

Richard Which did you like best, Granddad, the summer time or the winter?

Grandpa The summer, definitely.

Sarah Why the summer? I like the winter best

Grandpa Yes but we used to have these marvelous picnics – I've got a photograph here
somewhere (he puts on a slide of a picnic). It was the hottest summer we'd had for
years. Dad came home one day from the pit and said he wasn't going to bed, he was

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going to take us all on a picnic instead, so off we all went in our best clothes out of the town and into the hills looking for a picnic spot.

(The curtains open on the children and parents walking through the country)

Daughter 1 Can we have it here, dad?

Daughter 2 This is a nice place

Daughter 3 Please dad

Daughter 4 Can we dad? I can't walk any further

Dad Lets have a look at it ...(inspects the area) Well ... its got the view ...its got the sun ... and its got the shade as well – yes I think this will do nicely.

All Hurray!

Mam I want one of you to help me set the things and the rest of you can disappear for five minutes

David I'll do it

Mam That's very good of you

Daughter 5 Can we go exploring?

Daughter 6 Can we?

Mam As long as you don't go too far, we'll be starting in five minutes exactly

Daughter 7 I'm going to be the leader of the explorers

Daughter 8 No you're not, I am

Daughter 7 Who says? I'm older than you are

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Daughter 8 (Threatening) I know, but I can fight better.

Daughter 7 (Reluctantly) All right then, you're the leader

Mam How's that for diplomacy?

Dad We'll have no talk of fighting on a nice day like this.

Daughter 8 Yes Dad

(The go off exploring)

Dad (To David) Don't you want to go with them?

David They're only girls

Dad They're your sisters, boy, there's many would be glad of them

David I wish I had a brother, one brother would be worth all of them

Dad Well you haven't, so you'll have to get used to it.

Mam Pass the other basket, Dad

(He does so)

Dad (Breathing in the fresh air) Look at that view David ... doesn't it make you feel glad to be alive? Glad to have eyes to see?

David It's all right.

Dad "All right"? All right, you say? Its more than that – it's beautiful, that is – beautiful ... God's country ... there's many have never seen a view like that ... look, through there, you can even see the sea

SEPIA SERENADE

David That's where I'm going one day.

Dad The sea? You want to be a sailor?

David No – abroad – I want to get away from her – to see foreign countries

Dad Foreign countries?

David Yes. (Slight pause) Have you ever been to London?

Dad You think London's abroad, boy?

David Well it's not Wales, is it?

Dad It's not ... it's not anything is London ... I've been there and I was glad to get back.

David When I've got enough money that's where I'm going. I'll just have to do a few years down the pit –

Dad The what? You'll do no such thing. The pit killed my dad and it might kill me – there'll be no pits for you – education – that's where your future lies.

David I only thought ...

Dad I'll hear no more of it, do you hear?

David Yes, dad

Dad How old are you, David?

David Don't you remember?

Dad I've got lots of birthdays to remember, you don't expect me to remember all of them?

David I'm fourteen.

SEPIA SERENADE

Dad Fourteen eh? I wish I was fourteen again. Have you got a girlfriend yet?

David I might have.

Dad And you might not.

David I'm not a little boy any more if that's what you think

Dad I wasn't thinking anything.

David And I know how babies are made.

Dad You do, do you? (To Mam) D'you hear that mother? He knows how babies are made.
(To David) How's that then?

David (Jokingly) There's a big bird that brings them – a stork they call it.

Dad A stork is it? (Confidentially) Well I'll tell you what, you keep an eye out for that stork and next time you see it heading for our house you give me a shout and I'll nip next door and borrow Emry's shotgun!

(Sisters re-appear)

Daughter 8 Come on, David, we're playing hunters – we're all in the jungle and there's a wild bear after us – we want you to be the bear – will you?

Others Will you? Please? Etc

David Oh all right (getting up)

(They then do a hide and seek routine to the song "Teddy Bears' Picnic." As they are doing it the curtains close behind them to set the scene for the next chapel scene).

If you go down to the woods today
You're sure of a big surprise

SEPIA SERENADE

If you go down to the woods today
You'd better go in disguise.

For ev'ry bear that ever there was
Will gather there for certain, because
Today's the day the Teddy Bears have their picnic.

Ev'ry Teddy Bear who's been good
is sure of a treat today.
There's lots of marvelous things to eat
And wonderful games to play

Beneath the trees where nobody sees
They'll hide and seek as long as they please
'Cause that's the way the Teddy Bears have their picnic

If you go down to the woods today
You'd better not go alone
It's lovely down in the woods today
But safer to stay at home.

For ev'ry bear that ever there was
Will gather there for certain, because
Today's the day the Teddy Bears have their picnic.

Picnic time for Teddy Bears
The little Teddy Bears are having a lovely time today
Watch them, catch them unawares
And see them picnic on their holiday.

See them gaily gad about
They love to play and shout;
They never have any cares;

At six o'clock their Mummies and Daddies,

SEPIA SERENADE

Will take them home to bed,
Because they're tired little Teddy Bears.

(At the end of the song David chases all the sisters off)

Sarah Is that where you met Grandma, Granddad, on a picnic?

Grandpa No. You didn't get a chance to talk to girls when your parents were there. The only time you could give a girl the eye was when you were out playing under the gas lamp or else on a Sunday morning.

Richard On a Sunday? Where was that?

Grandpa Where do you think? (showing slide of chapel) I'll give you a clue.

Sarah I know – church.

Grandpa In Wales? There's not many churches in Wales.

Sarah I meant chapel.

Grandpa That's more like it.

(The curtains open on a chapel scene. Everyone is sitting on old chairs with hymn books in their hands and the preacher stands frozen in the pulpit with a bible raised in his hand as though preaching hell fire and damnation ...)

Preacher ... And Mrs Morris at the Post Office is selling these for only two and six so I would advise you to get yours while she has some left ... (Pause as he checks his notes). For my sermon this week I would like to talk about the Ten Commandments and more especially about the one that says "Thou shalt not steal." I am prompted to use this as the subject of my sermon because of something that happened to me the other day. I was on my way down the yard to the outside privy to do something which I needn't bother you with, when I realised that my bicycle was not where I had left it ... I searched the yard up and down, high and low but I could not find it anywhere ... Now I know I am a somewhat forgetful man and I don't have the best of memories but I'm

SEPIA SERENADE

sure that it was there on Thursday before I went out visiting my parishioners, so I am only left with one conclusion ... somebody has been into that yard and stolen it! I don't like accusing people and I shall not name any names but I do have my suspicions ... the person who took it might even be sitting amongst us at this very moment ...if he is, then let me tell him that that I would greatly appreciate it if my bike was speedily returned to me, as it is invaluable to me in my work ... (checks his papers again) I will say no more about that matter but turn now to the weekly notices and announcements ... There is only one this week to say that the preacher for next week's service will be hung on the notice board outside ... and the sermon will be about another of the Ten Commandments – "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Having said this he immediately remembers something and puts his hand to his mouth) Oh my God!

Dad What's the matter ? You've gone all red.

Preacher I've just remembered where I left my bike!

(The piano starts playing an intro for a hymn but is then cleverly changed to "Ma he's making eyes at me." The "congregation" sings and David makes eyes at the girl next to him who is to be his future girlfriend, Alice)

Alice Ma, he's making eyes at me

All VERSE
Little Lilly was so silly and shy, and all the
fellows new, she wouldn't bill and coo,
every single night some smart fellow would try, to cuddle
up to her, but she would cry.

CHORUS
"Ma", he's making eyes at me, "Ma",
he's awful nice to me,
"Ma" he's almost breaking my heart,
I'm beside him, mercy let his conscience guide him.
"Ma", he wants to marry me,
be my honey bee,
every minute he gets bolder, now he's leaning on my shoulder,
"Ma", he's kissing me.

VERSE
Lilly was so good everybody could tell, you'd never
see her roam, she'd always stay at home,
all the neighbours knew little Lilly too well, for when the
boys would call, they'd hear her yell.

SEPIA SERENADE

CHORUS

"Ma", he's making eyes at me, "Ma",
he's awful nice to me,
"Ma" he's almost breaking my heart,
If you peek in, can't you see I'm goin' to weakin',
"Ma", he wants to marry me,
be my honey bee,
Ma I'm meeting with resistance, I shall holler for assistance,
"Ma", he's kissing me.

Dad (At the end of the song) Behave yourself David

Jones (Rushing in) Doomed! Doomed! We're all doomed!

Dad What's the matter, Jones?

Jones Franz Ferdinand has been assassinated and we're at war with Germany!

Dad What? On our own?

Jones No, you fool – the English are with us!

(Interval curtain)