

SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

This sample is an excerpt - an appetiser, if you will - from a full Samuel French title.

This sample is just for you to try out, and it can't be used for performance, downloaded, printed or distributed in any way.

Take it for a whirl and see if it tickles your fancy!

For more information about licensing this or other shows, or to browse thousands more plays and theatre books to buy please visit our website.

www.samuelfrench.co.uk

or, in the US www.samuelfrench.com

BLOOD BROTHERS

A Musical

by Willy Russell

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

samuelfrench.co.uk

Copyright © 1985 by Willy Russell
Copyright © 1983 Timefact Ltd t/a Willy Russell Music (lyrics)
All Rights Reserved

BLOOD BROTHERS is fully protected under the copyright laws of the British Commonwealth, including Canada, the United States of America, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional and amateur stage productions, recitation, lecturing, public reading, motion picture, radio broadcasting, television and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

ISBN 978-0-573-08064-7

www.samuelfrench.co.uk

www.samuelfrench.com

FOR AMATEUR PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES

UNITED KINGDOM AND WORLD

EXCLUDING NORTH AMERICA

plays@samuelfrench.co.uk

020 7255 4302/01

Each title is subject to availability from Samuel French,
depending upon country of performance.

CAUTION: Professional and amateur producers are hereby warned that *BLOOD BROTHERS* is subject to a licensing fee. Publication of this play does not imply availability for performance. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised to apply to the appropriate agent before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre. A licensing fee must be paid whether the title is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged.

The professional rights in this play are controlled by Negus-Fancey Agents Ltd, 78 Portland Rd, London W11 4LQ.

No one shall make any changes in this title for the purpose of production. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. No one shall upload this title, or part of this title, to any social media websites.

The right of Willy Russell to be identified as author of this work has been asserted in accordance with Section 77 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

THINKING ABOUT PERFORMING A SHOW?

There are thousands of plays and musicals available to perform from Samuel French right now, and applying for a licence is easier and more affordable than you might think

From classic plays to brand new musicals, from monologues to epic dramas, there are shows for everyone.

Plays and musicals are protected by copyright law so if you want to perform them, the first thing you'll need is a licence. This simple process helps support the playwright by ensuring they get paid for their work, and means that you'll have the documents you need to stage the show in public.

Not all our shows are available to perform all the time, so it's important to check and apply for a licence before you start rehearsals or commit to doing the show.

LEARN MORE & FIND THOUSANDS OF SHOWS

Browse our full range of plays and musicals and find out more about how to license a show

www.samuelfrench.co.uk/perform

Talk to the friendly experts in our Licensing team for advice on choosing a show, and help with licensing

plays@samuelfrench.co.uk 020 7387 9373

Acting Editions

BORN TO PERFORM

Playscripts designed from the ground up to work the way you do in rehearsal, performance and study

Larger, clearer text for easier reading



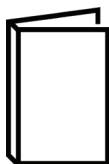
Wider margins for notes



Performance features such as character and props lists, sound and lighting cues, and more

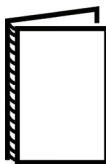


+ CHOOSE A SIZE AND STYLE TO SUIT YOU



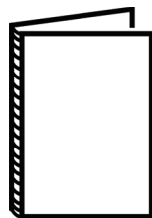
STANDARD EDITION

Our regular paperback book at our regular size



SPIRAL-BOUND EDITION

The same size as the Standard Edition, but with a sturdy, easy-to-fold, easy-to-hold spiral-bound spine



LARGE EDITION

A4 size and spiral bound, with larger text and a blank page for notes opposite every page of text. Perfect for technical and directing use

LEARN MORE

samuelfrench.co.uk/actingeditions

Other plays by WILLY RUSSELL
published and licensed by Samuel French

Breezblock Park

Educating Rita

I Read the News Today

One for the Road

Our Day Out (A Play with Music)

Shirley Valentine

Stags and Hens

Other plays by WILLY RUSSELL
licensed by Samuel French

Blood Brothers (Play Version)

Boy with the Transistor Radio

Terraces

One for the Road

Our Day Out (Musical version)

FIND PERFECT PLAYS TO PERFORM AT
www.samuel french.co.uk/perform

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Willy Russell's career spans more than four decades; born in Liverpool in 1947, he left school at fifteen, became a women's hairdresser, part-time singer/songwriter before returning to education and becoming a teacher.

Russell's breakthrough work, commissioned by Liverpool Everyman, *John Paul George Ringo...and Bert* transferred to the West End winning Best Musical - Evening Standard and London Theatre Critics Awards.

Two of Willy's best-known plays have female protagonists, *Educating Rita* (Olivier Award for Best Comedy and *Shirley Valentine* (Olivier Award – Best New Comedy & Best New Actress, Tony Awards, Broadway – Best Actress). Both became successful films – Julie Walters and Pauline Collins who played the roles on stage received Oscar nominations as did Willy Russell for the screenplay of *Educating Rita*.

Blood Brothers, (Laurence Olivier Award, Best New Musical, 1983), played for twenty-four years becoming the third longest running West End musical. Major foreign productions include a two-year run on Broadway, with recent productions in South Africa and Korea and current productions in Australia and Japan. The UK tour is still playing to packed houses.

Our Day Out, originally written for TV, about a school outing, has been adapted for the stage as *Our Day Out – The Musical*. Premiered at Liverpool's Royal Court in 2010 to rave reviews it was revived a year later for another sell-out season.

The critically acclaimed novel, *The Wrong Boy* was published in 2000 and translated worldwide.

For further information please visit willyrussell.com

Photo credit paulcoxphotos.co.uk

MUSIC USE NOTE

RENTAL MATERIALS

A Piano/Vocal Score and orchestrations are available for this production. Please see the licence agreement for the fees and conditions of hire. Please contact Samuel French for perusal of the libretti and score materials before you apply for a licence, as well as for a performance licence application.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

If you have obtained performance rights to this title, please refer to your licensing agreement for important billing and credit requirements.

First performed at the Liverpool Playhouse on 8th January, 1983, with the following cast:

MRS JOHNSTONE (Mother)	Barbara Dickson
MICKEY	George Costigan
EDDIE	Andrew C. Wadsworth
SAMMY	Peter Christian
LINDA	Amanda York
MRS LYONS	Wendy Murray
MR LYONS	Alan Leith
NARRATOR	Andrew Schofield
CHORUS	Hazel Ellerby
	Eithne Brown
	David Edge

Directed by **Chris Bond**
 Designed by **Andy Greenfield**
 Musical Director **Peter Filleul**
 (Presented by arrangement with **Bob Swash**)

Subsequently presented by Bob Swash, by arrangement with Liverpool Playhouse at the Lyric Theatre, London, on 11th April, 1983, with the following cast:

MRS JOHNSTONE (Mother)	Barbara Dickson
MICKEY	George Costigan
EDDIE	Andrew C. Wadsworth
SAMMY	Peter Christian
LINDA	Kate Fitzgerald
MRS LYONS	Wendy Murray
MR LYONS	Alan Leith
NARRATOR	Andrew Schofield
CHORUS	Hazel Ellerby
	David Edge
	Ian Burns
	Oliver Beamish

Directed by **Chris Bond** and **Danny Hiller**
 Designed by **Andy Greenfield**
 Musical Director **Richard Spanswick**

CHARACTERS

MRS JOHNSTONE (Mother)

NARRATOR (also appears as Milkman 1; Gynaecologist;
Bus Conductor; Milkman 2; Teacher; rifle range man)

MRS LYONS

CATALOGUE MAN

FINANCE MAN

MR LYONS

MICKY (ages from seven to twenties)

EDWARD (ages from seven to twenties)

SAMMY (ages from nine to twenties)

LINDA (ages from seven to twenties)

POLICEMAN

Children, policemen, neighbours, wedding guests, doleites,
councillors, nurses, Judge

MUSICAL NUMBERS**ACT I**

Music

- | | |
|------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Overture |
| 2 | Marilyn Monroe (1) |
| 2(a) | Marilyn Monroe (reprise) |
| 3 | Underscoring |
| 4 | Underscoring |
| 5 | Underscoring |
| 6 | My Child |
| 7 | Underscoring |
| 8 | Underscoring |
| 9 | Easy Terms |
| 10 | Underscoring |
| 11 | Shoes Upon The Table (1) |
| 12 | Easy Terms (reprise) |
| | Doorbell |
| 13 | Kids Game |
| 14 | Underscoring |
| 15 | Shoes Upon the Table (2a) |
| 16 | Shoes Upon the Table (2b) |
| 17 | Bright New Day (preview) |
| 18 | Long Sunday Afternoon |
| 19 | Bright New Day |

ACT II

- 20 **Marilyn Monroe (2)**
- Car horn
- 21 Underscoring
- 22 Underscoring
- 23 Underscoring
- 24 Underscoring and **Shoes Upon the Table (3a)**
- 25 Underscoring
- 26 **That Guy**
- 27 **Shoes Upon The Table (3b)**
- 28 Underscoring
- 29 Underscoring
- 30 **I'm Not Saying A Word**
- 31 Underscoring
- 32 Miss Jones
- 33 Underscoring
- 34 **Marilyn Monroe (3)**
- 35 Underscoring and **Light Romance**
- 36 **Shoes Upon The Table (Madman)**
- 37 **Tell Me It's Not True**

The Music for this play is available on hire from Samuel French Ltd

PRODUCTION NOTE

The setting for *Blood Brothers* is an open stage, with the different settings and time spans being indicated by lighting changes, with the minimum of properties and furniture. The whole play should flow along easily and smoothly, with no cumbersome scene changes. Two areas are semi-permanent – the Lyons house upstage left and the Johnstone house DR. We see the interior of the Lyons' comfortable home but usually only the exterior front door of the Johnstone house, with the "interior" scenes taking place outside the door. The area between the two houses acts as communal ground for street scenes, park scenes etc.

Blood Brothers is a rags-to-riches story that makes a haunting musical tragedy of our times. Mrs Johnstone, deserted by her husband and with a houseful of kids to feed, learns she is expecting twins, whom she cannot possibly afford to keep. She chars for childless Mrs Lyons who, learning of her plight, begs one of her twins from her at birth. The two boys grow up streets apart, never learning the truth but becoming firm friends (and in love with the same girl) despite their differing backgrounds and the attempts of Mrs Lyons to keep them apart. Mickey Johnstone loses his job, marries the girl, turns to crime and becomes dependant on tranquilisers. Edward Lyons prospers, goes to university and turns Councillor. But a Narrator, intruding like Fate, warns that a "price has to be paid". The price is the life of the blood brothers who die – Edward at the hands of Mickey, and Mickey at the hands of the police – fulfilling the prophecy that twins parted at birth will die on the day they find out their heritage.

ACT I

MUSIC 1: OVERTURE

The Overture comes to a close.

MRS JOHNSTONE (*singing; offstage*)

TELL ME IT'S NOT TRUE
SAY IT'S JUST A STORY.

The NARRATOR steps forward in a spotlight.

NARRATOR (*speaking*)

So did y' hear the story of the Johnstone twins?
As like each other as two new pins,
Of one womb born, on the self same day,
How one was kept and one given away?

An' did you never hear how the Johnstones died,
Never knowing that they shared one name,
Till the day they died, when a mother cried
My own dear sons lie slain.

The lights come up to show a re-enactment of the final moments of the play – the deaths of MICKEY and EDWARD (page 111). The scene fades.

MRS JOHNSTONE *enters with her back to the audience.*

An' did y' never hear of the mother, so cruel,
There's a stone in place of her heart?
Then bring her on and come judge for yourselves
How she came to play this part.

The NARRATOR exits.

As the introduction to Music 1 is heard MRS JOHNSTONE turns and walks towards us. She is aged thirty but looks more like fifty.

MUSIC 2: “MARILYN MONROE” - (1)

MRS JOHNSTONE (*singing*)

ONCE I HAD A HUSBAND,
YOU KNOW THE SORT OF CHAP,
I MET HIM AT A DANCE AND HOW HE CAME ON WITH THE
CHAT.
HE SAID MY EYES WERE DEEP BLUE POOLS,
MY SKIN AS SOFT AS SNOW,
HE TOLD ME I WAS SEXIER THAN MARILYN MONROE.

AND WE WENT DANCING,
WE WENT DANCING.

THEN, OF COURSE, I FOUND
THAT I WAS SIX WEEKS OVERDUE.
WE GOT MARRIED AT THE REGISTRY AN' THEN WE HAD A “DO”.
WE ALL HAD CURLY SALMON SANDWICHES,
AN' HOW THE ALE DID FLOW,
THEY SAID THE BRIDE WAS LOVELIER THAN MARILYN
MONROE.

AND WE WENT DANCING,
YES, WE WENT DANCING.

THEN THE BABY CAME ALONG,
WE CALLED HIM DARREN WAYNE,
THEN THREE MONTHS ON I FOUND THAT I WAS IN THE CLUB
AGAIN.
AN' THOUGH I STILL FANCIED DANCING,
MY HUSBAND WOULDN'T GO,
WITH A WIFE HE SAID WAS TWICE THE SIZE OF MARILYN
MONROE.

NO MORE DANCING
NO MORE DANCING.

BY THE TIME I WAS TWENTY-FIVE,
I LOOKED LIKE FORTY-TWO,
WITH SEVEN HUNGRY MOUTHS TO FEED AND ONE MORE
NEARLY DUE.
ME HUSBAND, HE'D WALKED OUT ON ME,
A MONTH OR TWO AGO,
FOR A GIRL THEY SAY WHO LOOKS A BIT LIKE MARILYN
MONROE.

AND THEY GO DANCING
THEY GO DANCING
YES THEY GO DANCING
THEY GO...

An irate MILKMAN (the NARRATOR) rushes in to rudely interrupt the song.

MILKMAN Listen love, I'm up to here with hard luck stories; you owe me three pounds, seventeen and fourpence an' either you pay up today, like now, or I'll be forced to cut off your deliveries.

MRS JOHNSTONE I said, I said, look, next week I'll pay y' ...

MILKMAN Next week, next week! Next week never arrives around here. I'd be a rich man if next week ever came.

MRS JOHNSTONE But look, look, I start a job next week. I'll have money comin' in an' I'll be able to pay y'. Y' can't stop the milk. I need the milk. I'm pregnant.

MILKMAN Well, don't look at me, love. I might be a milkman but it's got nothin' to do with me. Now you've been told, no money, no milk.

The MILKMAN exits.

MRS JOHNSTONE *stands alone and we hear some of her kids, off.*

KID ONE (*offstage*) Mam, Mam the baby's cryin'. He wants his bottle. Where's the milk?

KID TWO (*offstage*) 'Ey Mam, how come I'm on free dinners?
All the other kids laugh at me.

KID THREE (*offstage*) 'Ey Mother, I'm starvin' an ther's nothin'
in. There never bloody well is.

MRS JOHNSTONE (*perfunctorily*) Don't swear, I've told y'.

KID FOUR (*offstage*) Mum, I can't sleep, I'm hungry, I'm starvin'

...

KIDS (*offstage*) An' me, Mam. An' me. An' me.

MUSIC 2A: "MARILYN MONROE" - Reprise

MRS JOHNSTONE (*singing*)

I KNOW IT'S HARD ON ALL YOU KIDS,
BUT TRY AND GET SOME SLEEP.
NEXT WEEK I'LL BE EARNIN',
WE'LL HAVE LOADS OF THINGS TO EAT,
WE'LL HAVE HAM, AN' JAM, AN' SPAM AN'

(*speaking*) Roast Beef, Yorkshire Puddin', Battenberg Cake,
Chicken an' Chips, Corned Beef, Sausages, Treacle Tart,
Mince an' Spuds, Milk Shake Mix for the Baby:

There is a chorus of groaning ecstasy from the kids.

MRS JOHNSTONE *picks up the tune again.*

WHEN I BRING HOME THE DOUGH,
WE'LL LIVE LIKE KINGS, LIKE BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS,
LIKE MARILYN MONROE.

AND WE'LL GO DANCING...

MRS JOHNSTONE *humms a few bars of the song, and dances a few steps, as she makes her way to her place of work – MRS LYONS' house. During the dance she acquires a brush, dusters and a mop bucket.*

The lights crossfade to MRS LYONS' house where MRS JOHNSTONE is seen working.

MRS LYONS *enters, carrying a parcel containing new shoes.*

MRS LYONS Hello, Mrs Johnstone, how are you? Is the job working out all right for you?

MRS JOHNSTONE It's, erm, great. Thank you. It's such a lovely house it's a pleasure to clean it.

MRS LYONS It's a pretty house isn't it? It's a pity it's so big. I'm finding it rather large at present.

MRS JOHNSTONE Oh. Yeh. With Mr Lyons being away an' that? When does he come back, Mrs Lyons?

MRS LYONS Oh, it seems such a long time. The Company sent him out there for nine months, so, what's that, he'll be back in about five months' time.

MRS JOHNSTONE Ah, you'll be glad when he's back won't you? The house won't feel so empty then, will it?

MRS LYONS *begins to unwrap her parcel.*

MRS LYONS Actually, Mrs J, we bought such a large house for the – for the children – we thought children would come along.

MRS JOHNSTONE Well y' might still be able to...

MRS LYONS No, I'm afraid... We've been trying for such a long time now... I wanted to adopt but... Mr Lyons is...well he says he wanted his own son, not somebody else's. Myself, I believe that an adopted child can become one's own.

MRS JOHNSTONE Ah yeh...yeh. Ey, it's weird though, isn't it. Here's you can't have kids, an' me, I can't stop havin' them. Me husband used to say that all we had to do was shake hands and I'd be in the club. He must have shook hands with me before he left. I'm havin' another one y' know.

MRS LYONS Oh, I see...

MRS JOHNSTONE Oh but look, look it's all right, Mrs Lyons, I'll still be able to do me work. Havin' babies, it's like clockwork to me. I'm back on me feet an' workin' the next day y' know. If I have this one at the weekend I won't even need to take one day off. I love this job, y'know. We can just manage to get by now—

She is stopped by MRS LYONS putting the contents of the package, a pair of new shoes, on to the table.

Jesus Christ, Mrs Lyons, what are y' trying to do?

MRS LYONS My God, what's wrong?

MRS JOHNSTONE The shoes...the shoes...

MRS LYONS Pardon?

MRS JOHNSTONE New shoes on the table, take them off...

MRS LYONS *does so.*

(relieved) Oh God, Mrs Lyons, never put new shoes on a table... You never know what'll happen.

MRS LYONS *(twiggling it; laughing)* Oh...you mean you're superstitious?

MRS JOHNSTONE No, but you never put new shoes on the table.

MRS LYONS Oh go on with you. Look, if it will make you any happier I'll put them away...

MRS LYONS *exits with the shoes.*

MUSIC 3: UNDERSCORING

MRS JOHNSTONE *warily approaches the table.*

The NARRATOR enters.

NARRATOR There's shoes upon the table an' a joker in the pack.
The salt's been spilled and a looking glass cracked,
There's one lone magpie overhead.

MRS JOHNSTONE I'm not superstitious.

NARRATOR The Mother said

MRS JOHNSTONE I'm not superstitious

NARRATOR The Mother said.

The NARRATOR exits to re-enter as a GYNAECOLOGIST.

MRS JOHNSTONE What are you doin' here? The milk bill's not due 'till Thursday.

GYNAECOLOGIST (*producing a listening funnel*) Actually I've given up the milk round and gone into medicine. I'm your gynaecologist. (*He begins to examine her*) OK, Mummy, let's have a little listen to the baby's ticker, shall we?

MRS JOHNSTONE I was dead worried about havin' another baby, you know, Doctor. I didn't see how we were gonna manage with another mouth to feed. But now I've got me a little job we'll be OK. If I'm careful we can just scrape by, even with another mouth to feed

The GYNAECOLOGIST completes his examination.

GYNAECOLOGIST Mouths, Mummy.

MRS JOHNSTONE What?

GYNAECOLOGIST Plural, Mrs Johnstone. Mouths to feed. You're expecting twins. Congratulations. And the next one please, Nurse.

The GYNAECOLOGIST exits.

MUSIC 4: UNDERSCORING

MRS JOHNSTONE, *numbed by the news, moves back to her work, dusting the table upon which the shoes had been placed.*

MRS LYONS *enters.*

MRS LYONS Hello, Mrs J. How are you?

There is no reply.

(registering the silence) Mrs J? Anything wrong?

MRS JOHNSTONE I had it all worked out.

MRS LYONS What's the matter?

MRS JOHNSTONE We were just getting straight.

MRS LYONS Why don't you sit down.

MRS JOHNSTONE With one more baby we could have managed.

But not with two. The Welfare have already been on to me. They say I'm incapable of controllin' the kids I've already got. They say I should put some of them into care. But I won't. I love them. I love the bones of every one of them. I'll even love these two when they come along. But like they say at the Welfare, kids can't live on love alone.

MRS LYONS Twins? You're expecting twins?

MUSIC 5: UNDERSCORING

The NARRATOR enters.

NARRATOR How quickly an idea, planted, can

Take root and grow into a plan.

The thought conceived in this very room

Grew as surely as a seed, in a mother's womb.

The NARRATOR exits.

MRS LYONS *(almost inaudibly)* Give one to me.

MRS JOHNSTONE What?

MRS LYONS *(containing her excitement)* Give one of them to me.

MRS JOHNSTONE Give one to you?

MRS LYONS Yes...yes.

MRS JOHNSTONE *(taking it almost as a joke)* But y' can't just...

MRS LYONS When are you due?

MRS JOHNSTONE Erm, well about... Oh, but Mrs...

MRS LYONS Quickly, quickly tell me...when are you due?

MRS JOHNSTONE July he said, the beginning of...

MRS LYONS July...and my husband doesn't get back until, the middle of July. He need never guess...

MRS JOHNSTONE (*amused*) Oh, it's mad...

MRS LYONS I know, it is. It's mad...but it's wonderful, it's perfect. Look, look, you're what, four months pregnant, but you're only just beginning to show...so, so I'm four months pregnant and I'm only just beginning to show. (*She grabs a cushion and arranges it beneath her dress*) Look, look. I could have got pregnant just before he went away. But I didn't tell him in case I miscarried, I didn't want to worry him whilst he was away. But when he arrives home I tell him we were wrong, the doctors were wrong. I have a baby, our baby. Mrs Johnstone, it will work, it will if only you'll...

MRS JOHNSTONE Oh, Mrs Lyons, you can't be serious.

MRS LYONS You said yourself, you said you had too many children already.

MRS JOHNSTONE Yeh, but I don't know if I wanna give one away.

MRS LYONS Already you're being threatened by the Welfare people. Mrs Johnstone, with two more children how can you possibly avoid some of them being put into care. Surely, Mrs Johnstone, surely it's better to give one child to me. Look, at least if the child was with me you'd be able to see him every day, as you came to work.

MRS LYONS *stares at MRS JOHNSTONE, willing her to agree.*

Please, Mrs Johnstone. Please

MRS JOHNSTONE Are y' ...are y' that desperate to have a baby?

MUSIC 6: "MY CHILD"

MRS LYONS (*singing*)

EACH DAY I LOOK OUT FROM THIS WINDOW,
I SEE HIM WITH HIS FRIENDS, I HEAR HIM CALL,
I RUSH DOWN BUT AS I FOLD MY ARMS AROUND HIM,
HE'S GONE. WAS HE EVER THERE AT ALL?

I'VE DREAMED OF ALL THE PLACES I WOULD TAKE HIM,
THE GAMES WE'D PLAY THE STORIES I WOULD TELL,
THE JOKES WE'D SHARE, THE CLOTHING I WOULD MAKE HIM,
I REACH OUT. BUT AS I DO. HE FADES AWAY.

The melody shifts into that of MRS JOHNSTONE who is looking at MRS LYONS, feeling for her. MRS LYONS, gives a half smile and a shrug, perhaps slightly embarrassed at what she has revealed. MRS JOHNSTONE, turns and looks at the room she is in. Looking up in awe at the comparative opulence and ease of the place. Tentatively and wondering she sings.

MRS JOHNSTONE

IF MY CHILD WAS RAISED
IN A PALACE LIKE THIS ONE,
HE WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY WHERE
HIS NEXT MEAL WAS COMIN' FROM.
HIS CLOTHING WOULD BE SUPPLIED BY
GEORGE HENRY LEE

MRS LYONS *sees that MRS JOHNSTONE might be persuaded.*

MRS LYONS (*singing*)

HE'D HAVE ALL HIS OWN TOYS
AND A GARDEN TO PLAY IN.

MRS JOHNSTONE

HE COULD MAKE TOO MUCH NOISE
WITHOUT THE NEIGHBOURS COMPLAININ'.

MRS LYONS

SILVER TRAYS TO TAKE MEALS ON

MRS JOHNSTONE

A BIKE WITH *BOTH* WHEELS ON?

MRS LYONS *nods enthusiastically.*

MRS LYONS

AND HE'D SLEEP EVERY NIGHT
IN A BED OF HIS OWN.

MRS JOHNSTONE

HE WOULDN'T GET INTO FIGHTS
HE'D LEAVE MATCHES ALONE.
AND YOU'D NEVER FIND HIM
EFFIN' AND BLINDIN'.
AND WHEN HE GREW UP
HE COULD NEVER BE TOLD
TO STAND AND QUEUE UP
FOR HOURS ON END AT THE DOLE
HE'D GROW UP TO BE

MRS LYONS { *(together)* } A credit to me
MRS JOHNSTONE

MRS JOHNSTONE

TO YOU

Underscoring for the following dialogue.

MRS JOHNSTONE I would still be able to see him every day,
wouldn't I?

MRS LYONS Of course.

MRS JOHNSTONE An' ...an' you would look after him, wouldn't y'?

MRS LYONS *(singing)*

I'D KEEP HIM WARM IN THE WINTER
AND COOL WHEN IT SHINES.
I'D PULL OUT HIS SPLINTERS
WITHOUT MAKING HIM CRY.

I'D ALWAYS BE THERE
IF HIS DREAM BECAME A NIGHTMARE.
MY CHILD.
MY CHILD.

There is a pause before MRS JOHNSTONE nods. MRS LYONS goes across and kisses her, hugs her. MRS JOHNSTONE is slightly embarrassed.

Oh. Now you must help me. There's so much... I'll have to...
(*She takes out the cushion*) We'll do this properly so that it's thoroughly convincing, and I'll need to see you walk, and baby clothes, I'll have to knit and buy bottles and suffer from piles.

MRS JOHNSTONE What?

MRS LYONS Doesn't one get piles when one's pregnant? And buy a cot and... Oh help me with this, Mrs J. Is it in the right place? (*She puts the cushion back again*) I want it to look right before I go shopping.

MRS JOHNSTONE (*helping her with the false pregnancy*) What you goin' the shops for? I do the shopping.

MRS LYONS Oh no, from now on I do the shopping. I want everyone to know about my baby. (*She suddenly reaches for the Bible*)

MUSIC 7: UNDERSCORING

Mrs J. We must make this a, erm, a binding agreement.

MRS LYONS *shows the Bible to MRS JOHNSTONE, who is at first reluctant and then lays her hand on it.*

The NARRATOR enters. His narration is underscored with a bass note, repeated as a heartbeat.

NARRATOR In the name of Jesus, the thing was done,
Now there's no going back, for anyone.
It's too late now, for feeling torn

There's a pact been sealed, there's a deal been born.

MRS LYONS *puts the Bible away. MRS JOHNSTONE stands and stares as MRS LYONS grabs shopping bags and takes a last satisfied glance at herself in the mirror.*

MRS JOHNSTONE Why...why did we have to do that?

MRS LYONS Mrs J, nobody must ever know. Therefore we have to have an agreement.

MRS JOHNSTONE *nods but is still uncomfortable.*

Right, I shan't be long. Bye.

MRS LYONS *exits.*

MRS JOHNSTONE *stands alone, afraid.*

The heartbeat grows in intensity.

NARRATOR How swiftly those who've made a pact,
Can come to overlook the fact.
Or wish the reckoning be delayed
But a debt is a debt, and must be paid.

The NARRATOR exits.

MUSIC 8: UNDERSCORING

As the heartbeat reaches maximum volume it suddenly stops and is replaced by the sound of crying babies.

Two nurses appear, each carrying a bundle. A pram is wheeled on.

The nurses hand the bundles to MRS JOHNSTONE who places them smiling, into the pram. Making faces and noises at the babies she stops the crying. The babies settled, she sets off, wheeling the pram towards home. The lights crossfade to the JOHNSTONE home.

Various debt collectors emerge from her house to confront
MRS JOHNSTONE.

CATALOGUE MAN I'm sorry love...the kids said you were at the hospital. *(He looks into the pram)* Ah...they're lovely, aren't they? I'm sorry love, especially at a time like this, but, you are twelve weeks behind in your payments. I've got to do this, girl...

FINANCE MAN Y' shouldn't sign for the bloody stuff, missis. If y' know y' can't pay, y' shouldn't bloody well sign.

CATALOGUE MAN Look, if y' could give me a couple of weeks' money on this I could leave it.

MRS JOHNSTONE *shakes her head.*

FINANCE MAN Y' shouldn't have signed for all this stuff, should y'? Y' knew y' wouldn't be able to pay, didn't y'?

MRS JOHNSTONE *(almost to herself)* When I got me job, I thought I would be able to pay. When I went in the showroom I only meant to come out with a couple of things. But when you're standing there, it all looks so nice. When y' look in the catalogue an' there's six months to pay, it seems years away, an' y' need a few things so y' sign.

FINANCE MAN Yeh, well y' bloody well shouldn't.

MRS JOHNSTONE *(coming out of her trance; angrily)* I know I shouldn't, you soft get. I've spent all me bleedin' life knowin' I *shouldn't*. But I do. Now, take y' soddin' wireless an' get off.

CATALOGUE MAN Honest love, I'm sorry.

MRS JOHNSTONE It's all right, lad...we're used to it. We were in the middle of our tea one night when they arrived for the table. *(She gives a wry laugh)*

CATALOGUE MAN Ah well as long as y' can laugh about it, eh, that's the main thing isn't it?

The CATALOGUE MAN exits.

MRS JOHNSTONE (*not laughing*) Yeh.

MUSIC 9: “EASY TERMS”

Other creditors continue to enter the house and leave with goods.

MRS JOHNSTONE *watches the creditors. The babies begin to cry and she moves to the pram, rocking it gently as she sings, as if to the babies in the pram.*

Singing.

ONLY MINE UNTIL
THE TIME COMES ROUND
TO PAY THE BILL.
THEN, I'M AFRAID,
WHAT CAN'T BE PAID
MUST BE RETURNED.
YOU NEVER, EVER LEARN,
THAT NOTHING'S YOURS,
ON EASY TERMS.

ONLY FOR A TIME,
I MUST NOT LEARN,
TO CALL YOU MINE.
FAMILIARIZE
THAT FACE, THOSE EYES
MAKE FUTURE PLANS
THAT CANNOT BE CONFIRMED.
ON BORROWED TIME,
ON EASY TERMS.

LIVING ON THE NEVER NEVER,
CONSTANT AS THE CHANGING WEATHER,
NEVER SURE
WHO'S AT THE DOOR
OR THE PRICE I'LL HAVE TO PAY.

SHOULD WE MEET AGAIN
I WILL NOT RECOGNIZE YOUR NAME.

YOU CAN BE SURE
WHAT'S GONE BEFORE
WILL BE CONCEALED.
YOUR FRIENDS WILL NEVER LEARN
THAT ONCE WE WERE
ON EASY TERMS.

LIVING ON THE NEVER NEVER,
CONSTANT AS THE CHANGING WEATHER,
NEVER SURE
WHO'S AT THE DOOR
OR THE PRICE I'LL HAVE TO PAY...

MRS LYONS *enters, still with the pregnancy padding.*

MRS LYONS They're born, you didn't notify me.

MRS JOHNSTONE Well I... I just...it's...couldn't I keep them for a few more days, please, please, they're a pair, they go together.

MRS LYONS My husband is due back tomorrow, Mrs Johnstone. I must have my baby. We made an agreement, a bargain. You swore on the Bible.

MRS JOHNSTONE You'd better...you'd better see which one you want.

MRS LYONS I'll take...

MRS JOHNSTONE No. Don't tell me which one. Just take him, take him.

Singing.

LIVING ON THE NEVER NEVER,
CONSTANT AS THE CHANGING WEATHER,
NEVER SURE
WHO'S AT THE DOOR
OR THE PRICE I'LL HAVE TO PAY,
SHOULD WE MEET AGAIN...

MRS LYONS *rapidly pulls out the padding from beneath her dress. Amongst it is a shawl which she uses to wrap around the baby before picking it from the pram.*

MRS LYONS Thank you Mrs Johnstone, thank you. I'll see you next week.

MRS JOHNSTONE I'm due back tomorrow.

MRS LYONS I know but why don't you...why don't you take the week off, on full pay of course.

MRS LYONS *exits.*

MRS JOHNSTONE *turns and enters her house with the remaining twin in the pram.*

KID ONE (*offstage*) What happened to the other twin, Mother?

KID TWO (*offstage*) Where's the other twinny, Mam?

MRS JOHNSTONE He's gone. He's gone up to heaven, love. He's living with Jesus and the angels.

KID THREE (*offstage*) What's it like there Mam, in heaven?

MRS JOHNSTONE It's lovely son, he'll be well looked after there. He'll have anything he wants.

KID ONE (*offstage*) Will he have his own bike?

MRS JOHNSTONE Yeh. With both wheels on.

KID ONE (*offstage*) Why can't I have a bike? Eh?

MRS JOHNSTONE I'll... I'll have a look in the catalogue next week. We'll see what the bikes are like in there.

KIDS (*together; offstage*) Mam, I want a Meccano set.

You said I could have a new dress, Mother.

Why can't I have an air pistol?

Let's look in the catalogue now, Mam.

It's great when we look in the catalogue, Mam.

Go on, let's all look in the catalogue.

MRS JOHNSTONE I've told y', when I get home, I've got to go to work.

The lights crossfade to the LYONS house.

MR and MRS LYONS enter their house and we see them looking at the child in its cot.

MRS JOHNSTONE enters and immediately goes about her work.

MRS JOHNSTONE stops work for a moment and glances into the cot, beaming and cooing. **MR LYONS** is next to her with **MRS LYONS** in the background, obviously agitated at **MRS JOHNSTONE's** fussing.

Aw, he's really comin' on now, isn't he, Mr Lyons? I'll bet y' dead proud of him, aren't y', aren't y', eh?

MR LYONS (*good naturedly*) Yes...yes I am, aren't I, Edward? I'm proud of Jennifer, too.

MR LYONS beams at his wife who can hardly raise a smile.

MRS JOHNSTONE Ah...he's lovely. (*She coos into the cot*) Ah look, he wants to be picked up, I'll just...

MRS LYONS No, no. Mrs Johnstone. He's fine. He doesn't want to be picked up.

MRS JOHNSTONE Ah, but look he's gonna cry...

MRS LYONS If he needs picking up, I shall pick him up. All right?

MRS JOHNSTONE Well, I just thought, I'm sorry I...

MRS LYONS Yes. Erm, has the bathroom been done? Time is getting on.

MRS JOHNSTONE Oh. Yeh, yeh...

MRS JOHNSTONE exits.

MR LYONS Darling. Don't be hard on the woman. She only wanted to hold the baby. All women like to hold babies, don't they?

MRS LYONS I don't want her to hold the baby, Richard. She's... I don't want the baby to catch anything. Babies catch things very easily, Richard.

MR LYONS All right, all right, you know best.

MRS LYONS You don't see her as much as I do. She's always fussing over him; any opportunity and she's cooing and cuddling as if she were his mother. She's always bothering him, Richard, always. Since the baby arrived she ignores most of her work. (*She is about to cry*)

MR LYONS Come on, come on... It's all right Jennifer. You're just a little...it's this depression thing that happens after a woman's had a...

MRS LYONS I'm not depressed Richard: it's just that she makes me feel... Richard, I think she should go.

MR LYONS And what will you do for help in the house?

MRS LYONS I'll find somebody else. I'll find somebody who doesn't spend all day fussing over the baby.

MR LYONS (*glancing at his watch*) Oh well, I suppose you know best. The house is your domain. Look, Jen, I've got a board meeting. I really must dash.

MRS LYONS Richard, can you let me have some cash?

MR LYONS Of course.

MRS LYONS I need about fifty pounds.

MR LYONS My God, what for?

MRS LYONS I've got lots of things to buy for the baby, I've got the nursery to sort out...

MR LYONS All right, all right, here. (*He hands her the money*)

MR LYONS *exits.*

MRS LYONS *considers what she is about to do and then calls.*

MRS LYONS Mrs Johnstone. Mrs Johnstone, would you come out here for a moment, please.

MRS JOHNSTONE *enters.*

MRS JOHNSTONE Yes?

MRS LYONS Sit down. Richard and I have been talking it over and, well the thing is, we both think it would be better if you left.

MRS JOHNSTONE Left where?

MRS LYONS It's your work. Your work has deteriorated.

MRS JOHNSTONE But, I work the way I've always worked.

MRS LYONS Well, I'm sorry, we're not satisfied.

MRS JOHNSTONE What will I do? How are we gonna live without my job?

MRS LYONS Yes, well we've thought of that. Here, here's... (*She pushes the money into MRS JOHNSTONE's hands*) It's a lot of money...but, well...

MRS JOHNSTONE (*thinking, desperate. Trying to get it together*) OK. All right. All right, Mrs Lyons, right. If I'm goin', I'm takin' my son with me, I'm takin'...

As MRS JOHNSTONE moves towards the cot MRS LYONS roughly drags her out of the way.

MRS LYONS Oh no, you're not. Edward is my son. Mine.

MRS JOHNSTONE I'll tell someone... I'll tell the police... I'll bring the police in an'...

MRS LYONS No...no you won't. You gave your baby away. Don't you realize what a crime that is. You'll be locked up. You sold your baby.

MRS JOHNSTONE, *horrified, sees the bundle of notes in her hand, and throws it across the room.*

MRS JOHNSTONE I didn't...you told me, you said I could see him every day. Well, I'll tell someone, I'm gonna tell...

MRS JOHNSTONE *starts to leave but MRS LYONS stops her.*

MRS LYONS No. You'll tell nobody.

MUSIC 10: UNDERSCORING

Because...because if you tell anyone...and these children learn of the truth, then you know what will happen, don't you? You do know what they say about twins, secretly parted, don't you?

MRS JOHNSTONE (*terrified*) What? What?

MRS LYONS They say...they say that if either twin learns that he was one of a pair, they shall both immediately die. It means, Mrs Johnstone, that these brothers shall grow up, unaware of the other's existence. They shall be raised apart and never, ever told what was once the truth. You won't tell anyone about this, Mrs Johnstone, because if you do, you will kill them.

MRS LYONS *picks up the money and thrusts it into MRS JOHNSTONE's hands. MRS LYONS turns and walks away.*

The NARRATOR enters.

MUSIC 11: "SHOES UPON THE TABLE" - (1)

NARRATOR

SHOES UPON THE TABLE
AN' A SPIDER'S BEEN KILLED.
SOMEONE BROKE THE LOOKIN' GLASS
A FULL MOON SHININ'
AN' THE SALT'S BEEN SPILLED.
YOU'RE WALKIN' ON THE PAVEMENT CRACKS
DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GONNA COME TO PASS.

NOW Y' KNOW THE DEVIL'S GOT YOUR NUMBER,
Y' KNOW HE'S GONNA FIND Y',
Y' KNOW HE'S RIGHT BEHIND Y',
HE'S STARIN' THROUGH YOUR WINDOWS
HE'S CREEPING DOWN THE HALL.

AIN'T NO POINT IN CLUTCHING
AT YOUR ROSARY
YOU'RE ALWAYS GONNA KNOW WHAT WAS DONE
EVEN WHEN YOU SHUT YOUR EYES YOU STILL SEE
THAT YOU SOLD A SON
AND YOU CAN'T TELL ANYONE

BUT Y' KNOW THE DEVIL'S GOT YOUR NUMBER,
Y' KNOW HE'S GONNA FIND Y',
Y' KNOW HE'S RIGHT BEHIND Y',
HE'S STARIN' THROUGH YOUR WINDOWS
HE'S CREEPING DOWN THE HALL.

YES, Y' KNOW THE DEVIL'S GOT YOUR NUMBER
HE'S GONNA FIND Y',
Y' KNOW HE'S RIGHT BEHIND Y',
HE'S STANDIN' ON YOUR STEP
AND HE'S KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR.
HE'S KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR,
HE'S KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR.

The NARRATOR exits at the end of the song.

The lights crossfade to the JOHNSTONE house.

During the song MRS JOHNSTONE has gone to her house and locked herself in. MICKEY, aged "seven", is knocking incessantly at the door. He is carrying a toy gun.

MRS JOHNSTONE (*screaming; offstage*) Go away!

MICKEY Mother...will y' open the bleedin' door or what?

MRS JOHNSTONE (*realizing; with relief; offstage*) Mickey?

MRS JOHNSTONE *comes to open the door.*

MICKEY Mam, Mam.

She grabs him and hugs him. He extricates himself.

Why was the door bolted? Did you think it was the rent man?

She laughs and looks at him.

Mam, our Sammy's robbed me other gun an' that was me best one. Why does he rob all me things off me?

MRS JOHNSTONE Because you're the youngest Mickey. It used to happen to our Sammy when he was the youngest.

MICKEY Mam, we're playin' mounted police an' Indians. I'm a mountie. Mam, Mam, y' know this mornin', we've wiped out three thousand Indians.

MRS JOHNSTONE Good.

MICKEY (*aiming the gun at her and firing*) Mam, Mam, you're dead.

MRS JOHNSTONE (*staring at him*) Hmm.

MICKEY What's up, Mam?

MRS JOHNSTONE Nothin' son. Go on, you go out an' play, there's a good lad. But, ey, don't you go playin' with those hooligans down at the rough end.

MICKEY (*on his way out*) We're down at the other end, near the big houses in the park.

MRS JOHNSTONE Mickey! Come here.

MICKEY What?

MRS JOHNSTONE What did you say, where have you been playin'?

MICKEY Mam, I'm sorry, I forgot.

MRS JOHNSTONE What have I told you about playin' up near there. Come here. (*She grabs him*)

MICKEY It wasn't my fault. Honest.

MRS JOHNSTONE So whose fault was it then?

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

Please visit our website to buy the full script, apply for a license to perform this show (if it's available), or to explore hundreds of similar titles.

www.samuelfrench.co.uk

or, in the US www.samuelfrench.com

To be the first to know about new books, licensing releases, and enjoy other theatre-related larks, do follow us on our spangley social media channels.



Samuel French London



SamuelFrenchLtd