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SF PERUSALS

All For Your Delight

A Musical Play

Book, music and lyrics by
Roger Parsley

Music arranged by
Duncan Lane

Samuel French – London
New York – Sydney – Toronto – Hollywood



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ALL FOR YOUR DELIGHT

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

George Bell, Chairman and tenant of Hewlett's*
Lord Randolph Harleston
Lucy Lawson, a member of the Music Hall Company
Rosie Oakes
Lizzie Lockart
Annie Hughes
Albert Stoppard
Lionel Ramport } "The Ramportis"
Primrose Ramport }
Gentleman Jim
Mary Molloy
Alex Mills
Basil Crowley
Bessie Jakes ("Arnold the 'Orrible Urchin")
Other members of the Company

The action of the play takes place in a Music Hall, onstage and backstage, at the turn of the last century.

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*Hewlett's—the name of the Music Hall—can be changed as appropriate to the venue, and the name of the manager, proprietor, or dignitary, etc., be substituted.

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R.P.

PERFORMANCE NUMBERS

Music arranged by DUNCAN LANE

ACT THE FIRST

Overture		
1	Get On Down to the Music Hall Tonight	Company
2	Oh, Ever So Sad	Rosie, members of the Company
3	The Ramportis (mind-reading)—non musical	Lionel, Primrose
4	A Right Ding-Dong	Company
5	Sid's Socks (duologue)—non musical	Mills and Crowley
6	Joe: Or, I Don't Care What They Call Him	Lizzie
7	Hinvestigations	Police
8	Johnny Jones	Mary, Company girls

ACT THE SECOND

9	Rosemary Lane	Company
10	Ooh, It's a Big 'Un	Albert, Company girls
11	With a Laugh and a Smile	Mills and Crowley
12	Why Doesn't Nobody Want Me?	Arnold
13	Oh, What'll I Do?	Annie, Sailors
14	I'm Going to Say "Yes", If He Asks Me	Mary
15	All For Your Delight (duo)	Mary
Finale—All For Your Delight		Company
Reprise—Get On Down to the Music Hall Tonight		Company

The vocal line is given on pp. 51–68 of this script, whilst the piano score is available separately from Samuel French Ltd.

INTRODUCTION

The piece is set in a small Music Hall on the outskirts of London at the turn of the last century, when there were fifty Music Halls in the capital. The motor car was still a toy of the very rich, the aeroplane was a dream, but submarines were becoming a reality. There were two hundred and fifty Music Halls in the country at the time, and the leading performers included Harry Lauder, Dan Leno, Marie Lloyd, George Robey and Vesta Tilley. The Gaiety Girls were all the rage, and the first socialist resolution had just been moved in the Commons by Keir Hardie. In the Theatre proper, Sarah Bernhardt, Beerbohm Tree, Mrs Patrick Campbell, Marie Tempest, Ellen Terry and Henry Irving were stars, and it was the time of Strindberg's play *The Dance of Death* (1901). The London "tube" was increasing in size, but the Atlantic seemed a bit smaller, as Marconi had sent successful radio signals to America. Charlie Chaplin was already appearing in the "halls" as a young lad, and Stan Laurel, a year younger, was about to follow him into Music Hall, variety, and Hollywood. The Boer War was being fought in South Africa, with Roberts and Kitchener relieving famous sieges at Mafeking, Kimberley, and Ladysmith. The death of Victoria in 1901 only served to emphasize that rapid change was taking place. Patriotic and comic songs were popular, as were monologues, tableaux vivants, and illusions. Also going the rounds were "Pongo the Missing Link" and an act which specialized in improvising verses from topics suggested by the audience. However, the intention in the writing of this piece has been to create a *musical play* set in a Music Hall. It is not intended wholly to recreate an exact replica of a performance nor to delve too deeply into social history.

ACT THE FIRST*

The motto of Hewlett's Music Hall—"All For Your Delight"—is to be seen above the rostrum/stage, which has a simple drop curtain. There are chairs and tables for at least some of the audience, and a desk, chair, gavel etc. for the Manager and Chairman, Mr George Bell, who welcomes familiar and unfamiliar patrons as they take their seats. His manner of doing this should vary according to the character created by the actor playing the part. His introductions to the acts, too, should be varied to suit the atmosphere created, and thus the dialogue given at such points need to be taken as a guide only. Similarly, the piece is scripted with the intention that minor alterations can be made to suit individual performances or directorial ideas. There are three distinct facets to this piece—the Music Hall performance, the backstage scenes (which should be entirely played for real) and the melodramatic story involving Lord Harleston, Mary, the Chairman, and Gentleman Jim, etc.

Chairman Ah, good-evening, Mr and Mrs ——. How good it is to see you distinguish our evening with your esteemed company! I trust your glasses are filled? Our bar staff are entirely at your command. If anything can be done to increase your comfort here at Hewlett's, kindly relay the fact to our staff, who will make their greatest endeavours to satisfy you ... Mr —— ... how delighted I am that you could attend! I trust your journey here was without incident? Refreshment is readily available, as usual—we see to the needs of both mind and body here ... Do be seated, ladies and gentlemen ... A feast of entertainment will commence in a very few minutes ... *etc.*

When the audience are in, the Chairman bangs his gavel for silence

May I crave your best attention, ladies and gentlemen! I thank you. It has been said that our Musical Director is so gifted, he has total sympathy with his instrument! You, too, will express some sympathy with the poor piano when you see and hear what he does with it! May we present to you the one, and we sincerely hope, only ——. Ladies and gentlemen, the Overture!

The board announcing the number of the act shows the word "Overture" and the pianist—or in establishments of a higher class, band—plays the Overture which should consist of extracts from the show as selected by the Musical Director

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*N.B. Paragraph 3 on page ii of this Acting Edition regarding photocopying and video-recording should be carefully read.

As the applause, boos, cheers, or audience reaction dies, Lord Harleston enters through the audience area and on to the music-hall stage, with Lucy Lawson on his arm

(*To the audience*) What an unexpected privilege! (*To Lord Harleston*) We *are* honoured this evening. Lord Harleston!

Lord Harleston Good-evening, George.

Chairman Good-evening, my Lord. Will you take your usual seat?

Lord Harleston Thank you, George—in a minute. I shan't hold up the proceedings long. Run along now, Lucy—I expect you have things to do to get ready, or something. Please, don't forget what I said about Mary.

Lucy I'll try and have a word with her, my Lord. (*As she passes the Chairman to go backstage*) Sorry I'm late, Mr Bell.

Chairman (*looking at his watch*) You've got one minute, Lucy.

Lucy I'll be ready.

Lucy exits

Lord Harleston I say, George . . .

Chairman Yes, sir?

Lord Harleston Any sign of Mary Molloy, yet?

Chairman No, sir. Not yet. But she'll be here later sir. Appearing at the Oxford Music Hall tonight, she is—second on the bill! Making quite a name, you know.

Lord Harleston And plenty of cash for you, I suppose?

Chairman Well, I manage to make ends meet, sir.

Lord Harleston Hmm. I think I'll just go backstage and have a word or two with the doorkeeper—I don't want to miss her tonight.

Chairman You have something to say to her?

Lord Harleston Yes. I think I have a little proposition that she will find of interest. Oh, by the way, I hear we are to have something new this evening?

Chairman Yes, sir. Number six, sir.

Lord Harleston I must be back for it. If you could arrange for my usual bottle.

Chairman It shall be done, sir.

He looks at the MD *and establishes that all is ready and bangs his gavel slowly 3 times. The display board is changed, and shows the number 1*

Good-evening, ladies and gentlemen, one and all. Let us have the very best of order if you please. I thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, here we are at the beginning of the twentieth century. Mr Marconi has sent his messages through the air right across the Atlantic, there are even as I speak, men in ships travelling *under* the sea, and some of you have arrived tonight in horseless carriages! We live in changing times, ladies and gentlemen, but nothing, absolutely nothing, can replace the good old Music Hall! When all these things are forgotten, we'll still be here! But enough of my ruminatory ramblings. You have all come here tonight to be entertained, and entertained you shall be. We have assembled for your

delectation an extravaganza of talent, an evening of taste, titillation, tonsil-tweaking, terpsichorean triumphs, and tee-atre! In short, tonight we welcome you to Hewlett's, the finest Music Hall in the Empire. We may not be the biggest, but we always give the best, and we borrow the words of our immortal bard when we reiterate our motto "All for your delight". (*He bangs his gavel*) Now our dazzling company will perform for you—with the added advantage of your distinguished help in the chorus—our opening number—ladies and gentlemen—our company!

The Company enter

No. 1: Get On Down to the Music Hall Tonight

Company

1. Let us tell you all about
A place just down our way
A warm and friendly place for you and me
It's somewhere you can sing and shout
And chase your cares away
There's nowhere else quite like it, you'll agree
You don't need 'ackney carriages
A pair o' boots will do
Just get yourself along to see the show
A penny or two will get you in
Two more will buy a brew
Just listen and we'll tell you where to go:

Chorus:

Get on down to the Music Hall tonight
A couple o' drinks and a fat cigar
Will set you up all right
Come on down there, see the glowing lights
Grab a chair, we'll see you there
At the Music Hall tonight

2. If you're feeling out of sorts
I know the thing for you
It's something that a doctor can't supply
Call round your mates, and arm in arm
Walk for a mile or two
You'll see the open doorway by and by
You'll hear the joyful laughter
As the old pianner plays
Those songs you love so well will fill the air
And as you step inside
You'll see the cheery glasses raised
You know a welcome's waiting for you there

Chorus

3. Come on down, now—don't be late
Don't dawdle or delay
Just leave your supper waiting in the hearth
Why not join us down there mate

It's not so far away
Come on down and 'ave an 'earty laugh
We'll sing the songs you love to hear
The happy and the sad
The choruses that make the rafters ring
You'll hear the sweetest harmony
To make your heart feel glad
So let's be off, and on the way we'll sing

Chorus

Suitable play-off music should be incorporated here, and after all similar numbers in the show

As the company leave the stage after the opening number, the Lights change to represent a backstage area

The performers establish a convention that they are standing in front of, and talking and looking into, a large mirror

Rosie Oates comes dashing in, obviously late

Rosie For Gawd's sake, Lizzie, give us an 'and, or else I'll never be ready!
Lizzie (*helping her*) Where on earth have you been? We thought you were never going to get here . . . George just asked me to cover for you. There was no message, or anything.
Rosie (*sharply*) Yeah, well, I'm here now, ain't I?
Lizzie Don't snap my bleedin' head off, just 'cos you've had a bad day, or something. What's up? You had a row with that toff of yours? Blimey you don't 'alf go on at each other. But he'll come round, like he always does. Is that what it is, Rosie?
Rosie (*trying to calm herself*) Lizzie, let's leave it.
Lizzie (*after pause*) All right. But if I can do anything . . .
Rosie I'll be all right. Let's just get tonight over. How's the new song going?
Lizzie I still can't believe George gave it to me to do.
Rosie You were made for it, Lizzie.
Lizzie There's a publisher coming tonight to hear it. Could get me picture on the music—can't be bad for business. I just hope it goes down all right.
Rosie 'Course it will.

Albert enters

Albert Well, hello, Rosie Oakes! First number went very well without you—again! Why don't you get that toff of yours to buy you a nice gold watch?
Rosie Aah, get off, Albert. You just ain't funny!

Rosie exits

Lizzie You could certainly brush up your timing, Albert!

Lizzie exits

Albert (*to the mirror*) Sometimes, I don't think I deserve the audiences I get.

Annie enters

Annie Hey, Albert, you seen the man from the Chamberlain's office?
Albert What? You're joking.
Annie No, I ain't. He's in here tonight. I'd watch it if I were you. That song of yours isn't exactly above board, is it?
Albert Annie, my dear. That song is as respectable as a Sunday tea—it's only the punters' minds that make 'em think otherwise. And anyway, they love it!
Annie Well, I wouldn't let George know the Chamberlain's man is in, or your song'll be out!
Albert Don't he know, then?
Annie No, it's probably a secret visit to see that we're not sneaking in material likely to deprave.
Albert Most of the people who come here are depraved already.
Annie I know. It's depressing sometimes. Still, I've got a few feelers out——
Albert You saucy girl!
Annie No, I mean in the theatre—the *real* theatre. With any luck I shall be back on the legitimate in a month or so, then I can say goodbye to this dump!
Albert Naah! Once a Music Hall actress, always a Music Hall actress. It gets in the blood.
Annie Not mine!
Albert You're kidding yourself. You weren't cut out for the big stage—this is where you belong.

Annie hurries off

(*Shouting after her*) Don't tell George about the Chamberlain's man, will yer?

Lionel and Primrose Ramport enter

Evening Lionel, Primrose.
Lionel Do you have to shout so in the dressing room, Albert? Some of us like to prepare ourselves mentally for the evening ahead.
Albert Oh, pardon me, I must say.
Primrose It's so important for Lionel and me to have our minds in tune with one another.
Albert Blimey, anyone would think your flaming act was on the level!
Lionel Are you suggesting that we——
Primrose Lionel, don't rise to the bait. He's trying to upset your equilibrium.
Albert Yer, I probably would be if I knew where it was.

Lucy enters

Hello, Lucy. How's tricks?
Lucy Fine. Yerself?
Albert (*over-loud*) I'm wonderful, as always.

Reaction from Lionel and Primrose

Anyway, gotta change, now. Be good, folks—ta-ta.

Albert exits in an elaborate tip-toe fashion

Lionel shakes his head

Primrose Mary didn't get that song, then?
Lucy What song is that?
Primrose The one Lizzie is doing tonight.
Lucy Well, she's made for it.
Lionel There was a time when a song like that would have gone straight to Mary every time. They're not hitting it off, are they?
Lucy Who?
Lionel Mary and our beloved Chairman. It's obvious. You know, he made her—and I reckon she's about to ditch him.
Primrose Yeah, I reckon she cares a lot more for that Lord Harleston—he's always around. A pain up the aristocratic backside, he is.
Lionel I expect you know he's given her a diamond necklace? Worth half his fortune, they say. You don't get that for being good—or careful!
Lucy It's supposed to be a secret, that is. Anyway, he's only given it to her on loan.
Lionel Payment for services rendered.
Lucy Mary's not like that! I don't know why she accepted it. It doesn't make sense.
Primrose Lucy, it happens all the time. Most of the girls here are *looking* for the chance to get off with a toff. Most of 'em go down the Oxford, though.
Lionel Well, I'm willing to bet she'll be his lordship's fancy woman soon, if she's not already.
Lucy (*going*) Don't talk so dirty about Mary!

Lucy exits

Primrose (*after she's gone*) You know, I sometimes think Lucy isn't cut out for this game.
Lionel Time we was moving.

As they turn to go, Mills and Crowley enter

Mills It's got to go—we're in the twentieth century now, Basil!
Crowley We've been doing it for ten years—they expect it!
Lionel If you two are going to fight, make it *outside* the hall this time.

Lionel and Primrose exit

Mills Oh, go and take your liver pills! What do you think, though, Basil?
Crowley They love it.
Mills But we're not developing. Haven't been for years.
Crowley What is there to develop? We're still funny, aren't we? If it gets a laugh, why change it?
Mills When was the last time we ever changed anything?
Crowley Look, Alex——
Mills I'll tell you. It was so significant I remember the exact time and place. It was Bradford, eighteen ninety-eight, October the tenth, second matinée, you actually ad-libbed!

Crowley And it worked! And it went in and stayed in. Always got a laugh, always gets a laugh!

Mills Yes, but the reaction's not the same. People are changing, Basil—they're different—all right, so the audience laugh, but not like they *used* to. We've got to move on. Like with the song.

Crowley The song's us, Alex. It's Mills and Crowley. Look, I don't know what you're worried about. We're still getting booked aren't we? Hardly a free date for the next three months.

Mills Yes, but where, Basil, where? Second and third rung of the ladder—that's us. Never the top. (*After a pause*) We've never played the Oxford.

Crowley (*uncomfortable, then:*) Well, that's not our kind of audience.

Mills No, but it's our kind of money!

Crowley We do all right.

Mills That's about it; we do all right!

Crowley Look, Alex, you come up with some material and we'll put it in.

Mills I've done that already. You just say "no" all the time. You're not prepared to try anything new.

Crowley That's because you never come up with anything that's *us*! We've got the audience to consider. They like us as we are. (*He starts to exit*)

Mills I'd give a fiver for just one juicy ad-lib tonight.

Crowley (*at the door*) Keep it tight, keep it right, Alex.

Crowley exits. Mills follows him out after a helpless gesture towards the mirror

The Lights change and we are back on the Music Hall stage

Chairman For our first act this evening, ladies and gentlemen, it is my overwhelming pleasure to introduce to you—from our own company—the vibrant, the vital, the vivacious, the voluptuous Miss Rosie Oakes!

The board shows number 2

Rosie Oakes enters and performs "Oh, Ever So Sad" with members of the company in the choruses and miming incidents during the song

No. 2: Oh, Ever So Sad

Rosie *1.* I was only a flower-girl here in The Strand
I never imagined a life posh and grand
Born in the buildings and not really planned
Oh, ever so sad
When I was a baby I cried every day
My mum said, "It's no good. She really can't stay"
So the rag and bone man came to take me away
Oh, ever so sad.

Chorus: Oh, ever so sad
No carriage and no caviar
I never drank champagne or dined at the Ritz
And my clothes like my life were just falling to bits

And I thought I was going right out of my wits
Oh, ever so sad.

2. I stood 'ere for years at this point in the street
Twelve hours a day in the rain and the heat
And a small tot of gin as a bit of a treat
Oh, ever so sad
Nobody loved me, now ain't that a shame
All of my life I've had suffering and pain
And whatever went wrong it was me got the blame
Oh, ever so sad.

Chorus

3. Then one day a man came my flowers to see
He said, "Love don't I know you, and don't you know me?"
And he started crying most pitifully
Oh, ever so sad
And then he said, "Ivy, I've found you again
Won't you come home to my house in Park Lane?
These long years without you have been filled with pain"
Oh, ever so sad.

Chorus

4. Now my name isn't Ivy, but I didn't say no
'Cos I might have misheard him, he *might* have said Flo
But I wondered—that Ivy—just where did she go?
Oh, ever so sad
Then one day a woman, with a face just like mine
Came calling, "I'm Ivy, been away a long time"
I said, "Love you're too late, what was yours is now mine"
Oh, ever so sad.

Chorus

5. So if you are feeling that life's got it wrong
Try to remember my little song
And just take your chances when they come along
You'll never be sad
'Cos now I am leading a life posh and grand
And I give from my carriage a wave of my hand
To Ivy who's now selling flowers in The Strand
Oh, ever so sad.

Chorus tune for:

Oh, ever so sad
I've carriages and caviar
And now I drink champagne and I own the Ritz

And my life is no longer falling to bits
And my name is now Ivy and the wedding ring fits
Oh, ever so sad.

Rosie exits with the other company members

After the applause for "Oh, Ever So Sad":

Chairman And now, Hewlett's Music Hall is proud to present an act——

Gentleman Jim stands up from his seat in the audience

Gentleman Jim I wonder if I might be permitted to say a few words?

Here the acting turns melodramatic in style, and many lines are played straight out to the audience

Chairman Who are you, sir?
Gentleman Jim I believe I am popularly known as "Gentleman Jim".

When the Chairman next speaks it is with exaggerated horror, which is underlined here, and whenever desired in the melodramatic passages, by appropriate mood music

Chairman That black-hearted thief and master of disguises?
Gentleman Jim So it is rumoured.
Chairman There's no need for panic, ladies and gentlemen, I'll soon—that is, I'll . . . er, don't panic, we'll . . . um . . .
Gentleman Jim No, pray do not panic. Leave that to the Chairman—he's rather good at it.
Chairman I, now look here, I——
Gentleman Jim (*moving down on to the Music Hall stage*) Don't splutter so, man. All I want to say is, that in the interests of fair play I am going to announce my intentions this evening.
Chairman You mean, you intend to operate here?
Gentleman Jim Precisely. You may know that Miss Mary Molloy has been given a present of a diamond necklace recently.
Chairman You don't mean that——
Gentleman Jim I understand that she is to wear it tonight, and—(*looking at the audience and smiling*)—I intend to steal it! It may cause a certain amount of alarm, but I must have it for excellent reasons of my own which I may not at present divulge. I call it my Master Plan. I tell you merely to acquaint you with my purpose here.
Chairman And I tell you, sir, that I, and the entire Music Hall company, will watch and defend ourselves against any outrage that you or any other person might seek to perpetrate. Here at Hewlett's you have met your match, sir!
Gentleman Jim Don't talk drivel, man! All I have to do is to reach the stage at the appropriate moment and what I most desire will be mine!
Chairman That is impossible. (*To the audience*) Pray do not be alarmed, ladies and gentlemen; the security system here at Hewlett's is of the highest order.

Gentleman Jim We shall see, we shall see. (*He begins to exit via the audience*)
Chairman I am pleased to see you are leaving, sir. You are not welcome here, and I shall give instructions that you are not permitted entry again.
Gentleman Jim *Au revoir*, Mr Chairman. Till we meet again.

Gentleman Jim exits

Chairman There is, of course, no need for anxiety. Everything is under control. However, if you could keep an extra eye open, and make sure your handbags are close to your person, we may perhaps avoid unecessary awkwardness. I thank you. And now to more pleasant matters, for it is now my privilege to introduce to you two of the most amazing people it will ever be your fortune to meet. From whence stems their power? Who can explain the mystery of the science in which they have delved so deeply? Could it be that they share the same mind? I leave you to ponder on these questions as I welcome the incredible RAMPORTIS!

The number 3 is on the board

Lionel and Primrose Ramport enter in suitably mysterious cloaks and Primrose is masked to add to the atmosphere: it is most important that this act is slickly performed, and any tendency to slow the action should be avoided

No. 3: The Ramportis

Lionel Good-evening, ladies and gentleman. This evening we are to conduct, with your assistance, a series of scientific experiments proving beyond all doubt that there are forces within our minds of which most of us are entirely ignorant. We have been to the farthest reaches of the world to discover long-lost methods of communication—not by conventional means, but by the power of thought transference. I will ask a member of the audience to step forward and assist my wife in the adjustment of this mask—(*he holds a large eye-cover mask in his hands*)—in such a way that it is impossible for her to see anything. Madam, would you please examine this mask. If it were securely tied over someone's eyes, in your opinion, would that person be able to see? Would you, sir, like to examine the mask? You will find no holes: we are scientists, and wish to share our knowledge with you. Would you tie the mask over my wife's eyes, establishing that she is unable to see.

This is done

Thank you. Would you stay with her, sir, and turn her to face away from the audience, and kindly make sure that she does not turn round until the experiment is completed? Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I am going to come among you now, and you will see that an astonishing thing begins to happen as I move along.

Here he makes for an obstacle and is just stopped from tripping over it by a cry from Primrose: "Be careful!"

Do you see what is happening? I am becoming her eyes—what *I* see, *she* sees. We will now conduct our experiment. Can you hear me clearly?

The following dialogue is an example of how the act might begin to get into its stride:

Primrose Yes.
Lionel I am standing in front of . . .
Primrose A gentleman.
Lionel Yes. Are you getting a clear picture?
Primrose Not yet. Please think harder.
Lionel I'll try to concentrate. What is he wearing?
Primrose Er . . . a jacket, er . . . brown jacket . . . tie with stripes . . . in green and brown, I think. Oh, I can see – he's wearing spectacles.
Lionel That is correct. I will move along. Who am I standing before, now?
Primrose A lady . . . er, a young lady—very young—a girl.
Lionel That's right. What is she wearing?
Primrose A dress—no—a skirt and a blue blouse, and she's got dark hair in a ribbon—it's blue.
Lionel Good, the pictures are coming through. I would like you to concentrate on some objects now. Would someone like to produce something from their pockets or handbags for my wife to identify?

And so on . . . the final trick is thought transference of pictures. There are 10 cards with different symbols on them, and she identifies 3 selected by the audience. She is unmasked, and the audience member sits after being thanked. The mind-reading act relies entirely upon a code which has been learned by the two performers. The more elaborate it is, the more spectacular the effect, as eventually any object, item of clothing, personal effect, etc. can be identified. Lionel is in effect giving Primrose carefully-coded information. It can make the first two "mind-reading" attempts easier if the couple plan that Lionel will always stand in front of (for example) a gentleman first, then a lady. The card trick is done in a similar way—if the code learned is extensive, a member of the audience can draw an object on a blank card, and this can be described or named. With a more restricted code, the ten (or more) objects drawn on the cards are learned, and each has a code word or phrase. When making up a code, it is obviously best to start with a list of common objects and clothing likely to be found in the audience's pockets and bags, or on their person. If more subtle variations are required, code phrases or words will have to be found for leather, paper, metal, wood etc. Fifty or so phrases/code words can yield a surprisingly wide and effective vocabulary, and these phrases are used in combination whenever there is no individual code word or phrase to fit an unusual or unexpected object, so that an intelligent guess based on the code message may be made by Madame Ramporti as to what object has been offered. Some inaccuracies and hesitation will only add to the effect!

The Ramportis take their bow

Chairman Ladies and gentleman—the amazing Ramportis!

The Ramportis exit

Mary Molloy enters

Mary! Can I have a word with you?

Mary Yes, of course. Am I late?

Chairman No, you're all right—you seem a little flustered. Is anything the matter?

Mary I'm fine. It's just that I've got something on my mind this evening.

Chairman How did your appearance at the Oxford go tonight?

Mary They've asked me to top the bill in the summer.

Chairman I see. That's marvellous for you.

Mary If I accept.

Chairman Not accept? Not accept the Oxford? What's wrong, Mary?

Mary As I told you, I've got things to think about.

Chairman But the Oxford—that's the top!

Mary Is it?

Chairman Mary. What are Lord Harleston's intentions towards you? I see more flowers arrived today.

Mary Oh, yes. He's . . . persistent.

Chairman I can't afford diamond necklaces of course, but you and me . . . we could clean up—I could make you the biggest star there's ever been on the Halls.

Mary If I marry you, I suppose you mean.

Chairman Why don't we give it a go? You know I care for you. Aristocracy and Music Halls just don't mix, Mary. Your roots are here. They're different people . . .

Lord Harleston enters from the backstage area

Lord Harleston Ah, there she is. Sneaked in at the front to avoid me, eh?

Mary I came in a hurry from the Oxford.

Lord Harleston Give us a few moments, guvnor, will you?

Chairman Certainly sir, but Miss Molloy must prepare herself, you know . . .

Lord Harleston Indeed she must, indeed she must. Just a minute, if you would. I've got something to ask Mary.

The Chairman exits

Mary, you know what I want.

Mary I'm not sure I do.

Lord Harleston You accepted the necklace: worth half my fortune, you know.

Mary On loan.

Lord Harleston Yours to keep, if you'll do what I want.

Mary Is that a proposal of marriage?

Lord Harleston I'm sure we may get around to that, but in the meantime, why not come away from all this and really live?

Mary With you?

Lord Harleston But of course. As you know, I have just inherited my poor father's estates—there are several houses to choose from—not to mention my little castle in the Highlands—what do you say?

Mary I suppose I should be tempted.
Lord Harleston To be sure you should.

Lucy enters

Lucy Mary. Time to get ready.
Mary I'll have to go.

Mary exits with Lucy

Lord Harleston I need an answer, Mary.

The Chairman returns

Chairman We're about to restart, sir, if you wouldn't mind . . .
Lord Harleston Just a minute, George. I have something to say to you. This morning I noticed among my father's papers passed to me on his death, the contract for a most interesting property. At present the building goes by the name of Hewlett's Music Hall.
Chairman But that means you're——
Lord Harleston I'm the owner, yes. What a coincidence! And you, of course, are my tenant. I understand from impeccable sources that you have your eyes on my Mary. Now I don't tolerate rivals, and if she is persuaded by you to waste her life in seedy Music Halls, I shall make sure that your tenancy is instantly terminated. Do I make myself clear?
Chairman Perfectly so, sir.
Lord Harleston I shall return to my seat, now. We may need to converse further.

He goes as if to return to his seat in the audience

Chairman Ahem! Now, ladies and gentlemen. There have been no further sightings of Gentleman Jim, so there is no need for alarm on that score. And furthermore I have taken precautions against his reappearance. Thus, the danger has passed, and our company will help us celebrate with that traditional Cockney number, "A Right Ding Dong".

The number 4 is put on the board

The Company enter

No. 4: A Right Ding Dong

Company Ya-da-da . . . *etc.*

1. We got a little secret
But we'll share it now with you
It's something we do every single day
Down our street we think it is
The only thing to do
That is why the folks around here say

Chorus: Every night we light the light
And we get tight, it's quite a sight
Everyone who's anyone is there

The night goes on but come the dawn
The party still goes on and on
And for tomorrow we don't have a care
A right ding dong
Why don't you come along
Bring a bottle, bring a friend 'n' all
A right ding dong
Sing a silly song
Welcome to the long and short and tall
Ya-da-da . . . *etc.*

2. It don't ever bother us
When the rent man comes
Even if we're always in arrears
And if our Sunday boots is down
The pawnshop we don't care
You'll never find our faces filled with tears

Chorus

Then verse and chorus dance sequence—hopefully with clog dancing

3. You never can be miserable
When you're with your mates
A knees-up's just the thing to make you smile
A yarn or two, and someone who
To put your arms around
And dilly-dally for a little while

Chorus

No matter who
You're welcome to
A right ding dong

As the applause dies, one of the Company (Gentleman Jim in disguise) comes forward towards the Chairman

Gentleman Jim How did you think I rated as a performer, Mr Chairman?
Chairman Gentleman Jim!

The other members of the company exit

Gentleman Jim The same. And still on the same trail. There's nothing that you can do that will prevent me from attaining my goal. I shall appear and disappear at will.

Chairman I have some bad news for you, you blackguard; I have just taken the opportunity during a break in the proceedings to inform the police. The local constabulary, in whom we have absolute faith, are to send their finest squad of men to prevent the theft and carry you off to justice.

Gentleman Jim You will forgive me if my knees fail to tremble at the prospect. But I *am* glad that we are being open with one another. It makes my next move so much easier to plan. Till we next meet, Mr Chairman.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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SF **PERUSALS**