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SF PERUSALS

MOTHER CLAP'S MOLLY HOUSE

Written by Mark Ravenhill

Music by Matthew Scott

SAMUEL FRENCH

samuelfrench.co.uk

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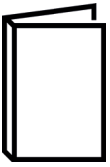
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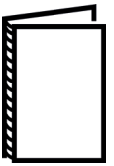
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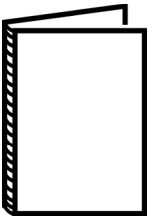
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Mark Ravenhill was born in Haywards Heath, West Sussex in 1966. He studied Drama and English at Bristol University. His first play *Shopping and Fucking* was produced by Out of Joint and the Royal Court Theatre in 1996. Subsequent plays include *Faust Is Dead* and *Handbag* (both Actors Touring Company), *Some Explicit Polaroids* (Out of Joint at the Ambassadors Theatre), *Mother Clap's Molly House* and *Citizenship* (both National Theatre), *Pool (No Water)* (Frantic Assembly at the Lyric Theatre), *The Cut* (Donmar Theatre), *Shoot/Get Treasure/Repeat* (Paines Plough) and *Over There* (Royal Court). From 2012 to 2014, Mark was playwright in residence for the Royal Shakespeare Company, producing a new version of Brecht's *Galileo* and *Candide* inspired by Voltaire (both Swan Theatre, Stratford-Upon-Avon). Mark's work in music theatre includes a new English version of Monteverdi's *The Coronation of Poppea* with additional material by Michael Nyman (King's Head); *Ten Plagues*, a song cycle for Marc Almond with composer Connor Mitchell (Traverse Theatre) and *Elysium* with composer Rolf Wallin for the Norwegian Opera. Mark is the co-creator of the ITV sitcom *Vicious*.

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MOTHER CLAP'S MOLLY HOUSE

List of musical numbers:

1. Overture/ Opening Act One
2. Funeral, Motto Two and Wake
3. Wake Two
4. Wake Three
5. Motto Three: Apprentice Boys & Phoebus Song/ Eros's Song
6. Motto Four: New Stock
7. Motto Five: Dame Fortune
8. End of Act One

9. PHOEBUS Reprise
10. Mother Clap's Maggot
11. Birthing Scene
12. Pleasure Song
13. The Whore's Prayer
14. Motto Six
15. Amelia's Maggot

Please note that the music appears in the back of the script.

The full score and band parts, and both pre-recorded accompaniments, are available on hire from the play's agent Judy Daish Associates Ltd, 2 St Charles Pl, London W10 6EG.

MOTHER CLAP'S MOLLY HOUSE

Mother Clap's Molly House was first performed at the Lyttelton Theatre, Royal National Theatre, on 24 August 2001. The cast was as follows:

MRS TULL	Deborah Findlay
STEPHEN TULL	Iain Mitchell
MARTIN, *their apprentice*	Paul Ready
PRINCESS SERAPHINA	Ian Redford
Whores	
AMELIA	Maggie McCarthy
AMY	Danielle Tilley
MARY CRANTON	Debbie Chazen
MARY BOLTON	Katy Secombe
Working Men	
KEDGER	Jay Simpson
PHILIPS	William Osborne
THOMAS ORME, *their apprentice*	Dominic Cooper
GABRIEL LAWRENCE	Con O'Neill
Deities	
GOD	Daniel Redmond
EROS	Paul J. Medford
JOSH	Dominic Cooper
WILL	William Osborne
CHARLIE	Jay Simpson
TINA	Danielle Tilley
TOM	Paul Ready
EDWARD	Iain Mitchell
PHIL	Con O'Neill

Mother Clap's Molly House was developed with the following students at LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts): James Adams, Samuel Barnett, Jack Bennet, Kieran Brew, Nicholas Burns, Louise J. Cox, Gus Danowski, Daniella Dessa, Henry Douthwaite, Felicite de Jeu, Will Huggins, Lisa Jackson, Marie Lewis, Daniel Llewlyn-Williams, Anna Maxwell-Martin, Tom McKay, Jamie Michie, Gavin Molloy, Claire Redcliffe, Francesca Rogers, Gary Shelford, Stephanie Street, David Sturzaker, Rebecca Todd, Leatsa Tsimbris and Aaron Woodman.

Thanks to Peter James, Cat Horn and everyone at LAMDA.

Other parts played by: Deborah Asante, Martin Chamberlain, Pamela Hardman, Luke Jardine, Tom McKay, Iain Pearson, Philip Ralph, Ali Sichilongo.

Director Nicholas Hytner
Set Designer Giles Cadle
Lighting Designer Rick Fisher
Music Director Paul Frankish
Sound Designers Neil Alexander, Colin Pink

A slash in the dialogue (/) indicates the cue for the next actor to start speaking, creating overlapping dialogue.

ACT ONE

Scene One

NO. 1: "OPENING ACT ONE"

CHORUS

WHEN AT FIRST OUR FATHER MIGHTY
MADE THE EARTH AND SEA AND SKIES
THEN OUR FATHER GREAT AND MIGHTY
MADE MAN AND GAVE HIM ENTERPRISE.

GOD

ENTERPRISE, SHALL MAKE YOU HUMAN
GETTING, SPENDING – SPARK DIVINE
THIS MY GIFT TO YOU POOR HUMAN:
PURSE CELESTIAL, COIN DIVINE.

London is revealed – a city of business and enterprise.

ALL

ENTERPRISE, COME LIGHT OUR DARKNESS
BUSINESS, SHAPE OUR HEART AND HAND!
THEN – OH RICH OUR FATHER MIGHTY! –
LEAD US TO THE PROMISED LAND.

London vanishes to reveal:

Tally shop. A large number of dresses. Workbench.

MRS TULL *at the counter. Enter* **MARTIN.**

MARTIN Sorry I took so long, only I—

TULL Martin. Where you been?

MARTIN Get thread like Master said, only I—

TULL Get thread? Get thread? Dun't take hour and more to get thread.

MARTIN Well, see, I was gonna go up—

TULL Weren't just thread, ask me. Weren't just errand. You was wandering again, wun't you?

MARTIN No. No.

TULL Thought so. Wandering. How many times Master told you: Boy, dun't you wander or you'll feel my fist?

MARTIN I know but I wun't—

TULL If there's one thing he hates most in the world it's apprentice boy who wanders. Where you go, Martin?

MARTIN I dunno. I get lost easy.

TULL Cos we worry when you in't back, see? See you might think: Man, look after meself. But we think: Boy.

MARTIN Yes, Mrs Tull.

TULL There's Mother and Father to keep a boy straying from the path and we in't Mother and Father but still there's a worry when you're off.

MARTIN Yes, Mrs Tull. Master awful angry?

TULL No. Master's...

MARTIN He had a fit?

TULL No. Just... Master's took peculiar. And Master's resting hisself. So I'm out the front today.

MARTIN What? You? You're gonna—?

TULL Thass right. I'm gonna drive the bargains. I'm gonna write them in the book. I'm gonna...

MARTIN Yeah?

TULL Oh, Martin. Figures is hard, in't they? You make anything of that?

TULL *shows* **MARTIN** *the ledger.*

MARTIN No.

TULL In't numbers terrible things? Dance around when I look at them.

MARTIN He shoulda taught you.

TULL No. See I'm Wife. And ledger's – well, he's always done ledger. But now—

MARTIN So what you gonna do when customer arrives and there's writing in to do?

TULL I dun't know. Muddle through. Don't you worry about me. I'll find a way. Now you. Out the back. Great deal of mending to do today. Them two whores we hired to yesterday got into an awful fight on account of them both going after the same customer – him being the only customer a-loitering in Covent Garden – and ripped the dresses awful. So you put that thread to good use.

MARTIN Yes, Mrs Tull.

MARTIN *goes to exit.*

TULL Martin –

MARTIN Yes, Mrs Tull?

TULL Nothing. Just...

MARTIN You frightened?

TULL Frightened? No. Watched him often enough, in I? Show the sluts the dresses. Bargain with the sluts. Write the sluts' money in the book. Can't be so hard, can it?

MARTIN No. Can't be so hard.

TULL Wish me luck?

MARTIN Good luck.

Exit **MARTIN**.

Pause. The shop bell rings. Enter **PRINCESS SERAPHINA** – *a large man in a dress.*

PRINCESS Hello. Hello. Howdeedo.

TULL …

PRINCESS Looking for your husband.

TULL …

PRINCESS I'm looking for work.

TULL …

PRINCESS See. I have a good hand.

He picks up a garment.

This one's been hurried. Poor thread in a poor light, I should say. And if you're working with poor thread in a poor light you gotta have great skill otherwise – now this *[his own dress]* is my own work. Now you look at the way the lace meets the body here. Perfect match. And you compare that work *[the dress from* **TULL***'s shop]* to this. No comparison. Heaven and Earth. Shit and silver. Come run your hand over it. See.

He takes **TULL***'s hand and runs it over his dress.*

What do you think of that?

TULL What are you?

PRINCESS Princess Seraphina. Howdeedo.

TULL You're a man.

PRINCESS Thass right.

TULL In a dress.

PRINCESS Thass right.

TULL *(calls)* Stephen. Stephen. It's a man. In a dress.

Enter **STEPHEN** *at great speed.*

STEPHEN Told you: no work here.

PRINCESS But my rates are fair.

STEPHEN I'll call the watch.

PRINCESS No rates fairer than mine. No work better than mine.

STEPHEN Then let some sodomite take you on. Let 'em look to their own.

PRINCESS I'm not a sodomite.

STEPHEN Or molly or mary or ingle. Whatever you are.

PRINCESS No, no. I'm a man as ever you are.

STEPHEN Listen to it. Man. Rigged up like that.

PRINCESS *(to* **TULL***)* See, when I'm dressed in trousers I get awful vicious. I think the whole world's against me and I strike out with my fists. But in a dress—

STEPHEN I don't want – no.

STEPHEN *staggers.*

TULL Oh, love.

PRINCESS Please, I gotta eat. Not asking for charity. I'm a good worker.

STEPHEN Agh. Burning. Agh.

TULL *(to* **PRINCESS***)* You're gonna kill him.

STEPHEN Agh.

TULL *(to* **STEPHEN***)* Sit yourself down. Thass it.

STEPHEN Aaaaagggh.

TULL You got no right. Come in here trying to kill him. *(to* **STEPHEN***)* Thass it, love. Hold on. I'm here. I'm here for you. *(to* **PRINCESS***)* You be on your way.

PRINCESS I'm only asking—

TULL And I'm saying: No. See – good Lord made two natures. Him. Thass man. And then – bit of his rib – woman. Thass me. There in't no room for third sex. You're against Nature. No wonder he got burning in the head.

PRINCESS That in't me. Oh no.

TULL Oh yes.

PRINCESS Burning in the head? In't me. Burning in the head? Thass pox. On account of all the sluts he's fucked, that is.

TULL No, no, no. I in't listening. Go, go, go. You mincing dog. You swivelling no-prick. Out. Out.

She pushes **PRINCESS** *out of the shop.*

Oh, Stephen. In't it a wicked creature? Wicked creature saying evil words.

STEPHEN You did well there, me love, see him off. You've gotta be strong once I'm carried off.

TULL No. That in't gonna—

STEPHEN Oh yes. Wun't be long before I'm dead as dead.

TULL No, love.

STEPHEN More fits 'an ever now. Burning in me head night and day.

TULL No – good Lord in't gonna carry off man of industry, man of business. It's the makers, it's the savers, it's the spenders and traders who are most blessed. In't no love like the Lord's love of business. Thass what you said.

STEPHEN Listen. He's taking me cos… he's taking me cos I'm bad.

TULL No. Good man.

STEPHEN See, he loves business, what he dun't love is…lustful thoughts.

TULL You in't had lustful thoughts, Stephen.

STEPHEN Oh yes, my love. Multitudes of 'em. Night and day.

TULL Then thass me to blame. Thass woman tempting you.

STEPHEN No, me love, in't you. And I've done lustful deeds.

TULL No, no.

STEPHEN Oh, how can you be so blind? You must have seen—

TULL Seen nothing.

STEPHEN You must have heard.

TULL Heard nothing.

STEPHEN In't you even wondered? When I in't...took you for twenty years.

TULL Thass the way with marriage. First year is always nothing but lovemaking, after that – blue moon. Any Old Wife'll tell you that.

STEPHEN See – there's God of industry, yes. And he smiles on London now. Gonna make us greatest city in the world. But then there's – oh, love, I got Eros whispering in me ear all the day long.

TULL Then you gotta fight him.

STEPHEN And I try. God says: Make money. But Eros says—

TULL You wanna buss a little, love? You wanna take me? That what you want? Come. I know it in't much of a body but I'm willing. I'm yours, love, you must do with me as you will.

TULL *pulls up her skirts.*

STEPHEN There's been others.

TULL No.

STEPHEN There's been hundreds of others.

TULL What's that? Can't hear you.

STEPHEN All the day long. Ledger? Ledger's a lie. There's been monies out to buy whores, monies out for trinkets for my sluts, there's been drinking and gambling with doxies,

there's – that's why we in't got new stock. Thass why you're, always mending. That's why we got so few customers.

TULL *(sings unaccompanied during the above)*
OUR RATES ARE FAIR
SO CLIMB THE STAIR
TO TULL'S, TO TULL'S, TO TULL'S.

STEPHEN Listen to me. I'm gonna be struck down! I'm gonna die! I'm gonna burn for ever! One more lustful thought and I'm gone!

Bell rings. Enter **AMELIA** *and* **AMY**.

AMELIA Well, will you look at this. New stock! *(to* **AMY***)* Thank fuck the good Lord has smiled on me at last. I'd almost given up hope. All the old stock's fucked and the only customers we see is a Lord who wants a whipping once a week and a Critic of Plays who promises to pay another day. And how's a whorehouse to thrive on that? But now this – oh, won't they come from miles around to fuck this?

TULL Stephen—

STEPHEN That's it, love. See to the customers.

AMELIA Every day I've been waiting for those bloody coaches to arrive from the country – and out they step – lame girls, starved girls, girls with fingers missing, girls with hair on their chins and breath like a fart – and then: out she steps. Come to Mother, I say ,and here we are. Now then – shepherdess for this one.

AMY I never cared for sheep. Family's been shepherds for years. But – used to hear them bells ringing round them bloody beasts' necks and I'd think: Fuck you. Wun't have to live like this much longer. It's the bells of London for me.

AMELIA Thass right. Gonna make your fortune in London.

AMY Fortune? Dun't know about that. Fair amount, I reckon. Got a clean body, willing manner.

AMELIA Do you have a shepherdess?

TULL Don't know. Stephen—

STEPHEN Measure her first.

AMY Mother always made my clothes.

AMELIA Well, I'm Mother now.

TULL You miss her?

AMY Oh no. I never cared for her. Shepherd's wife. Thass a stupid thing to be, isn't it?

TULL She'll miss you.

AMY Oh no. Fourteen children. One less'd be a blessed relief, I should say. Though I was always the fairest.

TULL Is that so?

AMY Oh yes. They'd all say – from preacher to pigman – 'By God, that's a fair child' and they'd try for a fumble but I thought: No. For I shall be a whore in London and make my money and ride through here in a carriage and gob on you.

AMELIA Maidenhead too? Oh Lord, in't He smiling down on me today. Got a Sir Somebody willing to pay twenty guineas to feel a hymen snap and see the blood come.

AMY Twenty guineas? Fuck me. Twenty guineas. In't it a marvel what a body's worth?

TULL Is this the manner of thing you had in mind?

AMELIA No. I want higher on the leg, a cap, a crook.

TULL Might have something out the back. If you wanna – *(to* **AMELIA***)* He had a turn, gotta rest himself.

Exit **TULL** *and* **AMELIA**. *Pause.*

AMY Well, I better...

She starts to take off her dress.

You ever been to the country?

STEPHEN No.

AMY Country's alright for a child. But then I grew, see?

STEPHEN Yes?

AMY Do you think I'll make a good whore?

STEPHEN Don't know.

AMY Don't you think I'm fair?

STEPHEN Fair enough.

AMY In't that a wonder? Twenty guineas to take a maidenhead, shall we look at it?

STEPHEN At...?

AMY Oh, fetch a mirror and let's look at my little marvel.

STEPHEN No.

AMY Oh, here.

She has found a little hand mirror. She puts it on the floor. She pulls her skirts up to her knees and stands over the mirror.

Now open up and...no. Can't see it yet. I shall need you to hold the mirror higher. Here.

AMY *holds the mirror out to* **STEPHEN**.

STEPHEN No. Can't.

AMY Oh please, sir. You gotta help me. It's a grand day when a girl finds her body in't just eating and shitting, in't it? Day when a girl discovers she's a commodity.

STEPHEN But there's lustful thoughts.

AMY Oh no. Ain't no lust in a whore. Just business. Thass why God smiles on 'em.

STEPHEN My lustful thoughts.

AMY In't much lust in just looking, is there? I shan't let you touch. Come.

She hands **STEPHEN** *the mirror. She sits on the counter, pulls up her skirts, opens her legs.*

Now, sir, look into me.

Reluctantly, **STEPHEN** *does so.*

See hymen?

STEPHEN I don't...reckon maybe...

AMY Now mirror up and let's marvel at Katie Cunt together.

Enter **TULL**, **AMELIA** *and* **MARTIN**. **AMELIA** *carries a shepherdess dress.*

AMELIA Now isn't this just the thing? Quick, miss. Don't delay.

AMELIA *and* **AMY** *exit to put on the dress.* **STEPHEN** *sees* **MARTIN**.

STEPHEN Oh, back at last, are you? Wanderer returns. Well, I hope you give him sharp words. You spoil him with soft tongue. Can't make him your infant.

TULL Yes, Stephen.

STEPHEN Oh, wife, I know you wanted an infant.

TULL Oh yes. We both wanted that. Infants.

STEPHEN Hundreds of 'em, eh?

TULL Hundreds? Oh. That'd wear a body out.

STEPHEN Dozens of 'em. Calling out night and day. Mum Mum Mum.

TULL Dad, Dad, Dad.

STEPHEN And that never happened but –

TULL Oh, I wanted to hold on to 'em. Wanted that more than all the world. Just my body never could.

STEPHEN Don't fret yourself, love.

TULL Heart said kid. Head said kid. Just body could never hold on for more ' un a month.

Enter **AMELIA** *and* **AMY** *in the shepherdess outfits.*

AMY Oh, dun't I look wonderful? They'll all be standing to attention when I walks past.

AMELIA At last. Back in business.

STEPHEN *clutches at his head.*

AMY *(recites)* Lost, sir, lost, sir, searching high and low

Looking for my sheep, sir – oh where did they go?

Oh pity me, oh pity me – a poor simple Jill

Who only wants a flock, sir.

To drive up her hill.

STEPHEN Aaagh.

AMELIA I'll hire a boy. Run through the streets crying: Best fuck in London.

STEPHEN Oh. Lust. Lust.

TULL You gotta fight it, Stephen.

AMY Oh yes. I'm the one they all want a fuck. Look at me. Look at my bubbies. Rise and fall. Rise and fall.

STEPHEN Oh, love. Lord's gonna strike me down.

TULL Think of ledgers, Stephen. Think of monies in. Monies out. Balance. Surplus.

AMY There never was a girl like me. Oh, in't I wonderful?

AMELIA He'll cry: Come and fuck her, each and every one.

TULL Figures. Numbers. Stock.

AMY Cunt. Cunt. Cunt. In't I got a wonderful cunt?

STEPHEN Aaaaggggghhhh.

TULL Don't let it into your head.

AMY Look up me. Come into me. Work away. Make me whole.

AMELIA Good Lord, for what you have sent me – thank you, thank you.

AMY Oh, the smell of me. Oh, the taste of me.

TULL *grabs the ledger – holds it up in front of* **STEPHEN**.

TULL Numbers. Add 'em up. Total 'em. Carry 'em forward.

STEPHEN Can't see'em. Dancing.

AMY How do you want me? Forwards? Backwards? Bring your friends, bring your family, cos Amy's here.

STEPHEN Aaagggh.

TULL *flies at* **AMY**, *hitting her with the ledger.*

TULL Stop that, miss. Just you – stop that.

AMELIA Mind my stock. Don't damage the goods.

TULL Cover your mouth, girl. That's evil. That's muck.

AMY Old woman. You're dry. I'm wet. In't that right, sir? I'm moist. *(to* **MARTIN***)* Come on, boy, you want me? Oh, there's me flock. Baaa! Baaa! Baaa! Come, ram – tup away. Baaaa!

STEPHEN Aaaaghh. Lord's coming for me now.

TULL No. Stephen. Stay. Stay.

STEPHEN Can't hold out much longer. Aaaaagggh!

TULL You gotta live, love.

STEPHEN Aaagggh. Quick – you gotta listen. Running the business. So much to tell you. Quick. Aaaagh. Lessons to give you.

STEPHEN *collapses.*

TULL Stephen – no.

STEPHEN Ledger's yours now, love. Shop's yours. Aaaaggggh.

TULL But, Stephen, I don't know how. Stephen, I can't.

STEPHEN Aaaaggggh.

STEPHEN*'s body convulses several times and is then still. Pause.*

TULL Come on, love. You gotta come and teach me, love. Love. Can't go 'til I'm ready. Not ready to be alone. Love. Love. I'm here for you, love. Stephen. Stop that. You're a good man. Oh Lord.

Pause.

AMY It weren't me, was it?

Scene Two

NO. 2: "FUNERAL, MOTTO TWO AND WAKE"

CHORUS

THE WIDOW'S IN A SORRY STATE
WITH HUSBAND DEAD AND GONE
BUT TEARS WON'T BRING BACK
MILK THAT'S SPILT
AND THE WIDOW CARRIES ON.

The tally shop. A wake. **STEPHEN TULL***'s body lies in an open coffin. A large number of people – men and women – among them the whores – including* **AMELIA**, **AMY**, **MARY GRANTON** *and* **MARY BOLTON**. **AMY** *is still in the shepherdess outfit. They've all been drinking heavily for some time. A couple of musicians play. People are dancing drunkenly. Enter* **MARTIN**.

MARTIN Ho there. Ho there.

Music stops.

Widow says: Thank you for coming. But now she's took to her bed.

AMELIA Oh no, that isn't right.

MARTIN Took to her bed and she in't coming out.

AMELIA Widow's gotta join the wake.

Mourners agree.

MARTIN Thass what she says and she says: Go home now.

AMELIA What? Quick jig and a mug of ale and off we go. Oh no. Dance 'til you drop. Drink 'til you reel. More beer—

MARTIN No. You gotta go.

BOLTON Beer, boy, beer.

MARTIN There in't no more.

AMELIA And strike up there.

The band starts...

NO. 3: "WAKE TWO"

but **MARTIN** *shouts them down.*

MARTIN No!

The band stops.

BOLTON Bit of pleasure. Thass all we want.

CRANTON. Shit old life. Wake comes along, you gotta make the most of it.

BOLTON You wanna enjoy yourself, boy. Tally shop in't gonna last long, you ask me.

MARTIN Oh no. Carrying on. You'll see.

CRANTON You wanna look for a new trade, boy. Less you wanna starve. Who's got a head for business? Not her. Not you.

AMELIA Come on, boy. Dance while you can. Music!

The band plays

NO. 4: "WAKE THREE"

the mourners dance. Finally, **TULL** *enters.*

TULL Thass enough now. Time to go. Finished now.

Silence.

See, it's just me and him now. Thass proper way to send him off. Always said to me: "My love, the rest of the world is either customers or thieves. And as long as we make sure the customers fill our purse and the thieves dun't snatch it, then what do we care for them? The world is you and me and there's an end to it." So just you leave us be. I got a lot I want to ask him.

AMELIA D'you think he'll answer?

TULL He'll find a way. Wun't you, love?

AMELIA D'you think you could ask him about new stock for the shop?

TULL Oh no, in't that—

AMELIA See Sir Somebody is calling on our shepherdess tonight and once Sir Somebody has had her, then I'll have some capital. And I'll be looking to invest.

TULL No. Tally shop—

AMELIA And I reckon dress up my old stock. Launch 'em afresh. Take these two girls. Rigged well—

CRANTON Oh yes, Mother. New markets for us.

AMELIA Rigged well, they could fetch a fair price.

BOLTON Thass right.

AMY That'll take work. Make these two fresh?

CRANTON Oh no. We was beautiful once. Wun't we, Mary?

BOLTON Thass right.

AMELIA So just you ask him where you can find—

TULL No. That in't the manner of thing I had in mind.

BOLTON See, told you. Giving up the shop.

MARTIN No. You in't gonna do that, are you?

TULL I dunno. I wanna ask him—

MARTIN But we gotta carry on, we gotta do that, there's new stock—

TULL I gotta decide. Now leave us be. All of you. Just widow and husband and past and future to decide. Please.

They all start to exit.

AMELIA *(to* **AMY***)* Come. Let's get you ready for Sir Somebody.

AMY *(to* **CRANTON** *and* **BOLTON***)* You must be in the next room and when I make a noise so – *(stamps on the floor)* – you must make a noise so: baaaa!

BOLTON Oh Lord. Who'd be a whore?

Exit **AMELIA**, **AMY**, **CRANTON**, **BOLTON** *and the remaining mourners. Pause.*

MARTIN You heard her. New stock and we'll—

TULL Thass enough from you, boy. Leave a widow in peace.

MARTIN Mrs Tull—

TULL Peace.

Exit **MARTIN**. *Pause.*

Stephen. Speak to me.

Pause. Enter **PRINCESS**. **TULL** *doesn't see him.*

Stephen, love. Wanna tell you, wanna ask you, Stephen.

PRINCESS Waste of time. Dead's dead, ask me.

TULL Oh no.

PRINCESS See when Mother died—

TULL Dun't want to know about you! Dun't want to know about Mother!

PRINCESS Thass right. Anger. That's how it took me.

TULL Is that right?

PRINCESS Vicious all me life, I was. And then when Mother died – Lord, didn't know no bounds. Fighting. This un, didn't look at me right, this, un didn't speak to me right – smash 'em. Strike out with me fists. That how you feel?

TULL Yes.

PRINCESS But then I think: Mother's dead. And I think: life goes on. And I think: Put on one of her dresses.

TULL That dun't seem right.

PRINCESS Thass what I thought. Dun't seem right. And I carried on: anger, fighting. But all the time dress is in a trunk, calling me. And I thought: No, can't. Mother'll come back and tell me no.

TULL Thass right. "Thass my dress, son, and you got no right."

PRINCESS But one day, feeling was too strong. And I went to the trunk and I put on that dress.

TULL "No, son, no."

PRINCESS And, oh, putting on that dress I felt such…peace and such calm.

TULL "Don't you go swishing about, son. Gave birth to a man and a man's what I wants you to be."

PRINCESS No. Never spoke to me. Cos she's dead and I'm alive and I worn her dress from that day to this.

TULL We still got things to discuss. He'll tell me…

PRINCESS Now he's gone –

TULL No.

PRINCESS I'd be good for the shop. See, I'm a character. Everyone loves a character. Everyone calls out to me: Howdeedo, Princess, and I call out: Howdeedo. And with a character—

TULL Shop might close.

PRINCESS No, you gotta—

TULL I need to ask him. Please.

PRINCESS Any time you want me, you just call out: Howdeedoo, and I'll come running.

TULL I'll remember.

Exit **PRINCESS.**

Stephen, Listen, love. I been thinking and I… Oh, Stephen. I in't up to tallying. Little mouse, Stephen. In the dark with a needle, thass me. Little mind, little voice. Dry old, barren old body. I can't… Come back, love. Just a few minutes. "Thass alright, my love. You sell the shop and move on." Stephen. Please.

Enter **MARTIN**. *He carries a large bundle.*

MARTIN Look! Look! Look!

TULL What you got there, Martin?

MARTIN New stock. Look.

He opens the bundle and pulls out some very grand dresses.

In't that wonderful? See? In't that something'll fetch a good price? And here. Now – you ever seen fairer than that?

TULL Where it all come from?

MARTIN Business'll take a turn with this, wun't it? Once word is out, we got this in stock, there'll be customers crowding in morning and night.

TULL Where you get it?

MARTIN It's what he would want. Business got to go on.

TULL They stolen goods?

MARTIN Dun't matter.

TULL Thought so. Martin. Thass wrong. Stolen goods.

MARTIN But that's business.

TULL Not this business.

MARTIN *sighs.*

Or you'll swing, boy. That what you want?

MARTIN *shrugs.*

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