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CONCORD
THEATRICALS

MRS BEETON SAYS...

A new musical based on the life
and times of Isabella Beeton

Book by Helen Watts

Music and lyrics by Eamonn O'Dwyer

SAMUEL FRENCH

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Music and lyrics by Eamonn O'Dwyer
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MRS BEETON SAYS...

First performed at the Redgrave Theatre, Bristol, 6 December 2018, by Bristol Old Vic Theatre School

ISABELLA BEETON	Beshlie Thorp
SAM BEETON	Jonathan Oldfield
ALICE	Heidi Parsons
SARAH	Anna-Kate Golding
AMABEL	Karla Kaucky
MYRA BROWNE	Eva O'Hara
COMMENTATOR/CORSET MAN/DOCTOR	Shane David-Joseph
FRED GREENWOOD/BARKER	Lawrence Haynes

Other parts played by members of the company

Piano	Pamela Rudge
Violin	Wendhy Sierra
Cello	Christine Johnstone

Director	Paul Clarkson
Musical Director	Pamela Rudge
Designer	Bronia Housman
Choreographer	Clare Fox
Lighting Designer	Joe Stathers
Sound Designer	Evie Nichols
Voice Coach	Carol Fairlamb
Dialect Coach	James Gitsham
Assistant Director	Sara Malik

Production Manager	Jon Sherwood
Production SM Supervisor	Alix Abram
Stage Manager	Eve Kershaw
Deputy Stage Manager	James Goldsworthy
Assistant Stage Managers	Rosie Tredray, Charlotte Woolley
Production Electrician	Chris Horseman
Lighting Operator	Jack Tosney
Sound Operator	Daniel Davies
Prop Maker	Hebe Perry
Construction Manager	Andy Scrivens

Set Construction	Maya Barker, Daniel Davies, Ambra Fuller, Harriet Hollinshead-Lee, Jack Tosney, Rosie Tredray, Oliver Wareham, Charlotte Woolley
Scenic Art	Julie O'Conner, Emma Inge, Radhika Parekh, Daisy Tomlin
Costume Supervisor	Janie Powell
Costume Assistants	Amber Bowerman, Isabel Cope, Madi Barnicoat

Mrs Beeton Says... was originally commissioned by Bristol Old Vic Theatre School in 2018.

MRS BEETON SAYS... SONG LIST

1: Mrs Beeton Says...	Women
1b: Before Epsom	Underscore
2: Epsom	Commentator and Company
3: Transition	Women
3a: Together	Undersore
4: I Love A List	Bella
5: I Belong To You	Bella and Sam
6a: Letter – On Fabric	Fabric Woman
6b: Letter – On Entertaining	Entertainment Woman
6c: Letter – On Corsetry	Corset Man
6d: Letter – From Cupid's Letter Bag	Cupid's Letter Bag Woman
6e: Fred	Underscore
7: You There	Bella, Sarah and Amabel
8: How We Rise	Barker and Company
9: Samuel – 25th August 1857	Women
10: Give A Girl A Book	Bella, Sam and Women
10b: Into The Streets	Underscore
10c: She Knew Your Name	Underscore
11: Wisdom	Women
11b: Bella Reads	Underscore
12: All Things To All Men	Bella and Women
13: Kitchen Trials	Bella
14: You There (Reprise)	Bella
15: Office. 1860	Underscore
16: The Grand Tour	Company
17: Watch The Light	Bella
18: Reviews	Company
18b: Transition into Butcher's	Underscore
18c: Transition into Bella's Kitchen	Underscore
19: Don't You See	Myra and Bella
20: Trial, 1865	Underscore
21: Usque Ad Finem	Underscore
22: Finale – The Domestic Anthem	Women

AUTHOR'S NOTE ON CASTING

Other characters, spoken letters and voice-overs may be distributed among the company at the discretion of the Director. In the original production the actors playing Bella and Sam did not play any other roles, but the remaining four women and two men multi-roled all the other ensemble parts. Accents should represent the full variety and breadth of the British Isles.

SETTING

The action of the play takes place predominantly in London.

TIME

1854–1865.

CHARACTERS

Cast size optional – min 5F 3M

ISABELLA (BELLA) BEETON – (f, 20s) A bright and ambitious young (woman
SAM BEETON – (m, 20–30s) Her husband, an entrepreneurial publisher
BESSIE – Isabella's sister (20)
ESTHER – Isabella's sister (18)
COMMENTATOR – (m, any age)

MYRA BROWNE – (f, 20s) A middle-class Clapham housewife
ALICE – (f, 18) A West Country maid
SARAH – (f, 20–40s) A Northern mother of eight
AMABEL – (f, 20–40s) A wealthy London society lady

FRED GREENWOOD – (m, 20–30s) Sam Beeton's assistant
FABRIC WOMAN – (f, 30–60s)
ENTERTAINING WOMAN – (f, 20–30s)
CORSET MAN – (m, any age)
CUPID'S LETTER BAG WOMAN – (f, 20–40s)

BARKER – (m, 20s–60s) A side-show performer & social commentator
PETE JONES/CHARLIE BROWNE/LORD CADOGAN – (m, 20–40s)
PEGGY JONES – (f, any age)
SALLY VINE – (f, 20s)

GEORGE FREEMAN – (m 30–50s) A chauvinistic engraver
PROSTITUTE – (f, any age)

CALF'S FEET WOMAN – (f, any age)
TRIPE WOMAN – (f, any age)
SNIPES WOMAN – (f, any age)
HORSERADISH SAUCE WOMAN – (f, any age)
RABBIT STEW MAN – (m, any age)
SYLLABUB WOMAN – (f, any age)

ENGLISH TOURISTS – (any ages)
FRENCH SHOP ASSISTANT – (f, any age)
GERMAN WOMAN – (f, any age)
DOCTOR – (m, any age)
BUTCHER – (m, any age)
JUDGE – (m, 30–60's)

[MUSIC NO. 1. "MRS BEETON SAYS..."]

We see four **WOMEN**, *in four separate kitchens, reading from* Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management. *They read aloud from the book in turn.*

MYRA

MRS BEETON SAYS ...

ALICE "As with the commander of an army, or the leader of any enterprise, so is it with the mistress of a house"

SARAH

MRS BEETON SAYS ...

AMABEL "To be a good housewife does not necessarily imply the abandonment of proper pleasures"

ALICE

MRS BEETON SAYS ...

MYRA "The mistress of the house is the first and the last, the Alpha and the Omega in the government of her establishment"

AMABEL

MRS BEETON SAYS...

SARAH "She is a person of far more importance in a community than she usually thinks she is"

MYRA

MRS BEETON SAYS THE THINGS A WOMAN NEEDS TO KNOW

SARAH

HOW TO RUN YOUR HOUSEHOLD,

AMABEL

RAISE YOUR CHILDREN,

MYRA

ROAST YOUR CHICKEN,

ALICE

KNEAD YOUR DOUGH!

AMABEL

MRS BEETON SAYS HER METHODS SET A GIRL APART,

ALL

MRS BEETON SAYS TO BE A WOMAN TAKES A CERTAIN KIND OF ART.

MYRA "Man is a *dining* animal. Creatures of the inferior races eat and drink; man only *dines*."

SARAH and **ALICE**

MRS BEETON KNOWS HOW SUET PUDDING SHOULD BE MADE.

MYRA and **AMABEL**

MRS BEETON TELLS US WHAT TO SERVE AT LUNCH,

AMABEL

HOW TABLES SHOULD BE LAID.

ALL

MRS BEETON MAKES IT ALL SO SIMPLE AND CONCISE;
MRS BEETON KNOWS THAT EVERY WOMAN NEEDS A WOMAN'S GOOD ADVICE.

SARAH "There is no more fruitful source of family discontent than badly cooked dinners and untidy ways..."

ALL

TIME WAS ...
YOU WERE EXPECTED TO JUST KNOW THE THINGS THAT NO ONE EVER TOLD YOU.
TIME WAS...
YOU BURNT THE BISCUITS,
WOKE THE BABY
TORE THE LINEN
AND YOUR HOUSEMAID
OR YOUR HUSBAND

OR YOUR MOTHER
OR HIS MOTHER
WOULD THINK LESS OF YOU,
IMPRESS ON YOU
THE NEED FOR YOU
TO TRY AND DO
A BETTER JOB OF DOING ALL THE THINGS THAT NO ONE EVER SHOWED YOU HOW...
BUT NOW...

MRS BEETON TEACHES US THE RUDIMENTS OF LIFE;
HOW TO BE A LADY AND A MOTHER AND A HOSTESS AND A WIFE.
MRS BEETON SHARES WITH US HER WISDOM AND HER GRACE
MRS BEETON KNOWS THAT EVERY WOMAN HAS A BATTLEFIELD TO FACE.

MRS BEETON LIKENS US TO GEN'RALS OFF TO WAR!
MRS BEETON KNOWS EACH DAY IS HARDER THAN THE DAY THAT WENT BEFORE.
MRS BEETON TELLS US WE ARE SISTERS IN THIS FIGHT.
WHETHER IT'S THE DINNER
OR THE CHILDREN
OR THE WEANING
OR THE FLOWERS
OR THE MEASLES
OR THE LINEN
OR THE CLEANING
JUST KNOWING THERE'S AN ANSWER AND A METHOD AND A MEANING
GIVES ME HOPE THAT I AM DOING SOMETHING RIGHT ...
MOTHERS, SISTERS, DAUGHTERS, WIVES,

MRS BEETON SAYS...UNITE!

MYRA *(reading from* Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management*)* "If I had known that this book would have cost me the labour which it has, I should never have been courageous enough to commence it."

The song ends, and **MYRA** *is left on the stage.*

(showing the huge book to the audience) "Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management". Just look at the size of it!

I imagined Mrs Beeton to be stout, red-faced, covered in flour and dripping. There was *no* question in my mind that she wasn't a formidable middle-aged matron with decades of culinary experience. I mean… *(referring to the book)* Look at it! Her household must be a kingdom of organisation!! –"a place for everything and everything in its place."

Before I got married, I used to imagine what it would be like to be the mistress of a house. I imagined my devoted husband sitting by the fire with two or three little darlings playing with their toys; a maid would keep away the dust, a housekeeper would keep everything in order and, of course, a cook would prepare delicious dinners! That was the dream, and then I married Charlie – an insurance man from Putney…so that was the end of that. I would have to be the maid, housekeeper and cook. I had never so much as boiled an egg or ironed a shirt, but how hard could it be?!

[MUSIC NO. 1b. "BEFORE EPSOM"]

1854 31st May.

The company are at the races and watching with binoculars.

ISABELLA *(eighteen) has recently returned home from her school in Germany.* **ISABELLA** *is dodging through the crowds during the race with her two sisters* **ESTHER** *and* **BESSIE.** *All three girls have estuary accents that lean to cockney when excited.* **SAM** *(twenty three) has had an unlucky day gambling on the horses.*

BELLA Bessie! Esther! Get over here!

BESSIE Can you see the finish line?

BELLA Yes! *(squeezing past people)* 'scuse me sir… *(calling)* Hurry, the race is about to start!

BESSIE Where's Mama?

BELLA She's taken all the children for a walk with Granny.

BESSIE It must seem strange for some of the younger ones to see their home over-run with people.

BELLA The grandstand is hardly a home, more somewhere we all sleep when there isn't a race.

BESSIE Still, they don't know any better.

ESTHER *spots* **SAM** *as she scrambles past him. She hurries to gossip with her sisters.*

ESTHER Did you see who we just passed?

BESSIE No –

BELLA Who?

ESTHER That's Sam Beeton.

[MUSIC NO. 2. "EPSOM"]

BELLA *(in disbelief)* No! *(She stands on tiptoe to get a look at him/looks through binoculars?)*

BESSIE Who's he? I mean I know the name –

ESTHER You know Eliza and Viccie's older brother.

BESSIE The one who went to prison?

ESTHER No, the other one! The publisher, Samuel Orchart Beeton. You know! Owns a huge publishing house on the Strand...

BESSIE *(clearly disappointed)* Oh!! I thought he was meant to be good-looking?

ESTHER He's not *bad*-looking... *(asking her opinion)* Bella, what do you think?

BELLA I think he's delicious!

The girls squeal with delight.

COMMENTATOR

LOVELY WARM, SUNNY DAY HERE FOR THE EPSOM DERBY
THE HORSES ARE LOOKING BRIGHT-EYED AND READY TO GO ... OH!
HOSPODAR'S LOOKING A BIT FRISKY ON THE OUTSIDE,
HE'LL NEED TO SIMMER DOWN A BIT BEFORE THEY BEGIN.
THERE'S LORD DERVISH IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FIELD AT FIVE TO ONE
BEING THE HOT FAVOURITE TO WIN.
ANDOVER SEVEN TO TWO, KING TOM TEN TO ONE, HOSPODAR ELEVEN TO ONE,
HERMIT THIRTY-THREE TO ONE, OH... THEY'RE BEING CALLED TO LINE UP!
ANDOVER AND KING TOM LOOKING *VERY* FINE INDEED ...

BELLA Mr Beeton?

SAM *looks up at her.*

SAM Yes?

BELLA *(coyly)* You don't remember me, do you? We used to play together as children... *(***SAM** *looks perplexed)* ...when you used to visit your grandmother in Milk Street.

SAM *(remembering)* Isabella Mayson?! You're so grown up! My sisters sometimes talk about you in their letters from Germany. Will you be seeing them soon?

BELLA I doubt it. I've left school now.

BESSIE Bella! Quick, the race is about to start!

COMMENTATOR

THERE'S THE SIGNAL AND THEY'RE *OFF*!
TWENTY-SEVEN HORSES HAVE MADE A BEAUTIFUL START,
HOSPODAR IS TAKING AN EARLY LEAD,
WITH MARC ANTONY, CANUTE, AND WILD HUNTSMAN FOLLOWING BEHIND;
ANDOVER GATHERING FULL STRIDE, DERVISH, KING TOM,
AND SETTLING TOWARDS THE BACK MARSYAS, NEW WARRIOR,
AND THE EARLY BIRD BRINGING UP THE REAR.

NOW THEY'RE APPROACHING ABOUT HALF WAY,
HOSPODAR IS BEING PURSUED BY ANDOVER, WITH
MARC ANTONY AND KING TOM DROPPING OFF –

There are frenzied shouts from the crowd as the race comes to its end.

SAM Come on King Tom!

BELLA Come on Andover!

There is a rivalry between them.

CHORUS

AAAAH!

COMMENTATOR

WHAT'S THIS? HERMIT HAS NOW TAKEN THE LEAD,
WITH ANDOVER CLOSE BEHIND,
KING TOM, DERVISH, KNIGHT OF ST GEORGE, MARSYAS,
EARLY BIRD, AND NEW WARRIOR!
KING TOM DESP'RATELY TRYING TO GET AHEAD,
BUT IT'S NO GOOD! KING TOM CAN'T GO ON!

SAM Come on!!!

BELLA Looks like you backed the wrong horse Mr. Beeton!

COMMENTATOR

HE DOESN'T HAVE THE PACE!
THE TWO LEADERS ARE BEGINNING TO WEAKEN

ALL

SENDING ANDOVER INTO THE LEAD!

COMMENTATOR

KING TOM IS DESP'RATELY TRYING TO MOVE FORWARD BUT
IT'S NO GOOD!
ANDOVER! ANDOVER!
ANDOVER STRIDES AHEAD AND WINS THE DERBY!

The crowd celebrate the win.

SAM *(frustrated at losing)* Bugger!

SAM *tears up his losing ticket.*

BELLA I'd best collect my winnings. Goodbye Mr. Beeton.

SAM Will I see you again?

BELLA *(coyly)* Perhaps... If you need any tips.

She leaves.

[MUSIC NO. 3. "TRANSITION"]

CHORUS *(variously)*

MRS BEETON SAYS...

"Friendships should not be hastily formed, nor the heart given at once to every newcomer."

MRS BEETON SAYS...

"Care must be taken that the love of company, for its own sake, does not become a prevailing passion."

MRS BEETON SAYS...

"There *are* ladies who uniformly smile at everything, and who do not possess the courage to reprehend vice."

MRS BEETON SAYS...

"That said, trifling occurrences and petty annoyances should never be mentioned to your friends."

Cabbie

1856. **ISABELLA** *is sitting by herself in the carriage. She has a piano book on her lap and is practising 'air piano'. She is waiting for* **SAM** *and is agitated that he is late.*

BELLA *(She sees* **SAM** *approaching the cab.)* What took you so long?

SAM *(as he gets into the cab. To* **CABBIE***)* Drive on! *(to* **BELLA***)* Sorry.

BELLA *throws herself at* **SAM***, kissing him passionately.*

(calming her down, overlapping) I hope we're not late for your piano lesson.

BELLA Who cares? I'd rather be here with you. *(***SAM** *is flattered.)* We could talk about furnishings.

SAM *(without enthusiasm)* Furnishings?

BELLA For our home in Pinner. Tell me about it.

SAM Again?

BELLA Please. What have you done since last week? Did you get the table? And the curtains?

SAM Oh, no... I haven't yet –

BELLA What did you decide about the wallpaper?

SAM Nothing. I'll get some samples.

BELLA You said that last week.

SAM What have *you* been doing?

BELLA Oh, you know. Teaching the younger children their French verbs, helping Granny Jerrom make the children some new clothes.

SAM What did you make?

BELLA Four petticoats, two dresses and three shirts.

SAM Lord!

BELLA And all week I've had the strangest notion...

SAM What?

BELLA *(coyly)* Do you really want to know?

SAM Go on...

BELLA I kept thinking what fun it would be to be locked in a cupboard with you.

SAM *(going to kiss her)* You naughty girl!

BELLA *(she quickly breaks away)* Why didn't you come to Epsom last Sunday? *(***SAM** *sits back defensively.)* I looked out for you all afternoon.

SAM I was busy with work.

BELLA My parents think you are avoiding them.

SAM I doubt they care, they hate me!

BELLA They don't hate you.

SAM There was nothing but hate from the first moment they saw me!

BELLA Well, you don't do yourself any favours!

SAM How do you mean?

BELLA Missing dinner engagements! Sending me letters on any old scrap of paper that's lying in the office... you know I cried all Sunday evening when you didn't show...it's as if you don't want to see me!

SAM You know that's not true. Things are just very busy at the moment. Please Bella, try and understand.

BELLA I'll try, but it does seem unfair. We're getting married in two weeks and I barely see you! I hope it will be different when we're married.

SAM Of course it will! *(pause)* You'll be pleased to know there are lots of cupboards in our new home!

He kisses her neck.

BELLA *(dreamily)* To think...in a few short weeks I will become your property.

SAM What?

BELLA I just thought –

SAM I don't want to *own* you, I want to love you! I want us to make our choices together, equally, you and me...

BELLA Really?

SAM There isn't a person whose opinion I value more than yours Bella. Whatever we face, we'll face it together.

BELLA *smiles. The carriage comes to a halt.*

[MUSIC NO. 3b. "TOGETHER"]

Look...when you get back to Epsom, why don't you send me a letter reminding me of all the things I need to do for our house? I want you to be happy there.

He kisses her goodbye.

[MUSIC NO. 4. "I LOVE A LIST"]

BELLA Goodbye.

The carriage disappears. **BELLA** *is alone at her writing desk.*

As requested, my love, I have made a list of all the things left that we need for our little house together. One bread-grater, one colander, three block-tin saucepans, one large boiling-pot, two sets of skewers, one flour box and three jelly moulds. *(With satisfaction)* Ooo...

I LOVE A LIST.
JOTTING DOWN,
CHECKING THROUGH,
ENSURING NOTHING HAS BEEN MISSED.
I LOVE A LIST.
TOTTING UP,
TICKING OFF,
A LITTLE FLICKING OF THE WRIST!
IT'S A SKILL, IT'S AN ART
IT'S A THRILL, WELL, IT'S A START ...
OOH, I LOVE A LIST!

She returns to her letter.

Now, Sam, I really must insist we have the following: salad forks, fish forks, oyster forks, dinner forks, fruit forks, and of course dessert forks.

OH AND CHEESE FORKS.

SEE, I LOVE A LIST.
NICE AND CLEAR,
NICE AND CLEAN.
AND IT'S THE BEST WAY TO ASSIST!
WHEN YOU'VE A LIST:
'IS IT DONE?'
'LET ME CHECK;'
'NO IT'S NOT.'
YOU SEE? ANYONE CAN GET THE GIST!

HOW ELSE CAN YOU EVER HOPE TO EXECUTE A PLAN?
LEAVE IT UP TO CHANCE?
LEAVE IT TO A MAN?

BETTER MAKE A LIST!
WHAT TO DO,
WHAT TO BUY;
THE THINGS ON WHICH WE WILL SUBSIST!
MAKE A LIST!
A TO Z,
ONE TO TEN,
OFTEN MORE!
I FIND IT TRICKY TO DESIST!

HOW ELSE CAN YOU EVER HOPE TO REALISE A GOAL?
A WOMAN WITH A LIST IS A WOMAN IN CONTROL …

WE CANNOT WALK THE HALLS OF POWER;
WE CANNOT GOVERN THE LAWS OF MAN;
WE CANNOT SPEAK OF THINGS BEYOND US,
SO A WOMAN DOES WHAT A WOMAN CAN;
WE HAVE TO LOVE, OBEY AND HONOUR;
WE HAVE TO WEATHER EVERY WIND THAT BLOWS;
WE HAVE TO KEEP THINGS TICKING OVER,
AND A WOMAN LIVES BY WHAT A WOMAN KNOWS …

SO MAKE A LIST!
PLAN IT OUT,
THINK IT THROUGH,
BUT BE PREPARED TO BE DISMISSED ...
'DON'T NEED A LIST!'
YES WE DO, YES WE DO, YES WE DO!
I CLENCH MY HAND INTO A FIST!

HOW ELSE CAN WE EVER HOPE TO ORGANISE OUR LIVES?
I KNOW WE'RE NOT YET MARRIED, SAM,
BUT TILL THAT DAY ARRIVES
WE NEED A LIST!

SO I WILL PERSIST!

DON'T YOU SEE, MY DARLING, THIS IS SIMPLY ONE OF MANY,
MANY OF THE WAYS WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO COEXIST?

I LOVE A LIST.

Yours affectionately. B.

I really do...

Marriage

A young, upper-class lady sits at her writing desk.

AMABEL My mother always said that a young lady's main aim in life was to make sure that she was a suitable candidate for marriage. The most desirable of women have a wide range of accomplishments, so it was perfectly logical to me that I should practise the piano, study watercolour and speak four languages – in short, do everything I could to give myself an advantage... I could not have been more prepared.

There I was on my wedding day, triumphant in my achievement, and then it dawned on me, what about the wedding night? I simple hadn't thought beyond the ceremony. Legally I knew that I was now the property of my husband, but what would he actually do with me? I had a *vague* idea from one of the other girls at finishing school, but what if I got it wrong? I was so nervous I could barely

eat the charlotte russe. The worst of it was that I could *only* ask my mother and she said, 'It was not a thing she could be expected to speak of...' Naturally that sent me reeling and I remember thinking, Oh God! Is it really that bad?

AMABEL *laughs, remembering.*

Of course, it was all fine in the end. More than fine. You know, it's frowned upon to say that you actually like "it". Any whiff of enjoyment and you're considered a whore. In fact, I remember reading a piece that said, "The majority of women, happily for them, are not very much troubled with sexual feeling of any kind". I wonder how on earth he came to that conclusion?!

[MUSIC NO. 5. "I BELONG TO YOU"]

10th July 1856 **SAM** *and* **BELLA***'s wedding night.*

ISABELLA *is alone in the room.* **SAM** *appears at the door.*

SAM May I come in?

BELLA Yes. I am ready.

SAM Bella...

BELLA Mrs Beeton now, if you please.

SAM Mrs Beeton...

BELLA

I HAVE YOUR NAME ...

SAM

A NOBLE START.

BELLA

I HAVE YOUR WORD AND YOUR BOND
AND THE WHOLE OF YOUR HEART!
YET I BELONG,
I BELONG TO YOU.

BELLA *awkwardly walks away from him and goes to undress.*

SAM What are you doing?

BELLA *(blushing)* I don't know. What should I do?

SAM *goes towards her reassuringly.*

SAM
YOU TOOK MY NAME ...

BELLA
AN ACT OF LOVE,

BOTH
IN SIGHT OF GOD AND OF MAN
AND THE STARS UP ABOVE,

SAM
BUT I BELONG,
I BELONG TO YOU.

BOTH
ALL THE VOWS ALL THE LAWS
ALL MY THOUSANDS OF FAILINGS AND FLAWS
DON'T MEAN A THING IF YOU ARE MINE
AND I AM YOURS.

SAM
YOU HAVE MY NAME ...

BELLA
SO WE ARE ONE ...

BOTH
THIS IS THE LIFE THAT WE SHARE
AND IT'S FINALLY BEGUN

BELLA
NOW I BELONG TO YOU

SAM
NOW I BELONG

BOTH
TO YOU.

1857 August. Office

The bustle of S.O. Beeton. The office is in a perpetual state of disarray, papers are haphazardly stacked, the desk is a mess. There is no order. **SAM** *has spent the night in the office and is doing up his tie when* **FRED** *walks in. There is an air of morning ritual in their exchange.*

FRED Good morning Mr. Beeton!

SAM *(light and breezy)* Good morning Mr. Greenwood!

FRED And is it a fine day in the world of publishing?

SAM It is indeed! Productivity is high and costs are average –

FRED And income?

SAM Decidedly low…!

FRED Pity!

SAM Still, today is a new and glorious day where anything could happen. I have a good feeling, Fred.

FRED Stayed in the office again, did you? Doesn't Isabella mind?

SAM Not at all.

FRED It can't be long now.

SAM What?

FRED The baby.

SAM Oh, that! Any day!

FRED I expect you're worried about the birth –

SAM Certainly not!

FRED Really?

SAM There's nothing to worry about! It's a mere…effort of nature!

FRED *looks unconvinced.*

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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