

MEMORY LANE

Extract One

SCENE TWO

SONG: IT'S A LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY

*It's a long way to Tipperary,
It's a long way to go,
It's a long way to Tipperary,
To the sweetest girl I know.
Goodbye Piccadilly,
Farewell Leicester Square,
It's a long, long way to Tipperary
But my heart's right there.*

Short burst of A LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY

Bernard: My dad fought in the First World War.

Doris: And so did two of my uncles along with Pat Greenfield's dad from number 4.

Olive: And Mrs White, who lived next door to the Reeds, she lost four brothers.

Doris: Everybody had got somebody who'd lost somebody. My dad worked in the Arsenal

Olive: And my uncle was working there with him.

Olive's Uncle Bob: We were filling shells. There were five of us there, all close friends.

Doris's Dad: They used to call us Canaries...

Olive's Uncle: Because we were completely yellow.

Doris's Dad: And they didn't give us no masks to do this and that stuff ate your lungs away.

Olive's Uncle: Gradually you developed this cough.

Doris: And do you know what? All five of those men died within six months of each other. Eight years after the war ended. My father first.

Olive: Then my uncle and then the other three.

Extract Two-

Doris: I was just ten when my father died. My mother got a widows pension but it wasn't much so she had to go out to work as a cleaner. One of her jobs was in a school so she had to get up really early. She'd get the porridge ready the night before. And then when I got up I'd have a bowl and it'd still be nice and hot, so I never ever went hungry. And then off I'd go to school. I remember one day I was walking back over the common and these two children from my class came up, quite nasty, you know, and they said:

Kid 1 (boy): So where do you live then?

Doris: Well we were just passing this huge big white house where my mum had one of her cleaning jobs, so I pointed to it and said: "In there".

Kid 2 (girl): No you don't!

Doris: Yes I do!

Kid 1 : Let's see you go up the steps and knock at the door then.

Doris: Well I knew that Mrs Japp and her husband who lived in the house were away, but I knew my mum was in there, so I went up the steps to the front entrance. I rang the bell and the butler answered the door, all done up.

Butler: Yes?

Doris: I'm Ada Bliss's girl.

Butler: What do you think you're doing walking up here?

Doris: *(Whispering)* I've just told those children that I live here.

Butler: Ohhh, I see. Well, you'd better come in then.

Doris: So in I went, and it was lovely. I'd never been inside a house like that before. Anyway, he took me downstairs to the kitchen where my mum was working and she said: "What are you doing here?" And when I told her, she laughed. Then she gave me something to eat, and then I walked back to school and after that I was treated with great reverence by those two kids who really did think I lived in that house.

When Mrs Japp came back, she suggested that I might go and wash some steps on a Saturday for a lady she knew in Eliot Vale. I was only

ten at the time but I went along there and one of them met me at the door.

Lady: Here's your pail of water.

Doris: Stone cold it was.

Lady: Now wash and scrub all those steps down.

Doris: Yes Ma'am.

Lady: Then you rinse them off, then empty the water down the road.

Doris: Yes Ma'am.

Lady: Then when you've finished, walk up the side so you don't make a mark on the steps.

Doris: No Ma'am, I mean yes Ma'am. For years after that, whenever I passed that house, my great ambition was always to take a bucket of dirty water and just throw it on those steps.

Lady: Bring me back the pail and I'll give you a penny.

She does so

Lady: Don't spend it all at once.

Doris: Whatever money I made, I gave to mother.

Extract Three-

SCENE NINE

SONG: BYE BYE BLACKBIRD

*Pack up all my care and woe,
Here I go singing low,
Bye, bye, blackbird,
Where somebody waits for me
Sugar's sweet so is she
Bye, bye blackbird
No-one here can love and understand me
Oh what hard luck stories they all hand me.
Make my bed and light the light,
I'll arrive late to-night,
Blackbird bye, bye.*

Olive: Hey Bill, over there, isn't that Lily Avery from number 14? You heard about her, didn't you?

Bill: No, what?

Olive: Well, before the war, she used to work as a chambermaid at one of those boarding houses up in town, Bloomsbury Square. Quite the bottle blond she was. And apparently this foreign man was staying there. He was a dapper little man. He was older than her and I can just see him now in his black jacket and homburg hat and his spats, that's what struck me, these spats. Anyway, he took a shine to Lily.

Furrier: Lily, I would like to give you some money so that you can stop work and stay at home. Then I can take you out in my motor car whenever I'm free. I would be delighted to take you on some trips.

Olive: He had a furriers, a big warehouse place in the east end. And Lily would be dressed up to the nines in all these flashy dresses and fur stoles. Everyone thought they were going to get married and Lily was over the moon, cos of course it would have been a big step up for her.

Furrier: Today we shall go to the coast. Portsmouth, yes?

Olive: It was usually Portsmouth. She told me he was always taking photographs of her with the ships in the background. This went on for a while, and then, I think it was when Hitler was getting very big over there, he didn't come anymore. In the end, she went over to his warehouse and the place was completely empty and he'd gone. Disappeared.

Bill: You mean.....?

Olive: Yes, he must have been a spy.

Bill: Well, blow me down. Often you'd be in the shelter right through till the morning and that man on the radio, Lord Haw Haw, he'd say something like

-