

SIX NIGHTS IN NAPLES

A New Musical

**Book & Lyrics
by
Eden Phillips**

**Music
by
Richard Link**

**Representation
Jean Diamond
Diamond Management
31 Percy Street
London W1T 2DD
020 7631 0400
jd@diman.co.uk**

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Synopsis

A musical comedy in the style of a comic opera, Six Nights in Naples deals with the culture clashes between British soldiers and Italian opera people and between operatic and musical theatre conventions. Characters fall in and out of love and back again in deliberately improbable ways. There is eventually a mystical explanation for everything that happens.

The action takes place on a bare stage representing the stage of the San Carlo opera house Naples in 1943. Scenes in a dressing room and a rehearsal room are denoted by a few simple items of furniture.

Salvatore is alone on the stage of the San Carlo. As he plays his violin he sees in his mind's eye an opera of many years before – *Sei Notte a Napoli* (Overture and Salvatore's Dream). We see and hear what he sees – a scene from the opera, sung by the actors playing Deborah and Wilks, while Fabio, in another life, dances attendance.

British soldiers force their way into the auditorium and confront Salvatore. His dream fades. The senior officer, Mander, and his second-in-command, Brown, question Salvatore and learn that German troops have recently left. While Salvatore sings of the history of the theatre (Io Parlo Inglese) Brown admires its beauty and Privates Brightwell and Owen, the radio operator, wonder 'What the hell are we doing here?' Private Wilks arrives with a basket of food he has been given by Mariangela, the theatre's wardrobe mistress and dresser.

As the Italians and British start to get to know one another they are interrupted by the arrival of Lucia, the opera's prima donna (Lucia's Aria). She is horrified by the 'invasion' of the San Carlo. The soldiers consolidate their position (I Could Be At Home), Brown and Wilks becoming enthusiastic about living in a theatre.

Owen brings in a cable that says that the victorious American troops will expect entertainment when they arrive shortly. Panic ensues, and the Brits try to enlist the help of the Italians (Six Nights In Naples). Mariangela drops a charm bracelet; Brown retrieves it for her.

The following day, in the dressing room where they are now billeted, Brown, Brightwell and Owen discuss their ambitions for peacetime (After The War).

Lucia is furious that the other Italians are prepared to help the invading soldiers (How Dare You) but decides to open negotiations with Mander. As they talk, Mander reads, but doesn't share, a cable saying his wife has left him. Lucia flirts, letting Mander know she can only love a man who can sing. She tells him of her past life and the hardships of the war (Threads), Salvatore and Mariangela joining in.

Wilks sees Lucia's daughter Deborah dancing with Fabio and falls in love with her on the spot. Unfortunately for Wilks, she can only love a man who can dance (Beautiful To Dance).

As if from nowhere, an American officer, Major O'Leary, arrives. In the brash tones of a Broadway producer he informs the assembled company that he has been sent to check the progress of the forthcoming show (Do It My Way). He encourages Salvatore to play his violin and Owen to play the piano. During the song an invisible force propels Mander into singing and makes Wilks dance. Lucia and Deborah instantly declare their love for each of the two soldiers.

At the start of act two, two more nights have passed. Wilks, walking on crutches, talks with Mariangela, telling her that he has injured himself dancing with Deborah and that she no longer loves him. Mariangela commiserates, saying that she too has endured heartache, having been forced to give away her newborn baby (*Threads reprise*).

O'Leary spots a large leather-bound volume that Mariangela has left on the piano and leafs through it. Brown has taken a platonic shine to Fabio. Mander, torn between his wife and Lucia, is confused about his sentiments (*What's That Feeling*). O'Leary reminds everyone that romance has to take a back seat to rehearsals for the show, and instructs the soldiers in theatrical superstitions (*Good Luck*). With time running out, he tells them to turn an opera into a musical. The Italians suggest *Sei Notte a Napoli* (*It Goes Like This*).

As another night passes, the couples (Mander and Lucia, Salvatore and Mariangela, Wilks and Deborah, Brown and Fabio) regret their lack of communication (*Talk To Me*).

The following day, Brightwell and Owen tease Wilks about his failed romance with Deborah (*I Could Be At Home reprise*). O'Leary starts rehearsals. It appears that thanks to him Brightwell has learned overnight how to write a script, and Owen's piano playing has improved. What's more, the invisible force descends and suddenly, hey presto, Wilks can dance again.

As the company rehearses, Fabio drops a charm, clearly from Mariangela's bracelet. Fabio reveals himself to be a girl, and Salvatore and Mariangela realize that 'she' is their long-lost daughter. The two women explain everything (*Serafina*). Brown is delighted that the boy he got along with so well can now be a conventional object of his affections.

O'Leary has disappeared. Mander tries to take control of the show, which is due to open any moment. He begs Lucia to perform, if only because she loves him. She warns him her love is not unconditional (*I Love As I Love*). Mander's voice suddenly deserts him, and he leaves the theatre desolate, hoping perhaps he may fall prey to a German sniper.

O'Leary reappears, hovering on a cloud, and the company realizes that he is the spirit of the San Carlo, Carlo Liri, as referenced in the leather-bound volume he holds. (*Feel The Magic*).

The show starts (*Welcome To Naples*). Mander reappears, holding O'Leary's tam o'shanter that he has found in the street. It empowers him to sing again, and the show within the show continues and ends with the four couples together (*I Love As I Love reprise*). From his cloud, O'Leary gestures to Brightwell and Owen to become a fifth.

SIX NIGHTS IN NAPLES

The San Carlo Opera House, Naples, was founded in 1737 – the oldest opera house in Europe. It is next to the Royal Palace, overlooking the Bay of Naples, and has always been a gathering point for the social elite. The French writer Stendhal observed in 1817 that the San Carlo ‘dazzles the eye and enraptures the soul’. It was rescued from ruin in 1943 by British troops, who staged over 30 variety shows and operatic performances.

That much is true. However, Six Nights In Naples’s story and characters are pure invention and no attempt is made to portray real people or incidents. In fact, quite the reverse: the tone of the musical is as fantastical as the most improbable comic opera.

Characters

Salvatore

50-ish, a violinist (who plays).

Fabio/Fabia

17, apparently a mute, actually a girl masquerading as a boy.

Captain Brian Mander

Early 30s, the senior British officer.

Lieutenant Michael Brown

Late 30s, Mander’s deputy.

Private Tom Wilks

About 18, a handsome, naïve cockney dreamer. Also plays a Singer.

Private Donald Brightwell

Early 20s, cheeky and confident, a Scot.

Corporal Fred Owen

Early 20s, willing but stubborn and not very bright, a Yorkshireman. Plays the piano.

Lucia Tivolini

Mid 40s, a former star of the San Carlo.

Deborah

18, Lucia’s daughter. Also plays a Singer.

Mariangela

40-ish, wardrobe mistress and dresser to Lucia.

Major Carl O’Leary

Mid-30s, an American soldier.

Musical Numbers

Act One

1. Overture/Salvatore's Dream	Deborah, Singer, Fabio (mute)
2. Io Parlo Inglese	Salvatore, Mander, Brown, Brightwell, Owen, Wilks
3. Lucia's Aria (p.12)	Lucia
4. I Could Be At Home Home	Mander, Brown, Brightwell, Owen, Wilks
5. Six Nights In Naples	Mander, Brown, Company
6. How Dare You	Lucia, Mariangela, Deborah, Mander, Brown
7. After The War	Brown, Brightwell, Owen,
8. Threads	Lucia, Mander, Salvatore, Mariangela
9. Beautiful To Dance	Deborah, Wilks
10. Do It My Way	O'Leary and Company

Act Two

11. Threads <i>reprise</i>	Mariangela
12. What's That Feeling	Mander
13. It Goes Like This	Lucia, Mariangela, Salvatore, Company
14. Good Luck	O'Leary, Company
15. Talk To Me	Company
16. I Could Be At Home <i>reprise</i>	Wilks, Owen, Brightwell
17. Beautiful To Dance <i>dance</i>	Wilks, Deborah
17a. Salvatore's theme	Orchestra
18. Serafina	Mariangela, Fabia, Company
19. The Rehearsal	Company
20. I Love As I Love	Lucia, Mander
20a. Welcome to Naples theme	Violin
21. Feel The Magic	Owen, O'Leary
22. Welcome To Naples	Orchestra, Brightwell, Owen, Wilks
23. I Love As I Love <i>reprise</i>	Mander, Lucia, Company

ACT ONE

Music 1: Overture and 'Salvatore's Dream' – Orchestra, violin, Deborah, The Singer, Fabio (mute)

The music starts as we see SALVATORE on the dusty, bare stage of the San Carlo Opera House, Naples. The theatre hasn't been used since before the start of the war. We can see the back wall and a few tattered curtains hanging from the flies. A battered upright piano and stool sit neglected on either side of the stage. There are some rickety wooden steps from the stage to the auditorium. The proscenium is decorated to look as much as possible like the actual proscenium of the San Carlo. We hear the sound of bombs falling some distance away and, closer but only occasionally, gunfire.

SALVATORE is playing his violin as if in a dream. He is slender and ascetic looking, his thinning hair immaculately brilliantined. He plays a solo version of the theme from 'I Love As I Love'. The orchestra takes up the theme. Behind SALVATORE, as if in his mind, we see FABIO, in a previous life, DEBORAH and the actor playing WILKS as THE SINGER acting out a scene from the San Carlo's original production of Sei Notte a Napoli. They are dressed in 19th century costumes and move – though not dance – in time to the music. Then, accompanied by SALVATORE, they sing, in Italian...

DEBORAH

Si canta presto e lo saprai

SINGER

Noi sappiamo oggi

L'amore e di piu bello

DEBORAH, SINGER

E domani lo stesso qui

SINGER

Sappremo si di piu

DEBORAH

Sappremo si di piu

DEBORAH, SINGER

Molto, si, di piu!

DEBORAH, SINGER

Amo e amo

Secondo me, secondo me

SINGER

Senza dubbio

Come sono

Sono vero

A me stesso

DEBORAH, SINGER

La domanda per tutti

E lo stesso per me -

[The dream is interrupted by a loud banging from the back of the auditorium. The orchestra stops. DEBORAH, THE SINGER and FABIO disappear. SALVATORE plays on, oblivious. Soldiers burst in from the back of the stalls. One of them shines a powerful flashlight on SALVATORE. The soldiers are British troops, led by Captain Brian MANDER.

With him are Lieutenant Michael BROWN, Private Donald BRIGHTWELL and Corporal Fred OWEN. OWEN carries radio equipment. They advance towards the stage. All but MANDER, who has a pistol, have rifles at the ready]

Mander

[Shouts] Stay where you are! *[SALVATORE plays on]* Stop!

Brightwell

What a bloody racket. Shut up!

Mander

Be quiet Brightwell. I'll deal with this. *[From the bottom of the steps leading to the stage, loudly and slowly]* Do...you...speak...English?

Salvatore

[Coming out of his trance and taking the violin from beneath his chin] Mi dispiace. I no hear you.

Owen

Bloody 'ell. We just kicked the doors in. *[He dumps his radio down with a bang]*

Brown

Be careful, Owen.

Salvatore

[Holding his hands to his ears] The bombs. Always the bombs.

Mander

[To SALVATORE] So you do speak English?

Salvatore

Si.

Music 2: 'Io Parlo Inglese' - Salvatore, Soldiers

SALVATORE

Parlo Inglese, un po

English, a little bit

Only a little bit

Learnt long ago

All I can tell you is welcome to Napoli

Benvenuti and ciao

Here in San Carlo the spirit of opera

Lives in the walls

On the stage, in the air

How you say? Everywhere...

Forever and now

[speaks] Are you going to shoot me?

Brown

No, of course not. I'm not a savage.

SALVATORE

**No, you not a savage, I know
Germans break into here
Make noise and interfere
Suddenly go
They have no time for the making of opera
Only the making of war
Marching around like they own-a da place
Heads in the air
With the step of the goose
How you say? It's vamoose...
It is true, io so**

[Private WILKS, in 1943 uniform, enters at a rush from the back of the auditorium, his rifle slung across his back. He carries a basket of bread and other food]

Wilks

[To MANDER] Sorry sir. [He hands him the basket] Grub.

Mander

You idiot. You could have been killed. *[He hands the basket to BROWN]*

Wilks

A lady gave it me.

Mander

You can't just go wandering the streets.

Wilks

I didn't, honest sir. She was hiding in a little Punch and Judy thing at the front.

Brown

[To MANDER] Probably the box office, sir.

Wilks

She gave me a big smile. *[Taking the basket back from BROWN]* And this.

Brown

Fall in, Wilks.

Brightwell

[Taking the basket from WILKS] I'm starving.

Owen

Me too.

Wilks

[Taking the basket from BRIGHTWELL] I ain't eaten since we got off the landing craft.

Mander

All in good time.

Brown

[Taking the basket from WILKS and setting it down, to MANDER] Could I have a word please sir?

[MANDER goes over to BROWN. During the following, SALVATORE reacts with puzzlement to the words addressed to him]

Owen

[To BRIGHTWELL and WILKS] Well lads, I've one thing to say...

OWEN

What...the hell are we doing here?

WILKS

Never been far from home, no never before

BRIGHTWELL

[To SALVATORE] **They shoved us off on a beach**

Told us we gotta reach

Naples –

SALVATORE

– It's Napoli –

OWEN, WILKS, BRIGHTWELL

So we unhappily

Marched on...

On and on and on and on

OWEN

[To SALVATORE] **Three days of it**

OWEN, WILKS, BRIGHTWELL

On and on and on

BRIGHTWELL

[To SALVATORE] **Three nights of it**

WILKS, BRIGHTWELL. OWEN

What the hell are we doing here?

OWEN

[To SALVATORE] **My feet got wet the minute I waded ashore**

Now they're starting to rot

BRIGHTWELL

What the hell have we got?

Can't stand no more of this

OWEN

[To SALVATORE] **Sand in each orifice**

BRIGHTWELL, WILKS, OWEN

[To SALVATORE] **Sod it!**

Salvatore

Che?

OWEN, WILKS, BRIGHTWELL

March and march and march

WILKS

[To SALVATORE] **Three days of it**

OWEN, WILKS, BRIGHTWELL

March and march and march

BRIGHTWELL

[To SALVATORE] **Three nights of it**

[The focus switches to BROWN and MANDER]

MANDER

[To the other SOLDIERS] **Take care what you say**

We must not give away what we're doing here

BROWN

He may have the ear of the enemy here

Who can tell?

BROWN, MANDER

Maybe he'll run to the Hun and expose us

MANDER

And we'll lose all we've won

And before we've begun

We will have to withdraw

Or be prisoners of war

BROWN

I think he's okay

But I hear what you say, Captain Mander, sir

We must be discreet with whomever we meet

Hereabouts

MANDER, BROWN

Maybe it's pie in the sky to feel safe here

BROWN

But the men need a rest

So perhaps it is best

At least for tonight

To dig in and sit tight

Mander

Very well.

Brown

I say, this really is a beautiful theatre. *[He spots WILKS'S basket]* Golly! There's a sort of sausage here. Come along men, we can eat. *[WILKS, BRIGHTWELL and OWEN gather round and pick out bread and salami. BROWN to SALVATORE]* And how about you...er...?

Salvatore

Salvatore. *[He gestures to the basket]* Antipasti. Mariangela has friends on the black market. *[Gesturing again]* Prego.

SALVATORE

Nothing of the world outside

San Carlo I can see

Now you're here

I no fear

It is meant to be

**Now you stay here
Find a way here
Keep the world away
From me**

BRIGHTWELL, WILKS, OWEN

**What...the hell are we doing here?
Never been far from home, no never before
Must have something to eat
When you're dead on yer feet**

WILKS

[TO SALVATORE, brandishing his food] **Scoff all this stuff**

**But it isn't enough
For a sandwich...**

BRIGHTWELL, WILKS, OWEN

**On and on and on and on
We're slogging it
On and on and on
We're flogging it**

Brown

You know, boys, we could make history here.

SALVATORE

**I will never leave San Carlo
Only when I die
When you go
You will know
All the reasons why
I will stay here
Live each day here
Every day until
I die**

Wilks

[To BRIGHTWELL] Till he dies, Scotty?

Brightwell

He's got it cushy all right.

Salvatore

Kushi?

Owen

Aye. Better to be fiddling about in 'ere than yomping from Salerno with a radio on yer back.

Mander

[To OWEN] Do I have to remind you again? There's a war on.

MANDER

[To SALVATORE, talk/sing] **Are you here all on your own?**

We must find a billet –

Headquarters – until it

Is definitely known

Whether it's safe to dig in and consolidate –

SALVATORE

Scusi, no understand...

Brown

[Talking over music] Bisogna scoprire dove il nemico.

Salvatore

Ah, capisco. Non lo so. I don't know.

Mander

[To BROWN] I didn't know you spoke Italian, Brown.

Brown

Only a little. I didn't want anyone to think I was fraternizing with the enemy.

Mander

Fraternize away.

Brown

I was asking where the German troops are. He says he doesn't know.

*[The musical themes combine, singing simultaneously *]*

* SALVATORE

I will never leave San Carlo

Only when I die

When you go

You will know

All the reasons why

I will stay here

Live each day here

Every day until

I die

Every day until I die!

* BRIGHTWELL, WILKS, OWEN

What...the hell are we doing here?

Never been far from home, no never before

They shoved us off on a beach

Told us we gotta reach

Naples or Napoli so we unhappily

Marched on...

On and on and on and on

Three days of it

On and on and on

Three nights of it

* MANDER

Take care what you say

We must not give away what we're doing here

BROWN

Better keep mum

MANDER

Easy for some

What the hell's this fellow doing?

BROWN, MANDER

Here we stand alone

ALL

Every day until we die

BRIGHTWELL, OWEN, WILKS

[Shout] **Three nights of it!**

[WILKS detaches himself from the group and wanders in and out of the wings, fascinated by all he sees]

Brown

[TO SALVATORE] Mi chiamo Michael Brown. *[Pointing to MANDER]* Ecco Captain Mander. Are you alone here in this glorious building?

Salvatore

Certo.

Mander

No one else?

Salvatore

Nessuno. No one.

Brightwell

It's brutal outside.

Owen

I could hear shots.

Brown

German snipers probably.

Mander

[To SALVATORE] You're sure there's no one else in the theatre?

Salvatore

Si si. I am sure.

Mander

[To the others] All right, I think it's safe. Brightwell, Owen...?

Brightwell, Owen

Sir!

Mander

Wilks?...Where's Wilks?

Wilks

[Emerging from the wings] Here sir.

Mander

Come on, pay attention. Go...erm...behind the scenes...er...

Brown

Backstage.

Mander

Thank you. Go backstage and do a recce.

Brightwell, Owen, Wilks

Yes sir.

Mander

And watch out. This chappie may not be telling the truth.

Salvatore

I tell the truth, Inglese. Many years before...I play your Covent Garden. I learn the English.
E la mia lingua seconda.

Mander

What?

Brown

He says it's his second language sir.

Salvatore

Come, please.

[He ushers BRIGHTWELL, OWEN and WILKS into the wings. A bomb explodes in the distance]

Brown

[To MANDER] Are we going to dig in here?

Mander

Why not? Good strong walls and no windows. It's ideal.

Brown

It's the most beautiful building I've ever seen.

Mander

So you keep saying. That's not the point, Brown. We've got to keep ourselves out of

trouble and wait for orders from Brigade Headquarters. We need to get the radio set up. Owen! Where the bloody hell's Owen?

[Music 3: 'Lucia's Aria'. There is a piercing, long, high note from the back of the auditorium. LUCIA has entered. Dressed in elegant street clothes of the 1930s, she is the very model of a diva only just past her best. Head held high, she stalks down the aisle like a panther and comes up the steps to the stage. Walking respectfully behind her is FABIO]

LUCIA

Ah! Aspetti!

[Glissando]

Aspetti!

[Glissando]

Qui, resti qui

Resti qui, insisto

Cara figlia

Aspetti!

Aspetti!

Ma figlia

Perche tu...

Mander

Jolly good!

Lucia

Wait! I 'aven't finished! *[Beat]* Adesso, in Inglese!

[BRIGHTWELL, OWEN and WILKS re-appear from the wings open-mouthed. SALVATORE steps forward and accompanies LUCIA on the violin]

LUCIA

[Music] **Ah, my daughter**

[Music] **Ah, beloved**

Don't leave me

Believe me

You must be

Close by my side

Ah, by my side

Never stray

Stay!

[She finishes the aria. FABIO steps forward and shows her off with mock curtain calls. SALVATORE joins in. The SOLDIERS applaud]

Mander

Madam, who are you?

Lucia

[Horried] You don't know? I am Lucia Tivolini.

Brown

[To FABIO] And who are you?

Lucia

[To BROWN and MANDER, with an imperious beckoning finger] Please, please. Talk to me. [MANDER opens his mouth to speak. Before he can utter...] Fabio told me there are soldiers in the opera house. [MANDER tries again, but LUCIA will not be interrupted] Inglese? [MANDER and BROWN nod] The enemy. I will tell you only I am the prima donna of the San Carlo. You may torture me but I will say nothing more. Capisce?

Mander

Dear lady, I am the commanding officer of –

Lucia

Please leave. Fabio, I go to my dressing room. Come and tell me when these ‘gentlemen’ have departed. *[She sweeps out]*

Salvatore

Signora Tivolini! Aspetti, un momento! *[He follows her out]*

[OWEN and BRIGHTWELL approach FABIO]

Owen

‘Allo lad, are you part of this opera mob?

[FABIO backs away]

Brightwell

Cat got yer tongue?

Wilks

Speak up, mate.

Owen

We won’t bite.

[FABIO turns on his heels and runs after LUCIA and SALVATORE. During the following dialogue two areas appear upstage: one representing a dressing room, with a make-up table and mirror, before which LUCIA is seated; the other area shows the corner of a rehearsal room with a table]

Brown

Bit of a shy boy.

Brightwell

Bit of a nancy boy if you ask me.

Wilks

Well you’d know.

Owen

I think he’s –

Mander

That will do. All of you. Owen, get the radio set up. Send a message to HQ. Request orders.

Owen

[Reluctantly] Yes sir. [He picks up the radio and exits]

Mander

Brightwell, go...er...

Brown

...backstage...

Mander

...and see if you can put the kettle on, there's a good chap.

*[Intro to **Music 4: 'I Could Be At Home'**]*

Brightwell

Nothing like a cup of tea to cheer us up, eh sir?

Mander

Precisely. After all we've been through.

Wilks

We're safe now. *[MANDER and BROWN exchange glances]* Aren't we sir?

[WILKS and BRIGHTWELL exit. During MANDER and BROWN's section of the song that follows, WILKS, BRIGHTWELL and OWEN re-appear in the designated areas: OWEN in the rehearsal room, BRIGHTWELL and WILKS in the dressing room. In between adjusting her make-up, LUCIA stares at them as they unpack their kit]

Brown

I must say, I could really make myself at home here.

Music 4: 'I Could Be At Home' – Mander, Brown, Wilks, Brightwell, Owen

MANDER

**In the streets outside there's a war on
It's not the time to think or talk of home
We have responsibilities
For billeting, so stand at ease
And only concentrate on reaching Rome...**

Brown

Rome?

MANDER

**It's where the Allies have to be
Before we go home**

BROWN

**I could be at home here
Standing on the stage
Makes me realize
Okay, fantasize**

**My dancing's all the rage
See me do the soft-shoe
Though I'll never play King Lear
I've seen what stars can do
Dancing in revue
And I can do it too
Right here**

[Speaks] You know sir, like Jack Buchanan. *[He tries a few inept steps]*

Mander

Have you taken leave of your senses, man? *[He watches BROWN dance]* And who's Jack Buchanan?

Brown

Oh sir! Didn't you see *This'll Make You Whistle?*

BROWN

[Sings] **This'll make you whistle
Doo-doo dee-dee-dee!
Bound to make you whistle
Doo-doo dee-dee-dee!**

Mander

Pull yourself together.

Brown

But don't *you* feel at home here sir?

MANDER

**I could be at home if
Berkshire flew out here
In the Rose & Crown
Slowly swilling down
A pint of English beer
Sitting in the garden
Susan never far away
Gentle as a breeze
Wafting through the trees
Doing what we please
All day**

Brown

Who's Susan, sir?

Mander

My wife, you idiot.

Brown

I didn't know you were such a romantic.

Mander

I'm not. I'm English. Now come on, I want to check the men are settled in.

[As MANDER and BROWN exit, the focus switches to the dressing room - BRIGHTWELL and WILKS - and the rehearsal room where OWEN is setting up the radio]

WILKS

**I could be at home here
Better here than Bow
Sod the city bells
All the City smells
Glad I had to go
I could be at home here
No need to share a bed
Is that a powder puff?
People say I'm tough
I like this theatre stuff
Instead**

Lucia

Basta! Get out! You have invaded my home.

Brightwell

Och, sorry m'lady.

[They stand to attention, but stay in the dressing room. OWEN moves from the rehearsal room to the piano on the main stage]

ALL *[except LUCIA]*

**Home...
They say there's no place to compare it with
Home...
That's where the heart is so they say
Home...
Depends on who you have to share it with
But I'll find my home one day**

OWEN *[fiddling with the piano keys]*

**I could be at home if
I could play and sing
Every lass in Leeds
Knows just what she needs
A Yorkshire pearly king
The women will come flocking
When I'm tickling the keys
Every little miss
Queuing for a kiss
Cos I can play like this *[running his fingers up the keys ineptly]*
With ease**

BRIGHTWELL

I could be at home if

**Mother came to stay
Brought my old tin bath
Put it in the hearth
Let me soak all day
Took me to the pictures**
[To LUCIA] Were you ever in a flick? [LUCIA stares at him]

Lucia

[Speaks] Flick?

BRIGHTWELL

**Sitting in the dark
Watching Lassie bark
Hoots mon, what a lark**
WILKS
You're sick

[The radio bleeps. OWEN goes to it and puts on headphones]

ALL [except LUCIA and OWEN]

Home...

They say there's no place to compare it with

Home...

That's where the heart is so they say

Home...

[OWEN tears off his headphones, leaves the rehearsal room and rushes to the stage]

Depends on who you have to share it with

But I'll find my home one day

I'll find my home...

BRIGHTWELL

...one...

ALL [except LUCIA and OWEN]

... day

Owen

[To MANDER] Sir, sir! There's a message from HQ!

Mander

They know we're in Naples?

Owen

Yes sir. I told them we're in a theatre.

Brightwell

Hope the Germans aren't listening in.

Brown

They're too busy getting out of the city. *[Disgusted]* Nazis. Give it here. *[He takes the cable from OWEN]*

Mander

Give it here. *[He snatches it from BROWN, thinks better of it and hands it back to OWEN. To OWEN]* Read it.

Brown

Read it, Owen.

Owen

“Stay where you are. Naples almost secure. Americans due in six days.”

Mander

Saturday. *[Sigh of relief]* Home and dry.

Owen

There’s more, sir. *[He reads]* “They will expect entertainment.”

Mander

[Horried] What?!

Owen

[Reading more] “Organise a show. Boost morale.”

Brown

[Smiling] I say.

Mander

[To OWEN] Why the hell did you tell them we’re in a theatre? This is all your fault.

Owen

Sorry sir.

Mander

And now we’re supposed to put on a show.

Brown

[Enthused] A show!

Mander

[Unenthused] And in six days.

Owen

Aye, in six days.

Brown

I hear Noel Coward can write a play in three.

Mander

[Sarcastically] Well perhaps you could ask him to parachute into Naples this evening and get his pen out.

Brown

I believe he’s attached to the Navy.

Mander

I bet he is. See sense, man. Wilks! Brightwell! Where are they?

Brown

Backstage.

[WILKS and BRIGHTWELL hear the command and leave the dressing room. LUCIA tuts and attends once more to her make-up as the focus switches away from the dressing room]

Brown

I do see what you mean, sir. With the best will in the world I don't think those two and Owen are going to be able to put on a show.

Mander

[Panicking] Now let's keep calm. Today is Sunday. We need to be ready by next Saturday. But...

Music 5: Six Nights In Naples - Company

MANDER

We've only got six nights in Naples

BROWN

Six nights to go

OWEN

Six nights in Naples

MANDER

We've got to put on a show

BROWN

[Pointing his toes] **Six days to master**

The way to point a toe

OWEN

I'll play along

[To MANDER] **If you sing a song**

MANDER

[Looking at them aghast] **Suppose we just say no?**

Owen

Orders is orders, sir.

Mander

I'm well aware of that, thank you.

Owen

You've told us often enough.

[MANDER gives OWEN a testy look. BRIGHTWELL and WILKS enter the main stage]

Brightwell

You called, sir?

MANDER, BROWN

We've only got six nights in Naples

MANDER

And five British troops

To make entertainment –

OWEN

Five nincompoops

Where are the showgirls?

[To WILKS] Put on a dress

Wilks: What?!

BROWN

Then maybe Lucia

Would like to appear

And help us out of this mess

ALL

Six nights in Naples

Six nights to go

Six nights in Naples

To put on a show

BROWN

Who's got the talent?

The get-up-and-go?

BRIGHTWELL, WILKS

A wing and a prayer

Might just get us there

OWEN

Suppose we just say no?

Mander

As you so rightly say, Owen, orders are orders.

BROWN

We must show the world

There's more to us

Than meets the eye

BRIGHTWELL

No

OWEN

No

WILKS

No

I'd rather

Curl up and die

[Music continues. From the stalls FABIO comes in, followed by DEBORAH and MARIANGELA. They run up the stairs on to the stage]

Mander

Women! Thank God!

Owen

Aye, thank God.

Mariangela

[Breathless] Scusi, signore. I believe Signora Tivolini is in the theatre.

Mander

Signora who?

Deborah

My mother, Lucia Tivolini. Fabio says she is here.

Brown

Ah yes. She is in her dressing room. *[To MARIANGELA]* I don't believe I've had the pleasure.

Mariangela

Pleasure?

Brown

Please introduce yourself.

Mariangela

[Looking puzzled] What is this 'pleasure'?

Mander

Oh, for God's sake. WHO ARE YOU?!

Mariangela

I am Mariangela Simeoni. I am the...how you say...?

Deborah

Mariangela is the dresser to my mother. And when my mother comes to the theatre, she comes too. For the costumes, you understand.

Wilks

[To DEBORAH, fascinated] Are you an actress?

Deborah

In the chorus.

Owen

Chorus girl eh?

Brightwell

Will you be in our show?

Deborah

What show?

MANDER, BROWN, BRIGHTWELL, OWEN, WILKS

We've only got six nights in Naples

BROWN

Six days in fact

MANDER

Six days to learn how

To sing and dance and act

MANDER, BROWN, BRIGHTWELL, OWEN, WILKS

Please will you help us?

The show must go on

BROWN

We haven't a clue

'Bout what we should do -

MARIANGELA, DEBORAH

Suppose we just say 'non'?

BROWN

Six nights in Naples

[To FABIO] Raising our hopes

You're young and handsome

Just show me the ropes

Teach me some dances

I'd love to tap

We'd make a great team

'Cos you always seem

To be a reliable chap

[BROWN slaps FABIO on the back, nearly knocking him over. SALVATORE enters]

Salvatore

Ah, Mariangela. Signora Tivolini wishes to see you.

Mander

Ask her if she will appear in our show.

Salvatore

What show?

Brown

We're trying to organize an 'entertainment'. We need help.

SALVATORE, MARIANGELA

[Looking despairingly at one another]

Has the world gone crazy?

What are we meant to do?

SALVATORE

We only know the opera's ways

MARIANGELA

We're opera people through and through

SALVATORE

I don't know what they call 'show'

MARIANGELA

I couldn't start to guess

SALVATORE

What are these people telling us?

MARIANGELA

I think they mean they're in a mess

MANDER

We must show the world

**There's more to us
Than meets the eye**
MARIANGELA, DEBORAH, SALVATORE
**I don't know
How to help
But I will surely try**
ALL
We will surely try

ALL
**Six nights in Naples
Six nights to go
Six nights in Naples
To put on a show
In desperation
I turn to YOU!**

[They point at one another. Pause]

OWEN
A wing and a prayer
BRIGHTWELL
Might just get us there

BROWN
A buck and a wing
WILKS
I think is the thing

ALL
**We haven't a clue
'Bout what we should do
With you and you and you
And you and you and you
And you and you
You
[shout] And YOU!**

[Pointing again]

[A ping from the orchestra. MARIANGELA has dropped something. She goes quickly to pick it up, but BROWN gets there first]

Brown

[Holding up a charm bracelet] How pretty. Oh dear, there's a piece missing.

Mariangela

Give it to me please. *[BROWN is still examining it]* It's meant to be like that. *[Holding out her hand]* Please?

[BROWN hands her the bracelet]

Mander

Jolly good. I'm sure the costumes are in safe hands.

[A chord from the orchestra. LUCIA appears on stage. She bears down on SALVATORE, DEBORAH, MARIANGELA and FABIO. FABIO, caught between BROWN and LUCIA, ducks and exits at a rush. SALVATORE follows]

*[Music: intro to **Music 6, 'How Dare You', fast, impatient]***

Lucia

[Thunderous, to MARIANGELA and DEBORAH] How dare you!

Owen

[Winking at BRIGHTWELL and WILKS] Here comes the star of the show. Come on lads, we know our place.

[They withdraw to the side of the stage and observe the scene with amusement]

Music 6: 'How Dare You' – Lucia, Mariangela, Deborah, Mander, Brown

LUCIA

[To MARIANGELA and DEBORAH] How dare you leave me all alone

I've been unseated from my throne

By rough Inglese

You must be crazy

To welcome wild invaders

They'll ravish and degrade us

My virtue's hanging by a thread

You might as well leave me for dead!

DEBORAH

How dare you throw another drama

Can't you see

MARIANGELA

Oh can't you see

DEBORAH

Your diva days are over, mama

Let it be

MARIANGELA, DEBORAH

Oh let it be

DEBORAH

Forget your virtue, mama

No-one will hurt you, mama

Unless they tell you what is true

MARIANGELA

That your retirement's overdue

MARIANGELA, DEBORAH

That your career at last is through

LUCIA

Oh how dare you

Show me disrespect

DEBORAH

Oh how dare you

What did you expect?

MARIANGELA, DEBORAH

There's nothing for us

DEBORAH

Stuck in the chorus

MARIANGELA, DEBORAH
You've shown us nothing but neglect

LUCIA
[To MARIANGELA] **It's true you're nothing without me**
So bow and scrape and bend the knee
How dare you leave a
San Carlo diva
A mess in threads and tatters
Get me a frock that flatters
[To DEBORAH] **And as for you, ungrateful swine**
This time you've really crossed the line

MANDER
Dear ladies be a little calmer
If you please

BROWN
Yes, calmer please

MANDER
This really is no time for dramas
Such as these

BROWN
No dramas please

LUCIA, MARIANGELA, DEBORAH
[To MANDER, and BROWN] **Who asked you to butt in here?**

LUCIA
Since you have us shut in here
Free speech is all we have that's free

DEBORAH
And if we choose to disagree

BROWN
Oh please don't disagree
LUCIA, MARIANGELA, DEBORAH

We keep it in the family

LUCIA
[To BROWN and MANDER] **Oh how dare you**
Come and interfere

DEBORAH
[To LUCIA] **Oh how dare you**
Try and rule by fear

MARIANGELA, DEBORAH
There's nothing for us

DEBORAH
Stuck in the chorus
MANDER, BROWN
[They've heard DEBORAH's complaint too often]
I think it's time to disappear

Lucia
[To MANDER and BROWN] **Stay where you are!**

Deborah

[To LUCIA, furious] What do you mean “leave you”? I didn’t even know you were here.

Mariangela

[Imitating FABIO’s mime] Fabio said you’d sent for us.

Lucia

You know very well I cannot be in the theatre without my dresser and my...*[looking contemptuously at DEBORAH]*...supporting cast.

Deborah

I’m your daughter. Or had you forgotten?

Lucia

I forget nothing.

Deborah

Except perhaps that you haven’t sung here for years.

Lucia

I am not here to sing. I am here to protect the San Carlo from foreign invasion.

Mariangela

But what can you do, signora?

LUCIA

Oh how dare you

Have so little fight?

I’m a fighter

I know what is right

The war’s not over

Until it’s over

And the Inglese put to flight

[Dialogue over music]

Mander

There are a quite a lot of us, dear lady.

Lucia

I count cinque.

Brown

[In MANDER’S ear] Five.

Mander

We are merely an advance party.

Brown

There are Americans in Naples too.

Lucia

Pah! *[To BRIGHTWELL, WILKS and OWEN]* Get out!

[They go at a rush]

DEBORAH

**Mama you're crazy, can't you see
There's nothing left for you and me**

MARIANGELA

**Please don't depress her
She needs her dresser**

DEBORAH

**She needs a mental doctor
The one who first unlocked her
From mad delusions years ago
Or she'll be floating down the Po**

Lucia

[Screaming with rage] Traitors!

MANDER

**Dear ladies please be gentle
And polite**

BROWN

Yes, be polite

MANDER

No need to talk of matters mental

BROWN

Or to fight

MANDER

No, please don't fight

MARIANGELA, DEBORAH

**You don't know what we've been through
The tantrums we have seen through**

LUCIA, MARIANGELA, DEBORAH

Oh, all the stories we could tell

Now we've got you as well

BROWN, MANDER

And we've got you as well

ALL

This war's a living hell!

[Music break as everyone shouts at everyone else. Having heard the noise, SALVATORE and FABIO enter and observe the scene. Then...]

MANDER, BROWN, LUCIA, MARIANGELA, DEBORAH *[wagging fingers at each other]*

How dare you

Tell me what to do

How dare you

I know more than you

The way you treat me

You'll never beat me

You'll never stop me

LUCIA

You'll never stop me!

ALL

How dare you say the things you do!

[The light on the radio starts flashing. The orchestra plays a message in Morse Code. The rehearsal room comes into focus. BRIGHTWELL and OWEN have made makeshift beds out of old curtains and costumes and are fast asleep. There is an unused 'bed' where WILKS should be. Music: 'Six Nights' melody. BROWN enters]

Music 7: 'After The War' – Brown, Brightwell, Owen

BROWN

[Slowly] Sleepless in Naples

Five nights to go

Five nights of nightmares

Until we put on a show...

Brown

Wakey wakey. Come along... *[BRIGHTWELL and OWEN stir]*

BROWN

Time for parade, lads

Stand by your beds

One thing's for sure

We're fighting a war...

Owen

[Yawning] I've got that Monday morning feeling.

[BROWN falters as he notices an empty bed]

Brown

Where's Wilks?

Brightwell

Good morning, sir.

Owen

[Starting to get up] Dunno sir. He was here last night.

Brown

He'd better not have gone AWOL. He'll be in serious trouble.

Brightwell

Och he won't have left the theatre, sir. He keeps going on about how much he likes it.

Owen

It's only 'cos he's got his eye on that Italian girl.

Brown

Well she is very pretty.

Brightwell

Have you got a girlfriend, sir? I mean back home.

Brown

Well...

Brightwell

Excuse me for asking, sir.

Brown

That's all right. No, no one steady. The war's rather interrupted that sort of thing, hasn't it?

Owen

Aye.

Brightwell

When I get home – if I get home – I'm going to...

Owen

What?

BRIGHTWELL

I'm going to be a farmer

And I'll find a farmer's wife

Owen

Find your own.

Brightwell

Shut up.

BRIGHTWELL

A lassie who will marry me

And we'll live the country life

With sheep and goats and chickens

In the hills of Wester Ross

We'll bring up bairns as farmers too

They'll know that I'm the boss

That's my plan, it's not a dream

That never will come true

I'll find my farm and a farmer's wife

That's what I'm going to do

BRIGHTWELL, OWEN, BROWN

Forget the life we're living

Forget what went before

We'll change the world to suit ourselves

As soon as we've won this war

OWEN

I'll take my chance and buy a pub to run
Just like my dad's but yet a better one
A host I'll be to each and everyone
Who calls
Owen's Bar will be the place to be
Welcome on the mat
Suddenly the girls are making eyes
At the landlord who they realize
Isn't just the man behind the bar
He drives a great big shiny motorcar
And smokes a great big fat cigar
All day

That's my plan, it's not a dream at all
That never will come true
Like a Yank I'll be a millionaire
When I can get myself away from here

BRIGHTWELL, OWEN, BROWN
Forget the life we're living
Forget what went before
We'll change the world to suit ourselves
As soon as we've won this war

BROWN
I don't make plans
That's not my way
I take what comes to me
Day by day
But I must admit
I have often thought
Not to teach at the school
Where I've always taught
Would make a nice change
From the old routine
In fact let me say
That I'm rather keen
To be my own boss
Though I'm not the brightest
Need to be helped by a shorthand typist

[The three of them sing sections of their verses in counterpoint, finishing with...]

BRIGHTWELL, OWEN, BROWN
[Singing in harmony]
Forget the life we're living
Forget what went before
We'll change the world to suit ourselves
As soon as we've won this war
We'll change the world to suit ourselves
As soon as we've won this war

[BROWN and BRIGHTWELL leave OWEN. He attends to the radio, eventually taking down another message. The focus switches to the main stage, where MANDER is pacing nervously. There is a stool at one side of the stage. Music: 'Lucia's Aria' theme, played slowly and with martial insistence. LUCIA enters]

Lucia

Allora. I have decided to talk.

Mander

Jolly good.

[OWEN enters slowly]

Mander

Hurry up, man. What is it?

Owen

Another cable sir. *[Eyeing LUCIA]* Is it all right to...?

Mander

Yes yes. Read it.

Owen

"Entertainment for troops. Advise re preparations. Stop."

Mander

[Frantic] Preparations. Now, preparations. We have five days. Are we...um...prepared?

[MANDER looks at OWEN, who shrugs. He looks beseechingly at LUCIA. She stares back, cold as ice]

Lucia

[To MANDER] So. You have an old fiddle player, a dancing boy and some soldiers. Can you make a...how do you say it...'performance' out of these people? Without a 'star'?

Owen

Sir? There's another cable. *[He pauses]*

Mander

Well read it out.

Owen

I think you'd better read this one yourself, sir.

[He hands the cable to MANDER, who reads it, then crumples it and turns away]

Mander

[Stiff upper lip] I see. Thank you, Owen. You may go.

Owen

Yes sir. *[He starts to go, then turns back]* Sir?

Mander

What?

Owen

You do know we've only get five days till this show thing?

Mander

[Testily] Yes yes, I'm well aware of that, thank you very much. Now please leave us.

Owen

Yes sir. *[Exits]*

Mander

[To LUCIA] You wanted to talk?

Lucia

You have persuaded my dresser, my daughter, my musical director to appear in this 'show'. You seem to have Fabio on your side. And yet...and yet you have not asked me. Why is this? Do you not need a prima donna?

Mander

Well, yes but –

Lucia

In opera there is always a prima donna.

Mander

A prima...er?

Lucia

[Forcefully] Donna. I am such a one. *[Pause]* And the only one in Napoli.

Mander

I see.

Lucia

In all of Italy. Do you know what it is like for me – for me – to walk through broken streets to a house with no windows? When once I had a chauffeur and a balcony overlooking the bay? To walk past beggars where everything that was molto bello has been destroyed by this war?

Mander

Don't you think Mussolini has –

Lucia

Enough! I will say only this: to perform again I must have my dressing room redecorated...

Mander

Gosh.

Lucia

...and I must have fiore – bouquets and bouquets – on the first night.

Mander

Well, of course I'll do my best.

Lucia

Are you frightened of me?

Mander

No of course not.

Lucia

I think you are. Maybe we should get to know each other. What is your name?

Mander

Mander. Er...Brian.

Lucia

And how do you come to be in the British Army, *[making a point of it]* Brian?

Mander

It's the only thing I know. My father was a soldier. He sent me to a public school – in England that's a private school actually – and then to Sandhurst – that's where officers are trained and...*[lamely]* here I am.

Lucia

I see. Your turn for a question.

[There is an awkward pause. MARIANGELA comes in with a large leather-bound volume and a dress. She places the volume on the stool and covers it with the dress]

Mariangela

Scusi signora.

[LUCIA nods in thanks. MARIANGELA leaves]

Mander

[To LUCIA] Er...are you married?

Lucia

Yes. But I sent my husband away many years ago.

Mander

You sent him away? Why?

Lucia

He was no use to me. He provided me with a daughter, yes. But when his singing voice failed, there was nothing left in the marriage.

Mander

But surely you didn't marry him just for his voice?

Lucia

Is that so strange? I loved him madly, hopelessly. I loved him for his beautiful tenor singing. Together we were the golden couple of the San Carlo. Lucia and Giuseppe. When his voice failed, so did my love for him. Simple. I didn't *need* a man, as many women do. My voice was my independence.

Mander

So you sent him away?

Lucia

Immediately. You see, I can only love a man who can sing. *[MANDER looks at her in amazement]* How about you?

Mander

What? Oh no, I'm afraid I can't sing.

Lucia

I mean tell me about yourself. Are *you* married?

Mander

[Sombre] Yes. My wife is called Susan.

Lucia

And do you love this 'Susan'?

Mander

[Quickly] Yes of course.

Lucia

You love her without even thinking about it?

Mander

Isn't that a definition of love? *[He is on the brink of tears]*

Lucia

I wouldn't know. *[She looks at him quizzically]* What's the matter?

Mander

It's all right. It's just...well, I've had some bad news.

Lucia

Are you going to tell me?

Mander

I'd rather not.

Lucia

[Flirtatiously] Come on...you can tell me. Is Mr Churchill being nasty to you?

Mander

No no, it's nothing like that. The prime minister doesn't even know who I am.

Lucia

Then it must be a problem of the heart. Tell me. *[MANDER looks away]* You British have the hard upper lip. I have heard this.

Mander

Stiff.

Lucia

Scusi?

Mander

Stiff upper lip. It means we...well, you know...

Lucia

I know something.

Mander

Yes?

Lucia

You are a very attractive man.

Mander

[In an agony of embarrassment] Oh please.

[LUCIA stares at him with an amused smile as he writhes. Then...]

Lucia

Allora. You want a prima donna. A star. You want me to sing for you. *[He nods]* You want me to sing for the hordes of soldiers who have invaded my country? *[She picks up the costume from the chair but doesn't see the leather-bound book]* In this perhaps?

Mander

It looks very nice.

Lucia

Hah! It is old. It doesn't fit. It is...how you say... threadbare. It makes me look like an ancient courtesan. *[She laughs gently]* Maybe it is suitable after all.

Music 8: 'Threads', Lucia, Mander, Salvatore, Mariangela

LUCIA

There are women on the streets who have to sell themselves

It's hell on earth but nothing new to me

I've always been a seller, and I tell you now

I never give myself away for free

No, my friend, don't take away what made me

You can't trade me or parade me to your men

You must know experience is bitter

And it's better if you turn and think again...

Mander

Lucia, please.

Lucia

You must understand...

LUCIA

Threads

All that I've had

All of my life

Took them where I found them

Threads

Weaving a life

Thread after thread

Weaving others round them

A costume that will always fit

Is sewn together bit by bit

It hides the heart

It hides the soul

Just threads

I found my voice too young, too bright

Too smart, too soon

I didn't know what lay ahead

When every note was still in tune

Hope

Soon disappears

Take it from me

Knowing what I know now

Stars quickly burn out

That's what I learnt

All too long ago now

I made my armor thread by thread

Then couldn't cast it off, instead

I died inside

Behind the smile

No hope

Mander

No hope? What about your marriage?

Lucia

It died with my husband's voice. *[Pause]* So, big soldier, why should I save you? Why should I sing for you?

MANDER

[Talk/sing] I'm lost

Let me confess

Out of my depth

Slowly going under

Please, don't make me beg

**Return to the stage
Fill it full of wonder
My armor's weak, the threads I spin
Aren't tough enough, I'll never win
Without you here
Without your voice
I'm lost**

**I've never had ambitions
Far beyond my reach
If you will meet me halfway there
Then I can learn what you can teach**

[The ORCHESTRA plays a verse, music swelling. MANDER goes towards LUCIA and reaches out a hand. She extends one of hers, then decides not to touch him. SALVATORE and MARIANGELA come into focus in another area of the stage]

MARIANGELA
[To SALVATORE] **Remember when our best days
Lay ahead, my dear**
SALVATORE
When light and music filled the air
SALVATORE, MARIANGELA
With magic in the atmosphere

LUCIA, SALVATORE, MARIANGELA, MANDER
**Threads
All that I've had
All of my life
Took them where I found them
Threads
Weaving a life
Thread after thread
Weaving others round them**
LUCIA
**A costume that will always fit
Is sewn together bit by bit**
MARIANGELA
**It hides the heart
Dispels the fear**
SALVATORE
**While music keeps
The spirit here**
LUCIA, SALVATORE, MARIANGELA, MANDER
**A thread emerges every year
Just threads**

[The lights change, the radio flashes, we hear the Morse Code message from the orchestra. Another night has passed. SALVATORE starts to play 'Six Nights in Naples' slowly on his violin. As he does so, MARIANGELA goes to talk to him. He puts the violin down and the orchestra takes up the melody]

Salvatore

So...we are going to help the British soldiers?

Mariangela

They seem to be good people. Strange, but good. Besides, what choice do we have?

Salvatore

We should follow Signora Tivolini. She will always have the best interests of the San Carlo at heart.

Mariangela

As we do. *[She goes to the stool and picks up the volume]* I have been hiding this since the start of the war. I was going to show it to Lucia.

Salvatore

[Taking the volume] Let me see. Ah, the Archive! I had forgotten about it.

Mariangela

How could you? A record of every performance ever given at the San Carlo. Every opera, every singer, every conductor, every director.

[The focus switches to MANDER and LUCIA]

Mander

I really meant what I asked of you yesterday. When I asked you to sing for us.

Lucia

I will sing for anyone. *[Pause]* If the price is right.

Mander

Well perhaps you could give me some idea of your... expectations?

Lucia

I could. But they have nothing to do with money.

Mander

What then?

[DEBORAH enters with FABIO. The others freeze]

Deborah

Good morning. Oh, have I interrupted something?

Mander

No, not at all. We have only four days before the performance. I was trying to persuade your mother –

Lucia

Deborah will do as she is told. I will not. Not without compensation.

Deborah

Oh mama!

[WILKS enters. He wears a soldier's uniform, bright scarlet, clearly from the opera's costume department. He spots DEBORAH on the other side of the stage. With a ping from the orchestra the lights change. DEBORAH looks back at WILKS]

Music 9: Beautiful To Dance – Wilks, Deborah

Lucia

[Eyeing WILKS, to DEBORAH] And I am telling you: NO MORE UNSUITABLE MEN! *[To MANDER]* Come with me. *[Gesturing to SALVATORE and MARIANGELA]* You too.

Mander

[To WILKS] Wilks, that is not regulation uniform.

Lucia

Come! *[Looking back at DEBORAH]* I'm warning you.

[LUCIA sweeps out in her customary manner, followed by MANDER, SALVATORE and MARIANGELA. FABIO starts to dance to the melody. After a while DEBORAH joins in. WILKS watches, following DEBORAH's every move. FABIO and DEBORAH continue to dance. Then, as if he is in a trance...]

WILKS

**Fish out of water
And birds that can't fly
Feel more at home
In a whirlwind than I
Here on the outside I'm scared looking in
Music and dancing make my head spin**

**And yet I
Can't shake the feeling
It's all going to change
No use concealing
I feel very strange
If fish and the birds know how it should be
I only wish they could tell me what's happening to me**

[The melody continues to the end of first time through. WILKS watches and then steps forward as FABIO and DEBORAH's dance ends. The melody starts again]

Wilks

[To FABIO, awkwardly] Excuse me.

[FABIO bows low to WILKS, then kisses DEBORAH on the cheek and exits with a flourish]

Wilks

I'm sorry. I shouldn't be pushing in.

Deborah

Why not? You have the costume.

Wilks

What? *[Suddenly aware of what he's wearing]* Oh. The nice lady gave it me.

Deborah

It's from a famous San Carlo opera. *Sei Notte A Napoli*. The soldier who wears it would certainly be...how you say...pushing in.

Wilks

The lady...

Deborah

Mariangela.

Wilks

Mariangela. She said I should put it on. She said I was...er... 'teatrale'.

Deborah

[Pronouncing it properly] Teatrale. Ah. 'Theatrical'. And are you?

Wilks

[Slowly] I don't know. I don't really know what it means. *[He looks intently at her]* I only know that...that when you dance, it's beautiful.

Deborah

My mother loves to sing. I love to dance.

DEBORAH

Almost like flying

The freedom of birds

Comes to the dancer

Too simple for words

Dancing comes easy when living is tough

Better than dreaming – one step is enough

To take you

Out of a nightmare

And into the day

Into the light where

The demons can't play

Dance and you'll share what's there in your heart

Your every wish will be granted the moment you start...

For it's...

Beautiful to dance

So beautiful to dance

Dance and you'll see

So follow my lead

The beat sets you free

Come fly through the air

With music as wings

Come dancing with me

Deborah

Since you are 'theatrical', let me tell you a secret.

Wilks

Yes?

Deborah

[Like a child giving away a secret, almost a whisper] I could only ever love a man who can dance.

Wilks

Does that mean you love...er...

Deborah

[Laughing] Fabio? No. I love to dance with him. That's different. I don't love every man who can dance. But the man I will love forever will be a beautiful dancer. You see?

Wilks

[Disappointed] Yes.

Deborah

Will you dance with me?

Wilks

I can't.

Deborah

You can try. *[DEBORAH dances as WILKS sings]*

WILKS

You tell me...

Out of the darkness

And into the light

Wish and your wishes

Will come true tonight

You make it sound easy for those who can dance

But if I can't move a muscle I don't stand a chance

DEBORAH

It's so

Beautiful to dance

Your wish will come true

Dance and you'll see

WILKS

I love when you dance

DEBORAH

The dance lets me fly

With music as wings

DEBORAH, WILKS

It's beautiful to dance

DEBORAH

Come dancing with me

[She holds out her hands. WILKS comes to her and holds her hands awkwardly. They start to dance]

DEBORAH

Come hold me close

Dance and you'll see

It's beautiful to dance

So beautiful to dance

Come dancing with me

Wilks

[Turning away, desperately] I can't!

[WILKS runs off, bumping into MANDER as he comes on stage]

Mander

Wilks! Wilks, come back here! I've told you before. That is not regulation uniform. Wilks! I could have you court martialled!

Mander

[To DEBORAH] I have a problem.

Deborah

He is a good man. In his heart.

Mander

I wouldn't know. I suppose you must think of me as the enemy. As your mother does.

Deborah

I am not like my mother. But you must understand...the war has been very bad for her.

[MANDER looks at her enquiringly] No, I don't think of you as the enemy.

[A skirl of bagpipes. A door at the back of the stage opens and, as though impelled by an invisible force, O'LEARY enters. He is dressed in a kilt of the tartan of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and is playing the bagpipes. He wears an extravagant tam o'shanter and carries a kit bag on his back. The others come rushing out on to the main stage. OWEN goes to sit at the piano. O'LEARY throws down his kit bag and without waiting for acknowledgement of his playing speaks in the brash tones of a typical Broadway producer]

O'Leary

[Handing his bagpipes to OWEN] Who's in charge here?

Lucia, Mander

[Together] I am. *[The two look frostily at one another]*

Mander

I didn't know the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders were in Italy.

O’Leary

The Argyll and what?! I’m Major Carl O’Leary, American Fifth Army. Brigade HQ say you’re under orders to put on a show. In four days time. I’m here to check progress.

Lucia

I like your dress.

O’Leary

[Briskly] Thank you, mam.

Lucia

It’s like the one I wore in *Lucia Di Lammermoor*.

Mander

[To O’LEARY] Why are you wearing a tartan to which you are patently not entitled?

O’Leary

Let’s call it ‘cos-tume’.

Brown

Costume?

O’Leary

OK, research then. I’ve got an idea for Lerner & Loewe. It’s about a Scottish village that comes alive once every hundred years.

Brightwell

Doesn’t sound up to much.

O’Leary

Yeah, you’re prob’ly right. *[To WILKS]* Say, are you in show business?

Wilks

I’d like to be.

Mander

I hate to interrupt all this theatre talk, but may I remind you there’s a war on?

O’Leary

The war can look after itself. Your orders are to put on a show. *[Silence all round]* Well? *[To MANDER]* You said you were in charge.

Mander

[Gesturing to LUCIA] So did she.

O’Leary

Democracy is all fine and dandy –

Mander

– It’s what we’re fighting for –

O'Leary

– but it doesn't work in the army and it doesn't work in show business. Somebody's got to be top banana. So? *[Without pausing for an answer]* OK, you've twisted my arm.

Lucia

You are this 'banana'?

O'Leary

Yes ma'am. King of the hill, top of the heap, numero uno.

Lucia

I see. What did you say your name was?

O'Leary

O'Leary. Carl. Major. But you can call me maestro.

Lucia

And I must do what you say?

O'Leary

You got it. *[Looking around]* Say, this place seems kinda cosy. But then again I'm at home in any theatre.

Lucia

This is an opera house. And I am its prima donna.

Deborah

Its *former* prima donna.

Lucia

[To O'LEARY looking him up and down] And what are your...credentials...to be our maestro?

Music 10: 'Do It My Way' - O'Leary, Company

O'LEARY

Who plays the piano?

OWEN

I do

O'LEARY

Can you play it this way?

[He goes to the piano, pushes OWEN aside and plays a fantastic piece of ragtime]

Anyone else play an instrument?

Salvatore

[Proffering his violin] Signor.

O'LEARY

Okay, take it away

[SALVATORE starts to play his theme]

O'LEARY

I said take it away!

[SALVATORE fits in with the ragtime O'LEARY is playing]

O'Leary

Good man!

O'LEARY

[Leaving OWEN to play the piano]

Singers over here please

Dancers over there...

[As O'LEARY sings, DEBORAH drags LUCIA to one side – 'singers' and then pulls FABIO to the 'dancers' side where they are joined by BROWN. DEBORAH gestures to WILKS to go to 'dancers' and he takes BRIGHTWELL with him. MANDER and MARIANGELA remain on the sidelines. ALL gawp in amazement at what follows...]

O'LEARY

Don't hang back guys, strut your stuff for me

Show your feet are neat enough to be

Tapping out that vau-di-o-doh

Terpsichorean style

Brightwell: Terpsi-what?

Singers go for harmony

Make sure you don't sing off-key

Steps and voices both together now

Run your number through and take a bow

[The music continues. Nobody moves]

O'Leary

Well?

Lucia

I don't know what you are talking about.

O'Leary

I heard you were planning a show. Where is it?

Mander

I think we need a little guidance.

O'LEARY

There's only one rule: do as I say

That's the way to the top

Back on Broadway every star

Follows this strict formula

"Let O'Leary show you what to do

Wow, kerchink, here comes a rave review!"

Yeah, when it comes to showbiz

Believe me, I wrote the book

You're in the need-to-know biz

Trust me and I can get you offa the hook

**Do it my way, ballet or tap
Acting tragic or droll
If you're desperate to succeed
I am all you'll ever need
Let O'Leary point the way ahead
Wow, kerchink, and boy you'll knock 'em dead**

Lucia

I don't understand a word you're saying.

O'Leary

Then listen up, lady, listen up. *[To everyone]* Come on! Come on!

Mander

I'm sorry, I can't dance. *[Beat]* Don't ask me.

Wilks

I can't dance either.

Deborah

Please try.

Mander

And neither can I sing.

O'Leary

[To WILKS and MANDER] Stand aside please. Both of you. No room for shirkers in this company.

Mander

Accusing a fellow officer of shirking is a very serious –

O'Leary

Now – the rest of you. Do something! Anything! *[MANDER and WILKS go to either side of the stage. The others still hang back]* Okay, get in a line. Quick – a nice straight line.

[He pulls them into position across the front of the stage and goes to the centre of the line]

O'LEARY

Singers on my left side

Dancers on my right

Give those eyes and teeth a chance to shine

That's the way to make a chorus line

O'Leary

[To BRIGHTWELL, WILKS] Singer? Dancer?

Brightwell

Well, if I had to choose, I'd say...neither.

O'Leary

Not good enough! Get with the singers. *[To WILKS]* How about you?

Deborah

Dancer!

Wilks

I'm not! Honest, maestro, I'm not.

O'Leary

You will be!

[Music continues. The COMPANY puts on fixed smiles and pop eyes, but they don't move]

O'LEARY

Do it my way

Do it my way

Do it my, my, my, my

My way

O'LEARY

You can do it, you can do it, do as I say

Cos you only have to let yourself go

You can do it, you can do it any old way

And it's the only way to put on a show

You can do it, you can do it, where there's a will

If you wanna find it you'll find a way

You can do it, you can do it, all that you need

Is the confidence to do it

Now just take it away...

O'Leary

Where's the guy who can't dance?

Wilks

Here.

O'Leary

[Removing his tam o'shanter and opening his arms wide with the cap in one hand] Believe!

[There is a shimmer from the orchestra and a blue light picks out WILKS. He dances]

WILKS

Look at my feet

My old plates of meat

They're working a treat

My life is complete!

[Another shimmer and blue light – this time on MANDER, He steps forward]

Mander

[Apologetic] Excuse me.

[Suddenly he emits glorious sounds]

MANDER

Tra-la-la-la-lah

Tra-la-la-la-la-la

[Speaks] Good heavens!

Tra-la-la-la-lah

Tra-la-la-la-la-la

[Speaks] I beg your pardon.

Tra-la-la-la-lah

Tra-la-la-la-la-la

Lucia

[To MANDER] You said you cannot sing.

Mander

[Apologetic and horrified] I'm so sorry. I don't know what came over me.

[LUCIA, MANDER sing together, she singing 'Ah ah' to his 'Tra-las']

MANDER/LUCIA

Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la-lah/Ah ah ah ah ah

LUCIA

Beloved

MANDER/LUCIA

Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la-lah/ Ah ah ah ah ah

LUCIA

Don't leave me

Lucia

[To MANDER] Meraviglioso.

Mander

Thank you.

Deborah

[To WILKS] You said you cannot dance.

Wilks

I couldn't. But now – wow! *[He does a perfect bit of tap]*

Lucia, Deborah

[Together, lustily] Come here big soldier.

Lucia

You can sing, so now...

Deborah

You can dance, so now...

[A big swell of music: 'You Can Do It' theme. LUCIA takes MANDER into her arms. DEBORAH does the same to WILKS. The others freeze into a tableau focusing on the couples]

Lucia

Deborah, you do not have my permission to love an enemy soldier.

Deborah

[Cheekily] I'm only following your example, mama!

O'LEARY

You can do it, you can do it, do as I say

Cos you only have to let yourself go

COMPANY

Let yourself go

O'LEARY

You can do it, you can do it any old way

And now we're going to put on a show

COMPANY

Put on a show?

O'LEARY

You can do it, you can do it, where there's a will

If you wanna find it you'll find a way

COMPANY

We'll find a way

O'LEARY

You can do it, you can do it, all that you need

Is the confidence to do it

COMPANY

The confidence to do it

O'LEARY

Now just take it away...

COMPANY

Take it away

We'll take it and take it

And take it away

[Music slows to high kicking style]

O'LEARY

There's only...

COMPANY

Only one rule: do as he says

That's the way to the top

Back on Broadway every star

Follows this strict formula,

"Let O'Leary show you what to do

O'LEARY

Wow, kerchink, here comes a rave review!"

[END OF ACT ONE]

ACT TWO

*[Two nights have passed. The stage is bare and empty except for the piano. On top of the piano is the leather-bound volume, the Archive. The radio flashes, the orchestra plays the Morse Code message. Then, **Music: 'Threads' theme.** MARIANGELA enters pushing a wardrobe rail, on which are old-fashioned male and female opera costumes, including the red tunic WILKS wore in act one. The dressing room area appears upstage. BRIGHTWELL and OWEN are getting dressed. WILKS enters the main stage, walking with the aid of crutches. The focus switches from main stage to dressing room and back again]*

Wilks

[Disconsolate] Good morning.

Mariangela

What's happened to you?

Wilks

I fell didn't I? Day before yesterday. Dancing with Deborah.

Mariangela

[Laughs] You'll soon be better.

Wilks

You think so? She won't look at me now I can't dance.

Owen

[To BRIGHTWELL] Where's Wilks gone?

Brightwell

Looking for his Italian lassie I shouldn't wonder.

Owen

Doesn't he know we only have two days before this show thing?

Wilks

My head's all over the place. I don't know what I'm doing here.

Mariangela

The American seems to know.

Wilks

I thought I was coming to Naples to fight a war. But now...*[He touches the red tunic on the rail]*

Owen

Good luck to the Yank. Captain Mander needs a bit of luck too.

Brightwell

Putting a show on?

Owen

No. His wife's left him.

Brightwell

How do you know?

Owen

I get the cables don't I?

[OWEN and BRIGHTWELL continue dressing as the dressing room area fades]

Mariangela

You really do love her, don't you?

Wilks

How do you know?

Mariangela

I too have been in love. *[Gesturing to the crutches]* Here, put those things down. *[WILKS throws the crutches to the floor in frustration. She takes the tunic from the rail and offers it to him]* Go on. *[With her help WILKS starts to put on the tunic]* Now you are an operatic hero. A great warlord. Anything you want to be. *[She buttons the tunic for him. He stands there helpless]*

Music 11 – 'Threads' reprise, Mariangela

MARIANGELA

Boy

Look at you now

Blood red and bold

History's greatest lover

Threads

Put them to work

Make them your own

Then you will discover

You can be what others see

So none can doubt your bravery

A costume is a tapestry

Of threads

Wilks

I don't understand.

Mariangela

I mean you can be whoever you want. For me, it's different.

MARIANGELA

I hid myself behind the scenes

Too long ago

So I could only be myself

A person no one wants to know

Wilks

That's not true. / want to know you.

Mariangela

You are a sweet boy. But I'm old enough to be your mother.

Wilks

I didn't mean –

Mariangela

[Putting her fingers to his lips] Sssh.

MARIANGELA

Once

I had a choice

Which road to take?

Scared to death of choosing

What could have been mine

[She plays with her charm bracelet]

I gave away

When life became confusing

I only did what I was told

How could I know what would unfold?

And ever since

A lifetime

Of regret

Wilks

What did you give away?

Mariangela

My baby.

Wilks

[Horried] What?!

[O'LEARY, now wearing an American army uniform, enters carrying a bugle. He plays a rousing reveille]

O'Leary

OK everybody. On stage! Places please! *[He spots MARIANGELA and WILKS. To MARIANGELA]* It's a little early for a wardrobe call, but good thinking, signora. *[To WILKS]* And who have you come as – Nelson Eddy? *[He spots the crutches and picks them up]* Nice touch. Play lame – gets you sympathy.

Wilks

I'm not playing. I can't walk.

O'Leary

[Handing him the crutches] That's it. Then you make a miracle recovery in the last act.

Wilks

You don't understand.

O’Leary

Trust me. *[He spots the Archive on the piano, picks it up and starts to leaf through it]*
Excuse me a moment.

[DEBORAH enters. She turns a pirouette and rushes to WILKS’s side. Then, remembering his injury...]

Deborah

Ah, Tom. I thought it was a terrible dream.

Wilks

[Pleading] Please.

O’Leary

[Snapping the Archive shut and putting it inside the piano] A-ha! Jeanette McDonald! Did no one tell you Nelson Eddy doesn’t dance?

Deborah

That is exactly the problem. Now I cannot love.

[WILKS turns away and limps towards the wings. LUCIA enters, almost brushing him aside, pulling MANDER by the arm]

O’Leary

Wardrobe calls? Backstage romances? Boy, you don’t waste time here.

Lucia

Signor Americano, I never understand a word you say.

O’Leary

On Broadway we wait till rehearsals – at least until rehearsals – before this sort of thing.

Mander

What sort of thing?

O’Leary

Making whoopee.

Mander

I can assure you –

Lucia

I am in love.

Mander

What?

Lucia

With your voice. *[She takes MANDER in her arms and kisses him passionately. He pulls away and then thinks better of it. He returns to LUCIA and responds with equal passion. The others ooh and aah in amazement]*

O'Leary

Come on everybody. Let's leave the lovebirds to love. *[He ushers all but LUCIA and MANDER upstage]* We have work to do.

Lucia

I am no lovebird. I am a worker. Of sorts. I come with you. *[She lets MANDER free of her clutches with a push. He is catapulted downstage. LUCIA goes to join the others. They go into a huddle, O'LEARY clearly in charge. As a sign of his authority, he dons his tam o'shanter. The lights fade. MANDER is left alone with his thoughts]*

Music 12: 'What's That Feeling' – Mander

MANDER

What's that feeling?

What am I revealing?

Am I a better man or am I worse?

Something deep inside me

Moved and mystified me

Is it a gift or nature's curse?

It's not like me to

To show my deeper feelings

Must admit my nerves are all but shot

I was trained

To always be restrained

I can't be the man I'm really not

Trying so hard to be discreet

Trembling knees and aching feet

Feverish brain and burning brow

Panic attacks are starting now

What can I do – my head's

Exploding!

Am I glad enough

Or sad or mad enough

To take confusion in my stride?

Staring through the mists –

Hey, psychiatrists!

Tell me what does it mean

Tell me what does it mean?

Tell me what

This feeling means...

Here comes a voice

My voice

Not just this noise

Making demands

Rough commands

Merely being in charge

Does a song

Come with a voice
Out of the blue
So I don't have a choice?
What's in a song?
More than just words
More than just sounds
Sing a song
With something to say
Every day
Of my life from now on

If this voice
Comes from inside
Is it for showing
Or something to hide?

Mander
No more hiding.

MANDER
Tra-la-la-la-lah
Tra-la-la-la-la-lah

Here comes a singer
And he's got his own voice
Here comes a singer
Now it's time to rejoice
Singers sing love songs
So I'll find the room
To sing a new love song
But sing it to whom?

There must be a lover
And she'll listen to me
A singer and lover
But where can she be?
Goodbye to the old love
Hello to the new
Now I can sing songs
[To LUCIA] I'll sing them to you
To you!

[He goes over to the group around O'LEARY]

[MANDER and LUCIA go in to a clinch. SALVATORE enters in a rush]

Salvatore
Mariangela? *[He sees what is going on]* Ah. Scusi.

O'Leary
Good morning, fiddle player.

Salvatore

Buongiorno.

O'Leary

Your timing is perfect.

Salvatore

Che?

O'Leary

[Sing song] It's re-hearsal time! Now where's the rest of the company? *[Another blast on the bugle]* We have the principals, we need a chorus.

[BRIGHTWELL, OWEN and WILKS detach themselves from the group upstage]

O'Leary

[Dismayed at the sight of them] Oh my God.

Brightwell

What's that racket?

O'Leary

That, my boy, is the authentic All-American bugle call. *[Another blast]* And you are about to become the boogie-woogie bugle boy.

Brightwell

Over my dead body.

O'Leary

It may come to that. Try it.

[He hands the bugle to BRIGHTWELL, who tries and fails to get any sound out it]

O'Leary

Never mind. You can only improve. *[To OWEN]* Any better on the ivories?

Owen

Ivories?

O'Leary

Piano for Chrissake.

Owen

What, since last night?

[BROWN and FABIO enter]

O'Leary

And where the hell have you two been?

Brown

This young man was showing me the ropes.

O'Leary

Sounds like fun.

Brown

I mean for the scenery.

O'Leary

No more romances till we've got the show on the road.

Brown

I hope you're not insinuating –

O'Leary

It's OK, I'm broad-minded. But we have work to do. So what's our show to be? *[Silence]*
Ideas please. *[Still nothing]* When deadlines are short I often go for a revival.

Lucia

What does that mean?

O'Leary

A show I've done before. What was your biggest hit?

Lucia

'Hit'?

Deborah

Mama...*Sei Notte A Napoli. [To O'LEARY] Six Nights In Naples.*

O'Leary

Sounds familiar. Tell me more.

Music 13: 'It Goes Like This' – Deborah, Mariangela, Salvatore, Lucia, Soldiers

DEBORAH

It goes like this

LUCIA

No, it goes like this

MARIANGELA

It goes like this

DEBORAH

No, it goes like this

SALVATORE

[Starting to play his violin]

It goes like this...

MARIANGELA

There are heroes bold

DEBORAH

There are heroines

MARIANGELA, DEBORAH

And a war going on

SALVATORE

There are violins

DEBORAH

And a britches part

MARIANGELA

And forgiven sins

DEBORAH, MARIANGELA, SALVATORE

It's an opera

It's an opera

Owen

What's a britches part?

DEBORAH, MARIANGELA, SALVATORE

And the soldiers come

And invade at will

LUCIA

And the heroines

Must resist until

There's a sacred task

That they must fulfill

SOLDIERS

It's ridiculous

It's ridiculous

[FABIO starts to dance]

DEBORAH, MARIANGELA, LUCIA, SALVATORE

Boys love girls and girls love boys

A god descends, a god who toys

With everyone else 'cos he enjoys

The mischief

Yes, the mischief

DEBORAH, MARIANGELA, LUCIA, SALVATORE

An opera

An opera

The sound is more important than the word

An opera

An opera

It is essential that the plot is quite absurd

DEBORAH

It goes like this

LUCIA

No, it goes like this

MARIANGELA

It goes like this

DEBORAH

No, it goes like this

SALVATORE

It goes like this...

MARIANGELA

There's a pantaloon

LUCIA

That's an older man

And his loyal friend

But they never can

DEBORAH

Make the others see

ALL

That they have a plan

That's fantastical

SOLDIERS

That's fantastical

DEBORAH

There's a younger boy

And an ingénue

DEBORAH, MARIANGELA

And they fall in love

As they're bound to do

MARIANGELA

And a foundling child

Who we always knew

Comes home at last

ALL

Comes home at last

DEBORAH, MARIANGELA, LUCIA, SALVATORE

Girls love boys and boys love girls

A god appears and strews his pearls

Wherever he goes as he unfurls

His magic

ALL

Yes, his magic

DEBORAH, MARIANGELA, LUCIA, SALVATORE, SOLDIERS

An opera

An opera

***Six Nights In Naples* never fails to please**

An opera

An opera

With a plot that's bound to tease and tease and tease

LUCIA

And tease

DEBORAH, MARIANGELA, LUCIA, SALVATORE, SOLDIERS

***Six Nights In Naples* never fails to please**

O'Leary

[*To BRIGHTWELL*] Well, that's clear enough, eh bugle boy?

Brightwell

Not to me.

O'Leary

You're going to write the book.

Brightwell

Book?

O'Leary

Turn that opera into a musical. Those American doughboys aren't gonna sit through an opera.

Brightwell

Write the 'book'? I thought you wanted me to play the bugle.

O'Leary

That too. *[To OWEN]* And you'll play piano and act a part. *[To BRIGHTWELL]* When you've written it. *[To DEBORAH and WILKS]* You're on dancing duty.

Deborah

I have no partner any more.

Wilks

Deborah, please...

O'Leary

[To DEBORAH] You'll have to be chorus then.

Deborah

The story of my life.

O'Leary

Don't worry about it. Pavlova started in the chorus. *[To LUCIA and MANDER]* Leading lady, leading man. *[TO SALVATORE and MARIANGELA]* Orchestrations please. And as for the costumes, nice threads, lady, nice threads. *[To BROWN and FABIO]* Now what about you two?

Brown

Well, I'm happy to offer my soft shoe shuffle.

O'Leary

With your partner? Good man!

Brown

He's not exactly –

O'Leary

It's OK! What happens in the dressing room stays in the dressing room.

Brown

Please let me assure you –

O'Leary

Never mind, never mind! Soft shoe shuffle and what else?

Brown

Well...

O'Leary

I'm looking for versatility.

Mander

[To O'LEARY] I say, excuse me. But aren't you asking rather a lot of us. After all, we're not professionals.

Lucia

Me? Not a professional?

Mander

I mean my men. *[To O'LEARY]* You seem to expect us to write, dance, sing, act and...er...all the other things, when even to do one of them is beyond us.

O'Leary

What do you mean?! You can sing. Two days ago you couldn't.

Mander

But that was a sort of magic.

O'Leary

Magic? Phooey. Now – we haven't got much time. When's this show gotta go on?

Mander

The day after tomorrow.

Lucia

Impossible. *[She says it in Italian – im-poss-ee-be-lay]*

Brightwell, Wilks, Owen

Impossible.

O'Leary

Nonsense dammit! Of course it's possible – with me around.

Mander

[To O'LEARY] Well, all I can say is good luck to you.

[O'LEARY reacts as if he's been shot. With quiet menace...]

O'Leary

What did you say?

Mander

I said "good luck".

[A chord from the orchestra... O'LEARY starts to sing...]

Music 14: 'Good Luck' – O'Leary, Company

O'LEARY

**Never say that
I said never say that
In the theatre it's a curse
The kiss of death**

Mander

What – good luck?

O'LEARY

**Never say, never say, never say that
It's worse than Shakespeare's Scottish play**

Brown

What, Macbeth?

[Again, O'LEARY reacts as if he's been shot]

O'Leary

Aagh! Do I have to teach you everything?!

[He walks around the assembled company as he sings, addressing each of them with lines relevant to what they're going to do: Brightwell, script; Owen, piano; Mander and Lucia singing; Salvatore, violin; Mariangela, costumes; Deborah, Brown and Fabio, dancing. WILKS looks on disconsolately]

O'Leary

Now, as we prepare for opening night...

O'LEARY

**You can play better chords
You can write better plays
You can sing like Caruso
And dance roundelays
You can play that old fiddle
Like young Menuhin
Bask in my compliments
Which would be genuine
Design haute couture
Like Coco Chanel
But I won't say 'good luck' *[he mouths but doesn't sing the two words every time they occur]*
That's the trapdoor to hell
You can say...**

O'LEARY

**"Here's a rabbit's foot, it's your lucky charm
That's the kind of wish keeps us safe from harm
I found a penny, here take it from me
It'll bring you 'good luck' as the gods decree"**

**It's a cert that fate will always screw you over
Unless of course you find a four-leaf clover**

**"Here's a ladybird, may it land on you"
That's the kind of wish makes your dream come true
"A sprig of heather will not go amiss
It'll bring you 'good luck' like an angel's kiss"
So scared to go onstage I'd have to force you
Unless you can produce a silver horseshoe**

O'Leary

Go on, try it!

Lucia

You are a madman!

Mander

Steady on, old girl.

O'Leary

[To the others] It's your last chance!

MARIANGELA *[to SALVATORE]*

Here's a rabbit's foot, it's your lucky charm

ALL

That's the kind of wish keeps us safe from harm

BROWN *[to FABIO]*

I picked up a penny, here take it from me

ALL

It'll bring you 'good luck' as the gods decree

O'LEARY

It's a cert that fate will always screw you over

Unless of course you find a four-leaf clover

DEBORAH *[to BRIGHTWELL]*

Here's a ladybird, may it land on you

ALL

That's the kind of wish makes your dream come true

SALVATORE *[to OWEN]*

A sprig of white heather will not go amiss

ALL

It'll bring you 'good luck' like an angel's kiss

ALL *[except O'LEARY]*

Hey let me take the stage, I think I'm ready

My nerves were shot to hell but now they're steady

ALL

Only two more nights but we're good enough

Here up on the stage we can strut our stuff

Like sisters and brothers, no, closer than that

The words and the music, we'll get 'em off pat

And if there comes a time when the show gets stuck
The one thing we won't say
We won't say
We won't say
The one wish we won't wish
Is "wish you...
[They mouth it but don't sing it]
Good luck"!

[At the end of the number, O'LEARY exits. The radio flashes, we hear the Morse Code sound. We segue into four scenes happening simultaneously in abstract space, in dialogue and song. The focus moves from scene to scene, united by the music and the repeating chorus. The four scenes involve, in pairs, MARIANGELA and SALVATORE, LUCIA and MANDER, BROWN and FABIO, WILKS and DEBORAH]

Music 15: 'Talk To Me' – Company

Mariangela

The San Carlo is coming alive again.

Salvatore

I see only ghosts.

Mariangela

Better to have ghosts than empty space. That's all the Germans left us.

Salvatore

And now we have the British. And a performance tomorrow. But still no opera. Do you remember 1924?

Mariangela

Of course.

Salvatore

Why have you never mentioned that night? It's nearly twenty years.

Mariangela

I chose to forget.

Salvatore

It was passion!

Mariangela

It was a first night. A premiere. Over-excitement.

Salvatore

And then you went away for a year. Without a word to me.

Mariangela

You know why.

Salvatore

How could I know? I was desolate. I thought maybe I had been too ardent.

Mariangela

Oh no.

Salvatore

Or maybe not ardent enough?

Mariangela

Oh you silly man.

Salvatore

Well?

SALVATORE

Talk to me

MARIANGELA

You never listen to a word I say

SALVATORE

Talk to me

ALL WOMEN

Maybe tomorrow you'll find a way

[The focus switches to LUCIA and MANDER]

Mander

Of course you know the war will soon be over?

Lucia

Yes, Inglese, I know.

Mander

And what then?

Lucia

I shall be *in pensione*. Retired.

Mander

Would you sing with me? You say you like my voice.

Lucia

You would take me back to England? What about your wife?

Mander

Susan? She doesn't want me to go home. She doesn't want...Anyway, I could stay here.

Lucia

In Napoli? Don't be ridiculous.

Mander

I don't quite know how to say this, but I have become very...

Lucia
Well?

Mander
Fond...

LUCIA
Talk to me
ALL MEN
You never listen to a word I say
Talk to me
ALL WOMEN
Maybe tomorrow you'll find a way

ALL
Words and words and words and words
Who is true and who pretends?
Round and round and round and round
A pirouette
That never ends

[We see LUCIA and MANDER continuing to talk as they exit. The focus switches to BROWN and FABIO]

Brown
I say, old chap. Dovremmo parlare in italiano? *[FABIO stares at him]* Do you think we could be a double act? *[Pause]* You and me? *[Nothing]* I don't mean like Nervo and Knox, no, of course not. Maybe Flanagan and Allen? *[Pause]* Of course you've no idea what I'm talking about, have you?

BROWN
Talk to me
ALL WOMEN
You never listen to a word I say
ALL MEN
Talk to me
ALL WOMEN
Maybe tomorrow you'll find a way

[The focus switches back to MARIANGELA and SALVATORE]

[We see FABIO starting to dance. BROWN looks on, puzzled. WILKS and DEBORAH come into focus, WILKS still on crutches]

Wilks
It's stupid.

Deborah
I can't help it.

Wilks
Love is love. What's it got to do with dancing?

Deborah

That's just the way I am.

Wilks

But why?

WILKS

Talk to me

You never listen to a word I say

Talk to me

Maybe tomorrow you'll find a way

ALL

Words and words and words and words

Who is true and who pretends?

Round and round and round and round

A pirouette

That never ends

[Everyone except WILKS disappears from view. WILKS looks around]

Wilks

Where is everyone? *[He shouts]* Hello?! *[His voice echoes back from the wings]* It's spooky here. Hello?! *[Another echo]* I'm cold.

[BRIGHTWELL and OWEN poke their heads round either side of the proscenium. They make mock spooky calls across the stage]

Brightwell, Owen

Halloo! Halloo!

Wilks

[Startled] You! Bugger off.

[BRIGHTWELL and OWEN enter and come over to WILKS]

Brightwell

Where's your wee lassie?

Wilks

Gone. She doesn't want to know me.

Owen

Why not?

Wilks

[Waving one of his crutches] I'm a cripple ain't I?

Brightwell

Och, you poor thing.

Owen

And just when you thought you were part of the furniture.

Brightwell

At home in the theatre.

Owen

[Swirling round] "Yes maestro, no maestro". All that sort of thing.

Brightwell, Owen

La-di-dah.

Wilks

Stop taking the piss.

Music 16 – 'I Could Be At Home' reprise - Wilks, Brightwell, Owen

WILKS

I'll never be at home here

I never stood a chance

A soldier, nothing more

Came to win a war

Not to sing and dance

To find a girl was dreaming

OWEN

But dreams can still come true

BRIGHTWELL

Go back to her and try

To show the reason why

The apple of her eye

BRIGHTWELL, OWEN

Is you

OWEN

I've got to be at home here

Nowhere else to go

Came to fight a war

Drew the shortest straw

And now I'm in a show!

BRIGHTWELL

You already know your music

Don't look so woebegone

I came here to fight

Now they've made me write

And what I write is shite

BRIGHTWELL, OWEN, WILKS

Dream on...

BRIGHTWELL, OWEN, WILKS

Home...

They say there's no place to compare it with

Home...

**That's where the heart is so they say
Home...
Depends on who you have to share it with
But I'll find my home one day
One day
I'll find my home one day**

[The radio flashes, we hear the Morse Code sounds. Another night has passed. O'LEARY enters and plays a blast on the bugle. BRIGHTWELL picks up his script (a roll of paper) and comes forward. OWEN moves to the piano. WILKS, wearing his scarlet uniform, and DEBORAH enter from opposite sides of the stage. They look at each other tentatively. O'LEARY goes to WILKS and seizes the crutches]

O'Leary

OK lover boy, today's the day, tonight's the night. A world premiere! Time for the miracle cure!

Wilks

Give them back! Please, maestro.

O'Leary

[Throwing the crutches into the orchestra pit] Go on – dance!

Wilks

I can't!

O'Leary

[Taking off his tam o'shanter and throwing it to WILKS] Here! Catch!

[WILKS takes it and puts it on, takes some tentative steps, at first walking and then going into a dance. He gets better and better...]

Deborah

Oh Tom!

[DEBORAH rushes towards him. WILKS sidesteps her to shake O'LEARY's hand. DEBORAH misses WILKS, turns and prepares to return]

Wilks

Thank you very much, maestro sir.

O'Leary

My cap please.

[WILKS hands it back. Then, to DEBORAH as she finally embraces him]

Wilks

I love you!

Music 17 - 'Beautiful To' Dance theme – Orchestra

[WILKS and DEBORAH dance. As they finish...]

O’Leary

[To BRIGHTWELL] Now how about you? [Cod Scottish accent] My fine young laddie. [Ordinary voice] The book. The script. [Relishing the phrase] The words.

Brightwell

I’m not quite sure, sir. I sat down, took out my pen, and next thing I knew...[He unrolls the script with a flourish. It goes to the floor] The words.

O’Leary

[Handing it to him] Try the bugle. [BRIGHTWELL sounds a perfect reveille] I knew it! Okay, everyone on stage please! The dress rehearsal!

[LUCIA, MANDER, SALVATORE and MARIANGELA enter]

Lucia

Do I finally get to sing?

O’Leary

If the script says sing, you sing. Now Scotty...from the top.

Brightwell

Eh?

O’Leary

Start from the beginning. Read it out, laddie.

Brightwell

[Reading from the top of the roll] “Six Nights In Naples. An opera.”

Lucia

My masterpiece.

O’Leary

Stop! “A musical”.

Lucia

It’s an opera.

Brightwell

“Six Nights In Naples. A musical.”

Lucia

Pah!

Brightwell

[Continues reading out loud] “Our scene is set outside the Royal Palace, overlooking the Bay of Naples. It is a glorious summer morning.” [Nodding to OWEN] Music.

Music 17a: ‘Salvatore’s theme’ - piano and orchestra

[OWEN starts to play the theme, slow and measured]

Brightwell

"The dramatis...er...dramatis person..."

O'Leary

Dramatis personae. The cast.

Brightwell

"The dramatis personae..." I don't know how I wrote this stuff.

O'Leary

As the great showman Phineas T Barnum said to me, "Talent will out."

Brightwell

Out what?

O'Leary

Don't know. I never let him finish the sentence. But what he meant was that talent is like cream: in the end it rises to the top.

Brightwell

But I don't have any talent.

O'Leary

Oh you of little faith. Carry on!

Brightwell

As you wish. *[Mock respect]* Sir. "The dramatis personae are promenading in front of the San Carlo. They dance."

[The orchestra comes in over OWEN's playing. SALVATORE joins in with his violin. As O'LEARY and MARIANGELA look on, the rest of the COMPANY, including FABIO, start to dance. It is a slow, stately, dreamlike dance. After a little while, there is a 'ping' in the music. Everyone stands back, to see that FABIO has dropped something. It is a rabbit charm, such as might have once been part of a charm bracelet. Then a chord from the orchestra]

Mariangela

[Screams] Where did you get that?!

Fabio

[Picking up the rabbit charm] I have had it all my life.

[General consternation]

All

He speaks!

Mariangela

Impostor! *[She pulls up her sleeve to reveal the charm bracelet]* Look! There is one piece missing. A rabbit charm. I left it with my baby. *[To FABIO]* Show me!

[FABIO comes over to MARIANGELA and holds out the rabbit charm. MARIANGELA takes the bracelet from her wrist]

Mariangela

[Taking the charm] A golden rabbit! Look, it fits together *[She is about to embrace FABIO. Then...]* You have stolen my baby's birthright!

Fabio

No!

Mariangela

My baby was a girl!

All

A girl?

Fabio

[Pulling off his wig and garb and letting down 'her' hair] Then you must be... my Mother!

[She throws the wig to the floor. A chord from the orchestra, a gasp of amazement from the COMPANY]

Salvatore

Then I must be... your Father! Fabia!

Fabia

Papa!

[FABIA, MARIANGELA and SALVATORE rush to embrace one another]

Brown

I say!

O'Leary

[To BROWN] Disappointed?

Brown

Delighted.

O'Leary

I thought you liked boys.

Brown

Certainly not.

Mariangela

[To FABIO] But what of Serafina?

All

[Exaggerated] Who?

Music 18: 'Serafina' – Mariangela, Fabio, Company

MARIANGELA

**In the camp at Ercolano
Where fires were burning bright
I found food and warmth and welcome
On a lost and lonely night
Serafina and the gypsies
They could understand
With no one else to turn to
Serafina held my hand**

**Serafina took my baby
To keep her safe from harm
From the bracelet that she gave me
She plucked a lucky charm
And put it with the baby
In the crib beside her bed
Told me go back to the opera
And remember all she said
Serafina, Serafina
Is the mistress of the charms
Serafina, Serafina
La bambina in her arms**

FABIA

**So I grew up with the gypsies
As we were passing by
I saw this very theatre
And all at once knew why
I was born to be a dancer
There was nothing else for me
So I begged for an audition
To show what I could be**

**The director saw the talent
In my pirouettes and twirls
But he made me leave the opera
Said he wanted boys not girls
So I quickly found disguises
Serafina showed me how
To be a boy - but with surprises
And not the girl that you see now**

ALL

**Serafina, Serafina
MARIANGELA, FABIA
All my life a guiding hand**

ALL

Serafina, Serafina

FABIA

Only she could understand

MARIANGELA, FABIA
Serafina, Serafina, Serafina
All our lives a guiding hand
ALL
Serafina, Serafina
FABIA
Only she could understand
ALL
Serafina, Serafina, Serafina!

[During the number O'LEARY has departed without anyone noticing. OWEN has also disappeared]

Brightwell
[Clearing his throat] As I was saying: "Six Nights In Naples, a musical."

Lucia
An opera.

Brightwell
A musical.

Lucia
An opera.

Brightwell
A musical.

Mander
[Stepping forward] Whatever it is, it's got to be ready tonight.

Brightwell
"The cast is promenading in front of the San Carlo opera house. They dance".

Music 19 : 'The Rehearsal' – Company

[The melody of 'Welcome to Naples' starts in a stately fashion. WILKS and DEBORAH dance a courtly roundelay]

Brown
Well...er...Fabio.

Fabia
Fabia.

Brown
Fabia – of course. Perhaps you and I could –

Fabia
Dance? Now I can say this: I have always been attracted to an older man.

Brown

Not too much older I hope.

Fabia

You are just right for me.

[They kiss. The dance music stops]

Brown

[To MANDER] What do you think, sir?

Mander

Don't ask me, ask O'Leary. *[Looking around]* Where is he? *[OWEN enters from backstage]*
Owen, have you seen Major O'Leary?

Owen

No sir. All his stuff's gone too.

Mander

What about his kit bag?

Owen

Nothing. Even his bagpipes have disappeared. And there's another thing, sir. A message from HQ. *[He holds out a piece of paper]*

Mander

[Irritated] What?

Owen

"Naples in Allied hands. Beware German snipers. American troops due 19.00 hours. *[Beat]*
Expecting a show to celebrate victory."

Mander

Oh my God. Owen, send a cable to American High Command. Er... "Please advise whereabouts of Major Carl O'Leary. His presence required urgently – "

Owen

[Scribbling on a message pad] You're going too fast for me.

Mander

For heaven's sake! "Major Carl O'Leary. Stop. His presence required urgently. Stop. Mander, British Eighth Army Corps."

Owen

Stop. Yes sir. As soon as I can sir.

Mander

Do it now! *[OWEN exits]* Right...everybody ready?

All

Yessir!

[WILKS and DEBORAH approach]

Wilks

But what about Major O'Leary?

Mander

[Almost hysterical] He's gone, he's gone! Don't you understand? If London can survive the Blitz, I'm sure we can manage a song and dance show.

Wilks

[Striking a pose with DEBORAH] It's a musical sir. Major O'Leary insisted.

Mander

Well he would, wouldn't he? With his 'Broadway this' and 'Broadway that' and 'do it my way', 'showbiz, showbiz'. Makes me sick. Well he's not here. *[Beat]* American bastard. Now go and get ready. And remember – thank God we're British.

[As the others leave, to change into their 19th century costumes for the show, LUCIA comes to MANDER]

Lucia

I am not British, Inglese.

Mander

[Calming down] Please, please, Lucia...just this once, no Latin temperament. Do the show?

Lucia

I recall you promised that my dressing room would be redecorated.

Mander

Later? Please?

Lucia

And that I would have flowers.

Mander

There is a war on you know. *[They stare at one another]* Lucia, do the show? For me? Who you love?

Music 20: 'I Love As I Love' – Lucia, Mander

LUCIA

Love is just a word

Don't believe a word you've heard

And take care how you speak of love

Love is where you start

At the end a broken heart

So beware when you speak of love

Never look ahead

Live life day by day instead

That's the only way to stay in love

What's love?

I love as I love
The way I breathe, the way I see
Without a thought, as I care
My own affair, unique to me
If you asked me to fall in love
Forever with you
Then all I could say
Is I love as I love and live
It's with my soul and my heart
Today

I love as I love
Whatever else my lovers see
I cannot change who I am
I can't pretend, I'm always me
If you ask me for compliments
Or favours, take care
For all I can do
Is love as I love and live
And give my heart and my soul
To you

MANDER

What can I say?

LUCIA

Just try

MANDER

If love is true, what does that mean?

LUCIA

We'll know for sure when tomorrow dawns

MANDER

What about today?

LUCIA

Just another day

MANDER

Dazed, no, amazed

This talk of love is new to me

You know what to say

How can I show what I can be?

When you ask me to fall in love

Forever with you

It might be a day –

[He breaks down. Music continues. She goes to him. He turns away]

Mander

[Speaks] I'm sorry. My voice has deserted me.

Lucia

That cannot be.

Mander

I'm afraid so. Completely gone.

LUCIA

Then let your soul and your heart

Run free....

You love...

It's not a choice, your heart is true

Without a thought, as you care

Your own affair, unique to you

If I asked you to fall in love

Forever with me

Then all you can say

Is I love as I love and live

Evermore or for just one day

Evermore or for just one day

[At the end of the number, LUCIA kisses MANDER on the lips, at first briefly and then more passionately. Then she pulls away]

Lucia

I'm sorry. The feeling has gone.

Mander

Gone with my voice. We have a saying in the Army: "Surplus to requirements". Not needed. It's time for me to go.

Lucia

I'm sorry. *[Pause]* If you must go, be careful. I believe there are snipers in the city.

Mander

It's possible I'll encounter one. *[Beat]* If I'm lucky. Goodbye then.

Lucia

Arriverderci, caro mio.

[MANDER looks at her with slight puzzlement, holds the look and then turns and exits.

[SALVATORE, DEBORAH and WILKS enter in their 19th century costumes. SALVATORE tunes his violin and starts to play the 'Welcome to Naples' theme slowly]

Music 20a: Welcome to Naples theme - violin

[DEBORAH and WILKS dance a warm-up exercise]

Deborah

Look, mama! *[LUCIA is distracted, looking towards where MANDER exited]* Mama!

Lucia

[Still distracted] Very good, Deborah, very good. Maybe I was wrong about the boy. At least he can dance.

[DEBORAH and WILKS strike a pose, each with an arm and leg outstretched and kiss]

[BROWN and FABIA enter, also in 19th century costume. They too strike a pose. LUCIA claps her hands and laughs in delight]

Lucia

Strano. *[To BROWN]* Very strange. But bravissimo!

[MARIANGELA, dressed like a 19th century serving girl, enters. She carries a gorgeous 19th century costume, which she brings to LUCIA]

Mariangela

Signora. Please. *[The costume is all in one piece, with a Velcro fastening at the back. LUCIA steps into it effortlessly and MARIANGELA fastens it]* You remember? Your costume from *Sei Notti a Napoli?*

Lucia

[With a joyous smile] How could I forget?

Mariangela

You are happy now?

Lucia

Yes. I am working again. And I know that I am loved.

Deborah

With a new audience to love you, mama.

[BRIGHTWELL enters, in 19th Century costume, looking uncomfortable. He carries his script, trailing the roll of paper behind him. The waltz theme ends]

Brightwell

Mariangela, these clothes you asked me to wear...they don't fit.

Mariangela

Your tunic is the wrong way round. Come here. Now take it off.

[He does as he's asked. She helps him. Meanwhile...]

Brightwell

I'm supposed to be the scriptwriter.

Wilks

You're supposed to be versatile. Maestro O'Leary said so.

Lucia

Allora. I am ready. Where is our director? The American top banana?

[OWEN enters in 19th century costume. SALVATORE stops playing]

Owen

Cable for Captain Mander.

Lucia

He's not here.

Brown

What?

Lucia

[Quietly] He said he had to go out.

Brown

But it's nearly seven. We're supposed to start the show any minute.

Owen

What shall I do with the cable, sir?

Brown

Read it.

Owen

It's from American Army HQ; "Re Major Carl O'Leary...*[We hear an eerie echo of the 'Do It My Way' theme]* ...according to our records no soldier of that name and rank is serving in the American military."

[General astonishment]

Brown

They must be mistaken. We've just spent five days with him.

Lucia

Ha! Maybe he is a fraud. I always thought so.

[The 'Do It My Way' theme segues into 'Feel The Magic' theme]

Mariangela

But he made the opera house live again.

Brown

I'd like to think the British army had something to do with that.

[In abstract space, as though on a cloud, O'LEARY appears. He now wears 19th century costume and is carrying the leather-bound volume]

O'Leary

Buona sera.

[The others turn to look him. A moment of astonishment, as they exclaim in quick succession...]

Deborah

It's him.

Wilks
Who?

Owen
What?

Mariangela
How?

Lucia
A ha! The American. *[Contradicting herself with confidence]* I always thought he would come back.

Salvatore
Maybe he is a spirit.

Mariangela
The spirit of the San Carlo.

Lucia
Spirit? He's American.

Brown
I don't believe in ghosts anyway.

Music 21: 'Feel The Magic' – Owen, O'Leary

OWEN
[Sings, eerily] **What the hell is he doing there?
One minute he's here, the next he's up in the sky...**

[The melody switches to Salvatore's melody from act one]

O'Leary
The Great Archive of the San Carlo opera house lists every performance, and all the singers, conductors and directors. *[He opens the volume and reads]* "The thirteenth of September 1843. First performance of *Sei Notte a Napoli*. Singers: signor and signora blah-blah-blah. Conductor: blah. Unimportant. BUT: Director: Carlo Liri. *[He separates the two names carefully]*

Lucia
You! Then you are Italian?

O'Leary
The underworld knows no borders.

O'LEARY
**Feel the magic all around you
Breathe the spirit in
He controls
Hearts and souls
Time now to begin**

Inspiration strikes
Right now...

O'Leary

Did you think I'd desert you in your hour of need? In body maybe, but only in body. I've been in the theatres of the world for a hundred years. Now do the show and restore the glory of the San Carlo.

O'LEARY

No one in the world outside
San Carlo hears us sing
Here inside
Ghosts can guide
Now the play's the thing
We'll reveal it
As we feel it
All you have to do
Is...

ALL except O'LEARY

What's that feeling
Tell me what's that feeling?
It's like bells are pealing in the sky
Strangely chiming
Oh what perfect timing
Feeling simply sublime
I wonder why

O'LEARY

Now it's showtime
No more I-don't-know time
Come on, come on and play your part
Plots are intertwining
Love and war combining
Show me a show
That's full of heart
ALL
Of heart

[The music changes to sounds of the orchestra tuning up]

Deborah

Are you ready Tom?

Wilks

As ready as I'll ever be.

Fabia

[To BROWN] Shoft-shoe-shuffle?

Brown

Soft shoe. Here we go.

[OWEN plays a riff on the piano. LUCIA does scales. BRIGHTWELL exits]

LUCIA

La, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la

O'LEARY

You can do it, you can do it, love's in the air

ALL

So we only have to let ourselves go

ALL BRITS

We can do it, we can do it any old where

ALL

And it's the only way to put on a show

ALL ITALIANS

We can do it, we can do it, opera's the thing

ALL BRITS

With a song and dance routine along the way

ALL

We can do it, we can do it, all that we need...is

ALL MEN

An audience to love it

ALL WOMEN

An audience to love it

ALL

Now just take it away

Take it away

We'll take it and take it

And take it away...

ALL

Now we are...

Earthly mortals, spirits on high *[They look up to O'LEARY]*

That's the way to the stars

Enemies unite as friends

That's the way the story ends

Love and laughter till the curtain falls

Wow! Kerchink! Here come...the curtain...calls!

[ALL except BRIGHTWELL and O'LEARY exit]

Music 22: Welcome to Naples – Brightwell, Owen Wilks

[The orchestra plays the melody, slow and measured]

O'Leary

That's it! That's it! *[To BRIGHTWELL]* Now, laddie, get out there and start the performance. Curtain up!

Brightwell

[Stepping forward, out front, covered in confusion] Er...welcome, ladies and gentlemen. *[He shades his eyes against the lights]* Well...er...gentlemen. Just gentlemen. Welcome to the...

O'Leary

...the San Carlo opera house.

Brightwell

...opera house, in...

O'Leary

Napoli.

Brightwell

Naples. For a performance of...

American Voice - from the back

Get on with it!

Brightwell

Six Nights In Naples. The musical.

[The music starts slowly, then goes up tempo. WILKS, BROWN and OWEN enter and dance a Broadway 1943-style opening number to 'Welcome to Naples'. BRIGHTWELL joins them]

BRIGHTWELL, OWEN, WILKS

Hey, welcome to Naples

Buongiorno to Naples

The city in which we set our scene

It's all serenading

The locals parading

ALL BRITS

And now we're invading

Hey, isn't that mean?

[The ITALIANS enter]

LUCIA, SALVATORE, MARIANGELA, FABIA, DEBORAH

Welcome to Naples

Buongiorno to Naples

Although we never asked you to come in

We know you must invade us

It's happened before

But please don't serenade us

We'd rather have war

ALL

So welcome to Naples

Yes, it's welcome to Naples

Welcome to Naples one and all...

It's get-up-and-go-time

Get set for the show time

Welcome to Naples one and all!

[There is a shout from the back of the stalls]

Mander

Wait!

[MANDER enters, dishevelled, and moves down the aisle towards the stage]

[Crowd sound FX]

American voices

[Mixture of...] Hey, wait your turn! Leave the ladies alone! Who the hell are you!

One American voice

We were promised a show!

[MANDER climbs onto the stage and rushes over to LUCIA. Everyone goes quiet]

Mander

[Looking out front] Sometimes there are more things in life than show business. *[He turns to LUCIA]* Lucia. I have something to say.

Lucia

Yes?

Mander

I was looking for a place to...well, you know...and I looked down into the gutter and saw this. *[He reaches into his pocket and pulls out O'Leary's tam o'shanter. There is another shimmer from the orchestra and the blue light illuminates MANDER]* And I started humming to myself, and now...

Music 23: 'I Love As I Love' reprise – Mander, Lucia, Company

MANDER

[Beautiful voice] **I've found the words to say**

For now I've learned what love can mean

Lucia

Caro mio!

LUCIA, MANDER

We'll know for sure when tomorrow dawns

MANDER

But we know today

LUCIA, MANDER

Yes we know today!

MANDER LUCIA

We love as we love,

The way I breathe, the way I see...

[O'LEARY smiles beatifically]

MANDER

Without a thought, never fear

I'm always here, and you with me

MANDER, LUCIA

**Now I've asked you to be in love
Forever with me
Forever and true
I'll love the way I love I today
With all my soul and my heart
And you...**

MANDER. LUCIA

**We love ...
The way I breathe, the way I see
Without a thought, and I'll care
For you the way you care for me
WILKS, DEBORAH, BROWN, FABIA
Now I ask you to be in love
Forever with me
Forever be true**

ALL

**I love as I love and live
With my soul and my heart
And you...
With my soul and my heart
And you!**

[O'LEARY looks on approvingly. He gestures towards OWEN. OWEN shyly approaches BRIGHTWELL. They link hands. MANDER produces a huge bouquet of flowers and hands it to LUCIA]

Tableau:

Brightwell and Owen

Lucia and Mander

Deborah and Wilks

Brown and Fabia

Salvatore and Mariangela

END

