

**BACK HOME**  
THE WAR BRIDES MUSICAL

Book by  
Ron Sproat

Lyrics by  
Frank Evans

Music by  
Christopher Berg

**BACK HOME,**  
**The War Brides Musical**  
received honorable mention for  
**THE VERIZON BEST OF FESTIVAL AUDIENCE AWARD**  
and  
**EXCELLENCE IN LYRICS**  
at the 2007 New York Musical Theatre Festival Awards.

**BACK HOME** was named “**BEST OF THE YEAR**”  
by the Norwich (CT) Bulletin  
and winner of the **SPIRIT AWARD** for **BEST NEW WORK.**

*Thomas R. Distler, Esq.*  
*Brooks & Distler*  
*110 East 59th Street*  
*23rd Floor*  
*New York, NY 10022*  
*(212) 486-1400*  
*Telecopier (212) 486-2266*  
*Cellular (917) 687-2227*  
*E-mail:brookslaw@aol.com;*  
*tom1brookslaw@aol.com*

© Ron Sproat, Frank Evans and Christopher Berg

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

For cast of ten, piano and optional cello

ALL CHARACTERS double except MO and IVY.

MO, a London post office worker, twenties-thirties

IVY, a mill worker in Leeds, twenties-thirties

For purposes of identification, the other players are identified by their Key Roles

MO'S MUM/VERA (older)

Coworker at Leeds Mill

Cinema Patron

Leader of Group in Church Basement (London)

Ann Connor from Manchester for March on Dept of War Transport in London/Pub

Scene

Woman in "Chimneys and Steeples"

ALICE (Scottish Bride-youngest)

British Woman in Opening

Coworker at Leeds Mill

GLADYS, Mo's coworker at the Post Office

Cinema Patron

Bride in Church Basement (London)

Doreen Selby from Liverpool for March on Dept of War Transport in London/Pub Scene

Woman in "Chimneys and Steeples"

DORIS (From Canterbury-older)

British Woman in Opening

KITTY, IVY's confidant

Cinema Patron

Bride in Church Basement (London)

SYLVIA, leader of March on Dept of War Transport in London/Pub Scene

Woman in "Chimneys and Steeples"

IVY's MUM

JERRY (Mo's age, GI from West Virginia)

British Man in Opening

TOM, MO's Brother

Lieut. Pete Sussman, from Birmingham, Alabama (Globe and Anchor Scene)

Cinema Patron

Heckler in March on Dept of War Transport

Husband in Yanks' Lament

Soldier at Tidworth

TYPIST

## IVY's FATHER

Soldier in Globe and Anchor Scene  
Supervisor at Leeds Mill  
Cinema Patron  
Heckler in March on Dept of War Transport  
Radio Voice in Three Bells Pub Scene  
Husband in Yanks' Lament  
Drunken Man in "Chimneys and Steeples"  
Soldier who takes papers in "Want to See our Papers"

## TYPIST

Sings in final bars of "Everything I Heard"

## SOLDIER

In Globe and Anchor Scene  
Cinema Patron  
Heckler in March on Department of War Transport  
In "Chimneys and Steeples"  
DOCTOR at Tidworth  
Typist  
Soldier on Dock,  
Soldier on board ship  
Sings in Finals bars of "Everything I Heard"

## WAC at Tidworth

Pub Waitress in Glove and Anchor Scene  
Cinema Patron  
Bride (JEAN) at Bride's Meeting in London  
Heckler in March on Department of War Transport  
In "Chimney and Steeples"  
In "Want to See Our Papers?" as Bride  
Sings in final bars of "Everything I Heard"  
(This actress covers the female parts; WAC lines & business can go to a SOLDIER)

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

For cast of nine, piano and optional cello

ALL CHARACTERS double except MO and IVY.

MO, a London post office worker, twenties-thirties

IVY, a mill worker in Leeds, twenties-thirties

For purposes of identification, the other players are identified by their Key Roles

## MO'S MUM/VERA (older)

Coworker at Leeds Mill  
Cinema Patron  
Leader of Group in Church Basement (London)

Ann Connor from Manchester for March on Dept of War Transport in London/Pub Scene

Woman in “Chimneys and Steeples”

ALICE (Scottish Bride-youngest)

British Woman in Opening

Coworker at Leeds Mill

GLADYS, Mo’s coworker at the Post Office

Cinema Patron

Bride in Church Basement (London)

Doreen Selby from Liverpool for March on Dept of War Transport in London/Pub Scene

Woman in “Chimneys and Steeples”

DORIS (From Canterbury-older)

British Woman in Opening

KITTY, IVY’s confidant

Cinema Patron

Bride in Church Basement (London)

SYLVIA, leader of March on Dept of War Transport in London/Pub Scene

Woman in “Chimneys and Steeples”

IVY’s MUM

JERRY (Mo’s age, GI from West Virginia)

British Man in Opening

In Globe and Anchor Scene

Cinema Patron

Heckler in March on Department of War Transport

In “Chimneys and Steeples”

DOCTOR at Tidworth

Typist

TOM, MO’s Brother

Lieut. Pete Sussman, from Birmingham, Alabama (Globe and Anchor Scene)

Cinema Patron

Heckler in March on Dept of War Transport

Husband in Yanks’ Lament

Soldier at Tidworth

TYPIST

IVY’s FATHER

Soldier in Globe and Anchor Scene

Supervisor at Leeds Mill

Cinema Patron

Heckler in March on Dept of War Transport

Radio Voice in Three Bells Pub Scene

Husband in Yanks’ Lament

Drunken Man in “Chimneys and Steeples”  
 Soldier who takes papers in “Want to See our Papers”  
 TYPIST  
 Soldier on Dock,  
 Soldier on board ship  
 Sings in final bars of “Everything I Heard”

WAC at Tidworth  
 Pub Waitress in Glove and Achor Scene  
 Cinema Patron  
 Bride (JEAN) at Bride’s Meeting in London  
 Heckler in March on Department of War Transport  
 In “Chimney and Steeples”  
 In “Want to See Our Papers?” as Bride  
 Sings in final bars of “Everything I Heard”  
 (This actress covers the female parts; WAC lines & business can go to a SOLDIER)

#### SETTING

There is no curtain. The playing area should be spare, except for levels designed for easy entrances and exits and screens for projected visuals. For the New York Musical Theatre Festival, the set was a backdrop and floor drop flag, ten chairs and a rolling white box.

The play takes place in the present and in various locales in Great Britain from 1941-1946.

BACK HOME, THE WAR BRIDES MUSICAL IS WAR BRIDES can be performed without intermission. If an intermission is required, it comes at the bottom of page 44 after the stage direction “THE VOICES rise to a crescendo as the scene blacks out.” (Curtain, ACT I)

BACK HOME was presented in the 2007 New York Musical Theatre Festival by Musical Mondays Theatre Lab, Pat Addiss and Ricky Stevens. The production was directed and had musical staging by Bick Goss. BACK HOME was originally produced at the New Hope Performing Arts Festival, Robin Larsen, producer.

MUSICAL NUMBERS	CD TRACK
YANKS ..... THE COMPANY	1
COOKED GOOSE..... MO	2
A GOOD TIME NOW AND THEN ..... IVY	3
RIGHT AWAY ..... MO and JERRY	4
BACK HOME ..... JERRY	5
BY THIS TIME NEXT YEAR ..... MO and IVY	6
THRILL OF A ROMANCE ..... MO and THE BRIDES	7
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY .....THE BRIDES	8
YANKS’ LAMENT.....THE MEN	9

CHIMNEY AND STEEPLES ...MO, TOM AND THE COMPANY	10
IN A MOMENT I GO .....	IVY 11
BACK HOME II .....	MO and THE BRIDES 12
OH NO, HO HO, OH BOY ... VERA, ALICE, DORIS, IVY & MO	13
WANT TO SEE OUR PAPERS? .....	MO and THE BRIDES 14
WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO TELL US.....	DORIS Not recorded
THE GOOD THINGS .....	JERRY 15
WHEN I SEE HIM .....	MO 16
EVERYTHING I HEARD .....	THE BRIDES 17

There is no curtain. The stage is empty, except for blowups of photos or projections of Britain during World War II.

The play takes place all over England, so settings should be suggested as simply as possible.

The houselights dim.

We are in darkness. We hear sounds of sirens and bombs and see flashes of explosive lightning. Suddenly the noise stops and we hear a voice in the darkness.

The CAST comes on in the darkness. LIGHTS UP

VOICE OF WINSTON CHURCHILL

To each American soldier who has left home to join the great forces now gathering on this island, I send a message of greeting and welcome to the British Isles. Wherever you may go in this country you will be among friends. Our fighting men look upon you as comrades and brothers in arms. Welcome to you while you are with us: and when the time comes we will all go forward together and carry the good cause to final victory.

There was a time, not long ago, when for a whole year we stood all alone. Now we move forward in a great and gallant company.

(MUSIC under. Lights up on a group of British citizens.)

GROUP

YANKS!

MO

I saw a Yank!

WOMAN I (ALICE)

Where?

MO

He come into the post office, juggling a grapefruit. He tossed it to me and said A Keep it beautiful. And he smiled.≡

IVY

I saw a Yank, too. He was walkin' along the road outside of town. He was wearing a helmet and a dark green uniform and he looked ferocious. At first I thought he was a German. I run home and hid under me bed.

SONG: "YANKS"

IVY

(Continued, sings)

THEY ARE FRIGHTENING,  
SINGING,  
YELLING,  
BOUNTING DOWN THE STREET.

MO

THEY ARE GENTLEMEN,  
VERY MUCH THE FELLOW YOU'D WANT MUM AND DAD TO MEET.  
THEY ARE SHY AND SWEET....

WOMAN II (ALICE)

WELL, I DON'T KNOW  
IF THEY'RE THAT WAY  
WHEN THEY'RE DRINKING,  
BUT THEY'RE EV'RYWHERE YOU GO.

WOMEN

THERE'S A YANK.  
THERE'S A YANK!

(The rest of the cast comes on, WOMEN first, joined by THE MEN, all watching the YANKS. Behind THEM, there could be projected snapshots of American soldiers, singly and in groups, taken in every part of the British Empire. As the musical number continues, the snapshots begin to include British women, first seem dating the men, then in wedding pictures. The snapshots cover a time span from 1942 to 1944.)

WOMAN (ALICE)

THEY'RE UNUSUAL,

IVY

SEEMS TO ME THEY COULD BE MEN FROM MARS.

WOMAN (DORIS)

THOSE AMERICANS:

MOST OF 'EM HAVE FACES LIKE A MOTION PICTURE STARS.

WOMAN (VERA)

YOU CAN SPOT A YANK...

HE'S ALWAYS CLEAR:

BY THE MOLDING

OF HIS BRITCHES

AS THEY STRETCH ACROSS HIS REAR.

TWO WOMEN (VERA AND DORIS)

THAT'S A YANK.

ALL WOMEN

THAT'S A YANK!

IVY'S FATHER

THEM YANKEE SOLDIERS, ACTING LIKE THEY'RE HEROS  
SWAGGER IN THEIR BRAND NEW BOOTS.

MAN I (TOM)

THEY'RE ALL SUCH FOOLS THAT WHEN THEY SEE A DOORMAN,  
THEY START GIVING OUT SALUTES.

IVY'S FATHER

AND THEY AIN'T GOT SAVVY

MAN I (JERRY)

'CEPT TO OPEN A BEER

IVY'S FATHER

THEY'RE OVERPAID!

MAN I (JERRY)

THEY'RE OVERSEXED!

ALL MEN

THEY'RE OVER HERE.

IVY'S FATHER

Did you see the latest roadside notice? To all G.I.'s: Drive Carefully. That child may be yours.

(MAN I and IVY's father laugh heartily)

WOMAN I (DORIS)

AND THE WAY THEY LAUGH,  
MAKING YOU FORGET YOU'RE IN A WAR.

WOMAN II (ALICE)

THEN THEY TIP THEIR HATS,  
HELP YOU PUT YOUR COAT ON AND THEY ALWAYS HOLD THE DOOR.

WOMAN III (DORIS)

THEY ARE BIG AND TALL,  
IMMENSELY KIND.  
AND I THINK THEY MUST HAVE UP AND LEFT THE UGLY ONES BEHIND.

WOMAN II (ALICE)

LOVELY YANKS.

WOMEN

HANDSOME YANKS.

(MO comes out with HER BROTHER, TOM. Music continues under.)

MO

Oh, Tom, they ain't so much.

TOM

Do you know a private in their army makes more than a Major in ours? You know 'ow much them uniforms cost? A fortune, that's what!

MO

You look better in your uniform than any of them, and I'm not saying that because you're me brother neither.

TOM

Tell it to Brenda.

MO

That cow.

TOM

Keep yer mouth off ‘er.

MO

You still defend her? After what she’s done to you?

TOM

It’s just XI keep thinkin’ if I ‘ad the money to take her out and give her presents she’d be engaged to me now, ‘stead of that Yank

(THEY go off. Lights up on MEN.)

IVY’S FATHER

CAN YOU FIGURE IT?  
ALL THEM WOMEN MAKIN’ SUCH A FUSS?  
OVER FIGHTING MEN...

MAN II (JERRY)

FIGHTING MEN?  
THEY’RE FIGHTING FOR A SEAT UPON A BUS.

TOM

IF YOU THINK THERE WERE A LOT BEFORE,  
THERE’S A NEW SHIP  
IN THE HARBOR

TOM AND MAN II (JERRY)

AND I HEAR THEY’RE SENDING MORE....

MEN

ALL THEM YANKS...

WOMEN

LOVELY YANKS

MEN

BLOODY YANKS.

(Lights up on: IVY is watching the parade of Yanks go by , wide-eyed. HER FATHER comes up. HE is drunk)

IVY’S FATHER

Ivy!

IVY

(Flustered)

Oh X Da X

IVY'S FATHER

What you doin' out here? Why ain't you at work?

IVY

I'm on me tea break, Da.

IVY'S FATHER

So you come out here to gawk at the pretty soldier boys, like all the other tarts in Leeds.

IVY

These men come to help us win the war, Da. What's the harm in wavin' welcome to 'em?

IVY'S FATHER

Well, you stay away from 'em, you hear me?

IVY

Yes, da.

IVY'S FATHER

Say it like ya mean it!

IVY

Yes, da.

(IVY'S FATHER cuffs HER on the back of her neck and SHE falls to the ground. Lights crossfade as IVY picks herself up.)

WOMAN I (Alice)

YOU CAN ASK A YANK TO SUPPER, BUT TOMORROW  
WHEN HE WAKES UP IN THE MORNING, HE'LL EXPLAIN;  
HE WAS SLEEPING VERY NICELY ON THE SOFA IN THE PARLOR  
'COS HE MISSED THE FINAL TRAIN.

WOMAN II (Doris)

WHEN I KISS A YANK  
WILL I KNOW WHAT TO DO?

WOMAN III (Vera)

(Sprech-sings)

When I kiss a Yank...

(Sings)

I GARGLE WHEN I'M THROUGH.

WOMAN I (Alice)

(Speaks)

I went with my friend Mavis to this ballroom and that's where I met David. I turned around and there he was.

WOMAN II (Doris)

(Speaks)

I was introduced to Robert at an officer's dance in Lancaster.

WOMAN III (Vera)

(Speaks)

Jimmy-Bob stopped me on the street to ask directions, and we just got sort of acquainted X ya know.

MEN

(Sing)

STEALIN' ALL OUR GIRLS,

MAN III (JERRY)

LOCK 'EM UP FOR LARCENY AND THEFT.

TOM

TAKE A LOOK AROUND:

MAIDEN AUNT MATILDA IS THE ONLY VIRGIN LEFT.

IVY'S FATHER

SEE THE MIGHTY HEROS STRUT ABOUT

MIGHTY RAUCOUS,

MAN II (JERRY)

MIGHTY RANDY,

MEN

AND I'D LOVE TO BOOT 'EM OUT!

THE COMPANY

ALL THOSE YANKS,

WOMEN

HANDSOME YANKS,

MEN

BLOODY YANKS,

WOMEN

LOVELY YANKS,

THE COMPANY

ALL THOSE YANKS!

(Lights change to MO's flat in London. MO rushes around, getting dressed. MO's MUM comes on.)

MUM

And I'm askin' you Maureen, why are ya' takin' up with Americans?

MO

'O's takin' up with Americans?

MUM

(A beat, then:)

And I'm askin' you Maureen, why are ya' takin' up with Americans?

MO

I told you a milliontimes, Mum. I'm going out with 'im on accountof because Janet likes 'is friend.

MUM

And that's why you've seen 'im every night this week, on account of because of Janet?

MO

Oh, Mum, stop.

MUM

Looks like you're gettin' serious, luv. That's what worries me.

MO

We're not.

MUM

'e's a soldier, Maureen. One day soon, 'e'll be goin' off to fight. 'e might not be comin' back.

MO

I know that. All the more reason for us havin' a good time now.

MUM

'e's also a Yank. An American. If 'e does get through the war, 'e'll be goin' back to America when it's over. "'e might 'ave some girl waitin' for 'im there.

MO

'e doesn't. 'e told me so.

MUM

Surely you're not thinkin' of gettin' married someday and runnin' off to someplace at the end of the earth? Oh, Maureen.

MO

Mum, stop! First, you have 'im dead and buried, then you 'ave me runnin' off to America with this boy, when all I'm doin' is goin' out and 'avin' a few laughs with somebody I like. What's wrong with that?

MUM

Nothin'. If that's as far as it goes.

MO

It is. Now will you leave me alone while I get dressed?

MUM

The way you're carrying on, something's going on, Maureen Lucille Gubbins.

(MUM shakes her head and goes out.

MO Sings.)

Song: "COOKED GOOSE"

ALWAYS LOOKED BEFORE IT LEAPT,  
NOTHIN WRONG WITH ME EXCEPT:

I'M A COOKED GOOSE, I'M A TRAINWRECK.  
I'M A LORRY ON THE AVENUE THAT FLIPPED IN THE AIR.  
I'M A FEEBLE-MINDED CHICKEN THAT GOT LOOSE IN THE BARN  
AND I'M STARTING TO UNRAVEL LIKE A LOOSE BALL OF YARN.

GOIN' OUT WITH HIM TONIGHT  
YET ON WENS'DAY, EVEN MONDAY, THEY COULD SEND HIM OFF TO  
FIGHT.

BUT HE MAKES ME LAUGH  
AND I LOVE HIS TOUCH  
WHEN I'M IN HIS ARMS  
AND WE DANCE AND SUCH.  
COOKED GOOSE, TRAINWRECK, CRACKED EGG, ME.

AND IF I REALLY LOVE HIM?  
WHAT IF WE GO TOO FAST?  
I'M NOT A GIRL WHO EVER  
HAD ME A PAST.

I'M A PLUCKED BIRD, I'M A TRAPPED BEAR  
I'M A HERRING GETTING KIPPERED AND I'M DEEPIN THE SMOKE.  
I'M A ROAST WITH YORKSHIRE PUDDING THAT GETS ET CHRISTMAS EVE  
I'M A NOSE THAT NEEDS A HANKY, BUT ENDS UP WITH A SLEEVE.  
AND I BLITHER AND I BLATHER  
AND THERE'S LOTS OF THINGS I'D RATHER DO  
THAN FALL FOR AN IMPOSSIBLE BLOKE.

IF I DON'T GIVE OUT  
AND I DON'T GIVE IN  
WHEN WE DANCE ALL NIGHT  
THEN IT AIN'T NO SIN.  
COOKED GOOSE, CRACKED EGG,  
STUFFED MOOSE-HEAD

(SOUND: Doorbell)

TOM  
(Calls out)

'ey, Mo! Al Capone is here.

MO  
ME.

(Lights up on the vestibule area downstairs. JERRY  
is there with TOM. MUM comes on.)

JERRY  
Hello, Mrs. Gubbins.

MUM  
(Not too friendly)

‘ello.

JERRY

Hello, Tom. I brought you a few things.

(Producing package.  
To TOM:)

Here are cigarettes for you. And the salted nuts you like.

(To MUM:)

And here’s a pound of coffee. And a bottle of perfume. It’s called New-eet d’amour. I hope it’s all right. I don’t know much about perfume.

MUM

Well. Thank you very much, I’m sure. Say thank you, Tom.

TOM

Yeah. Thank you.

(MO appears)

MO

‘ello.

JERRY

Hi.

(There is a long moment while THEY just look at EACH OTHER.  
It’s obvious THEY are in love.)

TOM

I see you got your best dress on. Goin’ to Buckingham Palace, are we?

MO

Oh, shut yer yap. Shall we go?

MUM

Mind, have ‘er back before curfew.

JERRY

Yes, ma’am, I will.

(MO and JERRY go.)

TOM

Thinks ‘e can buy us for a carton of Chesterfields and a pound of coffee.

MUM

I didn’t notice you refusin’ ‘em.

Between your father’s being gone and the rationing, it’s nice to have a treat no matter where it comes from.

(Lights up on interior of a pub, the Globe and Anchor, Leeds. American Men in Uniform and mingling and dancing with young women who live in the town.

After this, lights up on IVY outside the pub.

HER mate, KITTY, comes out of the pub and joins HER. Lights dim in the pub)

KITTY

Ivy? I thought that were you.

IVY

Oh, hello, Kitty. I just happened to be passing by.

KITTY

Come inside. There’s a Yank wants to meet you. I told him you’re me mate from the mill.

IVY

I can’t go in Globe and Anchor, Kitty.

KITTY

They’ll let you in without an escort. I’ll see to it.

IVY

It isn’t that. It’s me dad. He’d kill me if he knew.

KITTY

What’s wrong with havin’ a bit of fun?

IVY

According to him, any girl who goes with a Yank is a tart.

KITTY

Oh, Ivy. Who cares what he thinks.

IVY

He's my father. I've got to do what he wants.

KITTY

Why?

IVY

He'll beat the livin' daylights out of me, that's why.

KITTY

C'mon, Ivy. Have some fun tonight. Why does your father have to know?

IVY

I best not take the chance of him finding out.

KITTY

Suit yourself.

(SHE goes off)

IVY

Kitty . . .

(But SHE is gone. Lights up on Crown and Anchor. IVY watches Soldiers and girls dancing, the sings≡)

SONG: AA GOOD TIME NOW AND THEN≡

(Sings)

DON'T I DESERVE A GOOD TIME  
NOW AND THEN?

DON'T I DESERVE A NICE TIME  
EV'RY ONCE IN A WHILE?

MAYBE A MOMENT WHEN ME DAD AIN'T PREACHIN'  
WITH A GLASS IN HIS HAND...

MAYBE A MOMENT  
WHEN ME MUM AIN'T CRYIN'  
HOW ME DAD WENT AND LOST ALL HER FAMILY LAND.

DON'T I DESERVE TO FEEL LIKE

IVY

(Continued, sings)

I'M A SCHOOLGIRL AT THE PANTOMIME,  
FROM TIME TO TIME...  
DON'T I DESERVE A GOOD TIME NOW AND THEN?

DON'T I DESERVE SOME DANCIN' NOW AND THEN?  
DON'T I DESERVE A DIP AND A WHIRL  
EV'RY ONCE IN A WHILE?  
GO TO A BALLROOM  
WHERE THE BAND IS PLAYIN'  
'TIL THE MORNIN' IS NEW...  
GO TO A BALLROOM  
WHERE A BOY WILL SEE ME  
AND THE LIGHT ALL AROUND  
IS A SILVERY BLUE.  
DON'T I DESERVE AN EVENIN'  
WHEN I HAVE MYSELF A BIT O' CHEER,  
SAY, ONCE A YEAR...  
DON'T I DESERVE A GOOD TIME NOW AND THEN?

JUST BEYOND THAT DOORWAY  
THEY ARE PLAYIN' DARTS AND DRINKIN' ALE  
AND LAUGHIN' AT THE BAR.  
OVER IN THE CORNER THERE'S A COUPLE HOLDIN' HANDS.  
IF ANYONE'S IN LOVE, THEY ARE

DON'T I DESERVE ROMANCIN'  
NOW AND THEN?  
DON'T I DESERVE CARESSIN'  
EV'RY ONCE IN A WHILE?  
WHERE IS THE BOY WHO'S WANTIN' TO KISS ME  
LIKE NO ONE BEFORE?  
THERE WON'T BE A BOY.  
NO ONE'LL KISS ME  
UNLESS I'VE THE GUMPTION  
TO WALK THROUGH THAT DOOR!  
DON'T I DESERVE A BIT OF WHAT  
I NEVER HAD THE CHANCE TO KNOW?  
WELL, HERE I GO!  
DON'T I DESERVE A GOOD TIME...  
NOW AND THEN!

(Music buttons and the lights restore on the Globe and Anchor. Music begins again,  
under as IVY goes in. KITTY is talking to MAN I, who is an American Soldier.)

KITTY (DORIS)

Ivy! You come in after all.

Yea.  
IVY

Ivy, this is Lieutenant Pete uh...uh...  
KITTY

Sussman.  
SOLDIER (TOM)  
(Southern accent)

Pete, Ivy, me mate from the mill.  
KITTY (DORIS)

Hi.  
SOLDIER (TOM)

Hello.  
IVY  
(Shyly)

Well, I'll leave you two to get acquainted.  
KITTY (DORIS)  
(SHE goes.)

I saw you through the window, and I said to Kitty who is that pretty girl? I'd like to meet her. I guess Kitty told you that.  
SOLDIER (TOM)

Yea.  
IVY

You live here in Leeds?  
SOLDIER

Yea.  
IVY

That was a stupid thing to say. Of course you live here X otherwise, why would you be here X right?  
SOLDIER

IVY

Yea.

SOLDIER (TOM)

I hail from Birmingham, Alabama. Ever heard of it?

IVY

No.

SOLDIER (TOM)

It's the greatest place in the world. I guess we all feel that way about our home towns. You must feel that way about Leeds.

IVY

No.

SOLDIER (TOM)

How come?

IVY

Just don't.

SOLDIER (TOM)

You're not much of a talker, are you?

IVY

No.

SOLDIER (TOM)

Most of the girls, all they do is chatter, chatter, chatter. You're the quiet type. I like that.

(Silence)

Can I get you something to drink?

IVY

I don't drink.

SOLDIER (TOM)

Would you like to dance?

IVY

I'm not a very good dancer.

SOLDIER (TOM)

C'mon.

(HE draws HER into a dance.)

You're the type girl I hoped –

(SHE kicks HIS upstage leg.)

IVY

I kicked you. I'm sorry.

SOLDIER (TOM)

Forget it. Like I was saying, you're the type girl X

(SHE steps on HIS foot.)

IVY

I stepped on your foot. I told you I'm not a very good dancer.

SOLDIER (TOM)

Just come closer, sugar.

(HE draws HER closer to HIM.)

Put your head on my shoulder.

(SHE does.)

Now just follow me.

(THEY begin to dance again. THEIR bodies are pressed together, and the music is dreamy and romantic.)

That's right. Nice, isn't it.

IVY

Yea.

(THEY dance for awhile before the SOLDIER speaks again.)

SOLDIER (TOM)

I'd like to get to know you better. Is there someplace where we could be alone?

(THEY dance off. SOLDIER II (IVY'S FATHER) dances on with IVY. HE passes IVY to SOLDIER III. As SOLDIER III and IVY head upstage, IVY moves THE SOLDIER's hand from her shoulder to a lower part of HER backside.)

KITTY and two OTHER FEMALE MILL WORKERS come on. We are in the mill, months later. The LIGHTS CHANGE. )

KITTY (DORIS)

Show 'em, Ivy.

(IVY pulls her hand from her back to show off a diamond ring.)

WORKER I (ALICE)

Very nice. Is that an engagement ring or what?

IVY

It's a wedding ring. I'm married. I'm Mrs. Earl Hennessy.

WORKER I (VERA)

Earl Hennessy? That baby faced one with the freckles who looks about twelve years old? That Earl Hennessy? You married *him*?

IVY

I love Earl and he's my husband , so shut yer gob.

KITTY

(TO WORKER I [VERA])

Yeah, Bridget, lay off.

WORKER I (VERA)

What happened to that Lieutenant you was so mad about, and the Captain, and Private What's-His Name? As well as half of the U.S. Army. You were mad for 'em all. What happened? Did they get what they wanted an dump ya?

KITTY

I said lay off.

IVY

One more crack and I'll knock you from here to next Tuesday

WORKER I (VERA)

Well, you finally got your ticket to America, even if you did have to marry babyface to do it. Congratulations, Ivy.

(SHE flounces off.)

IVY

Not one word she said is true. I love Earl. I do. I do. I do.

KITTY

We believe ya, luv.

WORKER II (ALICE)

Where will you be living?

IVY

Toledo. Toledo, Ohio, U.S.A.

WORKER II(ALICE)

Never heard of it.

IVY

There's a book calls it a thriving metropolis. We'll be living with Earl's parents for awhile. They're very well off. Earl showed me a photo of their house X it's lovely. Soon we'll have a place of our own, and we'll give parties and go to dances, and , oh, it's going to be wonderful.

KITTY

What do your mum and dad think about all this?

IVY

They didn't come to the wedding.

(SUPERVISOR comes on)

SUPERVISOR (IVY's DAD or MAN IV)

All right, ladies, tea break is over. Back to work.

(THEY disperse as the lights go down on. Lights come up on MO who is writing a letter..)

MO

Dear Jerry,

There are sounds of celebrating all around me as I write this. Thank God, it's over. This awful bloody war is finally over! They must be celebrating where you are, too. Write to me, please, because the war won't really be over for me until I know you got through it all right. My friend Mavis' husband was killed the day the war ended. And my father killed so sudden, less than a week after he reported for duty. So I worry. Please write, please

Love,

Mo

(Lights down and up on MO)

Dear Jerry,

Please write to me ...

(Lights up and down on MO.)

A postcard, anything.

(Lights up and down on MO.)

Dear Jerry,

(Lights up on JERRY.)

JERRY

Dear Mo,

(SHE snatches up his letter)

Sorry it took me so long to get back to you, but a lot has happened. I took a piece of shrapnel in the right shoulder, nothing real bad, but enough to put me in the hospital the day war ended. And enough to put me on the wounded rolls. Which means I'll be among the first to be sent home when shipping is available. It could be any time. It could be next week, next month, in fact I could be on my way...

MO and JERRY

...back to America...

(JERRY fades away)

MO

...by the time you receive this.

(MO looks away from the letter, says to herself:)

Well, I guess that's that. At least 'e's safe.

(SHE walks into a bus stop area, looking at her watch)

Number nine bus, late as usual.

(JERRY rushes on.)

JERRY

Mo?

MO

Jerry!

(THEY embrace, oblivious to the crowd watching THEM.)

What are you doing 'ere?

JERRY

Your Mum told me I could catch you . . .

MO

No. No. I mean, what are you doing here in London?

JERRY

(Words coming in a rush)

They're shipping me back to the States. We sail from Portsmouth on Thursday. I'm on a forty-eight hour pass.

Oh.

MO

Let's get married.

JERRY

Married?

MO

I know it's sudden, but I've been thinking about it for months, and if you want to do it, I want to do it.

JERRY

My stars.

MO

JERRY

(Sings)

SONG: RIGHT AWAY≡

RIGHT AWAY!  
RIGHT AWAY!  
TIME'LL FLY AND I'LL BE GONE.  
SAY YOU'LL MARRY ME, C'MON  
RIGHT AWAY!

Say I'll marry you?

MO

(Speaks)

HERE'S THE RING.  
TRY IT ON.  
TAKE OUR BLOOD AND GET A TEST  
AND THE LICENSE AND THE REST  
RIGHT AWAY!

JERRY

(Sings)

PLEASE MAKE UP YOUR MIND AND DO IT SOON.  
I'VE RESERVED A CHAPEL ---  
TOMORROW NOON.

MO

(Speaks)

Tomorrow noon???

JERRY

RIGHT AWAY!  
RIGHT AWAY!  
TELL YOUR MOM AND THEN WE'LL GO  
MEET MY SERGEANT, MY C.O.  
RIGHT AWAY! RIGHT AWAY!  
RIGHT AWAY! RIGHT AWAY!  
RIGHT AWAY!

(CONTINUED)

MO

JERRY

(Sings)

(Sings)

IF I HAD ANY PRIDE AT ALL,  
I'D SAY I HAVE TO THINK  
IT OVER

RIGHT AWAY! RIGHT AWAY!

ANY PRIDE AT ALL,  
I'D TELL HIM  
TIME IS WHAT I NEED

SAY YOU'LL MARRY ME...

IF I HAD ANY PRIDE I'D SAY  
WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE I LOVE YOU?  
DON'T TAKE ME FOR GRANTED.

TIME'LL FLY AND I'LL  
BE GONE.  
RIGHT AWAY.

IF I HAD ANY PRIDE I'D SAY  
YOU COULD HAVE WRITTEN ME TO  
TELL ME  
ANY PRIDE AT ALL,  
I'D TELL HIM MAYBE,  
MAYBE NOT  
ANY PRIDE AND I WOULD TELL HIM,  
LOOK,  
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I FEEL, MISTER  
MAYBE I AM DISENCHANTED.

RIGHT AWAY, RIGHT AWAY.

GO AND TELL YOUR MOM.

CHAPEL FOR TOMORROW NOON.  
RIGHT AWAY!  
RIGHT AWAY!  
RIGHT AWAY!  
RIGHT AWAY!

IF I HAD ANY PRIDE AT ALL  
I'D TELL HIM WE MUST DO THIS PROPER

RIGHT AWAY!

DO IT PROPER  
WITH A BRIDAL GOWN,  
LACE VEIL, FLOWERS TOO.  
ALL THE TRIMMINGS THAT I DREAMT  
ABOUT  
I WON'T MARRY YOU WITHOUT 'EM  
THAT'S WHAT I SHOULD TELL HIM.

PLEASE MO, ANSWER ME.

PLEASE, MO. PLEASE, MO.

JERRY

(Speaks)

What do you say?

MO

(Turns to HIM, looks at HIM. Flustered.  
Sings)

IF I HAD ANY PRIDE. . .

JERRY

Gee, Mo, I'm sorry. Do you want some time? Why don't you take, like fifteen minutes to think about it?

MO

Fifteen minutes?! We can't waste fifteen minutes.  
(Sings)

RIGHT AWAY,  
RIGHT AWAY,  
TELL ME MUM AND AFTER THAT  
SEE YOUR SERGEANT FOR A CHAT  
RIGHT AWAY...  
RIGHT AWAY...  
RIGHT AWAY...

MO and JERRY and ENSEMBLE

RIGHT AWAY!

(SHE kisses HIM.THEY run off, happy, excited. A moment later,  
THEY return, walking hand in hand, quiet and subdued.)

MO

'ow could two days go by so fast?

JERRY

I wish I could've taken you someplace fancy.

MO

Oh, I love that hotel. Even if the roof leaks and the pipes bang, it'll still be me favorite place for the rest of me life.

JERRY

Maybe we could come back there X say in twenty years or so X and have a second honeymoon.

MO

Oh, wouldn't that be grand.

JERRY

I'm glad your mum came to the wedding. I know it meant a lot to you.

MO

I wish Tom 'ad been there.. But e'll come 'round in time. I'm sure of that.

JERRY

(Glancing at his watch)

I should be on board in a minute.

MO

I was plannin' to look real nice when I got married. I was plannin' to have a trousseau.

JERRY

A trousseau? What's that?

MO

New clothes, linens. They'll 'ave to take me as I am in Bluebell. All I have is my old clothes

JERRY

They don't care about fancy clothes 'n' stuff like that in Bluebell. They aren't't like that at all.

MO

There's still so much to say. Why can't I think of everything I want to say?

JERRY

Soon we'll have years to do that.

MO

How long do you suppose it'll be before we're together again?

JERRY

It'll be soon.

MO

But what is soon? A week, a month, six months? What?

JERRY

I dunno. All I know is you're my wife and the United States Army has an obligation to ship all military wives to join their husbands. You'll see. Don't worry about it.

MO

If you say so.

JERRY

The US Military always meets its obligations.

MO

I hope your people like me.

SONG: BACK HOME

JERRY

(Underscored)

Like you, they'll love you.

(Sings)

WAIT TIL YOU GET THERE,  
THEY'LL KNOW HOW TO TREAT YOU,  
YOU'LL SEE,  
BACK HOME.

THEY'RE GONNA LOVE YOU  
THE MINUTE THEY SEE YOU  
WITH ME,  
BACK HOME.

FIRST, I'LL TAKE YOU DOWNTOWN  
TO GET THAT TROUSSEAU YOU PLANNED  
HIT THE SNAZZIEST NIGHTCLUB AND DANCE TO THE BAND.

I'LL INTRODUCE YOU,  
MY BUTTONS ALL POPPING  
WITH PRIDE,  
BACK HOME.

AFTER AN EVENING  
OF FUN WITHOUT STOPPING,  
WE'LL GLIDE  
BACK HOME.

WHEN THEY SEE YOUR COMPLEXION,  
YOUR SMILE

AND YOUR LOVING WAY...  
THEY'LL KNOW  
WHY I CHOSE TO BRING YOU  
BACK HOME TO STAY.

I'LL GO CRAZY WITHOUT YOU  
BUT SOON  
YOU'LL BE ON YOUR WAY...  
AND THEN WE WILL BE TOGETHER  
BACK HOME TO STAY.

(As the SONG ends, HE and OTHER SOLDIERS back away and disappear. Lights fade. Lights up on IVY & KITTY on THEIR way to work, sometime later.)

#### IVY

Every single girl at the mill is laughing at me behind my back sayin' that I slept with every G.I. I met so's I could get one to marry me and take me to America. That's not true. That's not true at all. All right, so I want to get to America, who doesn't? And I fancied I was in love with a few boys before Earl. Is that a crime? Anyway, I didn't do anything that most of them weren't doin' if they'd only admit it. I ain't got nothin' to be ashamed of.

I love Earl. I do.

#### KITTY (DORIS)

All right, Ivy. I believe you.

(Lights fade. Up on MO's flat area where TOM, MUM and MO are having breakfast, months later.)

#### MO

Bluebell, West Virginia. Bluuuuueee Beeeelll. Don't that have a lovely ring to it.

#### TOM

It's a coal mining camp, for Chris sakes.

#### MO

So? The Encyclopedia Britannica says the says that mountains of West Virginia are amongst the most beautiful in the world. The Encyclopedia Britannica knows more than you.

#### TOM

You give me a pain, you do.

MO

Likewise, I'm sure.

MUM

Stop it, both of you. Can't we get through one meal without this?

MO

He started it.

TOM

Only when you get all moonie and goin' on like you was bleedin' Cinderella and that Yank you married was bleedin' Prince Charming and you're goin' to live 'appily ever after in 'is 'bleedin' marble castle in the bleedin' sky. When the truth of the matter is 'e's nothin' but a coal miner and you're nothin' but a coal miner's wife and you'll be lucky to have electricity and runnin' water.

MUM

That's enough, Tom. You're excused from the table.

TOM

Suits me.

(HE goes)

MO

Tom thinks 'e knows so much. 'e don't know nothin'.

MUM

Maureen, luv, I hate to say this, but there may be a grain of truth in what Tom is sayin' to ya.

MO

Are you starting in on me, too?

MUM

Nobody's startin' in on you. It's a hard life you'll be goin' to, Mo. I want you to be prepared for it.

MO

It might not be as bad as you think.

MUM

Maureen, a mining camp is a mining camp. And a coal miner is a coal miner. They're the same all

over the world.

MO

Even so, I'll be with Jerry. That's all I want, Mum. That's all I care about.

(Lights fade.

Lights up on IVY rushing to leave the mill where SHE works.

Music punctuates HER speech. )

IVY

Aw, Gawd, Gawd, it's happened. Me father heard them terrible, vicious rumors about me at his pub.

Of course, he believed them. Every word. He roars at me at how I've disgraced him, about how I'm the biggest disappointment of his life and on and on. And Mum, she just looks at me and cries, which is worse. I've got to get out of this place. I can't stand it another minute!

SONG: ABY THIS TIME NEXT YEAR≡

IVY

(Continued, sings)

MY LIFE WILL TURN THE CORNER IN TOLEDO, OHIO.  
OHIO IS A LAND WHERE EVEN LITTLE DREAMS COME TRUE:  
A MAN WHO CARES ABOUT ME,  
WHO CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT ME,  
WHO UNDERSTANDS THE WORDS I SAY AND LOVES THE THINGS I DO.  
SO MUCH TO LOOK FORWARD TO  
AND ALL OF IT SO NEAR. . .  
AND I'LL LEAVE THIS PLACE I CANNOT ABIDE  
BY THIS TIME NEXT YEAR

(Lights crossfade to MO)

MO

(Sings)

IT'S HALFWAY 'ROUND THE WORLD TO GET TO BLUEBELL, WEST VIRGINIA.  
WILL I BE GETTIN' DIZZY WHEN I'M BREATHIN' MOUNTAIN AIR?  
THE LAND I'LL REST ME EYES ON  
IS JUST ON THE HORIZON  
BUT WAITIN' FOR TOMORROW IS AN AWFUL LOT TO BEAR.  
SO MUCH TO LOOK FORWARD TO

AND ALL OF IT SO NEAR. . .  
AND WHAT I WON'T DO WITH HIM BY MY SIDE  
BY THIS TIME NEXT YEAR

IVY AND MO

I'LL BE THERE. . .

IVY

. . . TO HELP HIM SET THE WORLD ON FIRE.

MO

. . . WALKING THROUGH THE WEST VIRGINIA SNOW.

IVY

EARL AND IVY ARE THE COUPLE THEY'LL ADMIRE.  
THEY'LL KNOW HOW MUCH...

IVY AND MO

. . . I LOVE HIM

MO

OH, I LOVE HIM SO.

IVY AND MO

I'M DREAMIN' HOW WE'LL CELEBRATE OUR SECOND ANNIVERS'RY.  
I'M DREAMIN' OF A KITCHEN FILLED WITH CINNAMON AND CLOVE.  
I'M DREAMIN' THAT I'LL BE THERE.

IVY

THE SKYLINE I WILL SEE THERE. . .

MO

THE VIEW OUTSIDE OUR WINDOW  
OF AN HILLSIDE AND A GROVE.

IVY AND MO

SO MUCH TO LOOK FORWARD TO  
AND ALL OF IT SO NEAR. . .

IVY

DREAMIN' OF RUBBIN' ELBOWS,

DREAMIN' OF PARTIES I'LL ARRANGE.

MO

JUST LOOKIN' OUT THE WINDOW  
TO SEE THE COLORS CHANGE

IVY AND MO

BY THIS TIME NEXT YEAR.

(Lights fade. Up on MO is sorting mail with GLADYS who is working beside HER.)

GLADYS (ALICE)

So, how long has it been since your husband sailed away and left you? Over a year, isn't it?

MO

Close to a year.

GLADYS

I thought you were going to join him right away.

MO

It's takin' a little longer than I thought. But Jerry says be patient, so that's what I'm trying to do.

GLADYS

Must be hard.

MO

Yep.

GLADYS

Will you be working in the post office over there?

MO

Oh, no. Jerry and I will be living in the mountains. There's no big post office in Bluebell.

GLADYS

By the way, I didn't know your husband was a film star.

MO

What?

GLADYS

I seen ‘im in the films last night.

MO

Jerry?

GLADYS

At the Odeon. In the newsreel, actually. There ‘e was, big as life. They were showin’ the celebrations in the street after V-J day, the crowds in Times Square an’ that, an’ there ‘e was in the middle of it all.

MO

Oh, that couldn’t’ve been Jerry. ‘E’s in West Virginia. That’s a long way from New York.

GLADYS

The boy in the pictures looked just like ‘im. The spittin’ image.

MO

It couldn’t’ve been Jerry.

GLADYS

Well, I’m relieved to ‘ear that, dear. Quite relieved.

MO

Gladys X

GLADYS

What time ‘ave you got?

MO

(Looking at her watch)

Half three.

GLADYS

Good. I’m talking m’ break.

(GLADYS goes)

MO

Gladys --

(But SHE is gone.)

SONG: ATHRILL OF A ROMANCE≡

(As SHE sings the song, the interior changes

to the interior of the Odeon Cinema, suggested by chairs and lighting. MEMBERS OF THE CAST become THE AUDIENCE AT THE CINEMA, entering and leaving after each change in the cinema programme.)

(MO sings)

AND SO  
I GET MESELF A TICKET FOR THE PICTURES  
AND PUSH AND SHOVE TO GET ME TO A SEAT.  
I SEE  
THAT FILM OF VULGAR WOMEN  
KISSING INNOCENT SOLDIER BOYS  
RIGHT THERE IN THE STREET.  
BUT NOT A SINGLE YANKEE SOLDIER LOOKS LIKE JERRY.  
NOT THE SLIGHTEST RESEMBLANCE,  
BLESS ME SOUL.  
IT ALL GOES BY SO FAST  
NOW THE NEWSREEL IS OVER  
AND THE FEATURE STARTS TO ROLL:

IT'S CALLED:  
ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE,≡  
ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE,≡  
VAN JOHNSON,  
ESTHER WILLIAMS  
IN ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE,≡  
MMM-MMM-MMM  
ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE,≡  
MMM-MMM-MMM  
ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE,≡  
THE COLORED LIGHTS DIMMING,  
THE DANCING, THE SWIMMING,  
ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE.≡

MO

(Continued, sings)

YOU SEE  
THE PICTURE HAS A VERY HAPPY ENDING.  
I'M ABOUT TO LEAVE M' SEAT AND HEAD FOR THE DOOR.  
BUT I STAY PUT BECAUSE THE NEWSREEL ON THE SCREEN  
AT THE ODEON STARTS ONCE MORE.  
I FIGURE THAT IT COULDN'T HURT TO SEE IT,  
AS LONG AS IT IS UP THERE ON THE SCREEN.  
AND IT'S JERRY,  
NO IT'S NOT!

YES, IT IS!  
NO, IT'S NOT . . .  
WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'VE SEEN.

THEN COMES:  
ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE,≡  
ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE,≡  
WAS IT JERRY?  
IMPOSSIBLE.  
THERE'S NO WAY ON EARTH THAT IT'S HIM.  
I HAVE TO SIT THROUGH  
ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE,≡  
NINETY LONG MINUTES OF  
ATHE THRILL OF A ROMANCE.≡  
I'M SWEATING OFF OUNCES  
AND ESTHER ANNOUNCES;  
ALET'S ALL GO FOR A SWIM.≡

AND THEN, AT LAST, THEY START TO SHOW THE NEWSREEL.  
I'M STARIN' AT THE SCREEN AND SAYIN' A PRAYER.  
BUT ON EV'RY SINGLE INCH OF THE SCREEN AT THE ODEON,  
JERRY'S THERE.  
HE'S ALL THEM YANKEE SOLDIERS MAKING WHOPPEE.  
HE'S ALL THEM YANKEE SOLDIERS OUT ON A SPREE.  
AND NOW HE'S EVEN, EVEN BLEEDING VAN JOHNSON  
AND I'M ILL FROM WHAT I SEE.

I THINK IT'S TIME I OUGHT TO LEAVE THE THEATRE.  
I RISE UP FROM MY SEAT, READY TO GO.  
AND THEN I FEEL M' PULSE, LIKE THE BEAT OF A  
KETTLEDRUM, TIP TO TOE.  
I DRAG M' FEEBLE BODY THROUGH THE LOBBY.

MO

(Continued, sings)

THE SWEAT UPON M' BROW'S STARTIN' TO BEAD.  
I'M THINKIN': SHOULD I WALK, SHOULD I RUN, SHOULD I CALL ME  
AN AMBULANCE?  
WHAT IS IT I NEED?

(Now the interior of the Cinema has become a church basement,  
which can be indicated by a sign reading AWAR BRIDES MEET  
HERE. SEVERAL WAR BRIDES have gathered to hear VERA

speak.)

VERA

(Speaks)

What is it girls? Why are we meeting 'ere tonight in this lovely church basement? What is it all us war brides need? Don't be shy!

THE BRIDES

(Sing softly)

WE NEED  
THE THRILL OF A ROMANCE.

VERA

(Speaks in rhythm)

*PLEASE MAKE A LITTLE MORE NOISE, GIRLS.*

THE BRIDES

(Sing, a little louder)

THE THRILL OF A ROMANCE.

VERA

(Speaks in rhythm)

*SAY HOW YOU'RE MISSING YOUR BOYS, GIRLS.*

THE BRIDES

(Sing)

THE MEM'RY OF HIS MANLY FACE  
THAT LINGERS ON MY PILLOW CASE.  
THE THRILL OF A ROMANCE.

VERA

(Speaks)

Let me hear you, ladies!

THE BRIDES

(Sing)

THE THRILL OF A ROMANCE.

VERA

(Speaks in rhythm)

*ASK ANY ANNIE OR FANNY OR FRAN:*

THE BRIDES

(Sing)

THE THRILL OF A ROMANCE.

VERA

(Speaks in rhythm)

*A WOMAN NEEDS LOVIN' AS MUCH AS A MAN!*

THE BRIDES

(Sing)

WE ALL AGREE.

WE'RE IN ACCORD:

WE'D HAVE OUR HEALTH AND OUR WITS RESTORED  
BY THE THRILL OF A ROMANCE...

MO

(Getting with the program, speaks in rhythm over music:)

*I'VE 'AD ENOUGH  
OF KNITTING A MUFF,  
PRUNING AND WATERING PLANTS.  
EATIN' A SWEET  
DON'T MAKE ME COMPLETE;  
GIVE ME THE THRILL OF...*

MO AND BRIDES

(Sing)

ROMANCE!

BRIDE (VERA)

(Speaks)

Girls, we formed our club so we wouldn't be so lonely, but this waitin' 'as gone on long enough. I think we should do something about it. I propose we start a letter-writing campaign. We write to everybody that can 'help us out. Both 'ouse's of Parliament ...

BRIDE I (ALICE)

(Cutting HER off)...

the American Army...

BRIDE II (DORIS)

...Mr. Churchill...

BRIDE III (JEAN)

... Mr. Truman...

IVY

(Runs on, speaks)

Is this where the wives are meeting to march?

MO

This is it, mate.

(SEVERAL BRIDES come on, carrying signs that say, or chanting on their entrances☺)

BRIDE (VERA )

Hold up your signs, girls: No ships! No Husbands!”

BRIDE (JEAN)

“We want shipping priority — Italian and German P.O.W.s get it!”

IVY

“We just want one big ship.”

(An officious woman, SYLVIA, comes on, carrying a clipboard.)

SYLVIA (DORIS)

ALLLL Members of the International Wives Organization! Let’s get organized. Please call your name, the location of your club, and the number of people you represent who will be marching with you this morning. You?

MO

Maureen Varski, London. I represent the London Ladies in Waiting. There are 165 of us.

SYLVIA (DORIS)

(Jotting it down)

165. You?

ANOTHER BRIDE (VERA)

Ann Connor, Manchester. I represent the Manchester 147. There are 147 of us.

BRIDE THREE (ALICE)

Doreen Selby, Liverpool. Liverpool Limey Lasses. 253.

IVY

Ivy Roarke. Leeds. One. No club. Just me.

(SYLVIA moves along, presumably to OTHER WOMEN offstage.)

BRIDE (VERA)

(To IVY )

Didn’t you have your picture in the newspaper?

BRIDE #2 (ALICE)

Aren't you the one who lay on the pavement in front of the Cunard Line for hours and hours because they wouldn't sell you passage?

BRIDE (VERA)

Wasn't it 36 hours?

IVY

(Pleased)

*Thirty-eight* hours.

(This causes quite a stir, and that pleases her, too)

I went back the next week, and threw a brick through the window.

BRIDE #1 (ALICE)

Really?

IVY

Girls was throwin' bricks through the windows of the Cunard Line in Blackpool and Brighton and all sorts of other places, but that was after I done it. I was the one started it.

(SEVERAL BRIDES cluster around IVY.  
SYLVIA [DORIS] returns.)

SYLVIA (DORIS)

Aaaaallll International Wives: we've waited a year for this moment. And now we're here, from all over Britain, 800 of us. This is the day we make our presence felt. This is they day we say we won't wait any longer. We march straight up the avenue, until we get to the Ministry of War Transport. Now, let's hear it. "We want ships."

BRIDES

We want ships.

SYLVIA

Louder.

BRIDES

We want ships.

SYLVIA

Louder!

BRIDES

WE WANT SHIPS!

SYLVIA

Let's go.

BRIDES

(As THEY march off, continuing to chant over the following dialogue)

We want ships! We want ships!

(THEY return and become PEOPLE WATCHING THE MARCH. The ENTIRE COMPANY, with the exception of MO and IVY, lines up at the apron of the stage as the march passes by. MO and IVY, offstage, continue to chant "We want ships!")

MAN 4 (SOLDIER)

Why should we pay to send you to America?

MAN (IVY'S DAD)

That's right.

MAN 4 (SOLDIER)

Let the Yanks pay!

WOMAN (WAC)

Ask your Yankee sweethearts to pay!

MAN 2 (TOM)

Right!

MAN IN CROWD (IVY'S FATHER)

Right!

MAN #2 (TOM)

You won't get a farthing from us!

WOMAN #1 (WAC)

Traitors!

MAN (IVY'S FATHER)

You were consorting with Americans while our boys were dying in Africa!

MAN #4 (VERA)

Traitors!

Traitors!  
                   (IVY and MO come on.)

We want ships!

Traitors!

We want ships!

Traitors!

We want ships!

Traitors!

(The word “TRAITORS!” sweeps THE CROWD, which is openly bitter and hostile now, and shouts its anger at the audience, as if the audience were the passing war brides. The shouts of “WE WANT SHIPS!” continues, then fades away, as the march moves on. As the march moves off, THE CROWD disperses.)

(Lights up on Three Bells Pub, with several BRIDES clustered around the wireless (radio). MO, IVY and JEAN come in and join them.)

ANNOUNCER’S VOICE (IVY’S DAD)

(During this, THE BRIDES start to cheer and the cheering continues to the end of the speech.) Several riots broke out in Kent this morning when rumors of fresh beef and pork proved false. Police report three serious injuries and multiple arrests.

(The voice of the ANNOUNCER goes up in volume.)

From America comes news that will please some and sadden others. The American Congress passed a bill yesterday, the so-called War Brides Act, that will provide immediate transport of military wives to America, so plan to say goodbye to over 70,000 of our comeliest maidens who will soon be leaving our shores.

BRIDE I (DORIS)

Ladies, a toast. To us! And to America!

BRIDE II (VERA)

Hear, hear!

IVY

I can't believe this is happening.

MO

Neither can I.

SONG: AIN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY≡

(Sings)

I THOUGHT TODAY'S A DAY WE'D NEVER GET TO . . .  
ARCHES FALLEN WEARY TO THE CORE.  
EV'RY SQUABBLE,  
EV'RY SET-TO.  
BUT DIDN'T WE GET WHAT WE WAS FIGHTING FOR?  
AND SO I'M TAKING A DRINK,  
HERE WITH A PAL . . .

IVY

. . . HERE WITH A CHUM . . .

MO AND IVY

. . . IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.

MO

HOW DO YOU FEEL?

IVY

HOW DO I FEEL?

MO AND IVY

SWEET AS A PLUM  
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.

IVY

THE TAKIN' OF SPIRITS NORMALLY WAITS FOR LATER.

MO

BUT WHEN THE SPIRIT OF LIFE MOVES YOU,  
WHAT CAN YOU SAY?

IVY

SAY THAT YOU'LL PICK UP A GLASS,

MO

MY NEW MATE,  
LET YOUR HAIR DOWN,  
CELEBRATE,

IVY and MO

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY,  
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.

BRIDE I (ALICE)

AND NOW I'M TAKING A DRINK,  
ONCE IN MY LIFE,  
OUT ON A LARK,  
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.

BRIDE II (DORIS)

WADDA YA KNOW?  
FEELIN' M' LIFE  
STARTIN' TO SPARK  
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.

BRIDE III (VERA)

TO HELL WITH WHAT I'LL BE HAVING TO DO TOMORROW  
STUCK WITH M' NOSE TO THE GRINDSTONE SLAVING AWAY...

ALL THE BRIDES

C'MON, LET'S ALL OF US TOAST  
SISTERHOOD...  
THAT'S WHAT MAKES US FEEL SO GOOD  
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.  
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY...  
SAY...

SAY THAT YOU'LL PICK UP A GLASS,  
MY NEW MATE.  
LET YOUR HAIR DOWN,  
CELEBRATE  
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.

OFFSTAGE VOICE (Pianist?)

Quiet!!!!

BRIDES

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.

(Lights fade. Lights up on JERRY, and two other men who are VERA'S HUSBAND, ARTIE, who wears an Hawaiian shirt and IVY'S HUSBAND, EARL, who has a pocket protector in his breast pocket with any number of pens.)

JERRY and the MEN

(Sing)

SONG: AYANKS'S LAMENT

(Hum, then:)

DADDY'S HOUSE  
HOME MADE BREAD  
MY OLD ROOM  
MY OWN BED  
SLEEP LATE NOW  
BUT WAIT NOW

WATCH THE CLOUDS  
FILL THE SKIES.  
HAVE A BEER  
WITH THE GUYS  
BEEN HERE NOW  
A YEAR NOW...

WHERE IS MY BABY?  
WHERE IS MY GIRL?

GOT AN URGE  
WON'T RELENT  
WHAT I GAVE UP  
AIN'T FOR LENT.  
I MISS HER  
I NEED HER  
I LOVE HER (X6)  
I LOVE HER.....

(hum)

(Lights Crossfade from JERRY and MEN to MO on a London Street. MO seems disoriented. TOM comes on)

TOM

Mo? Mo? Mum says to remind you that we're leavin' in an hour.

MO

I know.

TOM

Why so quiet? I thought you was bustin' your buttons to leave.

MO

I was. I am. . . I dunno, Tommy. Before . . . it was sort of like gettin' off the number ten bus at Roseberry Avenue and that was America. Today . . . it's hit me that it might be a long time before I see the old neighborhood again. If I ever see it again.

TOM

Not much left of it now. Just a heap o' rubble.

MO

The Jenkins' 'ouse was over there...

TOM

And that's where the sweet shop was...

MO

An' the Rivoli Cinema was there.

TOM

Mum made me take ya with me to the films every Saturday afternoon.

MO

You used to hold me on yer lap, and I'd squirm an' squirm all through the film...

TOM

Ya always 'ad to go to the loo during the best parts. One I time I said wait a minute, wait a minute, an' ya let go all over me best wool trousers.

MO

Oh, Tommy, I'm going to miss you so much.

TOM

Listen. Things got said X I didn't mean 'alf of 'em. I just want the best for ya.

MO

I know that.

TOM

C'mere.

(HE hugs her)

Take care of yerself, hear?

MO

You too.

TOM

Walk with me, will ya?

(HE goes off quickly. OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CAST wander on as MO walks and looks)

SONG: A CHIMNEYS AND STEEPLES

MO

(Sings)

THE BUTCHER BOY ON HIS BICYCLE,  
A LINE OF WASHING OUT TO DRY,  
AND CHIMNEYS THERE AMONG THE STEEPLES  
IN THE SILVER LONDON SKY

TOM

A BUNCH O' TOTS AND A XYLOPHONE...  
OH WHAT A RACKET THEY CAN MAKE...

TOM AND MO

AND CHIMNEYS THERE AMONG THE STEEPLES  
EV'RY TWIST AND TURN YA TAKE.

WOMAN I (DORIS)

THE CROWDS WITH THEM 'BROLLIES  
IN CASE IT STARTS TO POUR.

WOMAN III (VERA)

THE HAT SHOP WITH ITS GHASTLY HATS  
THAT HELD ON THROUGH THE WAR.

WOMAN II (ALICE)

THE WIDOW FLYNN  
WITH HER SACK O' CRUMBS  
FOR ALL THEM PIGEONS TO BE FED

WOMAN I, II, III (+IV)

AND CHIMNEYS ARE THERE AMONG THE STEEPLES  
EV'RY TIME YA TURN YOUR HEAD.

MAN (IVY'S FATHER)

What???

MAN I (TOM)

MAN (IVY'S

FATHER)

COMMOTION AT THE LOCAL...  
JUST HEAR THEM YELL AND SHOUT!  
BUT IS IT OVER POLITICS?

(Speaks)

What???? What???  
What????

MAN II (IVY's FATHER)

NAW, THEY JUST RUN OUT OF STOUT.

MO

I'VE GOT ME BRAIN  
TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS  
OF ALL THE SIGHTS THAT MEET ME EYE...

MO

EACH CHIMNEY THERE AND EV'RY STEEPLE

MO, WOMAN I, II, III, (+IV) MAN I&II (+III)

IN THE SILVER LONDON SKY.

MO

(Breaking through the CROWD's Choral singing)

ME HOME,  
ME FAM'LY AND ME PEOPLE  
HOW CAN I SAY GOODBYE?

(Lights change to MO's flat. MUM talks to an offstage MO)

MUM

(Speaks)

Everything's ready. Tom'll be here in a minute. We just 'ave time to 'ave a nice cuppa tea.

MO

(Coming on)

I'm not goin', Mum.

MUM

What?

MO

I'm not goin'. I can't go.

MUM

Why not?

MO

Because. Because. America is so far away. What if I hate it there? What will I do? Besides. Why should I leave? I love it here. This is me 'ome. It always 'as been an' it always will be. I'm not gonna leave. I'm not. Oh, no. Why should I?

MUM

What about Jerry?

MO

What about 'im?

MUM

Don't you love 'im anymore?

MO

'Course I do, but . . .

MUM

What are you gonna tell 'im?

MO

Nothin. I mean X You write 'im X an' tell 'im X Tell 'im I couldn't come. Tell 'im X tell 'im I got sick and died or somethin'. That's it. I got sick and croaked. I turned black in the face and keeled over, dead as a doornail.

MUM

You're talkin' crazy.

MO

I don't want to leave you, Mum. I love London. I love you and Tom too much to leave you. I can't go.

MUM

You know and I know you want to go. This is just nerves. Drink your tea and settle down.

MO

I'm gonna miss you so much, Mum. I don't know how I'm gonna stand it.

MUM

We're gonna miss you too. Drink your tea.

MO

(Sips tea)

This is hot water.

MUM

What?

MO

You forgot to put in the tea.

MUM

I never.

MO

Taste it.

MUM

(Tastes)

Well. It is a bit weak.

(THEY look at EACH OTHER and start to laugh. Then MO goes to MUM and hugs HER, and THEY are laughing and crying at the same time.)

MUM

(Brushing away tears)

I best fix me face.

(Goes off. Crossfade to a railway station in Leeds. IVY and HER MOTHER and FATHER are there. IVY's FATHER pantomimes carrying luggage, which HE puts down to open the train door for IVY. IVY's MOTHER (DORIS) is behind THEM.)

IVY' s FATHER

Here's the last of your luggage.  
Write to us, hear?

IVY

I will.

(SHE looks at HER MOTHER, who is silent.)

IVY' FATHER

(Looking up at the sky, trying to cover the awkwardness of the moment.)

It looks like it's tryin' to brighten up. Maybe it'll stop snowin' today.

IVY

It's supposed to stop tomorrow, or so they say.

IVY's FATHER

That's right. Tomorrow.

(THEY have run out of conversation.)

SONG AIN A MOMENT, I GO≡

IVY

(Sings)

IN A MOMENT, I GO.  
ANY MOMENT AND I'LL BE ON MY WAY.  
SO MUCH TO SAY BEFORE I GO . . .  
WE'VE BARELY SAID A WORD.

IN A MOMENT I GO,  
WE COULD SAY SOMETHING TO HELP US THROUGH TODAY.  
INSTEAD WE SAY: ATHE SNOW MAY CLEAR.≡  
ATOMORROW, SO I'VE HEARD.≡

(IVY squeezes onto a seat on an obviously crowded train.  
DAD pantomimes putting luggage on the rack over her head,

backing out, closing the train door, returning to MUM on the platform.)

MAY I ASK A FAVOR,  
YOU KNOW WHAT I NEED.  
WOULD YOU SAY AGOD BLESS?≡  
WOULD YOU SAY AGOD SPEED?≡

IN A MOMENT I GO.  
AND THERE'S NOTHING TO DO BUT WATCH THE SNOW.  
I WISH THE SUN WOULD MELT AWAY  
THE CHILL INSIDE MY HEART.

AI LOVE YOU AND GOODBYE.≡  
AI HATE TO SEE YOU CRY.≡  
THESE SIMPLE WORDS I LONG TO SAY  
I WISH I'D SAID TODAY.

(BLACKOUT.  
MAN TWO calls from off)

MAN TWO (TOM)

Tidworth. Next stop. Tidworth.

(MO and IVY appear in front of a very small room.)

IVY

Mo?

MO

Ivy? Ivy Hennessy?

IVY

Mo!

MO

(Rushing to HER and hugging HER.)

Oh, I'm so glad to see a familiar face.

IVY

Me too.

(A WAC comes up, followed by VERA and DORIS.) [In 8 character version, this role is played by A SOLDIER]

WAC (WOMAN IV)

All right, ladies. This is where you'll be billeted during your stay at Tidworth.

VERA

All of us? Here? In this little bitty room?

DORIS

It is a bit small.

WAC

Obviously, we're overcrowded.

VERA

How long you planning to keep us here?

WAC

As long as it takes to process you. And until transportation is available.

VERA

How long is that?

WAC

I don't know.

VERA

Why don't you know? Isn't it your job to know these things?

ALICE

(Comes on carrying a baby)

They told me to come here.

WAC

Mrs. Johnson?

ALICE

And Emma Johnson.

WAC

Good. You're all here.

VERA

Another one? And a baby? Oh, no. I ain't sharing no room with no screamin' brat.

WAC

I'm afraid you'll have to.

This is an emergency. We have more small children and babies than we can handle. We have babies

sleeping in file drawers. This is the best we can do under the circumstances.

ALICE

Besides, I won't be separated from Emma.

VERA

I demand you put me someplace else. I ain't sharing no room with no screamin' brat.

WAC

I'll register your complaint. Excuse me.

(SHE goes off.)

ALICE

Emma's really good as gold. You'll hardly know she's there.

(The baby starts to scream)

VERA

(Shouting)

There she goes. I won't stay here. Where is that woman?

(THEY ALL start talking at once.)

DORIS	ALICE	MO	IVY
It really doesn't do	Shh, Emma, shh	Look if we all stay	Shouting doesn't help.
any good X It really	Emma, shh, Emma	calm X If we all stay	Shouting doesn't
doesn't do any good.	Shh, Shh, Shh.	just stay calm.	help anything.

(THE VOICES rise to a crescendo as the scene blacks out.

[ACT BREAK HERE, IF DEEMED NECESSARY]

Lights restore.)

A YOUNG SOLDIER appears, in a corridor area. HE crosses the stage, banging on doors, flipping on a light switch.)

SOLDIER (TOM)

All right, ladies! Up! Up! Up!

(THREE WOMEN appear, as from various doorways, in night dress, ALL having been awakened from sleep. ONE OF THEM, ALICE, is carrying a baby. MO and IVY join THEM.)

DORIS

What's going on?

SOLDIER

The doctor's coming. He wants to examine you.

ALICE

Now?

VERA

It's four-thirty in the morning.

SOLDIER (TOM)

So? This is a processing center for war brides. It ain't the Ritz.

(A DOCTOR appears)

DOCTOR (MAN IV)

Line up, please. Open your robes and remove your undergarments so I can examine you.

(THEY do so, grumbling, with THEIR BACKS to the audience.)

Ladies, I don't like this any better than you do, but every woman in this camp has to be examined, all 600 of you, so let's get this over with as quickly as possible. Okay?

VERA

What you lookin' for today, Doctor? Nits?

SOLDIER

Quiet.

VERA

Oh, no. It must be lice. Nits was Saturday.

SOLDIER

I said quiet.

DOCTOR

Kindly open your robe and remove your undergarments.

VERA

Is this how you like to start your day, Doctor? Poppin' in for a quick peek at the privates?

SOLDIER

QUIET!

VERA

(To the SOLDIER)

How about you showing me yours?

(DORIS is shaking and near tears.)

DOCTOR

Kindly open your robe and remove your undergarments!

DORIS

I can't.

IVY

Do it and get it over.

(Shaking, DORIS opens HER robe. THE DOCTOR examines HER. SHE starts to cry. IVY comforts her. THE DOCTOR and SOLDIER go.)

VERA

I can't find me beige sling back pumps with rosettes. All right! Who's pinched me beige sling back pumps with rosettes?

ALICE

Please. You'll wake the baby.

VERA

(Shouting)

Who's pinched me beige sling back pumps with rosettes?

(The baby starts to scream)

ALICE

Look what you've done. Shhh, Emma, shhh.

IVY

Your shoes are right where you left 'em

VERA

Oh. Well, why didn't you say so?

ALICE

I wish you wouldn't raise your voice.

VERA

I'm not the one with the screaming brat, am I?

IVY

Please. Don't argue. Please.

MO

No, don't.

ALICE

I can't take much more of this.

MO

We'll be out of here soon! Every morning I say to meself, I'm one day closer to Jerry.  
(Sings)

SONG: ABACK HOME≡ (reprise)

(During the course of the song, DORIS regains her composure.)

COUNTIN' THE HOURS UNTIL I AM OFF TO THAT LAND, ABACK HOME.≡  
SEE IT ME-SELF NOW AND NOT GET IT ALL SECOND HAND, ABACK HOME.≡  
HE'S BEEN SAYIN' THE OUT OF DOORS'LL DAZZLE THE EYE:  
MOUNTAINS UNDER A BLUE UMBRELLA OF SKY.  
I DREAM OF  
SERVING HIM PIPING HOT MUFFINS THE MINUTE THEY BROWN, BACK HOME.  
SNUGGLE-ING UNDER A BLANKET OF GOOSE FEATHER DOWN, BACK HOME.  
SINCE THE DAY THAT HE LEFT ME, MY LIFE HAS BEEN DOWNRIGHT GRIM,  
BUT SOON I WILL KNOW CONTENTMENT,  
BACK HOME,  
WITH HIM.

IVY

GETTING THE COPIES OF MAGAZINES EV'RYONE READS, BACK HOME.

ALICE

WRITING HE THINKS OF ME EV'RY TIME PEOPLE WEAR TWEEDS, BACK HOME.

VERA

LOVELY PHOTO HE SENT ME OF THE LAST COUNTY FAIR.

IVY

THANKS FOR SENDING THE PLANS OF THE HOME WE WILL SHARE.

MO

ACRES OF FARMLAND . . .

ALICE

A ROOM WITH A CHAIR AND A BED,

ALICE, MO, IVY, VERA,.

BACK HOME.

IVY

SKYSCRAPER,

VERA

RANCH HOUSE,

ALICE

A WATERPROOF ROOF OVERHEAD,

ALICE, MO, IVY, VERA,

BACK HOME.

MO

I'M CARESSING YOUR PHOTO.  
FOR NOW, IT WILL HAVE TO DO . . .  
BUT SOON...

DORIS

(At last, joining THEM)

I'LL BE IN THAT PHOTO,

DORIS, ALICE, MO, IVY, VERA

BACK HOME, WITH YOU.

COUNTIN' THE HOURS, WE'LL BE IN A PLACE THAT THEY CALL ABACK  
HOME.≡

IVY

TOLEDO . . .

ALICE

SCHENECTADY . . .

VERA

PADUCAH . . .

MO

BLUEBELL . . .

DORIS

ST. PAUL. . .

ALL WOMEN

BACK HOME . . .

NOT TO SEEM HIM, NOT IN HIS ARMS FOR MORE THAN A YEAR.

NOW THE MOMENT'S SO CLOSE . . .

IN THE WIND . . .

DRAWING NEAR . . .

ACHING TO TOUCH HIM LIKE NOBODY EVER BEFORE, BACK HOME.

DREAMING OF HOW IT WILL BE WHEN WE'RE REACHING THAT SHORE,

BACK HOME.

MO

ALL THE FEELING INSIDE ME,

THE NEED THAT I PUT AWAY,

BRIDES

WILL BLOOM ON THE DAY I'M FIN'LLY

MO

BACK HOME . . .

MO & BRIDES

BACK HOME . . .

BACK HOME . . .

TO STAY.

ALICE

Where I'm goin', Schenectady, New York, they've got this place called the Stop and Shop. It's just miles 'n' miles 'n' miles of food. And of course there's no rationing there. You just go in and buy whatever you please.

VERA

I believe they got one of them in Paducah too. Only ours is bigger.

MO

Where I'm goin', there's only one little village shop, and that's it.

ALICE

When I go shopping, the first thing I plan to buy is oranges. I used to dream about oranges.

And ham.

IVY

And bacon.

MO

DORIS

And fresh eggs! Can you imagine having ham and bacon and fresh eggs every morning?

VERA

And shoes! No more savin' up ration coupons for clothes, girls! I plan to have matching shoes, purse, hat and gloves for every outfit I own. I plan to buy out every department store in Paducah, Kentucky! Lucky for me me husband is doing so well. And his people are very well off. I don't know if I've mentioned that before.

DORIS

You've mentioned it.

IVY

You've mentioned it.

ALICE

You've mentioned it.

VERA

Don't think I'm gonna turn into some posh American. I'll never forget me mates or where I come from. Like I told Mum before I left Blackpool, nothin' nor nobody is gonna change me!

ALICE

Me neither!

SONG: AOH NO, HO-HO, OH BOY!≡

VERA

(Sings)

I'LL HAVE LOTS OF CASH,

ALICE

UN-HUNH,

BOTH

IN AMERICA,

VERA

AND GLITTER AND FLASH,

BUH-DUH!

DORIS

IN AMERICA,

VERA, ALICE, DORIS

VERA

BUT WHEN I GO TO VISIT MUM AND DAD ON HOLIDAY  
I WILL STILL BE THE SAME AS WHEN I WENT AWAY.

WHEN I WEAR MY FUR,

IVY

WOO-WOO!

VERA, IVY, DORIS, ALICE

IN AMERICA

VERA

THEY'LL ALL SAY AGET HER!≡

EVERYONE

(WOLF WHISTLE SOUND)

BRIDES

IN AMERICA.

VERA

BUT WHEN I TAKE A VOYAGE HOME SUBSEQUENT  
I WILL STILL BE THE SAME AS WHEN I UP AND WENT.

ALICE

I'LL BE MAKIN' HOT DOGS  
A PERMANENT PART OF MY CUISINE.  
BUT EVEN WHEN I'M EATING HOT DOGS  
I'LL BE MORE BRITISH THAN THE QUEEN.

VERA

I'LL WEAR A FUR COAT,

LA, LA

ALICE

IN AMERICA,

BOTH

AND GOLD 'ROUND MY THROAT,

VERA

HOT CHA!

DORIS

IN AMERICA.

BOTH

VERA  
AN' WHEN I VISIT MUM BECAUSE I'VE HAD ME ENOUGH  
OF BEING MISSUS G.I. JOE AND ALL THAT STUFF  
I WILL STILL BE THE SAME BENEATH ME COAT AND MUFF . . .

BRIDES

LA LA  
HOT CHA,  
HA-HA.

VERA  
(Exaggerated Walk, speaks)  
This is how they walk in America, girls.

II  
DORIS

THEY'LL CALL ME A PEACH ---

ALICE  
(Makes kissing sounds)  
(KISS KISS)

IN AMERICA.

BOTH

IF I USE SOME BLEACH . . .

DORIS

VERA

(Makes clucking sounds)

TSK, TSK,

DORIS, ALICE, VERA

IN AMERICA . . .

DORIS

BUT WHEN I TAKE THE BOAT ACROSS TO VISIT OLD MUM,  
SHE WILL RECOGNIZE ME 'THO MY LOCKS ARE PLATINUM.

VERA

THE PARTIES I'LL TOSS,

IVY

HIGH HAT,

BOTH

IN AMERICA.

VERA

THE SERVANTS I'LL BOSS . . .

IVY

DO THAT!

BOTH

IN AMERICA . . .

VERA

BUT WHEN I VISIT MUM AND GIVE HER LAST YEAR'S MINK,  
WE WILL GAB A BIT AND DO THE DISHES IN THE SINK.

ALICE

I'LL BE USING JIVE TALK  
AND PUT ALL THE BE-BOP GALS TO SHAME.  
BUT WHEN I'M NOT TALKIN' THAT JIVE TALK,  
I'LL TALK MORE PROPER THAN A DAME.

I'LL GROW MY HAIR LONG,

VERA

ALLURE . . .

IN AMERICA . . .

BOTH

AND WEAR A SARONG,

ALICE

LAMOUR . .

MO

IN AMERICA,

BOTH

BUT I'M AWARE THAT BRITAIN AIN'T NO BABYLON,  
WHEN I GO I'LL BE DEMURE AS SOME OLD CAMBRIDGE DON  
WITH ME HAIR UP IN A BUN AND WITH ME KNICKERS ON.

ALICE

DEMURE

IVY

COIFFURE

MO

FOR SURE.

BRIDES

VERA

(Speaks)

Let's practice that American walk, girls.

(During the dance break, each of THE BRIDES gives an impression of how THEY will walk/strut in America, much to each other's amusement.)

III

WHEN I'M LIVIN' HIGH,

BRIDES

HO-HO,

IN AMERICA

WITH MY LUCKY GUY,

OH, BOY,

IN AMERICA,

DORIS

ON THE INSIDE I'LL BE BRITISH AS I ALWAYS AM . . .

ALICE

ON THE INSIDE I'LL LOVE CHURCHILL MORE THAN UNCLE SAM . . .

VERA

DOES IT MATTER IF THE OUTSIDE HAS A PERSIAN LAMB?

ALL

OH, NO! . . .

HO! HO! . . .

OH, BOY . . . !

>ME-

RI-

CA!

(THEY are abruptly interrupted by the entrance of A SOLDIER.)

SOLDIER (DOCTOR)

All military wives will report to Room 26D at fourteen hundred hours. That's now, ladies, so move it. And have your papers in order.

BRIDE ONE (ALICE)

(Holding letter)

Our papers.

BRIDE TWO (DORIS)

(Holding letter)

Our papers.

BRIDE THREE (VERA)

(Holding letter)

Our papers.

ALL

(Holding letter)

Our papers.

DORIS

Want to see our papers? Here they are. I've got my passport and my visa and...

SONG: AWANT TO SEE OUR PAPERS?≡

(Sings)

AN AFFIDAVIT THAT WILL TELL YOU  
THAT MY HUSBAND HAS A JOB;  
THE TOTAL OF HIS SAVINGS IN THE SAVINGS BANK.

ALICE

A PAPER THAT WILL TELL YOU  
THAT AT SCOTLAND YARD THEY LOOKED TO SEE  
IF I HAVE BEEN ARRESTED  
AND IT CAME UP BLANK.

VERA

PROOF OF INOCULATIONS AND VACCINATIONS I'VE BEEN GIVEN.

ALL

MY TICKET ON THE RAILROAD  
FROM NEW YORK TO THE TOWN THAT I WILL LIVE IN.

MO

MY BIRTH CERTIFICATE . . .

BRIDES

. . . IN DUPLICATE;

MO

MY PHOTOGRAPH . . .

BRIDES

. . . IN TRIPLICATE;  
MY MARRIAGE LICENSE  
IN QUADRULICATE,  
AND ALL THE REST OF THE GOBBLE-TI-GOOP-LI-CATE.

(Speak)

My passport, and my visa and . . .

GROUP ONE

(Sings In counterpoint with GROUP two)

AN AFFIDAVIT THAT WILL TELL YOU  
THAT MY HUSBAND HAS A JOB;  
THE TOTAL OF HIS SAVINGS IN THE SAVINGS BANK.  
A PAPER THAT WILL TELL YOU  
THAT AT SCOTLAND YARD THEY LOOKED TO SEE  
IF I HAVE BEEN ARRESTED

AND IT CAME UP BLANK.  
PROOF OF INOCULATIONS AND VACCINATIONS I'VE BEEN GIVEN.  
MY TICKET ON THE RAILROAD  
FROM NEW YORK TO THE TOWN THAT I WILL LIVE IN.

GROUP TWO

(Sings in counterpoint with GROUP ONE)

AN AFFIDAVIT THAT WILL TELL YOU  
THAT MY HUSBAND HAS A JOB;  
THE TOTAL OF HIS SAVINGS IN THE SAVINGS BANK.  
A PAPER THAT WILL TELL YOU  
THAT AT SCOTLAND YARD THEY LOOKED TO SEE  
IF I HAVE BEEN ARRESTED  
AND IT CAME UP BLANK.  
PROOF OF INOCULATIONS AND VACCINATIONS I'VE BEEN GIVEN.  
MY TICKET ON THE RAILROAD  
FROM NEW YORK TO THE TOWN THAT I WILL LIVE IN.

ALL

MEMOS, RECORDS, BLANK CERTIFICATES,  
VOUCHERS, WARRANTS, LEGAL WRITS.  
THESE BILLS OF HEALTH AND DOCUMENTS ARE CLEARLY UP TO DATE.  
BUT ALL WE DO IS  
WAIT AND WAIT AND WAIT AND WAIT AND WAIT.

MO

(Speaks)

And we're beginning to get angry!

BRIDES

(Sing, in cannon)

AND WAIT!

(Lights up on: an office area. THE MEN become TYPISTS who sit behind typewriters at desks. In the background, we hear the clatter of other typewriters.)

MO, IVY and the OTHER WOMEN stand by a TYPIST's desk for questioning. THE TYPISTS all ask the same question simultaneously, but THEIR speeches overlap. ONE TYPIST'S VOICE will be louder than ANOTHER's. The focus shifts from ONE TYPIST to ANOTHER with each question.)

TYPISTS

Next.

Name, please. Married name first, then Christian name and maiden name.

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
		(Simultaneously)		
Hennessy, Ivy Roarke.	Varski, Maureen Gubbins.	Loomis, Vera Haines.	Carter, Doris Bentley	Johnson, Alice Whitfield

TYPISTS

Identification number?

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
56621	56622	58818	56619	56620

TYPISTS

Previous address?

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
		(Simultaneously)		
1257 Newham Rd. Leeds.	557 Healy St, S.E.. London	372 Water St Blackpool.	4 Rockingham Lane Canterbury	23 Scarborough Street Dunbar

TYPISTS

Destination?

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
		(Simultaneously)		
7223 Iroquois St Toledo, Ohio	PO Box 17 Bluebell, Pennsylvania	33 Mulberry St. Paducah Kentucky	413 Fairfax Road St. Paul, Minnesota	23678 Erie Boulevard Schenectady, New York

BRIDES

U.S.A.

(Then THE BRIDES move on to a different desk where THEY are asked and respond to the same questions.)

TYPISTS

Next.

Name, please. Married name first, then Christian name and maiden name.

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
		(Simultaneously)		
Hennessy, Ivy Roarke.	Varski, Maureen Gubbins.	Loomis, Vera Haines.	Carter, Doris Bentley	Johnson, Alice Whitfield

TYPISTS

Identification number?

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
56621	56622	58818	56619	56620

TYPISTS

Previous address?

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
		(Simultaneously)		
1257	557	372	4	23
Newham Rd. Leeds.	Healy St, S.E.. London	Water St Blackpool.	Rockingham Lane Canterbury	Scarborough Street Dunbar

TYPISTS

Destination?

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
		(Simultaneously)		
7223	PO Box 17	33	413	23678
Iroquois St Toledo, Ohio	Bluebell, Pennsylvania	Mulberry St. Paducah Kentucky	Fairfax Road St. Paul, Minnesota	Erie Boulevard Schenectady, New York

BRIDES

U.S.A.

TYPIST I

Answer the following yes or no. Do you hereby swear that you do not intend to attempt to overthrow

by force or violence the government of the United States?

(The BRIDES groan)

VERA

Not that again!

DORIS

Do you know how many times I've sworn that?

TYPIST II

Answer the following yes or no. Do you hereby swear that you do not intend to attempt to overthrow by force or violence the government of the United States?

ALICE

(Holding HER baby)

No, mister, I do not intend to overthrow the government of the United States.

(Again, THE BRIDES go to another TYPIST to answer the same series of questions.)

TYPISTS

Next.

Name, please. Married name first, then Christian name and maiden name.

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
		(Simultaneously)		
Hennessy, Ivy Roarke.	Varski, Maureen Gubbins.	Loomis, Vera Haines.	Carter, Doris Bentley	Johnson, Alice Whitfield

TYPISTS

Identification number?

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
56621	56622	58818	56619	56620

TYPISTS

Previous address?

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
		(Simultaneously)		
1257 Newham Rd. Leeds.	557 Healy St, S.E.. London	372 Water St Blackpool.	4 Rockingham Lane Canterbury	23 Scarborough Street Dunbar

TYPISTS

Destination?

IVY	MO	VERA	DORIS	ALICE
		(Continued, simultaneously)		
7223	PO Box 17	33	413	23678
Iroquois St		Mulberry St.	Fairfax Road	Erie Boulevard
Toledo,	Bluebell,	Paducah	St. Paul,	Schenectady,
Ohio	Pennsylvania	Kentucky	Minnesota	New York

BRIDES

U.S.A.

TYPISTS

Next.

TYPIST I

Have you ever been indicted for a crime or felony?

BRIDES

No.

TYPIST II

Have you ever been in prison or an almshouse?

BRIDES

No.

TYPIST I

Have you ever been arrested for prostitution?

TYPIST II

Have you ever been arrested for prostitution?

TYPIST I

Have you ever been arrested for prostitution?

(THE TYPISTS repeat the question until we hear the word  
Aprostitution≡ over and over until IVY finally reacts.)

IVY

Yes! Yes! Yes! They call me the Tart of Piedmont Road.

THE TYPISTS grab IVY and take HER offstage.  
(BLACKOUT.)

(IVY, MO, VERA, ALICE and DORIS form a queue  
During the following dialogue, The WAC enters and takes  
ALICE and DORIS off stage for individual questioning.)

MO

What happened?

IVY

I told them I lost my temper and they told me they're tired too and just tryin' to do their jobs and blah, blah, blah. They also lectured me on how we mustn't, what is that word?

MO

Fraternize?

IVY

How we mustn't fraternize with the servicemen on duty or they'll send us home.

DORIS

In other words, listen, you bunch of tarts, don't drop your knickers or we'll kick you out. The nerve! Oh, I'm tellin' you. I'm mad. I'm mad as a hornet and I'm leavin'.

MO

What?

DORIS

I'm leavin'. I'm goin' home.

MO

Home?

IVY

Back to Canterbury?

DORIS

That's right. I've had it with the doctors and the papers to sign and the United States Army pushing me around. I won't stand for it any longer.

MO

We 'ave to put up with it, luv.

DORIS

Why?

MO

Why, to get to our ‘usbands, of course.

DORIS

If Artie wants me, he can come here to live. I don’t want to go to America. Not any longer. Not after the taste I’ve had of Americans.

MO

You’re tired. Lie down for awhile. We’ll hold your place.

DORIS

I mean it. Can’t you see what’s going on here? It’s plain as the nose on your face.

SONG: “WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO TELL US?”

DORIS

I’VE HAD MY FILL OF THE WAY THEY ARE TREATING US.  
COULDN’T YOU HONESTLY WEEP?  
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE MEN IN OUR BARRACKS,  
SNOOPING AROUND WHEN WE SLEEP?  
MEN WHO ARE SHOUTING AT QUARTER TO FIVE:  
‘OUT OF YOUR BED, HONEY, LET’S LOOK ALIVE.’  
WHAT DO YOU ALL TAKE THAT TO MEAN?  
WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO TELL US?

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF AMERICAN DOCTORS  
DEMANDING YOU TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTHES?  
PAINFULLY PINCHING AND PROBING —  
LOOKING FOR — GOD ONLY KNOWS?  
INVENTING DISEASES WE COULDN’T HAVE CAUGHT  
TOUCHING THE PLACES OUR HUSBANDS HAVE NOT.  
WHAT DO YOU ALL TAKE THAT TO MEAN?  
WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO TELL US?  
WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO TELL US?

AT HOME I HAD MY DAILY BREAD  
I SLEPT UPON A FEATHER BED,  
AND ‘THO THE FOOD WAS RATIONED THERE  
AT LEAST THERE WAS COMPASSION THERE

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT FILLING OUT FORM AFTER FORM  
YOU’VE FILLED OUT BEFORE?

HOW DO YOU FEEL BEING SHOVED IN A BARRACKS WITH  
THIRTY OR FORTY OR MORE?

DORIS

(Continued, sings)

WAITING FOR SHIPS THAT ARE NEVER TO SAIL.  
TREATED LIKE PRISONERS, ROTTING IN GAOL,  
THEY DON'T LIKE US HERE  
AND THEY DON'T WANT US THERE  
IF WE GO WE ARE ALL BLOODY FOOLS  
THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE TRYING TO TELL US  
THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE DYING TO TELL US.

her

(DORIS starts to break down. IVY and MO try to comfort  
HER, but the WAC takes IVY off. LIGHTS CHANGE.)

VERA and ALICE come on, dressed for traveling, carrying  
luggage. ALICE is carrying HER baby. A SOLDIER  
appears.)

SOLDIER

Wait here, ladies, until your name is called. Then collect your belongings and prepare for departure.

IVY

I keep thinking about what Doris said: AThey don't want you there.≡ Do you suppose that's true?

MO

I try not to think about it.

ALICE

Oh, I wish Mum was here to see us off.

MO

I'm just as glad me Mum isn't 'ere. It would make it that much harder to go.

ALICE

Mum made us promise to come back as often as we can.

MO

It's awful dear...y'know, the passage back.

ALICE

I know. I don't know how often we'll be able to manage it.

VERA

Oh, I'll be goin' back and forth all the time.

MO

Not me. Once I'm there, I'm there.

(DORIS comes on. THE OTHER BRIDES embrace HER.  
A SOLDIER comes on, carrying mail.)

SOLDIER

Okay, ladies, we got some mail here. McCloskey, Andrews, Varski, Harris . . .

MO

Varski.

(Taking letter. Excited.)

I got a letter from Jerry. It's been forwarded from London.

(As OTHERS behind HER get mail, open it, and react to it,  
MO tears open HER letter, reads it. As SHE does, HER face  
falls.)

He doesn't want me to come.

(On another part of the stage, JERRY comes on, carrying a  
stool. HE sits and laboriously begins to compose a letter.  
MO reads his letter out loud.)

MO

ADear Mo,

JERRY

(As he writes)

"This is the hardest letter I will ever have to write.

ABut I got your letter saying you would soon be on your way, and I think you should change your plans. I think you shouldn't come here. The reason is they're talking strike at the mine. It looks like a closer thing every day. If it happens, there won't be no money coming in, and I won't be able to support you. There's no other work here. I got to be honest with you. The people here don't like me getting married overseas. They think I should have waited and married someone from around here, like most of them do. . .

MO

(Reading)

AThey call you 'the foreigner' and other rude things that I will not repeat.

JERRY

AAnd this place is not what I remembered when I was over there. If I'd remembered what it was really like, I probably would not have had the nerve to ask you to marry me . . .

MO

A. . . It isn't that I was lying to you, Mo . . .

JERRY

At least, I didn't mean to. It's just X well, there I was, thousands of miles away from home, and thinking maybe I'd never see it again, so when I thought about home, and I thought about it a lot, I'd think of -- of things, well, like . . .

JERRY

(Continued, sings)

SONG: AT THE GOOD THINGS≡

SHOOTING A BASKETBALL,  
STEALING A BASE,  
WINNING THE RACE  
ON LABOR DAY;  
ALL OF THE TIME THAT I SPENT FAR AWAY  
I ONLY REMEMBERED THE GOOD THINGS.

GOING TO CARNIVALS,  
RINGING THE GONG,  
FEELING AS STRONG  
AS HERCULES  
LYING FACE-DOWN IN A TRENCH OVERSEAS,  
I ONLY REMEMBERED THE GOOD THINGS.

I NEVER REMEMBERED  
THAT BACK AT HOME  
MY LUCK COULD BE BAD.  
JUST GETTING BY  
IS NEVER THE SAME  
AS A DREAM YOU'VE HAD.

BUT THROUGH THE WAR  
WHAT KEPT ME GOING:

THINKING OF MOUNTAINS  
THE COLOR OF SMOKE,  
MAPLE AND OAK, A TREE-HOUSE VIEW . . .  
I ONLY REMEMBERED THE GOOD THINGS,

MO

THE GOOD THINGS.

JERRY

LINGERING SILENTLY IN YOUR EMBRACE,  
TOUCHING YOUR FACE  
I THOUGHT I KNEW  
WHAT IN THE WORLD  
I WAS BRINGING YOU TO . . .  
I ONLY REMEMBERED  
THE GOOD THINGS

JERRY

(Continued, speaks. Music continues under.)

AYou got more there than I can give you here. You've got a nice home and family. You've got friends. That's why I want you to stay there. Believe me, it isn't because I don't love you.

MO

AIt's because I want you to be happy.

MO & JERRY

Love, Jerry.≡

(As the music and lights fade, HE picks up the stool and crosses out.  
Lights up on the dock. A SOLDIER comes on.)

SOLDIER

All right, ladies. We're ready to board. Wait 'til your name and number is called.

IVY

What are you going to do?

MO

I don't know.

SOLDIER

#56618 X Vera Haines Loomis.

VERA

Here.

(SHE goes)

IVY

Shouldn't you go back?

Back to London?      MO

Yes.      IVY

Oh, no. I can't do that.      MO

#56619 - Doris Guilford Kelly.      SOLDIER

Yes, here!      DORIS

(SHE goes)

But Jerry says not to come.      IVY

#56620 - Alice Whitfield Johnson      SOLDIER

And Emma Johnson.      ALICE

(THEY go)

Mo, he says he might not be able to take care of you. Shouldn't you wait and ...      IVY

#56621 - Ivy Roarke Hennessy.      SOLDIER

Oh, God, Mo.      IVY

(To MO, torn)

Hennessy.      (To SOLDIER)

(SHE goes.)

MO

(Sings)

SONG: AWHEN I SEE HIM≡

WHEN I SEE HIM,  
EV'RYTHING WILL BE GOOD . . .  
OH, I KNOW IT WILL BE.  
WHEN I SEE HIM,  
OH, IF HE UNDERSTOOD . . .  
WHEN I SEE HIM,  
HE'LL SEE . . .

HE'LL SEE  
THAT ANYTHING IMPOSSIBLE I'LL DO FOR HIM.  
THERE'S A LOT OF STUBBORN IN MY SPINE.  
BY AND BY HE'LL SEE HIS LIFE COME THROUGH FOR HIM.  
WE WILL BE FINE.

MO

(Continued, sings)

WHEN I SEE HIM  
THAT'S WHEN WE GET TO LIVE . . .  
THAT'S WHEN ALL THE FEAR GOES.  
WHEN I SEE HIM  
ME, WITH MY LOVE TO GIVE . . .  
ALL FOR HIM X WELL, HERE GOES . . .

HERE GOES  
ONE LITTLE STEP AND THEN I'LL TO  
GET TO FLY TO HIM.  
GAMBLING AS I'VE NEVER HAVE BEFORE.  
I AM NOT THE GIRL WHO SAID GOODBYE TO HIM.  
I LOVE HIM MORE.

WHEN I SEE HIM  
JUST GET HIM IN MY ARMS . . .  
WHEN IT'S JUST HIM AND ME . . .  
ALL WE NEED TO BE IS BE TOGETHER  
AND THEN, OH, HE'LL SEE.

SOLDIER

#56622 - Maureen Gubbins Varski.

*(MO hesitates-optional depending on staging)*

*Maureen Gubbins Varski.*

MO

(Hesitates, then:)

Varski!

(SHE goes.

THE BRIDES come on, with ALICE carrying EMMA. THEY are lined up at the railing, staring out into the mist. MO comes on, standing a bit apart from THEM.)

MO

So we came to America. That was many years ago. But my memory of it is as clear as if it's happening right now.

ALICE

Can you see anything?

DORIS

No.

ALICE

I thought we'd be there by now.

DORIS

I couldn't sleep a wink. I keep thinking I'm making a terrible mistake.

MO

She isn't. Doris will go to St. Paul, Minnesota to join her husband, Artie, who is a young lawyer there. He'll become a Congressman and Doris, oh, she'll be very grand.

ALICE

Danny's never seen Emma. I hope he's a proud of her as I am.

MO

In 1947, Alice and Emma are going to wind up in a the Aberdeen Hotel in New York City, which has been set up by the U.S. Government for war brides who've been deserted by their husbands.

VERA

Did I show you this snap me husband sent me? He's gained a bit of weight. I don't mind that so much, but look at that Hawaiian shirt 'e's got on. I wrote him, I said, if you come to collect me wearing that Hawaiian shirt, I'll turn right around and go home.

MO

Vera will go to Paducah, Kentucky and find herself living in a shack with no running water and a convenience in the back yard. That husband won't last six months. Six husbands later, she's going to live in Palm Beach, Florida, dye her hair red, and spend most of her days having facials.

IVY

(To HERSELF)

I know I'm doing the right thing. I know I am.

MO

As for Ivy, her marriage to Earl Hennessy will end when he walks out on her and their six year old son, Robert, leaving a mountain of bills. She'll do everything she can to keep Robert with her. She will clean apartments fourteen hours a day, everything. She finally will find a job as a clerk for a Veteran's Hospital, and work her way up to department head. She'll put Robert through medical school and she'll do it alone. Ivy. Nobody else.

As for me, well, Bluebell is going to turn out to be worse than I thought it possibly could be. It's not the place, which is a bunch of tar paper shacks flung up on hillside, or the people not wanting me there, it's the 'omesickness. The strikes will come, and we'll leave Bluebell. Jerry will find a job in construction in Pittsburgh. Twenty years later, he'll have his own construction business. We'll have four sons, and they'll all marry and give us six grandchildren. And there'll be a point when I can't imagine my life without Jerry in it. I won't want to imagine it.

MO

(Continued)

But we don't know any of that now.

All we know is we're young and frightened. And our lives are about to change forever.

(ALICE comes out, carrying EMMA. The stage is suddenly brilliantly lit.)

ALICE

(Goes to the rail)

Look!

MO

Oh, my.

IVY

There it is.

MO

Yes. There it is.

SONG: AEVERYTHING I HEARD

(Sings)

EV'RYTHING I HEARD . . .  
IT WAS ONLY AN INKLING . . .  
THIS IS MUCH MORE THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.  
EV'RYTHING I HEARD,  
EV'RY THING THEY ALL TOLD ME  
COULD NOT DESCRIBE  
WHAT I'M STARTING TO SEE.

IVY

AFTER ALL THE HOURS,  
ALL THE LONG PREPARATION,  
NO ONE COULD TELL ME  
THAT WAY I WOULD FEEL.  
EV'RYTHING I HEARD,  
EV'RY THING THEY ALL TOLD M.  
CANNOT DESCRIBE  
WHAT IS SUDDENLY REAL.

MO, IVY & THE BRIDES

EV'RYONE SAID  
THERE'S A DAZZLING ISLAND  
WITH SKYSCRAPERS  
BY A SEA OF BLUE.  
BUT NOBODY SAID  
HOW MY HEART WOULD START POUNDING  
THE MOMENT IT CAME INTO VIEW.  
ALL OF WAITING,  
GONE FOREVER!  
ALL OF THE WAITING, WANTING MORE . . .  
ALL OF THE WAITING THERE, FOREVER,  
NOW I KNOW WHAT THE WAIT  
WAS FOR.

EV'RYTHING SO CLOSE,  
I CAN ALMOST TOUCH IT.

ALICE

CAN'T WE GO FASTER?

IVY

HOW I WANT TO BEGIN!

BRIDES

EV'RYTHING I HEARD  
EV'RY THING THEY ALL TOLD ME . . .  
CANNOT ACCOUNT FOR THE STATE I'M IN.

NOBODY SAID  
AFTER ALL THE SADNESS  
I'D FIN'LLY BE FEELING SO FINE.  
NOBODY SAID  
HOW I'D WANT THE EXCITEMENT  
AND ALL THE ADVENTURE  
THAT ALL VERY SOON  
WILL BE MINE!

ANNOUNCER

(Calls)

Alice Johnson . . .

ALL

(Sing)

MINE!

ANNOUNCER

(Calls)

Ivy Hennessy . . .

ALL

(Sing)

MINE!

ANNOUNCER

(Calls)

Maureen Varski . . .

MO

(As JERRY comes to embrace HER.)

JERRY! JERRY!

ALL

BACK HOME, the War Brides Musical

POST NYMF 2007

**81**

MINE!

CURTAIN