

# The Young Amateurs

## Act 1

### Prologue

*A silent hall, an empty stage  
A group of friends with but one thought.  
“Let’s do a play” is soon the cry,  
And no one thinks to say “let’s not”.*

*What sound out front now stirs the heart?  
And strikes the bowels with consternation?  
Is that the murmur of the crowd,  
Waiting in anticipation?*

*Too late now for fond regrets,  
No turning back to days of old.  
The die is cast, our fate is sealed,  
The seats are filled, the tickets sold.*

*That pistol now must be discharged  
Halfway through the second act.  
Evil must be foiled again,  
And once again next week in fact.*

*That secret letter intercepted  
(ruin to someone most respected);  
Oh Papa dear, what shall we do?  
Cries Maiden with a heart so true.*

*Then Villain with a black moustache*

*Sneers his sneer and laughs his laugh.  
And Maiden with a heart so pure  
Knows well what she must endure!*

*But hark! Oh hark, what do I hear?  
Could those be hoof beats drawing near?  
Like coconuts on table top  
Drawing nearer, then they stop.*

*The door flies open with a bang  
(That comes a half a second late)  
And Hero bold with steely gaze  
Strides in and stands and waits... and waits.*

*Some nervous laughter then a thoughtful  
Person whispers Hero's line.  
And Villain meets his nemesis,  
The day is saved and all is fine.*

*The Merry Villagers have sung,  
The cast have made their curtain calls.  
The audience, with bottoms numb,  
Prepares to rise, the curtain falls.*

## **Scene 1**

**Fred:** Well, what do you think?

**Bob:** I think this is just another of your hare-brained schemes.

**Fred:** Oh come now, Bob old man. There's Bell's music hall standing empty...empty and waiting.

**Bob:** Un huh.

**Fred:** Don't you think it's an awful shame? Where's your civic pride? I mean what's the use of a music hall without music? Just the other day I heard a man saying that someone should take that place in hand and do something with it.

**Bob:** The man was probably you. I don't know anything, Fred. I only know it's Monday morning and...

**Fred:** And here's Lindsay pining away for lack of entertainment.

**Bob:** I don't think Lindsay is pining away to see us on the stage.

**Fred:** They loved us at the Canoe Club last month.

**Bob:** With the amount of brandy you slipped into the punch, they'd have loved anything. Listen, Fred. It's one thing to do a few songs and imitations for your inebriated friends, it's another to hold an audience for a couple of hours. I mean a cold sober audience.

**Fred:** Your brother does it every Sunday. Cold and sober.

**Bob:** Ollie's never preached for two hours.

**Fred:** Just seems like it?

**Bob:** How would you know? You've only darkened the doors of our church once or twice in my memory.

**Fred:** All right, all right. No offence meant. I admire your loyalty. But what about the music hall? You're not just afraid of what your evangelical brother would say?

**Bob:** Certainly not! What do you take me for?

**Fred:** A man of independence and iron will!

**Bob:** Actually Ollie would have an apoplexy if he found out that I was doing amateur theatricals.

**Fred:** Or preach you a red hot sermon.

**Bob:** I can just hear him now. (*Holds head and shakes it*)

Song: "Go To The Theatre"

*If you would imbibe false views,  
go to the theatre!  
Idle fancy to amuse,  
go to the theatre  
If salvation you'd refuse,  
your immortal soul you'd lose,  
Fill the Church Of Satan's pews!  
Go to the theatre!*

*If you look for lewdity,  
go to the theatre!  
Rubbish, twaddle, nudity,  
got to the theatre!  
Beelzebub will take your fees,  
Take whatever seat you please.  
Sit with Mephistopheles!  
Go to the theatre!*

*If you would pervert your taste,  
go to the theatre.  
If in hell fire you would baste,  
go to the theatre!  
Degrading and pernicious rot  
paves the road to regions hot.  
Bishop Wood says better not  
go to the theatre!*

*(Spoken)*

**Fred:** Pass by the theatre with averted gaze, for there lies the house of the strange woman! *(Points to upstage)*

**Bob:** It does?

**Fred:** So I understand.

**Bob:** Interesting.

*(They turn to go upstage, and then turn back to the audience)*

*(Together)*

*What's this twaddle all about?  
Step right up, remove all doubt.  
Go inside and you'll find out!  
Go to the theatre!*

**Fred:** Go to the theatre?

**Bob:** We'll see.

## Scene 2

*(In the kitchen of the manse. Sarah is sitting at a table. There is another chair at the table as well. Sarah is reading from a book.)*

**Sarah:** *(Reading)* "On his own account, and, I must be allowed to add, on mine also, the Professor merits the honour of a formal introduction. Accident has made him the starting-point of the strange family story which it is the purpose of these pages to unfold."

*(There is a heavy footfall, and Sarah starts and tries to hide the book in her dress. Cornelia comes in.)*

Oh, Cornelia. It's you.

**Cornelia:** Yes. just little me. Sorry if I made a bit of a thump. Did you think it was my uncle?

**Sarah:** No. Well, I supposed it might have been. I ought to put the kettle on.

**Cornelia:** What are you hiding there?

*(Goes to Sarah and takes the book)*

Ooh ooh. *The Woman In White*. Wilkie Collins. Work of the Devil, Aunt Sarah. Work of the devil. *(Wags her finger at Sarah)*

**Sarah:** You're a little Devil, Cornelia. Don't mock your uncle, dear. It hurts me when you do.

**Cornelia:** I'm sorry. I'll try to be good. That's my mother's book isn't?

**Sarah:** Yes. She said it was very good, but I don't think it is quite kind of book...

**Cornelia:** That Uncle Oliver would approve of. But why should you be afraid to read a book in your own kitchen?

**Sarah:** I'm not afraid. But I have to respect my husband's wishes.

**Cornelia:** Or pretend to, and then do what you really want to do in secret.

**Sarah:** Cornelia!

**Cornelia:** I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

**Sarah:** When you get older, you'll understand. There are things a woman has to do.

**Cornelia:** When I get older, I won't have to understand. I don't believe I'll get married. All the boys I know are pitiful. There isn't one

of them I can't beat in an arm wrestle. Except Peter. I got him with a kick instead.

**Sarah:** Cornelia!

**Cornelia:** You have to know just where to kick them.

**Sarah:** Cornelia! That isn't fair.

**Cornelia:** If you can win fair and square, do so. If you can't, then cheat.

**Sarah:** Cornelia! (*Laughs*) What are we going to do with you?

**Cornelia:** Nothing at all. I'm just fine the way I am. The question is what are we going to do with Uncle Oliver?

**Sarah:** What do you mean?

[Anything that's any sort of fun, he's against it

**Cornelia:** If there's anything at all that you really like to do, He's against it.

**Sarah:** Now Cornelia you know that isn't really true, Now admit it.

Why your Uncle used to be a lot of fun, (I don't believe it) In a dignified and proper kind of way, And it wasn't very hard to get a chuckle out of him, Over something I would read or something I would say.

But what you used to do isn't a lot of use to you,

And "what used to be" isn't a lot of use to me.

Don't bother to inquire, he's against it. Anything a body might enjoy, he's against it.

If the evening's dragging on and you're feeling rather dull, And you find that you are glancing at the clock (not quite bedtime) For the

conversation hit a lull some forty minutes back And thank goodness  
you can knit or darn a sock

You might want to sing a song that isn't from the hymn-book,

You might want to play a game, any you can name, but the answer's  
still the same, he's against it.

*(Oliver comes in. Cornelia quickly takes the book from Sarah and holds  
it casually by her side.)*

**Oliver:** Cornelia. Why aren't you in school?

**Cornelia:** School's out, Uncle. It's almost five o'clock.

**Oliver:** So it is. I had quite lost track of time. Well then you should  
be getting home. It must be near your supper time.

**Cornelia:** Not until six o'clock. If Mother isn't late from her singing  
lesson. The it might be later.

**Oliver:** Singing lessons, for a woman her age. A waste of time and  
money. And singing profane music, no doubt. It would be different of  
course if she were singing sacred music.

**Sarah:** Tempe has sung for us from time to time. You said yourself  
Oliver, how well she sings. Cornelia, perhaps it is time for you to go  
home.

**Oliver:** What is that book, Cornelia? Show it to me.

**Cornelia:** You wouldn't be interested, Uncle.

**Oliver:** You might allow me to be the judge of that. Show it to me.

*(Cornelia reluctantly gives Oliver the book)*

**Oliver:** Wilkie Collins. The Woman In White. I have heard of this  
abomination. It should be burned. Open the stove.



**Sarah:** No Oliver.

**Cornelia:** That's my mother's book. Give it back to me.

**Sarah:** Cornelia is right, Oliver. It's Tempe's book.

**Oliver:** Very well, but take it out of my house immediately. And don't bring it back, or I will burn it.

### Scene 3

**Tempe:** I beg your pardon, Professor, but I was not flat.

**Professor:** But my dear, by the piano...

**Tempe:** Your piano is out of tune.

**Professor:** It is rare for a piano to go sharp, Tempe. In any case the piano was most carefully tuned only two days ago.

**Tempe:** But, but...

**Professor:** On the other hand it is common for a singer to be flat. I don't know why that should be, but there it is. Perhaps it is the force of gravity. Try it again from the beginning.

**Tempe:** (*Stage whisper to audience*) It was the piano.

*Oh that I might chance to be  
A nightingale upon a tree  
Chirping, yodelling merrily  
Just outside your window.*

**Professor:** Warbling, Tempe, not yodelling.

**Tempe:** I beg your pardon Professor, but I'm sure it is yodelling.

**Professor:** Look at the words, my dear.

**Tempe:** Oh. This must be a new edition.

**Professor:** It was always warbling, Tempe. Have you ever heard a nightingale yodel?

**Tempe:** We don't have nightingales in Canada. I don't know if they chirp or warble. I don't know what they do. Why can't we sing about woodpeckers, or chickadees?

**Professor:** Canada is a very uninspiring country. Nobody writes songs about it. From the beginning, Tempe, please.

**Tempe:**

*(Struggling)*

*Oh that I might chance to be  
A nightingale upon a tree  
Chirping, warbling merrily  
Just outside your window.*

*And if awhile you did remain,  
Listening to my sad refrain,  
You I'm sure would not complain  
And loudly close your window.*

*For well you know my heart is pure  
And nothing but your love can cure  
This suffering I must endure  
While singing at your window.*

From Princess Myrtle. What is Princess Myrtle?

**Professor:** It is a comic opera.

**Tempe:** The words don't make much sense.

**Professor:** The words of songs, poetry, the remarks of theatre critics and so on... we don't expect these classes of things to make sense, Tempe. It wouldn't be fair.

**Tempe:** If you say so, Professor.

**Professor:** That is our time for this week I believe.

**Tempe:** Am I getting better, Professor?

**Professor:** These things take time.

**Tempe:** That means I'm not.

**Professor:** Why do you want to sing, Tempe?

**Tempe:** I don't know. Not to say it in words.

**Professor:** I don't mean to know in words. When you know in your heart, then you will sing well as you can sing.

**Tempe:** Thank you, Professor. I think.

*(Tempe leaves and Fiona enters)*

**Fiona:** They are all the same, these pupils. The same faults, the same struggle. The same hopes. The same despair.

**Professor:** No, Fiona, they are all different, as every face is different. That is the fascination of teaching. The more I travel through this world, the more I treasure differences.

**Fiona:** And yet we are not of this world, you and I. How can we treasure anything? Ever moving. Never holding on to anything.

**Professor:** It is our lot, my dear sister. Let us find what interest we can in the passing scene, we wandering ones. And remember we are not without purpose in our existence.

**Fiona:**

Seamus. What is love?

**Professor:**

Love?

Love is an emotion that people feel. Love is very important. Why it is... I'm not really sure, Fiona.

*(Throws up his hands)*

No one tells us anything. You know that.

**Fiona:**

No one tells us anything  
We watch the cardboard world go by  
Passing through.

**Professor:**

There are other things besides love, Fiona. With love comes grief, and loneliness... and pain. Burdens we are spared in our existence.

*(The doorbell rings)*

Ah, that may be our young friends, the Amateurs. Would you go and see them in, Fiona?

**Fiona:**

The what?

**Professor:**

The Amateurs.

*(Fiona goes off while the Professor shuffles through some music. Fiona returns with Fred and Bob)*

**Fiona:** Through here, please.

**Professor:** Ah, gentlemen. Welcome, welcome.

*(Fred looks around with interest at the room, while Bob looks with interest at Fiona.)*

**Fred:** Thanks Professor. I've brought my friend Bob along. I told you about Bob. The one that can carry a tune.

**Professor:** Indeed you did. *(Notices Bob looking at Fiona)* Oh, may I present my sister, Fiona.

**Fred:** Pleased to meet you.

**Bob:** Fion...?.

**Fiona:** Fiona.

**Professor:** So, you can carry a tune, Bob?

**Bob:** In a bucket.

**Professor:** Modesty is a virtue.

**Bob:** And honesty a greater one.

**Professor:** Perhaps.

**Fred:** Sing? Why he's knocked them dead at the canoe club.

**Bob:** That's right. There were no survivors.

**Professor:** Let's try a little vocalizing. Are a tenor, a baritone?

**Bob:** Neither. I'm a baptist.

**Professor:** A baptist with a sense of humour? Just follow Fiona.

*(The Professor plays the introduction to the vocalization)*

*(Fiona and Bob sing the Vocalese)*

**Professor:** Now what will the play be? What shall we put on?

**Fred:** Well you know, I thought a little of this, a little of that. A song, a story, a few jokes... an olio.

**Professor:** An olio. Well, I think we can aim a little higher than that. What do you say to an operetta?

**Bob:** That's a bit ambitious, isn't it?

## Scene 4

**Oliver:** Bob. Someone has told me... I can scarcely believe it... that you intend to go upon... the stage.

**Bob:** Well, yes, Oliver. As a matter of fact, ah... the thought had...ah... occurred to me. I meant to tell you. You see, Fred thought we were in need of some harmless...

**Oliver:** Harmless!

**Bob:** and perfectly wholesome entertainment.

**Oliver:** Perfectly wholesome? Bob, you must be mad. Theatres are cages of uncleanness and public schools of debauchery. They are seminaries of vice!

**Bob:** How did you discover that? I didn't know you had ever gone into a theatre.

**Oliver:** Providence forbid! No, I trust to the opinions universally expressed by the greatest men in all ages. Men like Augustine, and

Tertullian.

**Bob:** Who were regular theatre goers?

**Oliver:** Yes, Bob, scoff. I suppose I don't deserve anything better.

**Bob:** Oh, Oliver. Some harmless entertainment. What's wrong with a little fun?

**Oliver:** Your immortal soul is not in need of entertainment.

**Bob:** No but my earthly form is finding things a little dull.

**Oliver:** It seems all my words, the good example I have tried to set have been cast away, while you go to disport yourself among the heathen and the blasphemers.

**Bob:** Heathen and blasphemers? A respectable group of amateurs... well all right, there's Fred, but the rest of them are respectable. And Bell's music hall. Hardly a palace of riot and debauchery, Oliver. A decent and ah... virtuous group of men and women.

**Oliver:** Women! Heaven defend us from all the wiles of Satan! Surely you do not propose to put women on the stage?

**Bob:** The thought had had occurred. You see there are so many parts for women, and if you've ever seen Fred in a wig, well it's not something you want to see again.

**Oliver:** Depravity is not a joking matter. This all the result of keeping low company. This Fred...

**Bob:** Oliver, you've made your point. Let's disagree, but still be brothers. *(Bob offers Oliver his hand, but Oliver ignores it. Bob walks sadly away.)*

**Oliver:** Harmless fun. So much harm may come from harmless fun.

## Scene 5 (*Oliver goes to confront the Professor*)

**Oliver:** Good day to you, Miss. Is your brother at home?

**Fiona:** You wish to speak with him?

**Oliver:** That I do.

**Fiona:** I will see if he is at home.

**Oliver:** Don't you know if he is at home?

**Fiona:** At home to one like you I mean.

**Oliver:** What do you mean by that, may I ask?

**Fiona:** You carry a dark cloud with you. A cloud of anger and distress. It is not pleasant to encounter such a cloud. Do you seek my brother's help?

**Oliver:** I most certainly do not. I have a serious complaint to raise with him.

**Fiona:** I go and see.

**Professor:** No need, no need, Fiona. Speak of the Devil and he appears. I believe that is the jocular expression, is it not Mr. Allen?

**Oliver:** I don't care for jokes about the presence of evil in the world.

**Professor:** Nor do I my good sir, nor do I. Not about true evil. But the comic opera evil of the Devil, I think we may smile at.

**Oliver:** I can see I have my work cut out for me.

**Professor:** Come, come what is this all about?

**Oliver:** This nonsense must stop. These amateur theatricals.



*(Fiona goes off) ## Scene 6*

*(Rehearsal. **Song:** All we have to do is make every body happy)*

**Fred:** I know that Fiona sings. Does she act as well?

**Professor:** Does she act? Why she had the audience in tears when she played “Little Pickle” in the well known play of the same name. That was in our time in England.

**Fred:** Do you think you could persuade her to join our company? We can’t afford to pay her.

**Professor:** I’m sure she would be delighted.

**Fred:** What part might we give her, do you suppose? I thinking of the Princess Myrtle.

**Professor:** But our good friend Tempe has been singing the part in rehearsal.

**Fred:** But the princess ought to be so, so... and Tempe is so, so...

**Professor:** Tempe would be terribly disappointed to have it taken away from her.

**Fred:** What importance is the disappointment of one when the needs of art are question?

**Professor:** What importance are the needs of art when the disappointment of one is in question?

**Fred:** You are a curious man, Professor. I thought you would place art above everything.

**Professor:** There are many arts that one can practise, Fred. Fiona would be charming as the maid. A comic part and one good song.

**Fred:** All right, Professor. You know best.

## Scene 7

*(Painting the drops. Song for Cornelia: Curiosity)*

**Cornelia:** Painted castles are all right, but somewhere there are real castles. Have you ever seen a real castle, Miss?

**Fiona:** Yes, many times.

**Cornelia:** You have? Are they beautiful?

**Fiona:** I don't know. I suppose perhaps some are.

**Cornelia:** Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live in a Castle, in the olden days? When there were knights in armour?

**Fiona:** No. Wondering. Is wondering something you do?

**Tempe:** Wondering is something my daughter does a lot of. I never knew a girl so full of curiosity.

**Fiona:** Curiosity? What is curiosity?

**Cornelia:** You don't know what curiosity is?

**Tempe:** Cornelia. Remember that Miss Allen is a foreigner.

**Cornelia:** Oh, that's right. Well, let's see...

*How to describe this thing called curiosity, There is a mystery, for there is a paucity of words that say exactly what it ought to be, But it means that you want to know.*

*So many things I'll never know, learning them would be a task, but when curiosity demands, I never think it hurts to ask. It only means you want to know.*

*(Confrontation between Cornelia and George, because Cornelia wants to help paint the drops)*

**George:** Now I'm telling you, Cornelia, for the last time. Leave my brushes and paints alone.

**Cornelia:** But I only want to do little painting on the drops.

**George:** Well not you can't and that's that.

**Cornelia:** People are always treating me like a kid.

## Scene 8

*(Bob and Fiona. The meaning of home)*

**Fiona:** How do we pass the time, as you walk me home?

**Bob:** I suppose we could talk.

**Fiona:** What shall we talk about?

**Bob:** We could talk about the moonlight.

**Fiona:** There isn't any moonlight.

**Bob:** Isn't there? I thought there was.

**Fiona:** Look up, Bob. No moon. The sky is clear and black. You can hear the great winds howling high above us. They might blow the stars around the heavens.

**Bob:** But then there is starlight. Let's talk about the starlight.

**Fiona:** What would you like to know?

**Bob:** Like to know? Where you have been all my life, where you came from. You are different from any girl I've known.

**Fiona:** I thought we talking about the starlight. Where I have been?  
A hundred different places.

**Bob:** What places have you been?

**Fiona:** Well, a place called Milan, in Italy.

**Bob:** Milan, in Italy. Are you Italian?

**Fiona:** No more than I am French or German because I lived in Lyons  
or Munich. Or English because I lived in London.

**Bob:** You come from everywhere.

**Fiona:** And to come from everywhere is to come from nowhere.

**Bob:** And is nowhere home for you?

**Fiona:** Home. Home. I have heard this word, but never knew its  
meaning.

**Bob:** Home. Home. It isn't just a someplace, it's a feeling.

\*When you're feeling tired and lonely

And look around to see That where you are is not the place That you  
would choose to be,

When the world seems much too big, And you seem much too small,

Home is made of memories and people that you've known, Familiar

And you've nowhere else to go\*

And you think of somplace you were happy You're bound to know.

Home is someplace waiting

\*Is a home a certain neighbourhood Or could it be a town? Home is  
often both those things

**Bob:** If you live long enough in a place it becomes home.

**Fiona:** Is home a place to be alone?

**Bob:** Sometimes. But mostly it's a place you share with others.

**Fiona:** So more than one person can have the same home?

**Bob:** Two... can share the same home.

**Fiona:** I know what I want now.

**Bob:** What's that?

**Fiona:** A home. Bob, how do I find a home?

## Scene 9

*(Cornelia sneaks to the theatre to try her hand at painting the drops)*

**Cornelia:** They ought to oil that lock.

Not a soul around. Good. No one to say I can't touch this, no one to say I can't do that.

I'll show that George what I can do. Just a kid, am I? I'll show them... it's awfully dark in here. Of course it is, silly. It's night time. And I've got a lamp, good coal oil lamp. Now where are the brushes, and where are the paints? There they are.

It's awfully dark in here. But there's nobody here. I be just fine.

I'll just set down my lamp and I'll get to work and I won't think about ghosts. Ahh! Ghosts. There aren't any. Don't think about ghosts Cornelia. I mean who ever heard of a haunted theatre?

Once I start painting I'll be fine. What shall I paint? I think I'll start with something easy. I'll paint a man on horseback. I've seen a lot of men on horseback. I know exactly what they look like.

Splish splash, splish, splash, in the brown paint pot, and swish swash back and forth and look at what you've got.

Well... it's brown. And it looks exactly... like a horse. No not really. It doesn't look anything like a horse. It looks like a mess.

What was that noise? It was nothing, Cornelia, nothing. You'll be just fine as long you don't think about... ghosts...

Keep busy. What shall I paint now? The horseman! I'll give him red breeches.

Splish, splash, splish, splash, in the red paint pot. Swash swash, up and down and look at what you've got.

It's a mess. Maybe if you stand back and squint. No it just looks like a mess.

Swish. swash, up and down and now the horse has red legs. Oh no, and the rider has no head. Swish swash, better a red head than no head.

## Scene 10

*(Song – Sleepless Night)*

**Oliver:** It must be stopped.

**Sarah:** What must be stopped, Oliver?

**Oliver:** This play that Bob and his friends are doing. It is iniquitous.

**Sarah:** What is the play about?

**Oliver:** How should I know?

**Sarah:** You condemn the play without knowing anything about it?

**Oliver:** It's bound to be pernicious twaddle.

**Sarah:** Even if it is... twaddle... what's the harm in a little twaddle? There was a time when you liked a joke yourself.

**Oliver:** Corrupting the morals of the young. Putting women on the stage. These are dark days, and Satan is abroad in Lindsay.

**Sarah:** Oh for goodness sakes. I'm going to bed, Oliver. I wish you would do the same.

**Oliver:** My brother defies my wishes. Even my own wife will not stand with me... but I will prevail.

## Scene 11

Confrontation between Bob and Oliver over the damage to the drops.

**Bob:** How could you do such a rotten underhanded thing, Oliver.

**Oliver:** I did nothing.

**Bob:** We caught you. You were there.

**Oliver:**

Song for Sarah and Oliver: Trust.

## Scene 12

Cast meeting. George: Were you ever just so mad you could spit.

**George:** All that work! Ruined!

**Fred:** We caught him red-handed. I say we go to the police.

## Scene 13

Sarah arrives to help, and the whole cast pitches in to repair the drops.

Song: Anywhere But Here.

Professor: Song: You Never Know.

## Scene 14

*(The Professor visits Oliver to persuade him to join the Amateurs)*

**Professor:** Ah. Here you are. It is growing dark. I'm surprised you have not lit a lamp. How are things with you, Mr. Allen?

**Oliver:** This all your fault.

**Professor:** Yes, you may be right.

**Oliver:** Coming into this town, where you aren't wanted. Making trouble.

**Professor:** Things are in a state of disturbance then. Nothing is the way it ought to be. Something of value has been broken and how it to be mended?

**Oliver:** You might put it that way.

**Professor:** The others blame you for the damage to poor George's work. I know that you are not to blame.

**Oliver:** I thank you for your good opinion. I wish my own wife shared it.

**Professor:** Ah yes. A delightful lady, Mrs. Allen. Sarah, if I may be so familiar. She has given me leave to call her by her first name.



**Oliver:** Her Christian name.

**Professor:** By all means. I am sorry to hear that Sarah has so little faith in you.

**Oliver:** It's none of your business in any case.

**Professor:** Perhaps not. I seem fated to stumble in where angels fear to tread. You do know who did the damage.

**Oliver:** I refuse to discuss the matter.

**Professor:** That is honourable of you. It is of no importance. I know too. But what can be done to mend this rift between you and Sarah?

**Oliver:** Nothing, I think. The harm is done. I had no idea her opinion of me had sunk so low.

**Professor:** You have been married ten years, I believe.

**Oliver:** Yes.

**Professor:** And no children.

**Oliver:** No.

**Professor:** It has not been the will of Providence.

**Oliver:** How strange to hear you speak in such terms.

**Professor:** Not quite so strange, Mr. Allen. May I call you Oliver.

## Scene 15

Bob and Fiona: Love scene. Fiona moving toward becoming human.  
Song: The Nature Of Things.

## Scene 16

Last rehearsal.

## Scene 17

Fiona becomes human. Song: What Lies Ahead?

**Professor:** The time has come, my dearest sister, for us to part. For a while. You have made your choice. I cannot say that you were wrong.

**Fiona:** What is this strange feeling? (*Hugs herself as if in pain*)

**Professor:** That is pain, Fiona. It is part of being human.

## Scene 18

The Night: Stage Fright.

(*Just before the curtain opens*)

**Bob:** I don't think this show will ever come together.

**Sarah:** Somebody told me a bad rehearsal means a good performance.

**Fred:** Never mind everybody. It'll be all right on the night.

**Tempe:** But this is the night!

**Fred:** Oh my sainted aunt. So it is!

(*song: Stage fright*)

*Just before the curtain opens  
Just before the axe descends  
Waves of panic sweep the hearts Of all on whom the show depends.*

*Let me think now, I can't think now  
How did I get into this? Please lord let a hole appear and swallow me  
How do I get out of this?*

*Stage fright, stage fright, creeping down my spine  
Churning up my insides,*

**Professor:** Tut, tut my friends. There is no reason to be alarmed. Each of you knows his part. Simply do it and enjoy yourselves.

**Fiona:** Seamus. I have an odd feeling in my insides. I think I am nervous.

**Professor:** As I feared. You are becoming human. Will I lose you, Fiona?

**Fiona:** I feel awful. Seamus? Will I die?

**Professor:** Not from stage fright, Fiona. Join the others. You'll be fine.

## **Scene 19**

*(Performance of Princess Myrtle. The Villain. Princess Myrtle. The Hero.)*

## Scene 20

The Professor takes his leave. Bob and Fiona united. Oliver and Sarah reconciled.

**Oliver:** Who are you?

**Professor:** Sometimes I hardly know myself. Say that I am a traveller through this world.

**Oliver:** With no place to come to rest?

**Professor:** No. At least...

**Oliver:** Yet even the swallow has found her nest.

**Professor:** Fiona, you mean? Yes. She has found her nest. And someday... yes, for me. For the moment I have obligations, and work laid out for me. A world of souls to heal, one by one, and not the least of them, my own. A daunting task. But then we have eternity ahead of us.

**Oliver:** Do we?

**Professor:** Yes. And we are not alone. Give me your blessing, Oliver, servant of God, and send me merrily on my way.

**Oliver:**

*(They shake hands)*

We will hear from you again?

**Professor:** Oh yes, from time to time. Goodbye.

*(Professor goes off leaving Oliver alone on the stage.)*

*All praise to God that gives us joy, A gift divine.*

**Fiona:** I know you think I'm silly.

**Bob:** No, I...

**Fiona:** There's no point in lying. I heard you talking.

**Fred:** Oh.

**Fiona:** I wouldn't mind so much except... I liked you, and I thought that maybe you liked me.

**Fred:** Oh, I do.

## Scene

**Professor:** What is this Fiona? Are you becoming human?

**Fiona:** How would I know, if I were?

**Professor:** I only know myself by hearsay.

## Scene

## Scene

**Professor:** Ladies and Gentlemen! Lindsay's very own the reverend Mr. Oliver. A warm round of applause, if you please, for our special guest.

*(Everyone applauds, encouraged by the cast. Oliver is astonished, then bows to the audience.)*

A good man with a good sense of humour.

**Scene**

**Scene**

**Bob:** So you only want to have a child. Do you love me?

**Fiona:** I think I do. But I'm not sure. What does love feel like?

**Bob:** What does love feel like? But don't you know?

**Fiona:** I...I know...but tell me anyway?

**Bob:** It's not something you can put into words. You can't say what something feels like.

**Fiona:** There are words for everything.

**Bob:** Not for everything. Love begins where words leave off.

**Fiona:** Then how can I ever know.

**Scene**

**Scene**