Expresso Bongo

By Wolf Mankowitz
Cha, cha, cha.
- One hot dog.
Right, sir.
I said, 'Get with it, chick!
Get with it! What's the point of coming
'if you don't go for the beat, huh?
What's the point?'
Yeah, but Vera, when she goes,
she really goes.
You see, he does look like
Dave Brubeck only shorter.
- I thought Brubeck was shorter.
- Oh, no. Very big.
Well, I can't get with him.
I do try, but I just can't!
Him, he's so square,
it's like dancing with a load of dice.
No.
Variety, Miss, Melody Maker.
I'll bring 'em back in the morning.
Johnny!
Johnny, this isn't a lending library.
All right, I'm not paying a subscription.
Hello, boy.
I've got second in the third and third
in the fourth. I've got no appetite!
Look, let's come to the Spieler.
It might break the box.
- Still racing, Racer?
- What else?
I got a hot tip for you.
Meesa Masheena in the 4:30.
- On you, too, better.
- Two salt beef on rye!
- Dying to see your new look, Leon.
- Have you got music?
- What am I, La Scala?
- Hi, Leon.
- You want this eat or take?
- Eat.
Two salt beef on rye. Four shillings.
Hi, Johnny.
How are the alterations coming?
Expensive. And no.
No what?
No nothing from you.
I don't want no propositions.
Did I make? I didn't make!
I've got a big enough
proposition with all this!
All right, so give me a cup of coffee
and I won't waste your time
by telling you what to make
Leon's new expresso
the most habitated teenage club in Soho.
Thank you very much. One coffee!
Make me up six salt beef on white
and four... No, two smoked salmon.
To eat? Oh, no, it's too many.
To take.
If it's not against your principles.
Oh, by the way, you heard
I'm handling the Beast Rhythm Group.
Beast Burns and his Beasts making a bomb!
Six salt beef on rye!
The rye's more fresher. Who wants Beasts?
Everybody wants to listen
to music today, Leon.
Everybody wants it!
So, what's with this new juke box?
They'll fix it. It's music, ain't it?
Leon, for half of what that machine,
with its degenerate can-music costs,
you can have
a real live artiste in this place,
a personality,
someone that the kids will eat up!
No. N-O!
You're talking to an educated man, Leon.
I could spell even four-letter words
before I was six!
Take a night off!
Don't you want to open
this great new enterprise with a splash,
something that will get you
into the papers?
Now look at this. Just look.
'Teenage kids making music in expressos.'
It's creating such interest.
- It's a good publicity.
- It's fabulous publicity!
I can book you an artiste into here
which'll make this place beat out
greetings from Croydon to Willesden!
The kids will come flocking in here!
Cost you a mere 20
a week for a first-class artiste.
- 5 cash. Booking charge.
- Some hope.
- Hope, unlike charity, costs nothing.
- It's still too expensive.
Six beef, two salmons.
I want you know that
I come from a long line
of small-capital big-hopers,
some of whom did not die bankrupt.
Look, Johnny,
why don't you stick to drumming?
You're a good drummer, boy,
but what kind of a manager!
- Hah!
- What's so funny?
I put in a few cucumbers to last.
I was just thinking what
a great opportunity you're missing
for the sake of a mere fiver.
- I'm glad.
- Oh, well, that's how it is.
Some fellas are just not
cut out for success.
Ah, that's how it is.
Look, Leon,
I'll book you a top personality
and throw in a group to back him.
A mere 20, the package. No?
- A mere no.
- All right.
All right! So thank you and good night,
Leon expresso bar schlemiel!
Hey, you're actually paying?
I told you, foolish man,
I own a fortune in talent.
It just so happens
I'm a fiver short tonight.
Eh, Johnny, wait a minute.
For curiosity's sake,
what's the proposition?
- No, it's too late, Leon, forget it.
- All right, all right!
All right.
So, book me a genius, but cheap.
That juke box will cost me a fortune.
I shouldn't be doing this,
but for an old friend...
You can do anything you like with me,
can't you, Leon? Just anything.
Well, I must be out of my mind.
- Want to come upstairs, dear?
- Now, Penelope, do you mind?
Johnny, I'm sorry,
I'm getting so short-sighted.
In your business,
it's better you don't see.
- Good evening, my little Chinese rose.
- Wotcha, Johnny.
- And what teenage folly are they up to?
- Just started Historical Honeys.
Now, if you boys were good at school
and studied history carefully,
you'll remember tales of bygone ages.
Let us turn back history's pages,
study scenes of dirty plot.
In those days, gosh, they had the lot!
First, Mary Queen of Scots in kiltie.
She of treason was found guilty.
Then she came an awful cropper
on the headsman's wicked chopper.
Next, the Ides of March in Rome.
And Caesar wished he'd stayed at home.
'Cause on that day he passed away.
With his last words, 'Get tu, Brute!'
You can look at the goods,
but don't touch
Ah, the goods are the goods,
but don't touch
You wouldn't walk in Cartier's
and touch every stone
You wouldn't stroke a Mayfair mink
that wasn't your own
Which means unless you're serious,
just leave the loot alone
You can look at the goods,
but don't touch
You can value the stocks,
but don't touch
Though the stocks are in frocks,
you don't touch
You can't walk in the Dorchester,
Savoy or the Ritz
And open up the showcases
to handle the bits
Which means until you own
the goods, don't touch the exhibits
You can hover like an eagle
But until you make it legal
You can look at the goods,
but don't touch
Hello, Charlie boy.
Come on, Alma! Ready, get dressed!
How can you strip if you're not dressed?
The work's ageing you, Charlie.
Oh, it's like
Smithfield Meat Market around here.
- So you're here, then.
- So I'm here, then. Kiss me properly.
I was using my new voice tonight.
Do you like it?
It was an experience, Maisie doll.
Doll, I wouldn't have missed it for
50% of Val Parnell.
Undo me.
You know, I think, um... Well, I think
we might go straight home tonight,
watch telly, have a few laughs.
- I hadn't thought about it.
- Well, don't rupture your brain!
Oh, don't be. I'm all pathological
when I'm doing a show.
It's all those bald heads out there.
It's like playing to an egg box!
- So long as you don't lay the eggs.
- I'm getting out of it soon.
- So, at least mention my new voice.
- We could both do with an early night.
I'm dying of hunger.
Besides, I've got our supper already cooking to death here.
Sorry, Johnny.
My teacher says I'm a new Judy Garland.
Send me the bill for the testimonial.
I told her to send you all the bills.
It's nice you have so much faith in me.
Do you want to take in the finale?
Nothing personal, kid,
but I think I need some fresh air.
You two. You've been running
early as long as the show.
It's known as fidelity.
And your G-string's slipped.
Shh.
You know the trouble with nonstop review?
People are always waiting.
You wait for the slummers to come in,
the slummers wait
for the girls to go on stage,
the girls wait for the slummers
to go home to their wives.
Five shows a day, non-stop,
everybody's waiting.
That's life. We all have to wait together.
I love that Chinese philosophy.
Here come the raincoats.
You better flash those almond eyes.
- Hello, Johnny, glad to see you.
- Hi, Kakky, how's the film business?
Ah, I have very interesting plans
with Dietrich the girl, Gable the boy
and Brando for my heavy.
Good chemistry, huh?
Now, look, Kakky, do me a favour
and tap somebody else this week.
It sparkles! Something.
All I've gotta do, get these three people and I am back in business!
Good, good. We'll all buy tickets.
Now, where the hell is Maisie? Maisie!
You know, I was the man who introduced the bubble bath into show business!
- Well, the bubble's burst now, Dad.
- Tell Maisie to get the lead out.
Who first bathed a girl in ass's milk?
Answer me that.
When I made
The Private Life of Omar Khayyam.
- Does 10 shillings speak?
- Mmm, you'll be my associate producer.
- Be great, be great.
- Dietrich the girl, Gable the man and...
Good night!
So what did you do?
Decide to give them another show?
Here, carry the dinner.
- Why can't we go out sometimes?
- Maisie...
Why can't we see a bit of life?
Five shows a day, you see life, Maisie.
I'm taking you home
for a little light relief.
- Johnny Jackson, I want to dance.
- But you've been dancing all day!
- I want to go to a jazz club.
- Look, definitely no jazz.
So, why're you against jazz all of a sudden?
- Look, Mais...
- It's ridiculous.
You're making money out of these things, so why shouldn't we listen to 'em, occasionally?
Maisie, why do you have to torture me?
A woman has moods.
But, Maisie doll, can't you listen to...
- Hi, Johnny, how's you, man?
- Hallelujah!
Johnny, I wanna dance!
Sure, sure. I'll go and see
if Arthur Murray's around someplace.
Cokes, Peps or coffee?
One of each. We like to mix our drinks.
The sky's the limit, doll!
Well, give me a sandwich. I'm hungry.
What, and spoil your supper? Here.
Chew on this for a while.
Here he comes. If we're lucky,
we'll be witness to an affray.
- Come on.
- And if I did?
And if things weren't bad enough,
we have to pick on amateur talent night.
Come on, let's go.
Sit down. This is my night out, remember?
Oh, come on, kid,
we've got homework to do.
Sit down.
Bad for your reputation as a manager
to be seen working.
Beast.
Oh, hello. Hiya, talent.
Beast, you shouldn't let these
spare-time geniuses use your skins.
I'm not a musician any more,
I'm a wet nurse.
One...
Two... Three...
Four... Five...
Six... Seven...
Eight!
Well, love ain't no lady
And love ain't no fool
Young love is rough and tough
And if you wanna win,
you gotta play it real cool
Yeah, love, like a fire
Cosy and bright
Warms you with flames of desire
And burns you up all day
and tears your heart out at night
Oh, when her lips look real invitin'
Brother, you're hit
Just take it slow, oh, daddio
You'll live it up and soon be dead
Love is a fever
Death in disguise
Love has no rules for fools
Who fall for all the lies
that women tell with their eyes
Ooh, ooh, yeah!
Love is a fever
Yeah, death in disguise
Love has no rules for fools
Who fall for all the lies
that women tell with their eyes
Oh, just take it slow, oh, daddio
You'll live it up and soon be dead
I'd say that child's got more
sex than age.
How would I know? I'm abnormally normal.
- Leon's Tom-Tom!
- Say again.
I've got the perfect setting
for all this teenage violence.
Here, you carry on with your dinner.
I'll be right back.
You, uh, strangle the old vocal cords
very effectively, my boy.
- Do what?
- The old tonsil caper.
Ah, that's nothing.
It's the old drums I fancy.
I got the rhythm kind of natural, like.
It comes natural.
It's that golden voice
you want to cultivate.
Any schmuck can irritate those skins.
I wanna play drums.
Well, um, perhaps
I can arrange that for you.
Now, look.
Let's discuss it over a cool Coke.
- Are you a teacher, then?
- No, professor.
- Got no money for lessons.
- Naturally. Who has?
- Two vintage Cokes, Elvis.
- I've got one, thanks.
Thank you and good night,
Johnny Jackson. P.S., sleep well.
Maisie, I want you to meet
a talent of the first order.
- Um, what's your name, kid?
- Bert Rudge.
- Bert Rudge, this is Maisie King.
- How are you? You have the dessert.
It's been yet another memorable evening!
Oh, wait a minute, doll! Wait a minute.
Here. Put your address down there.
I'll talk to you
first thing in the morning.
I gotta go to work tomorrow morning.
I work the Fun Fair,
bottom of Frith Street.
- What, with that golden talent?
- Are you sending me up?
- Who looks after you, kid?
- Me.
- No manager?
- What, for this? I do it for kicks.
Well, you're off sick tomorrow, son.
You've got a great future as a singer.
I don't want to sing,
I want to play drums.
You shall have my own personal kit.
I'll see you at your home
first thing in the morning.
Oh, and by the way,
your first lesson as a professional,
no more singing for free.
Oh, I've left my dinner behind.
You carried me away, kid! Carried me away!
And how's the most unavailable
strip in town?
Still doing her own stripping. Thank you.
Get back to your washboard, scrubber.
I'm switching you to an expresso.
- Oh, no...
- Oh, yes. Get.
You owe me money. Work for it.
Look, Maisie doll, I'm always waiting
for you while you're singing, don't I?
So, you can wait for me while I'm working.
All right, but let's go somewhere.
We're going! Home!
And your breath smells of garlic.
The pickled cucumber's leaking
all over my hand. Sorry.
My favourite perfume.
Salt beef.
Are we always going to celebrate
our lover's tiffs with delicatessen?
You know caviar gives you a rash.
Leon's sandwiches are the worst in Soho.
That fur isn't the best either.
You know, as soon as
I make my first million...
- Yes?
- I'm gonna have it cleaned for you.
All right, so, tell me.
Tell you what? We're back in camp,
far from the Indians. Relax.
I don't want to relax.
I'm still waiting to hear
what you thought of my new voice.
Mmm, I think I made the right choice.
Delicious. Still lukewarm.
- Johnny...
- You're a lucky kid!
- I'd like your opinion!
- Black Velvet without the champagne.
I want an honest opinion.
Relax.
I'll tell you. No charge.
I'm not in the mood.
- I want a frank opinion.
- So take your things off.
How can I give you an honest opinion
while you're dressed?
Maisie...
Maisie, did we walk 'round London
with you like that?
Well, there's not much point in
putting my things on at the theatre
if I've gotta to take 'em
all off again, here.
- Supposing you had an accident.
- You're the only accident I ever had.
Oh, I love your love talk.
No, I don't want a man, I want a manager.
Tell me first
what you thought of my number.
Well...
Well, Maisie...
You're a highly talented girl, but...
- You didn't like it.
- Well...
- It's a small voice, Maisie.
- It's getting bigger every lesson!
Well, yes, but, um...
Oh, be like me, doll, give up gracefully.
Thanks for nothing, pig!
Look at that bed!
How can you live like this?
Come on, let's make it.
Now, look, Maisie,
there's no point making it...
I said, make it!
Don't act like we're married.
It spoils everything.
Nobody else in the world is so pathological about the word marriage.
Come, straighten these.
Well, haven't I been faithful to you for two years? As far as you know.
You want the Tin Pan Alley award?
I'm only faithful because I'm not married to you.
Only a married man is unfaithful, Maisie.
The sheet comes
before the blanket, nowadays.
- So, my voice doesn't move you?
- Oh, sure I'm moved, doll,
but this is no playground.
It's a jungle.
And it eats up pretty little birds like you in great quantities.
They get swallowed up.
Nobody ever knows they've gone,
nobody ever misses them.
Are you trying to tell me,
in your tender way, you'd miss me?
If you don't know already,
how can I tell you?
You've got a wonderful way
of not saying a thing.
I don't say it because maybe I'd mean it.
And anything I mean,
I'm not foolhardy enough to say.
Can't you say it just once?
Say what you mean in this jungle,
and you're a dead jackal.
How did I ever tangle with you?
You're not my girlhood dream at all!
I want you to know that.
- Now, Maisie...
- Give me the pillow!
All I'm saying is, enjoy your lessons,
but don't expect too much,
because practically
nobody's a star, Maisie.
Including most stars.
What's with this Bert kid, then?
Well, this boy's our stake in
the future of British show business,
and I'm gonna manage him.
I'm just not with you
the way your mind works.
You're always finding talent
that turns out to be untalented.
I just knew, against my own intelligence,
which I insult every day
of my working life,
that one of these boys would make it.
But not me.
Look, Maisie,
I've only got a very small organisation.
One artiste is all I can handle at a time.
You just don't think of me
that way, do you?
Well, I do that way, Maisie.
But not that way.
Well, at least he can't give you
what I can give you, I hope.
Hope justified!
You see what a waste of time it is
making a bed?
Cor, look! Who's he?
Boys, boys...
- Yes?
- Mrs Rudge?
- What if?
- Is your son, Bert, at home?
- No.
- No?
What's he been doing? I'll kill him!
No, no need for violence, Mrs Rudge.
I bring tidings of joy to you
and the entire Rudge tribe.
Hey, what is all this?
- Who's he?
- Where's young Bert?
Nicer type of probation officer
these days.
- Hiya, guv.
- Well, there's my boy!
Now, you listen to me, mister,
he don't tell me what he gets up to
at nights hanging around the West End,
and I don't want to know.
Don't speak to the gentleman
like that, Mum.
He's the bloke I told you about.
Gonna be my manager. He's gonna make me.
Make you what?
- Someone people dig.
- That's it, Mrs Rudge.
Mmm?
Our boy is gonna be
the idol of teenagers everywhere.
Recordings, variety bookings.
Why, he'll even open up
shoe shops for cash.
And it only requires your signature.
I ain't signing. It's all a swindle.
Whenever I ever signed anything,
it's always been a swindle for me.
Hello?
I'd like you to meet my new guv'nor, Dad.
I'll have a bitter.
The pleasure is mine,
Mr Rudge, and congratulations.
And perhaps you'd prefer to sign.
- Oh, is he the man from the...
- Success, Mr Rudge, any moment now.
You have produced one of
the major talents in Britain today.
Yes, you, by marrying Mrs Rudge
and begetting Herbert,
have contributed in no small measure
to the pleasure of hundreds
of little people like yourselves.
Oh, poor bastards.
All we need is the signature and
a peep into the boy's birth certificate.
Don't you dare!
Now, Mrs Rudge,
when did you say the lad was born?
I didn't.
And mind your own bloody business.
It's nobody's business when he was born!
Now, look, Mrs Rudge.
It's just in the case of minors,
we have to get things right for the book.
I don't want no nosy parkers
nosing 'round my marriage business!
Dad, tell him to belt up and get out!
But think what a difference this will make
to your standard of living, Mrs Rudge.
- Here you are, handsome.
- Oh, lovely!
- Here, give me that back!
- Now, Mrs Rudge...
Oh, that's none of your business!
But I'm his guiding light,
his helping hand, his mentor.
I see.
Ah-ha. Oh, I follow.
My dear Mrs Rudge,
it can happen to the best of us.
My own mother. Need I say more?
That's right, Myrtle, you always was too touchy about...
You, shut up! You had your say years ago!
You're his mum, I'm his old man.
It's all that matters, ain't it, mate?
This just makes for an extra bond between us.
We don't want all that shouting all over the place.
But you're the only one that's shouting, Mrs Rudge.
- Oh, yes. Definitely, yes.
- You belt up!
So, come on, now.
There's no need for self-consciousness amongst friends.
Just sign this little go-ahead to handle Herbert's career.
- Why should I?
- Where the dots are, Mrs Rudge.
That little swine's never brought me more than two quid a week!
- Why should I do anything for him?
- Cor, haven't I got expenses?
- I've got a lot of expenses.
- What about me then?
What do I got for your 18 years except expenses?
How much do you think this haircut costs? Peanuts?
Twelve bob a week, I tell you.
- Down, boy.
- Well, she'll always on at me. Always.
This isn't pie in the sky we're talking about.
Why, you'll even see your boy on television.
The beloved face of your own little Bert reflected in the hot cod's eye which watches every home in Britain!
- We got no money for television!
- Sign, madam,
and you will have a contemporary home fit for British voters
to watch television in.
How do I know what all this mean, all this
whereas, where if and wherefrom.
I don't wanna know about any of that.
It's an insurance for your future.
Have kids. Go on, have kids and get done!
I don't know what we have 'em for!
He's a good boy, Mrs Rudge.
He'll look after you fine,
if you'll just sign.
Have kids... I've got this drunk.
He can't have two pennies in his pocket
without being a good-time Charlie
with drinks all 'round for every
Tom, Dick and Harry.
- Just sign...
- And that Edna there.
Always after the boys.
Where's she going to end up? And him!
Oh, stow it, stow it!
This is all very highly embarrassing
to a stranger...
I don't know. Definitely, I don't know
why we have kids for!
I'll tell you what you had kids for.
So you can bleed 'em white!
- Call yourself a mother?
- Don't you talk to me like that.
- Come on, you talented little Bertie.
- And don't come back!
Poor bastard.
Look, kid, you don't have
to go back to the Fun Fair.
We can fix up a contract
over a nice cup of hot, milky coffee.
Well, I'll just have a few shots.
You know, it sort of relieves my feelings.
All right, be my guest.
Hey, Bert. Your old man's been around.
Oh, stow the old man!
Look, the kid's a little off colour
this morning.
- Give him a dozen shots.
- But he shoots off more than he sells.
Who cares about a few legalities?
Good shot.
After all,
the relationship between a manager
and artiste is one of friendship.
You're a great shot, kid. Takes me back
to my few weeks in the Guards.
So, um...
So, we hand in the old resignation,
turn our backs on all of the fun
at the Fun Fair,
and we go along to Leon's Expresso.
Are you listening to me, Bertie?
That's better.
I guess I feel all right now.
You can tell the guv I'm jacking it in.
Oh, your courage will be rewarded,
my boy. Just sign here.
Now, let's get this straight.
Are you offering me money
for bashing the bongos?
And your singing. Don't forget
the real gold part of your talent.
- So, when do I get the money?
- You're holding up business.
- This is business!
- It is?
Now, look, my boy, we'll start you off
modestly on the expresso circuit.
A lovely, loud little joint,
just around the corner.
We'll crash off from there.
England's only chance of getting
to the moon next.
Sign here, you talented little child.
Do I get the money now?
Eventually. On this five-year contract,
- we go 50-50, all right?
- Fifty what?
All right, if that's the way you
feel about it, 50-50.
- Shake.
- So, how much do I get?
Look, from now on, half of everything
you earn is going to go to you.
Bert Rudge.
Hmm, a nice, honest, square name,
but just a teeny bit uncommercial.
Now, let me see.
Uh, Crasher, Basher, Banger...
I've got it! Bongo! Bongo Herbert!
There we are, all signed and witnessed.
- Witnessed? Who's the witness, then?
- I'm the witness, then.
Maisie King? Is that you?
Maisie's a friend,
who, not knowing how to write,
gives me the use of her signature.
What will I tell the guv'nor, then?
Tell him to put up a plaque.
"Bongo Herbert worked here." Come on, kid.
First, Mary Queen of Scots in kiltie.
All right, where are you, Mary?
Hold it! Hold it!
And who's the historical expert
who thought up that combination?
Well, it's not easy, Charlie.
They just sent along
a box of assorted tops.
You didn't expect to go on television
in the buff, did ya?
This is a decent, respectable country.
You wouldn't talk to us like that
if we had a union.
- Oh, belt up and break for coffee!
- Great!
Hello, you.
- Hello, star-maker!
- Hail, Caesar! Oh, Maisie.
Hi, Johnny. Do you want some coffee?
Hey, what's all the overdress for?
Royal visit?
We've got 10 seconds
on some television show,
so we're going straight.
Well, don't let it become a habit.
Now, look, Maisie, I want you to make
a telephone call for me.
Why can't you make it?
Because I won't be here.
I'll be at Garrick Records.
Which is where I want you to telephone

**me at 11:**
But you know it's against the rules
to use the telephone.
So give Charlie half-a-crown for his cut
in the infringement.
- What do you want me to say?

**- At 11:**
I want you to say, 'This is HMV.
'Could we please speak
to Bongo Herbert's manager?'
Repeat the message.
This is HMV. Could we please speak
to Bongo Herbert's manager?
Who's Bongo Herbert?
I've just signed him today.
He's that great kid we heard last night.
Fast work, eh?
What's all this HMV jazz?
Now, look, Maisie, you get on
with your act and I'll get on with mine.

**11:**
- Mr Mayer.
- Yes?
There's someone to see you.
Mr Johnny Jackson.
- Johnny Jackson?
- Used to arrange music for you.
- Says it's urgent. Would you see him?
- Normally, no.
But at this moment, a pleasure!
Mr Mayer, how are you keeping?
I'm surviving, Johnny,
but it's against my own nature.
Are you looking for work?
Work? Haven't you heard? I'm a manager.
Is the business so short of managers,
it has to drag good musicians away
from their instruments?
- Who wants to listen to good musicians?
- I want to listen to good musicians.
Funny to think, Johnny, that you
and Aida are both things of the past.
That's what happens
if you're modern in your time.
Not bad, eh?
Hmm, she'll do well.
She's got gloss, schmaltz,
and she carries her jewelled mink
as to a manor born.
Just booked her show for television.
That's what it is today.
- So, what's on your mind, Johnny?
- I've got a boy.
Oi, please, Johnny, not you also.
Everybody's got a boy!
Instead of eating their fingernails today,
they wear them down with the guitar.
But this boy's got
a completely new gimmick.
Yes, he plays the guitar with his nose.
All right!
All right, so I bring you a talent
because you're an old friend,
and you treat me like schnorrer!
Look, Johnny,
for the sake of our old association,
maybe I could find you
a few arrangements to do.
Mr Mayer, I'm not asking for charity,
I'm offering you Bongo Herbert!
- What for a name, Bongo Herbert?
- All the big companies are after him.
Why, Nixa, Philips, even HMV!
Sure, sure, sure. And he'll be in
the next Command Performance?
- All right.
- Do me a personal favour.
That's I'm trying to do.
I've got so many
of these young schmendricks.
All right, you made your point.
Nice to have seen you again, Mr Mayer.
- What do you make the time?

- **Almost 11:**
Thank you, Johnny. All the best.
Go in health.
- Stomach tablets?
- Yes. New kind.
Have one. 40% more pepsin.
Listening to all this dreck
has made me a double ulcer man.
I know how you feel,
I got the same trouble.
- You're an ulcer man?
- Am I an ulcer man!
Good. Now you begin to sound
like you're a manager.
I can taste the extra pepsin!
Sorry not to do business
on this occasion. But who knows...
The telephone, Mr Mayer.
Never mind the phone.
To see an old friend!
Could be important.
What's more important than friendship?
Well, something could have dropped out
of the top 10.
- Top 10?
- Top 10!
- Who is it?
- HMV, Mr Mayer.
They want Bongo Herbert's manager.
I'm sorry, Mr Mayer, but, well,
things are popping. You don't mind?
- It's a pleasure.
- Thank you. Hello?
Johnny Jackson speaking,
Bongo Herbert's manager.
- We're calling about Bongo Herbert.
- Oh, yes, that's right.
Well, I can't give you
a decision right now.
Well, you see, I've got a deal pending
for Bongo elsewhere.
Well, of course your offer's very attractive, but, uh...
Well, we'll be in touch.
And thank you for calling. Goodbye. Again, marvellous to see you, Mr Mayer.
I'm sorry we can't do anything.
Maybe next time.
Just a minute. Sit down, please.
- I don't want to waste your time.
- So, where is this boy of yours?
You want to see him in his right setting, Mr Mayer.
All right, so bring him along and empty us a cradle.
He's opening a new place tonight at the Tom-Tom.
Give yourself an outing.
- Oi. All right.
- Do you good.
As you leave, kindly switch on Aida, please.
With pleasure, Mr Mayer.
- The kid's great, isn't he, Leon?
- Yeah.
I get all my genuine Italian peasant-style cups and saucers broke.
- Oh, two free cups, Leon.
- You've already had six free cups!
- From now on, you pay!
- We're doing great business, boy. It's a free cappuccino to each new customer, isn't it, Leon?
What's so new about you?
I got a great idea for a great picture.
Kakky, Kakky, the coffee's free, you don't have to give a performance for it.
Not at the theatre, Johnny, to see your girl televisionised?
Sure. Um, it's tonight, isn't it?
Personally, I would never compromise myself by making pictures for television.
I'll be back.
Hey, Johnny! Hey, Johnny, wait a minute!
Why them and not me?
Why can't I get my Tom-Tom on Television?
Strip, and I'll guarantee you a spot.
Stop it! Stop it!
From now on,
all free coffee must be paid for!
Here, what's the programme?
Television strip with mother?
It's a documentary for Cosmorama.
What, a documentary at the Intime?
What'll they think of next?
You can value the stocks,
but don't touch
Though the stocks are in frocks,
you don't touch
You can't walk in the Dorchester,
Savoy or the Ritz
And open up the showcases
to handle the bits
Which means until you own
the goods, don't touch the exhibits
- What's cooking, flower drum girl?
- I am. Phew, it's hot in here!
Well, it looks as if
the completely un-unique,
unfabulous, unsensational
Maisie King is finding fame.
- The lot look queer in clothes.
- Is Gilbert Harding here?
Who's he?
Why, you ignorant little lotus blossom.
You can't have Cosmorama
without Gilbert... Ah!
Good evening, Mr Harley.
I'm the press man for this joint.
Don't go asking me for too many plugs.
You're what the corporation
- doesn't like about plugs.
- Who's asking?
I just wanted to say
what a great idea it was
for a serious, well-informed
documentary mob like yours
to take a look at the way
these wonderful teenage kids live.
All right, cut film.
Well, that's extremely kind of you.
- Simon.
- Uh, Maisie King! Maisie!
Come over here
and meet a real personality.
You know, my friend and I
are some of your greatest fans.
Well, Miss King,
that was most interesting.
It had an authentic quality
of gay delinquency.
Oh, it looks much better
in the real costume.
What did you think of my voice?
What I admire most about these kids
is their energy,
their vitality, their life!
You know, straight after the show,
do you know what
this little lady's gonna be doing?
What?
She'll be rocking like mad
with the other kids down at the Tom-Tom.
- She will?
- Oh, and where's that now?
Well, it's a sort of
contemporary youth centre
on the other side of Compton Street.
Come on, kid, dress! Let's get with it!
See you down there, chum.
Well, Simon, we may as well wrap this up
and get over to that Tom-Tom place,
see if we can get some candid stuff.
What's all this Tom-Tom routine?
This is our day, Maisie.
I should've had faith.
I should have realised that
luck can be so undiscriminating,
it could even happen to me.
You know, if I get a plug in Cosmorama,
we may well be in profit.
I could get advanced course singing lessons for as little as half a guinea!
- Get moving!
- Hey!
"In profit", I love those words!

Come on, kid. I want you all to come down to the Tom-Tom with me.
Why do I want to go there for? I'm tired.
Yes, I wanna go to bed.
Can't you keep your mind off work?
Now, come on, now. Be my guests!
All the expresso you can drink!
Make a night of it! Live it up.
Come on, now, get ready! Come on.

How long have we gotta stay in this nuthouse for juveniles?
This is a recreation centre.
Go in and recreate.
I'll be down in a minute, doll.
- Where are you going?
- Come on, kids, I'm waiting for someone.
Will you balance the budget with all this secrecy?

Look, Maisie, when I'm doing business, don't waste my time with economics.
Oh, you handle business so businesslike!
Oh, do me a favour, Maisie.

Evening, Mr Mayer.

Is the ulcer doing well tonight?
I already feel a small centre of irritation.
What? Television for an expresso opening?
- What else?
- How short of material can they get?
It's the boy, Mr Mayer. He's mustard.
Just mustard.
Mustard schmustard!
Public places degenerated so far, I'm finding great difficulty in getting down to it.

How low can you sink?
Just a little lower, Mr Mayer.
It's down in the cellar.
Well, here we are
in a typical expresso coffee bar.
In this rather synthetically exotic decor,
the teenagers relax
after their working day.
That is if you can call it relaxation.
Of course, you and I might prefer
the quiet atmosphere
of an old English pub.
But these youngsters get their kicks,
as they put it, under plastic palm trees,
where they sit to hatch and plot
their teenage rebellion.
Let's see what they think about it.
You, sir, what do you think about it?
- Why me?
- Oh, thank you.
- Have a cappuccino, Mr Mayer.
- Yes, please, flat.
Uh, one flat, Leon.
This is my friend.
Miss King, Mr Mayer, Garrick Records.
- How are you?
- How do you do, Ms King?
Chat him up.
Look, look, look what these devils
do to my paint.
Just see what it does to your business.
I always say
this is the best part of the day for me,
just sitting peacefully, sipping cafe.
At least coffee will keep me awake.
As a matter of interest,
Mr Mayer, how do you sleep?
- What do I want to sleep for?
- Please yourself.
Awake, I can count sheep going
into the record shops buying my discs.
Oh, don't you love this character?
I'll be right back. Make conversation.
- Come on, Bongo baby. You're on.
- I just did it.
Well, do it again. Just hog that camera.
Wherever that camera goes,
let it find you.
Right. Three, four...
Of course, Mr Mayer,
I wouldn't say my voice is quite
ready for opera just yet, but...
Perhaps, you'd be kind enough to stop
chatting Mr Mayer
and listen to this brilliant boy.
My heart was so heavy
With longing for you
My arms were so lonely
Lonesome and blue
Alone in my sorrow
I heard a voice cry
A voice in the wilderness
A voice from the sky
Have faith in your darling
The voice seemed to say
Be true to her memory
She'll come back one day
And though there was no one,
nobody to see
A voice in the wilderness
Brought comfort to me
We had a quarrel, I was unkind
Why did you leave me?
Love made me blind
My darling, forgive me
I yearn for your touch
Have pity, come back now
I need you so much
Believe me and you'll hear it
The voice from above
A voice in the wilderness
The voice of true love
- What do you think about him?
- Good evening, miss.
But don't you think
the boy's got something, Mr Mayer?
Something, he's got.
What it is, I don't want to know.
But you can be frank with me, Mr Mayer.
What's your feeling about this boy?
- Nausea, nausea!
- Nausea?
When I see this little bleeder
and compare him with Aida, nausea
Nausea
A boy who owns an Austin-Healey
Twice as great as Beni Gigli
Nausea
All your life, you should be so sick.
When this talent's in the lolly,
if you take the risk
You'll make more than Bobby Rawley
from his nauseating disc
Call this music? What a scandal
In his grave is turning Handel
Nausea, nausea, nausea
All he need's a crew cut,
a sweatshirt and some jeans
And he'll be better box office
than all your... Hey!
When I hear these coffee barmen
And think what they did
to Carmen, nausea
Nausea
Years ago, they would be failure
Now, they're cutting out Sibelius
Nausea, nausea
So try to sell the meister singers
in expresso bars
All they want is shyster singers
plucking back on their guitars
When I think of Don Pasquale
And compare him
with this Charlie, nausea
Nausea, nausea
I want you to know, Mr Mayer,
that I appreciate your frankness.
With opera, I lost my shirt.
Yet, from this rock dreck, I make money.
All right, I'll give you 35 for one disc,
two sides of your Bongo, no royalty.
- It's a deal?
- Hard cash.
It's a special concession to
an ulcer man, and in cash.
- It's a deal.
- Good.
- One, two and...
- Hello, Johnny.
What do you think of them?
Oh, kinky, but nice, nice!
Fetches me quite a new class of clientele.
Good, let me be your financial adviser.
Always ready to try something new.
Invest in a car. Love on wheels.
It's the safest thing.
I think you've got something there.
Where do they put these things?
Now, Penelope, you've been warned.
It's a fine thing if a girl can't look up a used car bargain.
Hi.
So, what's high?
Things have reached an all-time low.
- Now what's happened?
- Exactly nothing.
It's a week since I signed Bongo to make a record, no record.
A week since he opened at the Tom-Tom, no paragraphs.
- At least you got some money.
- Money? You call this money?
Two pounds, seven shillings and nine pence and a life membership at the Tom-Tom.
- Money is useless.
- Is that all you've got left?
At this rate, Bongo's going to be a very old teenager before I can retire to the south of France.
But the advanced singing lessons, Johnny. You promised.
Never. Not since I was a boy scout.
You said the next...
Sorry, doll, you'll have to keep on stripping.
At this rate, I'm gonna be a very old stripper before I can retire to the south of France.
Oh, that's the brave little artiste.
- What's for lunch?
- Guess.

Same as I've been guessing for
the last 3,000 Thursdays, spaghetti.
- It's special today, though.
- You mean it's not overcooked?
- Remember what day it is?
- Black Thursday.
- It's our anniversary.
- Congratulations. Of what?

Two years ago, today, you bought me
my first salt beef sandwich.
Why do women always want to
remember such things?
Well, they do.
- Why, I don't know.
- Now, look, Maisie doll,
with all my money,
do we have to eat off newspapers?
They're the lunch edition. I thought
they'd give you an appetite. Look.
That, with meatballs and the spaghetti,
is my anniversary present to you.
- Timber!
- How hungry are you?
'Cosmorama presents...'
Oh, it's just like I thought.
Just like you thought?
Yeah, that's why I told him
to hog that camera.
You didn't know they'd plaster
the newspapers with his face.
'Cosmorama presents Teenage Rebellion,
BBC Television.
'Saturday Night. 8:30.'
Well, oh, I didn't know for sure,
but I knew! I knew!
That's one thing I've got against you,
Johnny Jackson.
In all the two years you've been
my sole agent,
you'll never admit you don't know...
Still out of order! Why do I pay for it?
- It's out of order because you don't.
- Oh.

Get this junk off the table!
You're ruining these valuable newspapers.
That junk happens to be
our anniversary lunch.
Where are you going?
I've gotta organise Mayer,
the press... Oh, and Gilbert Harding!
But the food's ready!
Listen, Maisie doll,
when I'm cooking, you shouldn't be!
- I even got some wine! Red wine!
- Well, keep it warm!
I hate wine! I hate meatballs!
And I hate agents!
I wish I could hate
your method of lovin'
I wish I could hate
those dangerous charms
But what's a girl gonna do
who hates to love you
When she loves to hate in your arms?
I'm longing to loathe
your lovable laughter
I want to be footloose, fancy and free
But when I'm footloose and free,
it's you I fancy
Oh, worry, go-lucky me
I wish I could kill
our beautiful friendship
I wish I could douse
your passionate flame
But what's a girl gonna do
who aims to miss you
When she's always missing her aim?
I'd like to forget past,
present and future
If only my head and heart could agree
But you're my past
and my future at the present
Don't know if I hate to love you
or love to hate you
Worry, go-lucky me
One, two, three. I arranged to get my boy national advertising, a 45-minute programme, weekend peak viewing, and you haven't even got his disc out yet! He sings on this programme? What else can he do? Interview the Queen Mother? - Fix a recording session this afternoon. - This afternoon? Don't give me problems! Fix it! Your boy's disc will be in the shops late on Monday. Satisfied? Satisfied. You've made a wise decision, Mr Mayer. This will restore the public's faith in Garrick Records. I suppose he's a likeable fellow. - Cosmorama. Which studio, please? - Studio six. Got an appointment? Special urgent delivery. Gilbert Harding. Personal. I'll phone him through. Oh, it's more than my job's worth to keep him waiting. - Hey, you've got to be announced! - I'm not proud. Yes, I know, boy, I know. You may very well be right. But my personal view has always been very strong. The Archbishop should come in through there. Oh, my dear Mr Harding. I'd like to congratulate you on the publicity for your Teenage Rebellion programme. - Extremely kind of you, I'm sure. - Sensational, just sensational. - Haven't we met before? - Oh, it's not impossible. My show business interests are extensive. As I was saying, the ads for your programme are fabulous.
Well, I'm so grateful to you, but as you see, we're very busy. You see, I happen to be closely related to this Bongo Herbert. The boy you're featuring in your advert. Oh, yes. You his father?
- Uh, no, closer than that. Manager.
- Hmm.
I'm afraid we cannot allow you to use the film material of our client. But we've made him the keynote. He runs through the whole film. I'm afraid our lawyers feel that this programme of yours, praiseworthy as it may well be, is denigratory to our client's professional status. Would you care to see the documents? We had no idea the boy had any professional status. My dear Harding, the kid has records coming out all the time. Why, Garrick Records have an immense investment in him. You're not just exploiting an unprotected kid, you know. I assure you, we have no desire to exploit anyone. Anyone at all. Better sit down. We don't want our boy exhibited as a teenage curiosity. Teenagers are regarded by the corporation with the deepest reverence. By me, too, I assure you. We're quite prepared to pay your client a fair fee. It isn't the mere money, Harding. We're loaded. It's the principle of the thing. How much have you in mind?
- Fifty.
- Oh, please!
Seventy-five. It's a documentary. Yes, but Bongo Herbert
isn't an inexpensive herringbone!
We have the most eminent people coming
to discuss this Bongo and his symptoms.
I mean, his art.
It's a programme on the highest level.
And 100 is as far as we're prepared to go.
I've been watching you
very closely, Harding,
and I've come to the conclusion
that you're a deeply sincere person
and I'm gonna do my best to help you.
Well, I'm very glad if you feel
that way, Mr, um...
Uh, Jackson. So, we'll take the 100.
Uh, ask your cashier
to leave it for me on my way out.
- Very well.
- Now, about this eminent discussion.
Mmm-hmm.
I have one or two modest suggestions.
- Mmm.
- Do sit down.
Oh, dear.
Now, my dear Harding...
Well, here we are
in a typical expresso coffee bar.
And in this rather
synthetically exotic decor,
the teenagers relax after the day's work.
- Am I on yet?
- It's finished.
Oh, no, I missed it.
Missed my first film. How did I look?
You came out wonderful, Bongo.
No kidding?
Hey, why wasn't Johnny here to see me?
- What kind of a manger is he, anyway?
- For you, good.
Probably holding Mayer down
to a hot television set.
Perhaps I'll come on again, huh?
Well, I don't know about you,
but that left me absolutely breathless
just watching it again.
Now, what is the answer to this astonishing phenomenon of our time?
With us in the studio tonight, we have a distinguished panel of experts to discuss it.
- The Reverend Tobias Craven.
- Good evening.
An important Harley Street psychiatrist.
Good evening.
And last, but certainly not least, a man who has been responsible for much of what we're here to discuss, Mr Johnny Jackson, a well-known artist manager.
- Hiya, cats!
- How the hell did he get on there?
Oh, that Johnny. He's a really deep character!
Now, Doctor, would you say this was just a healthy sign of high spirits? It's not as simple as that.
Adolescents in our time demand outlets for their frustration.
See? You're frustrated, Bongo!
- You need some bint!
- Seek elsewhere.
The drums Bongo beats may stand for someone he doesn't like, or they may be a simple means of evacuating tension.
- What's all that about? Huh?
- Bint.
The whole mass of whirling conflict surge up to a pounding climax.
Afterwards, in its relaxation of tension, the face is almost beautiful.
Hear that? You're almost beautiful, Bongo.
- Do me a favour.
- Shh!
- Craven?
- Speaking personally, I welcome the whole phenomenon.
After all, many popular songs do have a touch of religion.
Uh, speaking for myself...
Of course, many others are frankly pagan.
Uh, speaking for myself...
We have to reach the people at their own level.
Mr Jackson?
Still speaking for myself,
I would definitely say that the Rev is onto something there.
This boy, Bongo Herbert, we must all bear in mind, is a real symbol of modern youth,
and this number which we heard him sing, Voice In The Wilderness,
will, we believe, introduce a new era in the hit parade.
Uh, the psychiatrist... Yes, Doctor?
Because get this, kids, the disc of Voice In The Wilderness will be on sale in your local record shops any minute now.
Well, thank you, Mr Jackson.
There you have the...
There is, of course, something in what Mr Jackson says.
I started a jive club at our youth centre some time ago.
Later, we converted it into skiffle.
Now, I think it not impossible that I start a bongo club in my crypt.
Oh, good for you, Rev!
A big hand for the Rev, kids!
You just heard the attitude of a really great modern churchman, if I may say so.
Just because we want a few kicks as well is no reason we should be unreligious.
Oh, thank you, Mr Jackson.
There you have the...
And talking about religion, kids, I don't want you to regard Bongo as a substitute, even though his latest Garrick recording, A Voice In The Wilderness,
is the greatest you ever heard!
I am speaking on behalf of both
me and Bongo...
- Mr Jackson.
- ...when I say,
go to church this Sunday.
Me and Bongo often go together
to the same little local church
where Bongo was christened 18 years ago.
How can he say those things?
How can he lie so well?
...and his little sister and his dad,
who have made so many sacrifices for him.
Bongo gives thanks for all you
wonderful people
who've made his career possible.
I never had it so good
since the day I was born
Corn is growing
where there used to be barren soil
What a life
I struck oil
I never had it so rich before
I was sliding the slope,
then I signed up a dope
Bongo, you opened the door
I never had it so good
until I learned to be bad
Glad to tell you
I'm no longer misunderstood
I never had it so good, good, good
I never had it so good
We have to proceed cautiously and quietly.
It's number five in the top 10.
How cautious can you get?
Look! Look at my systematic planning
on the Dixie Collins LP.
She hasn't been seen here for years,
and already we have pre-sold 50,000!
Good for you. But how does it help us?
- We gotta have action!
- Shh! Quietly.
As a young ulcer man,
you should take things quietly.
Find a new gimmick
and make a second record.
You should pardon the suggestion.
But with a property as hot as Bongo,
I can go anywhere.
Sure, you can go to Nixa, Philips,
even HMV, after the second record.
Remember, I have an option.
Please.
If you don't want the boy, release us.
Let us make a little loot.
We consumed that few pounds of nicotine
and salt beef a long time ago.
My boy, business is a very unfair thing.
That's why I'm going to give you
a small percentage on your third record.
But we haven't made our second record yet!
First, we make a contract for the third,
and then we discuss the second.
I see. So, you do want the boy?
You can be frank with me, Mr Mayer.
The boy can be a first-class property
with Garrick direction. Understand?
- Yes?
- You car's here, Mr Mayer,
and the Dixie Collins press reception
is in half an hour.
Thank you, miss.
Details, we'll discuss later.
Now, I have to go to the Dorchester.
You know how demanding a real star can be,
even if she isn't twinkling
too brightly at the moment.
I know I can trust you to give
Bongo and me a fair deal, Mr Mayer.
You cannot!
But what alternative do you have?
Smoking, smoking!
What kind of a hobby is smoking?
You need a bint! I keep telling you.
'Bint is the best nerve tonic there is.
I personally recommend it.'
Signed Beast.
- Can't you get off it?
- Not since I was 12.
Sort of takes you by the throat, Bongo.
Got no time for all that jazz.
Besides, I got other problems.
Wish I had other problems.
- Hi, guv.
- So, what new gimmick have you spawned?
It's another Bongo in the moronic so far.
'When I beat my chick with a solid rock.'
Look, get with it, Beast.
Mayer wants something different!
So, why can't this be different?
We could put some more echo on Bongo,
wire up something or other.
Sing it for the guv, kid.
No, I just can't get with it today.
- I don't know what's the matter with me.
- It's that mother of yours.
Hmm? Has she been here?
No, but she's been in all the expressos
looking for me.
Mother! Hmm, Mother!
Mother! Maybe that's it!
A new kind of rock-with-Mother song!
A sort of Oedipus rock! Yeah,
that's what we should be doing, Beast!
Putting down in music what...
What Bongo and all the other kids
in the country is worried about!
- Me? I'm just an ordinary kid.
- Yeah, yeah.
Save the humility for the press.
Now, we've got to be
analytical about this.
Well, look at the headlines you've had.
For a few days, you've become
a sort of national anti-hero.
You're every poor little fish
in the country,
only covered in gold chips!
- Who, me?
- Yes, you, you talented little berk!
You've got a chip on your shoulder
and an H-bomb in your pants.
A sneer, a twitch, a hell in your head!
It's you against the world, baby,
and the world loves you for hating it.
That's what this is, a great hate number!
I've just had a vision!
That simple priest on TV the other night,
if he can get our message,
the least we can do is get his!
Now, so far, what have we got in the act?
- Sex?
- We've got.
- Beat? Violence?
- We've got. We've got. We've got.
- Bash! We need more bash.
- All that, we've got!
We've got it all, except one thing!
Religion! We've got to get religion!
Where are you going? Heaven?
Gent... Gent... Gentlemen!
So, Miss Collins is a little late.
After all, she's a lady. Isn't she?
- Only by sex.
- It's the routine star treatment.
I'm Surprised Dixie can still remember the routine.
Rosemary's getting so terribly late.
I'm sorry, I really can't wait any more.
But Patricia, my sweet, I know how much Dixie is longing to talk to you.
So are plenty others, dear, provided I quote them.
What would we poor press agents do without your marvellous column?
Yes, have another cocktail.
It's a privilege for Garrick Records that Miss Collins comes to us.
For England, too, Mr Mayer.
Falling stars are just what we need.
What are we playing at?
I'm tired and I've got a deadline to meet.
To me, dear, you always look as fresh as a midday edition.
I've got three more of these tea parties to get to.
No, Eddie, don't be like that!
Angels, in all these years,
have I ever let you down?
Look, I know it's her natural environment,
but do you think you could possibly
drag your client out of the bedroom?
Ladies and gentlemen of the press,
your hostess, Miss Dixie Collins.
Hello, darlings! How perfectly
wonderful of you all to come.
Boys, boys, please! Will some gorgeous
gentleman get me a drink?
What exactly is the truth about
your fourth marriage, Miss Collins?
The same tragedy as the third, darling,
but then, with me,
everything goes in cycles.
Up and down, up and down!
Why is it so long
since you visited England, Miss Collins?
Oh, you know, so many dates,
so many husbands,
none of them English. What a pretty dress!
Dixie, there's some doubt
about your date of birth.
Would you care to clear it up?
Certainly, darling. I'm Scorpio.
And you're Patricia Lewis.
Simply everybody reads
your column back in America.
- Hello!
- Dixie,
whatever became of that
young flamenco singer?
The California oranges just didn't
agree with him, the poor darling,
so I re-exported him back to Spain.
Miss Collins.
Thank you. Gee, it's sure tough
to get a drink at this party.
- She can look after herself, that girl.
- Use has developed the muscles.
You got to admit it, she looks marvellous.
I admit it, but I can't enjoy it.
- Oh, no!
- Which paper are you?
The Financial Times.
I just had to see you, Mr Mayer.
I've got a great idea for Bongo.
It's haunting me.
All right, but not now. Come to my office.
But it's almost classical.
At the same time, it's got
a reverential attitude towards life.
- You're not holding my attention. Go!
- It's a sort of Ave Maria with heart!
- Italian numbers are out.
- In a word, Mr Mayer, religion!
You're a bloody nuisance,
but you're a trier.
All right, I'll buy religion.
So, take a drink and go.
There's a good one!
What shows are you doing here,
Miss Collins?
Well, I know
Gus has arranged a TV spectacular.
It's a beautiful show, beautiful!
What will the rest of the show be?
We hope to book
some of that wonderful talent
you have so much of in this country.
- Like who, for example?
- Like whom, for example?
Well, like Bongo Herbert, for example.
What do you think of Bongo Herbert, Dixie?
I'd just love another drink!
- To the rich in heart.
- Thank you.
I'll get another. And thank you.
You've never even heard of Bongo,
have you, Miss Collins?
Does anybody have an American cigarette?
Bongo is one of our
most promising younger stars,
a real Garrick find.
I have always done everything I could
to help young talent on.
- That's so true.
- Can we say that
Bongo will be in your show, then,
Miss Collins?
Any kid Gus Mayer says is promising
is gonna get a big push from me.
Got it?
Good quote.
Well, that's it, everybody. Goodbye.
Anybody coming to the Savoy?
- Going so soon?
- I'm sorry, Rosemary.
We've got four stars waiting for us,
including Son of Lassie.
Jack, darling, why not stay?
I promise you,
we'll give you a completely new angle.
Sorry, darling, she's had her moment. Bye.
Jack, darling! Jack!
So how are you, my precious?
Elated and exhausted, Gus.
We'll have one glass of champagne, alone.
No more for me, thanks.
I'm getting a bit burpy.
And sorry I had to throw you
to the wolves.
Any man who can pre-sell 50,000 records
for me can throw me anywhere he likes.
To the too-long-delayed return
of a great lady.
You know, Gus,
I hope this whole thing comes off.
I'm getting so cold over there that,
for the first time in my life,
I'm terrified.
Travel hopefully, darling.
I'm making a tele-recording made
of the Dixie Collins show.
And I'll send it straight to New York.
They'll go mad for it!
Gus! Would you like to be
my sixth husband?
- Do I look like Henry VIII?
- Who the hell is Pinky?
- Your second.
- Oh, yes, the heel.

All these years, she didn't care about her darling son.
But now she thinks I'm making some money, she wants the lot.
You ought to go and see her, Bongo.
She's probably very proud of you.
Well, she's too late.
I've always been alone,
and that's the way it's gonna stay.
That's the way it is in this business.
You kid yourself from time to time,
but really, you're always on your own.
But it's all right for you.
You've got Johnny.
Oh, sure. So have you.
I'm just something he sells.
Like rat poison or fish and chips.
It's funny, you don't like it because he sells you,
and I don't like it because he won't sell me.
But it's all right for you.
- You're sort of dedicated.
- What to? Stripping?
What I mean is,
to you, singing is sort of an art.
Perhaps that's why no one will buy it.
For me, it's more like a drug.
Takes my mind off quite a few things.

What are you doing after the show, sweetie?
Meeting my boyfriend in the vice squad.
Want to come?
So, this is where you come in your spare time.
We'll have to watch your voice doesn't start breaking.
- I just fancied a few drinks.
- Big, big problems he has!
All I have to worry about is finding numbers for him,
fixing records, booking him on TV shows.
All the rest, he can do himself!
Don't pick on the kid. He was lonely.
So, little white mother Maisie
is comforting him.
Why not? Do you have
an exclusive contract on my spare time?
- Look, I just fancied a few drinks.
- So, now you've had them. Now, get out!
I told you not to push him around.
I'll bear in mind what you say.
Blow, Bongo!
- He's my guest.
- Drop it, Maisie. I'm going.
- Now, look.
- You look!
I've got 50% of what he's got.
He hasn't got 50% of what I've got.
If that remark is supposed to refer
to me, you can take it right back!
You're a big help, you are!
I need the kid for work,
and you're busy getting him drunk.
What are you, a sadist or something?
Most of the time I'm with you,
I wish I was!
Oh, now, look, Maisie doll,
I've been working very hard,
I'm under a lot of tension!
Well, stay under and drown!
Ah, what the hell.
For art, one has to make sacrifices.
Hell!
If it's you, I'm asleep!
You want to be careful
whom you say you're not in to.
I am being careful.
That's why I'm telling you I'm not in.
What was it you required?
Just because we have a little scene
every so often,
I mean, you don't have to hibernate.
- Oh, come over here, baby.
- No!
I'm having a nice quiet read,
and it's very relaxing.
If you were a gentleman,
you'd come over here.
But you can...
Well, you can read here, baby.
Come on, you can relax here.
Why can't you come over here, anyway?
Well, I'd love to, baby. Really, I would.
But, well, I've got a lot of very
important calls coming through.
I'm expecting Hollywood
on the line any minute now.
You know, it's mid-morning over there.
Thanks for the geography lesson,
and good night!
Oh! Maisie, but I've got so many
important things to discuss with you.
Something... Well, something
that really means our whole future.
Our whole future?
Yes, that's right, baby. Oh, come over.
There's so much I want to tell you.
Well, maybe I will. Maybe I will.
Of course, I have to dress first.
Oh! That's great, baby! That's great.
Look, I'll go and make us some coffee,
you come right over.
You know, I've got
so many business problems.
What have you and me
got to do with business problems?
Well, isn't it of some interest to you
that I succeed?
You know, if Bongo doesn't get that...
So, it's Bongo! You don't want me,
you just want someone to talk to
about that bloody Bongo!
- Who else have I go to talk to?
- I'm not in a talking mood.
I'm sorry I insulted your ignorance
by even suggesting
that I could talk to you!
You only got up in the middle of the night
because you want a little rabbit!
You want to chat it up with someone!
- It's an insult! You're kinky!
- Who's kinky?
- You're bent!
- Who's bent?
- Don't you shout at me!
- Who's shouting?
- Good night!
- Good night!
Thank you. Thank you.
And now, straight from New York, Hollywood and Las Vegas,
we are very happy to be able to afford the fantabulous,
fantastico Dixie Collins!
Well, this is it, golden boy! Hey, hey.
Smoking when that velvet voice is about to perform?
She's around here somewhere,
I just know she's around here somewhere.
Don't tell me my little virgin's found himself a piece of frontline frippet?
It's my mother I'm talking about.
She's around here somewhere.
So, where else should a boy's mother be but at his side at a time like this?
Edna phoned me she's on the warpath.
She's got the needle to me.
And she wants half my money.
I'd give her half of mine if I thought it would make her happy.
- You would?
- Look,
it isn't as simple as all that.
Now, listen to me, kid.
She won't come around here.
You have my personal guarantee.
- Fix her for me, Johnny.
- Sure, I'll fix her for you!
I'm your manager, aren't I?
Your friend, your chum, your protector.
Now, go out there and kill 'em!
Tonight, eight million telly-hugging imbeciles
are going to
fall in love with you simultaneously!
Thank you! Thank you, all!
You, too, up there! It's wonderful
to know you still love me!
Now, here's a new singer making
his very first variety appearance.
your own Bongo Herbert!
Thank you, thank you very much.
Thank you very much,
thank you very much indeed.
It's not generally known
that I'm a deeply religious boy,
And here in this theatre tonight,
we're glad it's Sunday, because,
well, we've had a number
specially written for this show
We'd like to dedicate it to...
To a lady who taught us that
there's someone bigger than you or I,
my mother.
For my mother I'd like to sing for you
my latest recording,
The Shrine on the Second Floor.
Take it, Bert.
I was born in the heart of a city
In a room that I'll always adore
Though it's not much to see
It's like heaven to me
The shrine on the second floor
There's a beautiful grey-haired Madonna
Who once taught me
what life had in store
And I lift up my eyes
to that saint in disguise
In the shrine on the second floor
Whenever my troubles
seem too much to bear
I look for the answer, and then
I kneel down and see
that light shining there
And everything turns out right again
When I'm old and I find that I'm lonely
I'll return to my heaven once more
I'll remember the face
of a lady of grace
On the shrine on the second floor
When I'm old and I find that I'm lonely
I'll return to my heaven once more
I'll remember the face
Of a lady of grace
On the shrine
On the second floor
- That was lovely, wasn't it?
- Mmm?
You've sold another 50,000 records
tonight, my darling Dixie. 50,000!
Gus, if that doesn't get me
a New York series,
I'll just have to marry a prince! Yes?
- Only me. Can I bring my daughter in?
- Of course. Gus, fix some drinks.
- Yes.
- Oh, Ms Collins, it was simply splendid.
All my chums were there. Goodness,
we couldn't have adored it more.
- Oh, thank you.
- I told you
everyone will be utterly
delighted to have you back.
Rosemary, I'm delighted
to have me back, too.
Mumsy, I do wish
you'd let me go on the stage.
I will, darling, if you ever get an offer.
So far you've not had
an offer of any sort.
Mumsy, that's quite unfair.
It's only my third season.
Cynthia, you have lipstick on your teeth.
It was absolutely topping, Miss Collins.
- Word of an officer and a gentleman.
- Oh, rather. Oh, goodness!
You did very well, my little robin!
It was a most moving experience!
I got a message from Miss Collins herself.
She's invited me 'round
to her dressing room for a drink.
This is better than I thought.
If she takes a fancy to you,
I may be able to book you onto
any other shows she's doing.
You've got to get into the habit
of cultivating the right people,
because every right person, you know,
makes you a little more right.
Ah, Harry, just the man
we're looking for. Look.
I want you to take a picture
of the boy with Miss Collins.
- They won't let us in.
- What do you mean they won't let you in?
You've got to be with the right people.
Now, you wait there.
- Now, may we...
- No press in here, I'm afraid.
- But...
- Not even the Financial Times.
Can't you recognise fellow artistes?
This is Bongo Herbert.
Oh, I invited Mr Herbert
to come around for a drink.
Well, in that case, do come in,
Mr Herbert. With your father.
Oh, isn't he sweet?
Isn't he pure, pure heaven?
Miss Collins, I want to tell you
what a wonderful experience it was
to witness the triumphant return
of one of the greatest.
I'm sure you've always prayed for me.
The face is familiar,
but I can't place the flattery.
- Johnny Jackson.
- Manager and friend...
I didn't know the two went together.
...to the star of the future,
Bongo Herbert.
Well, stars of present and future,
I must love you and leave you all.
Late nights are hell
for a man with a stomach condition.
Good night.
- Sleep well, darling.
- I'll let you know.
Shrine is a masterpiece.
Come to my office tomorrow.
Pleasure.
I asked you around for drinks, Bongo,
to tell you,
I think you've got an awful lot
to offer, and I hope I can help you.
Oh, goodness, Bongo, do say something.
Yes, speak to Cynthia.
She's your generation.
Something in Cockney.
Apples and pears and things.
I thought you was marvellous,
Miss Collins.
- Ah.
- Now, isn't that nice?
It was nice of you to come 'round.
So sorry to have to rush you,
but Miss Collins has to get dressed.
I've always thought you was marvellous,
Miss Collins, ever since I was a kid.
- Funnily enough, so have I.
- I happen to have a photographer.
No more photographs. We've had all the...
Just one for the kid's album.
Please, Miss Collins.
I can't think of a cuter album to be in.
Go on, get your masterpiece.
It may be royalty next.
Flash them pearlies, Bongo.
That's enough. Just one for the album.
Miss Collins, you have just brought
a moment of happiness
into the life of a deprived child.
From now on, I'm personally going to see
that he's available for any show
of yours at any time.
Bless you. Home to beddy-byes, Bongo baby.
- Good night.
- Good night, doll.
You really think
I did all right tonight, Guv?
You have done well tonight, drummer boy.
So have I.
All you need to succeed in this business is one success after another.
Now, remember, on this battlefield, the only mercy shown to losers is to finish 'em off. But not to worry.
- Home, Bongo. See you in the morning.
- But I don't want to go home.
Well, what's the matter, kid?
Aren't you comfortable in Beast's flat?
Well, look now, don't let those girls of his get you down.
Here's a bonus. Stop off and buy yourself a sandwich.
Taxi!
This is better than beating your brains out at Leon's.
The Caprice. And don't eat too much!
- Oh, sorry, miss.
- It's okay, I'm just leaving.
- Would you like the flowers?
- Ohh...
They're yours.
It's lovely having you back again, Miss Collins.
I remember when you done your first show here.
So do I.
- What's the stage doorman called?
- Arthur.
That's right, Arthur.
- Good night, Arthur.
- You remembered my name.
But of course. Good night.
Could I have your autograph, Miss Collins, please?
Of course, thank you.
- Like the show?
- Loved it.
- Good. You, too?
- You gave a divine performance.
- Could you sign 'To Harry', please?
- Yes, I'll do that.
- Thank you.
- Bye-bye.
- Oh, Miss Collins.
- Well, hello.
The photographers have all gone.
Oh, I hate 'em.
They try make you look a proper Charlie.
You look more of a Charlie
when they leave you alone!
Well, good night again.
Uh, Miss Collins, you...
You asked me for a drink.
So I did. Well, you better
come and have one then.
What I have I got to lose? My virtue?
- Relax, let yourself go.
- Cor, what a place!
- Mix me a champagne cocktail, darling.
- Yes, of course, but I've never...
Oh, what am I saying? I'll mix it.
Maybe you'd like to wash your hands
or something.
Oh, no, thanks. I washed my hands
in the dressing room, before the show.
- I know what that is.
- Good. Then, open it.
I bet your manager gives you
lots of that to drink.
Johnny's not too bad
when you get to know him.
He gave me a quid tonight
to buy coffee and sandwiches.
I'd like to see his face now,
if he could see me.
Gave you a quid?
Oh, yes, he's all right with money.
He gives me wages every week.
And even then, he's always
slipping me half a bob for this or that.
Is he your manager or your owner?
He's my manager.
I owe everything I am to him.
All the best, then.
I can see you're used to champagne cocktails.
Nice drink, innit?
- Very nice. Help yourself to another.
- Thanks. Don't mind if I do.
You mean this manager of yours pays you a salary?
What do you mean? Wages, like?
What do you do here?
Drop of this, drop of that?
That's it. Not too much of that.
Well, it's not like wages exactly.
Not like I used to get when I was working the Fun Fair.
We go halves, see.
Everything what I earn, we share and share alike.
Very nice of Johnny, really.
- Cheerio, then.
- Cheerio.
You've made a couple of records, too, I understand?
Goes up your nose if you drink it too fast!
Yes, The Shrine on the Second Floor number's my second.
How do you think it'll go?
I understand there's a market, although personally, mothers leave me cold.
They do? Me, too. I hate mothers.
Do you know, when I was a kid in the war, my mother used to leave me to play on the bombsites all day, while she went out and worked in a munitions factory.
I suppose we all had to do our bit.
I know I did. Often.
I think I'll have another one of these.
Take it easy, now. Have you eaten tonight?
No, I haven't eaten all day.
Too sort of nervous.
I bet you never get nervous, Dixie.
I bet nothing in the whole world ever makes you nervous.
You know, you wouldn't think so to look at me, but I'm really a very nervous type.
- Ohh!
- Oopsy you, I think maybe you are.
Sit down.
I never, ever thought I'd ever have a drink with you, Dixie. If anybody had said I would, I'd have said, 'Never.' You're looking a little pale. I think perhaps I ought to send you home. I'm never going home, never, not ever.
- I've got a headache.
- I'll get you a hangover pill. Don't worry, I'll get it. Is it in there? I can look after myself. Don't you worry.
- Look after myself, he says.
- Cor!
- It's really lovely.
- Oh, dear.
It really is very, very lovely. I shouldn't have let you take those drinks so fast.
How was I to know your manager starves you? Here. You've been a perfect lady to me, Dixie. Does that feel better? It's the loveliest feeling I ever had in my life.
Good.
This is so comfy, so very, very comfy. Oh, dear.
Are you awake, darling? Come in, darling. Only me.
- I hope you had a good sleep.
- Wonderful!
Such a success, darling. They're all raving about... Really? Let me see. It's a wonderful press. All the pictures of you
have come out so well.
Here's another one, darling.
You've done a great job, Rosemary.
I want you to know that.
You can hardly blame me, darling.
If you insist on asking a snotty-nosed
little teddy boy 'round
to your dressing room.
Rosemary, darling, take it very easy.
Because you're in terrible danger
of losing your livelihood.
Good morning! May I come in?
- I'd advise you not to.
- Good morning, Gus.
I salute you, my darling.
What sensational reviews!
I've done my best. For weeks now,
I've practically been sleeping
with the gentlemen of the press.
Don't be modest, darling.
Do I detect a certain amount of tension?
Dixie's a little concerned
about the space given to Bongo Herbert.
Both Garrick stars!
Both with records out this week!
It's marvellous.
That's what I always say,
go straight to the horse's mouth
and you get a load of horse blossoms.
Take it away.
- Let's be big about this.
- Why?
- Associated Press.
- I'll take it. Give it to me!
Yes, this is Dixie Collins.
Well, I'm a little overwhelmed, of course.
Oh, I was delighted with Bongo's success.
He's such a sweet, talented kid.
I'm sure he'll go far. Mmm.
In fact, I'm giving him a little party
to celebrate his success.
That's right. Bye.
- A party?
- Oh, what the hell, why not?
He's really a very cute boy.
Let the breakfast in, Rosemary.
You're hired again.
That's what I call
taking it like a real pro.
Tell me, Gus, is the kid really
that naive or is it an act?
Six months of such naiveté
and he'll be earning 1,000 a week!
That'll be a neat 500
for that enterprising manager of his.
How so?
He's owns 50% of Bongo.
Fifty? This is monstrous!
- 50%?
- Have some coffee, Gus.
No, thanks, I'm too upset.
I'll see you later, beautiful. 50%!
I'm upset that you're upset, Mr Mayer,
but I have a completely legal
and binding contract with Bongo.
And so far, he's not complained.
I'm not questioning the legality
of your contract.
I'm simply suggesting that
you are being a little unfair.
So, poor little Bongo!
Instead of making a fortune every month,
he only makes half a fortune.
I'm not talking about Bongo!
It's me you are being unfair to!
Why should you own half
of such a property?
Are you suggesting perhaps
that, um, you should have an interest?
It could be to our mutual benefit.
I feel the need to contemplate.
If you don't mind,
not while I am talking business!
You may be talking business, Mr Mayer,
but I'm not!
I've been beating a bare living
out of this business
for too many years to be
of a generous nature!

Look, Johnny,
to me, money isn't everything.
How could it be,
with one foot in the classics?
You put me onto a good artist.
And in return, I'm not going to be
too small about it.
Just how small are you not
going to be, Mr Mayer?
I'm arranging a show for the halls
up north, featuring our recording stars.
I want Bongo to top the bill.
- How much?
- 400 a week on a 12-week tour.
Furthermore, I'm going to give you
a back royalty on both records.
So, charity begins
in the Charing Cross Road after all!
But there is a slight case of condition.
How stupid of me. Naturally.
There would be.
Don't bite the hand that feeds you.
With my delicate stomach?
From here to eternity,
Bongo will be on exclusive contract
to record for Garrick.
- In return, we feature him nationwide.
- I get it.
This way you both get it. Fair?
As things go, Mr Mayer, very fair.
It's like I always say, my boy,
in this business
even us, in this world,
nothing is for nothing.
This I already noticed, Mr Mayer.
Everything's for everyone
On the other side
There'll be free ambrosia
Beyond the great divide
Everything's for everyone
Where the living's high
There's a little snag, Jack
First, you've got to die
Nothing is for nothing
That's the human plan
Line up for the rat race
Man must live on man
Nothing is for nothing
Nothing is for free
I'll look after you, Jack
You look after me
Now?
Right.
That's it, boys, you've taken enough
for a souvenir programme.
- Bye-bye boys, thank you.
- Off you go.
Been wonderful having you, darling.
Good night.
Successful, I should say.
Rosemary, you're fantastico,
just fantastico!
- Super!
- Absolutely topping, Miss Collins.
- Word of an officer and a gentleman.
- We'll drop Bongo off for you.
Bongo and I have a little business
to discuss.
Oh, goodness!
Oh, well, I do hope you have
the happiest possible
business discussion, darling.
- Good night, Rosemary.
- Come along, celibate.
Come back later, boys.
See you in the morning, Rosemary.
Dixie, about my account.
In the morning, darling. Off you go.
Nightly-bye!
They're gone.
Bongo?
- High up, aren't we?
- I've been higher.
It was a smashing party, Dixie.
Thanks a lot. You can't half lay it on.
Glad you enjoyed it, sweetie.
They are some strange characters, though.
And that Lady Rosemary.  
Funny to think that stuck-up Cynthia is her chicko.  
Rosemary's perfectly capable of breeding, although naturally she avoids it whenever possible.  
Come over here, Bongo.  
Let's talk about your future.  
All those cars look real squashed.  
Old Johnny's doing very well for me.  
Old Johnny's doing very well for old Johnny, too.  
What does he plan for you?  
Oh, this and that. A bit of variety.  
You know, the usual.  
So long as it brings in the loot.  
I know the routine. Beat all you can out of a singer for a year, then when the kids are bored, dump him.  
Johnny'd never dump me.  
Not while you're getting bookings, he won't.  
But a pop singer's life is short.  
I've had three lives already, and I'm not that old.  
- What's he doing to develop your talent?  
- Like to swing with me, Dixie?  
You can't go on being a teenage singer for very far beyond your teenage, you know.  
Yeah, that's right.  
What am I gonna do when I hit 20?  
I'm gonna ask Johnny what I'm gonna do when I hit 20.  
He ought to be thinking about it.  
Bad things can happen to you in this racket if you don't look ahead.  
Be terrible to be out of it, though, wouldn't it?  
- You're infected, all right.  
- Never had a day's illness in my life.  
- You're full of health, are you?  
- I'll say.
Good. Let's go inside. It's getting cold.
- You know something, Dixie.
- What?
If I didn't have my bongos
to work it out on, I'd flip my lid.
Isn't there anything else you like better?
Well... There is something else.
- Do tell.
- No, I don't like to.
Go on. I've had requests
for practically everything in my time.
No, I feel silly.
- I won't laugh.
- It's the one thing I really want.
- Maybe it can be arranged.
- Well...
It's a motor scooter!
Not a motorbike, a red scooter.
What a pity I don't carry
an agency for them.
And who would you take with you
on the pillion of your little
motor scooter, Bongo?
I'd get one of them boxes
fixed on the back, for my sandwiches.
Bongo, that's really a new twist.
Haven't you got a steady girlfriend?
Why is everybody always on
with this girlfriend routine?
It's not unnatural or illegal, you know.
It's not even taxed. Yet.
Ah, girlfriends just pin you down.
Anyway, they're always wanting things.
Sometimes it's mutual.
I don't go much for these guys like Beast,
wasting themselves the whole time.
- So long as he gets his kicks.
- He ought to be saving it for his drums.
You've got enough for drums
and a steady girlfriend.
- Of all times.
- I'll get it.
Sit down. Don't waste yourself.
Oh, I hope I'm not too late
for the party, Miss Collins.
The party's over, Mr Jackson.
We all missed you very much.
I'd like to thank you for all the help you are giving our boy.
Think nothing of it, Mr Jackson.
Good night.
I really mean it, Miss Collins.
It's not often a star looks down the way you are on Bongo.
Do come in.
I know that you are very happy for my boy.
I'm happy, too.
When success comes to someone you've nursed carefully along like a sick whelp,
well, you can understand, Miss Collins, you get a bit careful about that kid.
I thought animals like you became extinct with giant lizards.
I'll take that as a compliment from a great lizardess.
- I'm gonna be very plain, Miss Collins.
- You are very, very plain.
I don't want you interfering with my business interests.
Oh, nothing personal of course.
Who is it, Dixie?
Who but your ever-loving old Uncle Johnny?
You've been quite the social lion tonight, kid.
Yeah. But where am I gonna be when I'm 20?
Who cares? Now clear your cretinous mind for a minute and listen to me.
- I ought to be developing myself.
- I booked a tour for you. 400 a week.
- Bashing them bongos, I suppose.
- What else, playing The Old Vic?
This is the big time!
- I know, I know.
- Well, you ungrateful idiot, react.
Don't just sit there all smug and deodourised all of a sudden!
What do you think about all this, Dixie?
Never mind about what Dixie thinks.
- Please, carry on. My days are all mine.
- Who gets the nights?
Careful, dear.
Dixie's been advising me about my career.
You've got to think ahead in this business.
Leave the visionary part to me.
You just remember that you're great only so long as the teenage public thinks you're one of them.
- What do I care about those grimy yobs?
- Start going fancy on them, make as if you were for one brief moment superior, and you, my little chicken, have had it.
Uncle Johnny really is telling you the truth about life.
Let's begin to understand one another, Miss Collins.
Bongo takes his orders from me.
Now put out that cheap cigar and get those glad rags and come have a quick look at the numbers for your new act.
- What I do is my business!
- Half is mine.
Aren't you playing this just a little too tough?
I'm just protecting my half.
Good night, Miss Collins. Get.
All right, Mr Jackson. Let's see what we can do with the other half.
Blimey, who's inside? Is it the Queen?
Nah, stop it, she wouldn't come down here.
- Cor! Look at her!
- Who are you?
- It's a film star!
- Never seen her in films!
No, she's on television!
- Cor! Look at that figure.
- She's a smasher!
Look at Father Christmas!
Where can I find Mrs Rudge?
You've found her.
And if you're looking for Bongo Herbert, he don't live here any more.
No, but he asked me to call, Mrs Rudge.
  - Oh, he did?
  - Mmm.
  - I suppose you'd better come in, then.
  - Thank you. Bring those in, George.
Put them there, George.
  - Isn't this homey?
  - What's all that?
Presents from Bongo, Mrs Rudge, for you and the family.
Him, sending those parcels?
He never comes near us.
So, what's he sending us parcels for?
You've got to realise, Mrs Rudge, Bongo's become an enormous success.
When success comes to the young, it sometimes upsets them for a while. It upset me, I know that.
All those presents for me?
For the whole family.
You see, Mrs Rudge, you may not have thought so, but Bongo thinks a great deal about you.
He's been trying to see you.
What's stopped him, then?
He knows where we live, don't he?
I'm afraid Mr Jackson doesn't consider that Bongo ought to give too much attention to his relatives.
That's that spivvy manager of his, I suppose.
Mr Jackson is very concerned that nothing should interrupt Bongo's career. So he don't let him see his own mother.
Well, Mrs Rudge, you did give your consent.
I never gave my consent to nothing.
But you did agree to Bongo's contract with Mr Jackson.
I didn't sign no contract. Maybe If I had,
we'd have got something out of it.
But Bongo's under 21, Mrs Rudge.
His contract isn't legal
unless his parents agree to it.
We didn't agree to nothing,
and we don't get nothing out of it.
Well, then, you mustn't blame Bongo.
You're right. I'm gonna do that Jackson.
He's come between me and my son.
I'm gonna do him.
- For Bongo's sake, I think you should.
- I will.
You know, Mrs Rudge,
I'd just love a cup of real English tea.
Help yourself, dear.
It may be a bit cold by now.
- Having fun, sweetie?
- Never been so happy, Dixie.
That's what we want, darling.
Won't be long.
Okay.
I want you to know I really appreciate
your telling me about all this.
I'm sure you do, Gus.
After all, there's nothing to prevent
you taking the boy over completely.
If I do so, it would be only be
on a perfectly straight legal basis.
Never mind the ethical discussion.
You just get your legal bloodhounds
onto this right away.
- Can I use your phone?
- I can't wait.
Regardless of my old friendship
for Johnny,
I feel for all our sakes,
I have no alternative.
Get me Horseacre and Brixton,
Chancery Lane.
Mind you, darling,
you'll forgive an old friend
being perhaps a little personal...
No, I won't, Gus. All that concerns you
is that I intend to use Bongo
in my New York act.
Have you heard from them yet?
They've only had the tele-recording this morning.
- Do you think I'll get an offer?
- I'm sure of it. Any moment.
Horseacre, a little matter of legal contract.
- I'll leave you to your business.
- Thank you again, darling.
It's a matter of an underage minor contracted as an artist.
Maisie? Maisie, has the kid been around here?
Oh, sure. We have lots of young boys around here.
Shh! They'll think it's the police rounds.
Maisie doll, this is urgent!
- So, what's the matter?
- I can't find Bongo.
- So?
- He ran out of rehearsal.
- Oh, is that all?
- What do you mean, 'Is that all?'
I've got the greatest deal I've ever lined up in my life,
and this stupid imbecile suddenly decides to go and get temperament.
All right, don't bite me as well as everybody else.
Who's biting?
I'm just worried, that's all.
So you come to little white mother Maisie.
All right, twist the knife!
Ever since you got into the gravy, you've been screaming as though you were drowning.
Why does he do this to me?
Don't worry, Johnny. He's probably chatting it up with some wide-eyed kid in a coffee bar somewhere.
Maybe you're right.
I think I know the very kid.
Like the sun, Bongo,
you mustn't take too much of it at once.
Anything you say, Dixie.
You're the boss now.
Good. Turn over.
Do you think...
You think Johnny will make any trouble?
Johnny is not in a position
to make anything any more.
It's gonna be marvellous
going to the States.
- With me?
- Yeah, with you.
I bet you thought I was a real drip
when I got sloshed here that first night.
You'd be surprised what I thought.
You see, I never thought of me and you
in that way.
Well, you wouldn't really.
But I'll say this for you, Dixie,
you've got what it takes.
- I've got the lot, haven't I?
- The lot.
Very lonely having the lot alone.
Come on, you alone?
You're always in the papers.
Sure, sure.
What kind of act do we get to do
in New York?
Mmm. I haven't thought out
the details yet. You'll sing...
Uh, yeah. I'll freshen it up a bit,
you know, put a bit of pep into your show.
- Thanks!
- Well, let's face it, Dixie,
you're fabulous,
but you're a bit on the square side.
- I am, am I?
- Still...
- You're maybe getting on a bit.
- I think maybe I am.
But you're real class.
- I wonder if you're gonna help me much.
- Help you what?
Help me.
Oh, hell, turn over.
You're done this side.
Bongo?
You can fool all of the people
Some of the time
You can fool some of the people
All of the time
Try to convey you're as young as the day
When a boy first kissed you
Try to imply that the years passing by
Somehow have missed you
You can fool most of the people
Lead them astray
As a rule, most of the people
Like it that way
Telling them lies,
throwing dust in their eyes
Isn't hard to do
Fool them all
But you can't fool you
I'm a fool.

Why are you crucifying me, Bongo baby?
What the hell are you doing here?
That's what I came here to ask you.
Well, we've got work to do.
You're a variety artiste.
The tour, remember?
You're trespassing
on Dixie Collins' property.
And Dixie Collins is trespassing on mine.
Now, you listen to me, Bert Rudge,
I've got two seats booked
on the Birmingham train on Monday.
Well, you better flog one of
them sharpish. I'm not coming.
Say that again.
Look, the tour's no good for my career.
All those kids screaming their heads off.
Is that what you want for me?
So, 400 a week is bad?
You're just like that old woman of mine.
You don't care about me,
it's just the money.
So, suddenly it's all for love, is it?
We've gotta love you, you idiot!
Dixie and I are doing an act together.
Maybe we'll even do a film together.
I suppose it'll be about this great star,
who, underneath it all,
is just a lonely woman,
and this great little kid,
who, underneath it all,
is just a rotten, ungrateful little scut!
- Get out.
- Now, get this message and get it clear.
I own 50% of you, no matter which part
you're giving to Madam Collins!
You keep your filthy mind to yourself.
And you keep your filthy hands
off my property!
He's got a four-year contract with me.
In a pig's eye, he has a contract.
It's about as legitimate as you are.
You've got a real yen for that boy,
haven't you?
You're a real case.
So are you, my friend.
His signature doesn't mean a thing.
He's underage.
I see. But only for signing contracts
and voting, I suppose.
Everything else, he either
knows already or you'll teach him.
I don't have to take this from you.
Get out or I'll have you thrown out.
I can get his parents to sign
that contract anytime, if I wasn't...
His parents will never sign with you
because they've already signed
with somebody else.
Will you leave now, or shall I have you
pushed over the edge?
Oh, it's gonna look great in the press.
'Much fancied film star
stables unbroken street Arab.'
Say what you like. It means as little
as that contract of yours.
Bongo is underage.
To me, he looks, all of a sudden, very grown up.
Not that way. The way you came in.
That's the end of him.
- You're free, Bongo, you're free!
- Tell me about New York, Dixie.
Well, it's full of Johnny Jacksons and Gus Mayers...
And Bongo Herberts?
Don't worry, honey, you're unique.
All right, so I signed the contract for Bongo's tour, but not for dates like these!
The dates are the same dates for anybody.
I wouldn't even offer them to a troop of performing dogs.
I'm sorry, Mr Mayer, but I won't let him play.
- Brava!
- Now, what's that for?
You are a performing dog, Johnny.
I want you to know I appreciate your performance.
Now, let's finish the comedy.
- I'm afraid we mustn't.
- You hear me out!
You have signed on behalf of Bongo Herbert, and you can't deliver.
What do you mean, I can't deliver?
You can't deliver him because you've never had him on a legal basis!
Oh, I see.
So, you enjoy the confidence of Miss Dixie Collins.
My dear Johnny, no one could be sorrier than I am, but you've placed me in a very difficult position.
What am I to do?
I have contracts to live up to.
I ought to have known.
My little gutter-lily glistening up at that fabulous grifter!
I understand how you must feel, my boy,
but I cannot,
with the best will in the world,
allow your misfortune to become my own.
All right, so I'm in trouble, Mr Mayer.
If I had a way of helping you out,
oh, believe me, I would.
I'm glad you feel that way, my boy.
I would hate to sue you.
- It's better this way.
- Which way?
It's better that I, after all,
an old friend,
- should take over the boy.
- Cable, Mr Mayer.
Thank you.
Oh, I get it.
I follow.
Oh, what the hell!
If I can invent one Bongo Herbert,
I can invent another.
- See you around, Mr Mayer.
- Just a minute.
- Get me Miss Collins at the Dorchester.
- Right away.
I want you to sit in on this.
It's very kind of you, Mr Mayer,
but I don't want to do
any arrangements for you.
Sit down, please.
It may cheer you a little to know
that business losses,
like death, come to all of us.
No matter who.
Miss Collins on the line, Mr Mayer.
Hello, Dixie, darling,
I just received a cable.
From New York? That's wonderful, Gus.
What does it say?
They want Bongo.
His own show for 13 weeks.
That's terrific! I can't wait to tell him!
When do we leave?
Well, Bongo leaves next week.
It might be smart to go with him.
Why wouldn't I go with him?
You said we had 13 shows?
Who knows, Dixie, darling,
if you play your cards right,
you might get on two or three of them.
- Who was it, Dixie?
- An old man with a scythe.
- What's a scythe?
- Sort of a very big knife.
What did you do that was so wrong?
You made Bongo, didn't you?
I made him, but I can't deliver him.
In this business, Maisie,
If you can't deliver, that's criminal.
And why are they all against you?
They just don't happen to share
your eccentric taste, that's all.
- They just don't understand you.
- That's right.
Whenever anyone said you were a bastard,
I always denied it.
Good, kid, but don't bother to deny it.
Just explain that it's a bastard world
and I'm a fully paid-up member.
How long will you be away?
Only a few weeks,
and don't look so miserable.
I'm only going on a band tour.
Where's me other brush?
In the kitchen.
Well, go on. Go on, get it.
I've got a train to catch.
You said you'd never go back to band work.
We've got debts to pay, doll.
You wouldn't want me to, well, welch on
all those delicatessen supplies,
and well, there's your singing teacher.
You'd never welch on anybody.
You're so faithful, it's heart-breaking.
Things were never so bad. It's not fair!
Things are back to normal,
and they were never fair.
How could Bongo do this to you?
For a blonde broad and a one-way trip
to Broadway.
And Mayer ought to be ashamed of himself.
There's no shame in this trade, Maisie.
Mayer is a great flesh broker.
When he cracks the whip,
everybody performs!
The whole world loves a big agent, Maisie,
but a small one's anybody's whore.
Come on, lover doll.
What time do you have to be at the show?
Drusilla's walking on for me,
but I've got to do the last one.
Well, that's all right.
Being seen onto a train at night
makes me feel like an immigrant.
You're so right, my friend.
Johnny, I didn't see you
in a month of Sundays!
- Kakky, not now, Kakky. Not now.
- Johnny!
When are we gonna get together again?
I told you, it's only a few weeks.
It's nothing.
At last, I've got a proposition
that is 110%!
- You remember my picture, Omar Khayyam?
- I was a schoolboy.
- I wasn't even born. I'm sorry I was!
- Easy, doll, I'm not dying.
They are making a stage musical with it.
Look, Kakky. Kakky, we're having
a private conversation here.
Here, I'm in business again.
Here is what I owe you
over the past five years.
Plus sixpence.
I always keep very neat accounts.
Who said good deeds go unrewarded?
In case the public interest
in strip declines while I'm away.
- Go on, you better go now, doll.
- Oh, Johnny...
I'll phone you from Manchester
in the morning.
I should never have spent so much on those singing lessons.  
Idiot! I love...  
Your voice.  
Go on now.  
I happen to own the stage rights of Omar Khayyam.  
Good, good. You'll sell out and retire.  
It couldn't happen to a nicer pioneer of spectacle.  
Sell out nothing! I'm going to produce.  
I got only one problem.  
Who do I get for Khayyama?  
- Khay-who-ma?  
- Omar Khayyam's girlfriend.  
She's a sort of a period Judy Garland, you understand?  
- You know something, K.A.?  
- What?  
I just happen to have, under contract to me, an absolutely brand new, entirely gorgeous, all British, real, sensational Judy Garland! That's impossible! K.A., in this business, nothing is impossible!