

# Thank you for the Music

*A musical play in two acts for the Dulverton Players*

## Act 1

*[Lights up, both on stage, and the living room area. Dorothy enters into the living room stage with breakfast in dressing gown etc.*

*From the distance, a milkman starts singing, gets louder, and starts to come on stage, dropping off bottles.*

*Milkman knocks on the Grandmother's door.]*

Dorothy: That was lovely, entertainment with my cornflakes.

MILK MAN: Service with a smile.

Dorothy: And what a lovely smile.

MILK MAN: Why thank you.

Dorothy: I remember that smile on your Dad, how is he getting on now?

MILK MAN: Oh, still jiving. Keeps the other residents entertained with a concert every month.

Dorothy: Wonderful. I still remember his singing at the club.

MILK MAN: I know, he still talks about his last big number on the night of the moon landing.

Dorothy: That was a night to remember. The night that mankind started littering the moon. Since then I can't help but look at the Moon and think that someone trod on it.

MILK MAN: Oh come on, landing on the moon was more than that, one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind and all that.

Dorothy: *[Takes a step towards her cornflakes with the milk]* Well, that was one small step for me, one giant leap towards my cornflakes.

MILK MAN: Oh, that reminds me, that will be £5.86 for the month's milk.

Dorothy: Oh yes, this milk extortion, it would be cheaper to get a cow.

*[Dorothy ferrets in pockets of dressing gown and pulls out some money, hands it over]*

MILK MAN: Well, cows aren't as Mooosical as me.

Dorothy: Quite. You know, I heard some of the best music to come out of that club from your Dad on Moon littering day. He really was on form.

MILK MAN: Absolutely, that was one of the first times I was allowed in the club.

Dorothy: There was also that other singer, I have forgotten his name, but he played "Norwegian Wood" so beautifully before your Dad was on.

MILK MAN: *[Tunefully]* "I once had a girl, or should I say, she once had me". Story of my life really.

Dorothy: Ian Sanders, I don't believe a word of it. A handsome man like you?

MILK MAN: Well you have seen him, I get my looks and voice from my Dad.

Dorothy: Yeesss.

*[Short pause]*

MILK MAN: Well, I can't stay here chewing the cud all day, I've got some milk to deliver.

Dorothy: Ok, bye then.

*[Dorothy closes door, puts milk on cornflakes, starts thinking back to that night]*

Dorothy: Oh yes, the night mankind trod on the moon.

*[On stage, lights slowly come up, with John Wetherman coming into position, perhaps miming playing the guitar in preparation, and the other members of the cast coming on stage]*

I remember coming into the club while that nice man John Wetherman was playing Norwegian Wood.

*[John Wetherman starts playing Norwegian Wood. When finished, everyone starts clapping]*

Club MC: That was fantastic, thank you very much. Everyone, JOHN WETHERMAN!

All: *Cheers, clapping etc.*

Club MC: *[Makes calming motions with hands]* Ladies and Gentlemen you attention please. Isn't it amazing, this morning, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first two human beings to land on the moon, and I am sorry to say that it isn't made of cheese.

For those of you who weren't up at 3.24\*\*\*\*\* this morning, this is some edited footage from the actual moon landing. I have to stop talking now, because there are no words to describe just how momentous this occasion is.

*[Footage of moon landing gets shown on screen of the moon landing to the sound of 2001: a Space Odyssey. One by one, people stand up in awe]*

Club MC: I have a tingly feeling watching history being made, we are going to be remembering this for years and years. Wasn't that spectacular?

All: *Cheers, clapping etc.*

Club MC: If that wasn't exciting enough, we have music fitting for this occasion, a man who needs no introduction, a regular, and a local, JEFFERY SANDERS!

All: *Cheers, clapping etc.*

Jeffery: You are too kind. Ok everyone, lets dance!

*[Jeffery plays song, dancing, applause when finished etc, then blackout, and cast leave stage. Behind Dorothy, Reg comes in with a largish and presumably heavy box]*

Dorothy: Yes, he was a handsome man.

Reg: What's that love?

Dorothy: Oh, you frightened the life out of me. What are you up to?

Reg: Oh just pottering about.

Dorothy: Hmph

Reg: I've just bought a magneto cross-shaft driving gear from a Lancaster bomber.

Dorothy: That's nice dear. Where did you get it?

Reg: Oh, I ordered it off the Internet.

Dorothy: *[Sceptically]* Really?

Reg: No-o, I got it from an auction yesterday, I was just getting it out of the car. Oh, I bumped into Jean. She asked me to remind you about the line dancing tonight.

Dorothy: Well that is nice, I only spoke to her yesterday about it. I hadn't forgotten already.

Reg: *[Hands up, apologetically]* Just passing the message on.

Dorothy: Ok, now go and play with your magnet shaft diving gear.

Reg: It's a magneto cross-shaft driving gear, and it came from one of the planes I used to fly – a Lancaster. Brings back memories.

Dorothy: Along with all the other parts you have got. Let me know when you have got enough to build a plane to fly us away on holiday somewhere.

Reg: Ok love.

*[Reg exits]*

Dorothy: *[To herself]* Yes, you used to fly them didn't you? You looked so handsome in your uniform.

What was the song that I used to sing when you came home on leave?

*[Young Dorothy on stage singing "Lili Marlene", Young Reg (In uniform) in semi-darkness in the side of the stage. When the song finishes, Young Dorothy goes over and embraces Young Reg, and they go off stage.]*

*[Phone rings, it is her daughter - Jackie]*

Jackie: Hi Mum, how are you?

Dorothy: Well, I looked in the mirror and I am still here.

Jackie: Are you sure that it wasn't someone else looking back at you?

Dorothy: Well, I asked them and they didn't say anything.

Jackie: Mum, are you in for the day?

Dorothy: I should be, why?

*[Reg enters, seeing Dorothy on phone, quietly sits down]*

Jackie: Can I ask a favour?

Dorothy: You can ask.

Jackie: Can pick Lilly up for me from her friends house and keep her company until I get back from shopping?

Dorothy: I thought that you wanted a favour? If I knew how much fun grandchildren were, I would have had them first.

Jackie: Well, I am glad that my Mother is a permanent taxi and helper.

Dorothy: Ok, I can do that. Don't spend too much.

Jackie: Why, won't my inheritance cover it?

Dorothy: Go on. I will see you later.

*[Puts phone down. Picks up picture of wedding day]*

Dorothy: They grow up so quickly don't they? It only seems a few years ago that they were pestering me for lunch money. Then they got married, now they have kids of their own.

Reg: That they are getting us to look after.

Dorothy: Yesss. Their wedding day was such an occasion. Even that Clive managed to make himself look acceptable.

Reg: Only after you badgered him for weeks to get a good suit.

Dorothy: Well, it was worth it.

Reg: Its a wonder they didn't get cold feet.

Dorothy: Not a chance, I made sure they both wore warm socks.

Reg: They looked so right together, not a care in the world on that day.

*[Lights up on stage, Clive and Jackie on stage in their wedding gear]*

Clive: Only three hours for her to get ready.

Jackie: This is quite tight, I hope I don't burst at the reception.

Clive: I'm getting married, I can't believe that she said yes.

Jackie: I am glad he asked me to marry him, even if it was a little out of the blue.

Clive: I hope her cooking improves.

Jackie: I hope he doesn't think that I am going to be cooking for him all the time.

Clive: Four years in bookkeeping haven't really prepared me for this.

Jackie: I hope the flowers are going to be delivered on time.

Clive: I hope that I can earn enough to provide for us both

Jackie: I hope that we will have enough to live on in the future, I don't fancy begging for a living.

Clive: I hope she doesn't want a baby too soon, I like my independence.

Jackie: I hope he doesn't want a baby too soon, because I don't feel ready.

Clive: That stag night really took it out of me.

Jackie: I am fairly sure I didn't do anything on my hen night that will come back to haunt me.

Clive: I hope that she is wearing something nice for, um, later...

Jackie: I hope he likes this underwear because it is really digging in, and cost a

fortune.

Clive: I will kill Nigel if he speaks up when the vicar says "Does anyone know of any reason why these two people should not be wed".

Jackie: I am so nervous, what if I get my lines wrong?

Clive: Will she turn up? I don't want to be left at the altar.

Jackie: Will he turn up. I don't want to walk up an empty aisle.

Clive: They say a woman looks her best in a wedding dress. I don't know what they say about the groom, but I haven't turned out too bad.

Both: Am I doing the right thing?

*[Look at each other, pause 1, 2, 3]*

Both: Yes.

*[Lead in to some love song, based on what it is - possibly one just starts singing.]*

Dorothy: Didn't they look so happy together? *[Looking at photo]*

Reg: And stayed together too.

Dorothy: I still think that she could have done better than him though.

Reg: He hasn't done too badly. He is a Chartered Accountant now.

Dorothy: *[Sarcastically]* What an *interesting* job that is.

Reg: Come on, we both know that if he was a racing driver with a string of villas all over the world you would worry that he wasn't spending enough time with Lilly.

Dorothy: Humph. What happened to that Lancaster diving gear you had?

Reg: You mean the magneto cross shaft driving gear, dear?

Dorothy: Yes, that one.

Reg: Well, it needs a bit of a clean up. I don't feel like doing it right now.

Dorothy: *[Stands up]* Oh well. Do you fancy a cup of tea?

Reg: That would be lovely.

*[Dorothy goes out]*

Reg: *[Reflective pause]* All those years ago, flying high. Charlie as my navigator, Flight Engineer 'leaky' George, Billy the bomber, Larry on the wireless, and Ken and Dennis on the guns. My first outing in the pilot seat. Off to Valenciennes to bomb a railroad yard. Me and 184 other Lancs for company. The weather there was hopeless, couldn't see a damn thing at 9500 feet ready to bomb, but then Gerry couldn't see us either.

Heading over to the target, we were in the middle of the pack. Over the target, the clouds suddenly disappeared, and Billy got his sights zeroed, he dropped our load bang on target, good man. Ha-ha, we showed them. Back to Blighty.

Of course, in the open things started getting interesting. I had to start dodging fighter flares and German ack acks. A few flak shots hit close enough to make us jump, but no serious damage. One of the planes in front of us, the Anaka I think, got coned by several Gerry searchlights and got the chop. Bastards. We managed to get home safely though.

*[Pause]*

Do not despair  
For Johnny-head-in-air;  
He sleeps as sound  
As Johnny underground.

Fetch out no shroud  
For Johnny-in-the-cloud;  
And keep your tears  
For him in after years.

Better by far  
For Johnny-the-bright-star,  
To keep your head,  
And see his children fed.

Rest in peace lads.

*[Pause, Dorothy comes in with a tea tray]*

Dorothy: What was that dear?

Reg: Oh, just thinking about my flying days.

Dorothy: Buying those bits always brings that out in you.

Reg: Well, it is nice to think of the time when what I did really meant something.

Dorothy: What, you mean other than being a wonderful husband, a strong provider, and a good father.

*[Hugs]*

Dorothy: Anyway, it wasn't all flying. Remember that thing you did showing people how to do the gas mask. That was well done.

Reg: Oh yes. That was before I got my stripes. Squadron Leader Donald Williams 'volunteered' me for that one.

Military sounding voice: *[Off]* Cadet!

Reg: Sir!

Military sounding voice: *[Off]* Report to my office at 1600 hours. You have volunteered to instruct some civvies in how to put on a gas mask.

Reg: Yes Sir! *[Pause]* That was they way people volunteered in the air force. I suppose the film didn't turn out too bad.

*[Lights on main part of scene dim down, On screen - Gas mask footage]*

Dorothy: *[Slightly pulling leg]* Think of all the people that now know how to put on a gas mask in an emergency that didn't before.

Reg: Think of all the people that thought that I was a right Charlie in that film.

Dorothy: Oh come on, it was partly that video that got officers to see what a fine upstanding man you are, maybe even helped you get a promotion or two.

Reg: That is true, I didn't finish up as Flight Lieutenant at the end of the war for nothing.

Dorothy: Hmmm. The end of the war. Those wonderful celebrations.

Reg: Yes, I got to have a lie in that day.

Dorothy: Listening to Churchill on the radio saying the war with Germany was over.

Reg: Didn't we celebrate at that dance?

*[Scratchy music plays quietly, getting louder as the scene goes on, until it is playing at full volume for the dance. On stage, people coming in, in a formal, unspoken asking each other to dance. Banner at the back saying something-end-of-war-ish. At end of dance, lights down on stage]*

*[Pause, Dorothy finishes tea]*

Dorothy: Come on, you can help me wash these tea things up.

*[Dorothy exits]*

Reg: Oh all right.

*[Reg gets up, pauses]*

I'm glad we won. Germans don't have any idea about tea.

*[Exeunt]*

-----End of Act 1-----