



## PREVIEW SCRIPT

# *“Movers”*



# *MOVERS*

by

Tony Layton

A One Act Comedy Drama.

# **Movers**

By Tony Layton

© Tony Layton 2001. All Rights Reserved

Published by :

Plays and Musicals, Lantern House, 84 Littlehaven Lane, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 4JB, UK

Tel : +44 (0)700 593 8842

[www.playsandmusicals.co.uk](http://www.playsandmusicals.co.uk)

[sales@playsandmusicals.co.uk](mailto:sales@playsandmusicals.co.uk)

Publication History:

December 2003 : First Edition

**THIS IS A PREVIEW SCRIPT.**  
The full version is available from Plays and Musicals.

## **ROYALTY FEES**

A royalty fee is payable every time “Movers” is performed in front of an audience irrespective of whether that audience pays for attending or not. Producing organisations **MUST** obtain a ‘Licence To Perform’ from the address above prior to starting rehearsals.

NOTE : The act of preparing material in quantities sufficient to rehearse a performance of “Movers” will be taken as intent to stage such a performance should litigation be necessary in the event of non-payment of Royalty Fees later found to be due.

**“Movers” is fully protected under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, and the right of Tony Layton to be identified as the author of the works has been asserted by him in accordance with the above Act**

While every precaution has been taken in the preparation of this musical play, the publisher assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions, or for damages resulting from the use of the material contained herein.

**ISBN 1 904458 50 5**

## Synopsis.

Four removal men are involved in a house clearance. It's the large house on the hill that housed the Cartwright family, a once powerful industrial dynasty that has now been reduced to bankruptcy.

The play is a symbol of all our destinies. The great can crumble and the weak can survive, especially if they are sustained by a sense of humour. We all have our tragedies, we usually survive, and life moves on. If you have the ability to laugh at yourself, it helps.

## Characters.

- Peter (Spike)Thorn** - a teenager, 18. Bright, professional-class renegade.
- Alf Stone** - middle-aged ex-seaman from Liverpool, a natural comedian.
- Willie Voss** - an immigrant German Jew. 60's. An educated aesthete.
- Roy (Cowboy) Horton** - leader of the moving men.
- Mrs Daphne Cartwright** - Octogenarian. A victim of senile dementia.
- Heather** - a young nurse.

## Setting

A large room in the Cartwright mansion. The furniture is covered with white dust sheets. The time is present day.

Running time : 45 minutes, approx

# MOVERS

*Roy enters studying his clipboard, which rarely leaves his tight grasp. Over his jeans and shirt he is wearing a long, white overall. This is the uniform for the moving men.*

**Roy** That's gone! That's gone! And that's gone!

*Enter Alf and Willie who show the signs of having just carried a very heavy weight.*

**Roy** Let's see. Wha' we got 'ere?

**Alf** I'm bugged I am. (*Sits on the chaise longue*). That piano nearly bloody killed me.

**Willie** We need special equipment. We should have had special lifting gear.

**Alf** I'm sure I've bloody ruptured myself. I felt a pull down 'ere. Look at 'im. He doesn't bloody care does he. I could 'ave ruptured myself with that piano. You're right, Willie, mate. We need special equipment.

**Roy** In 'ere we've got a chaise longue, Victorian, a sideboard, Georgian, chest of drawers, possibly Georgian again, Grandfather clock, Victorian ... and a table, oval, possibly Edwardian.

**Alf** I said, I could 'ave ruptured myself.

**Roy** Look Alf, stop moaning, or I'll rupture you myself.

**Alf** That's nice. That's nice tha' is. We come out on a Sunday ... Willie, are you listening to this?

**Willie** What?

**Alf** I said, we come out special on a Sunday, my day of rest by right, as a favour, as a very special favour ... and wha' d'we get? I tell you wha' we don't get, and that's bloody sympathy.

**Willie** Or special equipment.

**Alf** Right. I'm not jokin' 'ere, Cowboy. This is straight up. Next time we get the right equipment or I kick it into touch. I'd rather be on the dole.

**Roy** Time and a half's not good enough for ya? Is tha' what this is all about.

**Alf** Double time is what we should be on.

**Willie** And special equipment is what we should have.

**Alf** Dead right!

**Roy** It was not my fault. A piano was not on the inventory. Got it!

**Alf** I don't believe tha'. How can a ruddy great beast like tha' not be on the list?

**Roy** I don't know, do I. I only run this bloody outfit. No-one tells me anything.

**Alf** No-one leaves a grand piano off the list.

**Willie** Unless they're senile of course. Then they might.

**Alf** That's true. But you'd 'ave to be blind, deaf and daft to forget that monstrosity.

**Roy** Okay! I'll give you a bonus. Happy?

**Alf** How much?

**Roy** Twenty quid.

**Willie** Thirty!

**Roy** Okay! Thirty.

**Alf** And private medical expenses ... in case, ya know.

**Roy** How about a Mediterranean cruise to ease away the aches and pains?

**Alf** Now that sounds about right.

**Roy** Stroll on! Where's monkey features?

**Willie** Teenagers! I tell ya, when my kids were teenagers I never knew where they were. Never! I had nightmares.

**Roy** (*Searching*) Spike! Spike! Where the hell is he?

**Alf** Where he always is ... in the bog ... playin' with himself ... any money.

**Willie** I like this place. This is a class place. This would suit me down to the ground. All it needs is tarting up a bit. A lick of paint ... that's all it needs.

**Alf** You are jokin'. A lick of paint? Have you seen that brickwork out side? It's crumblin', mate. Crumblin'. In fact, we ought to be on danger money. This place could collapse any minute.

**Roy** Don't worry, Alf. I'll pay your funeral expenses. Happy?

**Alf** Ta Roy. Very generous. Typical tha', isn't it Willie. Typical.

**Willie** A bit of pointing, a bit of bracing ... it could be good as new.

**Alf** It would cost a small fortune. Of course, I forgot. You Jews are made of money.  
**Willie** So everyone says.  
**Alf** I've yet to see a hungry Jew. Don't tell me you haven't got a nice little hoard stashed away somewhere.  
**Willie** That's right. I'm an eccentric millionaire. I do this for fun.  
**Alf** Don't get me wrong Willie. I'm not pullin' your little wick. I like Jews. I always have. In fact I wanted to join once. I had my eye on a little corner shop in Rock Ferry *(or nearby town)* ... a gold mine. And I reckoned that if I joined the brethren I'd stand a good chance of getting' a loan to get me goin' like.  
**Willie** Sometimes I wonder why I've stayed so long in this country. I crave culture.  
**Roy** Spike! Spike!

*Spike comes forward from up stage, covered with a dust sheet, wailing like a ghost. Roy tears the dust sheet off him.*

**Spike** Had you goin' then, didn't I.  
**Alf** Yea, we won't sleep for a week.  
**Roy** *(To Spike)* Make yourself useful! Go and get the flasks!  
**Spike** You nearly shit yourselves.  
**Roy** Tell you what would really scare me, Spike ... the sight of you doin' a bit of graft. That would do my 'ead in that would.  
**Spike** Aren't we the happy little band of workers then.  
**Willie** Get the flasks, Spike. I'm parched.  
**Spike** Why should I? You're thirsty, you get 'em.  
**Willie** Just for once, do what you're told, there's a good boy.  
**Spike** Hello! What is this? Back in the Third Reich are we Willie. *(Goose-stepping around Willie)*. "Do vot you are told, you nasty little Jewish person, or for you it iz zee end."  
**Willie** You are an ignorant little boy, d'you know that. An ignorant little boy!  
**Spike** Touched a nerve have I Willie? Brought back sweet memories of childhood, did I? *(He delivers a Nazi salute to Willie.)*

*Willie takes a rolled up newspaper out of his pocket with which he hits Spike several times around the head. Spike places his hands around Willie's neck and dances around the space doing his rendition of an elaborate Bavarian dance, pulling Willie with him. This gradually transforms, what was working towards a tense situation, into a comic routine that amuses Alf.*

**Spike** *(Repeated ad-lib)* Oom-pa-pa, oom-pa-pa, tiddely-oom.

*Alf claps in time to the rhythm. Spike releases Willie who falls down at Roy's feet.*

**Willie** Bloody funny. Imbeciles!  
**Spike** Ah, come on Willie. Give us a kiss!  
**Willie** Don't touch me!  
**Roy** *(Helping Willie up)* Come on, Willie.  
**Willie** Leave me! Leave me!  
**Roy** Ignore 'im. They're ignorant. They know nothin'.  
**Spike** Is that right?  
**Willie** *(To Spike)* I worry for you. I worry for this country. *(To Roy)* What does he know about the Third Reich?  
**Spike** I've seen all the films, mate. 'Schindler's List'. Good film. I know all about it. I did 'The Diary of Anne Frank' for A-level. Good book.  
**Willie** *(Shouting)* That's it. Joke! It's easy to joke. Maybe one day, one day, a jackboot will march into your house and then you will know all about it, my friend. Then you will certainly know all about it.  
**Roy** Come on, Willie. Let's shift these dust sheets. *(To Spike)* And you shift as well, before I put a toe up your arse.  
**Spike** Doesn't that come under 'Industrial harassment' or 'Victimisation' or something like that?  
**Roy** Shift!

*Spike bows and exits. During the following dialogue the dust sheets are removed, folded and stacked stage right.*

**Alf** Are you okay, Willie, mate?  
**Willie** Fine. I'm fine. Don't you worry about me. I've had worse. Far worse.

**Alf** Kids today, eh.  
**Willie** Yeah!  
**Alf** What do they know?  
**Roy** Telly and films! That's their lot. Telly and films.  
**Willie** Look ... I'm sorry lads.  
**Roy** Forget it, Willie boy.  
**Willie** No. It was stupid. Why get angry? What's the point? It's all a long time ago.  
**Alf** I blame the schools myself. The teachers know nothin'. The kids know nothin' Stands to reason. Nobody knows nothin'. Where d'ya want these sheets, Roy?  
**Roy** Shove 'em over there out of the way. When did you come over here, then Willie?  
**Willie** I was a kid. Four years old. Before the war  
**Alf** Four years old.  
**Willie** And I'm ashamed to say I wet the bed every night until I was six. Can you imagine that? Every bloody night.  
**Roy** Can't be helped, can it, with all that crap going on around you.  
**Alf** What about your folks?  
**Willie** Who knows? D'you know, this is really a very nice house. I used to dream about a house like this. Look at this sideboard. Now that is classy. I like that. I'd put that at late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Definitely English. Possibly Chippendale. Right period. His style.  
**Roy** What do we have here then? A common sewer, or connoisseur, as the knobs say?  
**Alf** *(Using a posh accent)* I prefer the Hepplewhite, myself. It blends in so nicely with the telly and the flying ducks, don't you know, old fruit.  
**Roy** Hepplewhite? Oh yeah! In your dreams, sunshine. In your dreams.

*They all laugh at this. Alf wraps a dust sheet around himself and sings the Buddy Holly song "All I Have To Do Is Dream". Roy and Willie join in, also with sheets wrapped around them.*

**Alf** Dre-e-e-e-eam, dream, dream, dream.  
Dre-e-e-e-eam, dream, dream, dream.  
**Alf** } When I want you ... in my arms.  
**Roy** } When I want you ... and all your charms.  
**Willie** } Whenever I want you,  
All I have to do,  
Is dre-e-e-e-eam  
When I feel blue ... in the night,  
And I need you ... to hold me tight,  
Whenever I want you  
All I have to do,  
Is dre-e-e-e-e-e-eam!

*Spike has entered, carrying the flasks and sandwich boxes in a large cardboard box. He watches the performance, amused, puts the box down and gives a slow hand clap.*

**Spike** Yeah, I know! They don't write 'em like that anymore.  
**Alf** The miserable git returns. God help us!  
**Roy** That's what you call music.  
**Spike** Sad!  
**Roy** Pour the tea or I'll give you sad.  
**Spike** So I'm the tea boy now then.  
**Roy** Yeah! You've been promoted.  
**Alf** That's the way it goes, son. Tea boy and then world leader. That's the way it's always been. No sugar in mine.  
**Willie** Or mine.  
**Spike** Indian or China, or perhaps sir would like Earl Grey?  
**Roy** Are there anymore at home like you?  
**Spike** No chance. They broke the mould.  
**Alf** There's a blessing. So there is a God.  
**Spike** Tea is served gentlemen. Will you take it in the drawing room?

**Roy** We'll have it in a mug, ta.

*They collect their mugs of tea.*

**Alf** Cheers. You're lovely really.

**Spike** Perve! All right, Willie?

**Willie** I'm fine. Don't worry, I'm fine.

**Spike** It's all a laugh isn't it.

**Willie** Yeah!

**Spike** And now gentlemen, we have lot sixty four, a magnificent mahogany sideboard. This sideboard was presented to the Cartwright family by the then Prince of Wales in 1848 as a thank you present for services rendered. The prince spent many a happy weekend here with his concubine, Ruby Ramsbottom, who bore him three wonderful children. Sir, will you start the bidding.

**Willie** £500.

**Spike** Thank you sir. What a fine judge of British workmanship you are, sir. Who will give me £600.

**Alf** Why not. £600.

**Roy** £700.

**Willie** £800.

**Alf** £900.

**Roy** £1,000.

**Willie** £2,000.

**Roy** £4,000.

**Willie** £8,000.

**Roy** Sixteen...hold on! How do I know it's genuine? It could be a load of crap for all I know.

**Spike** You have the word of a gentleman, sir, him who knows what's what.

**Alf** You don't know your arse from your elbow, sunshine.

**Spike** The bid is with the German gentleman, Herr Willie Voss. £8,000 once! £8,000 twice!

**Alf** £8,000 and one penny.

**Spike** You can't do that, scouse.

**Alf** Why not?

**Spike** 'Cos you can't.

**Alf** Who says?

**Spike** I says. It's an unwritten law. It's not etiquette.

**Alf** Ooooh! Etiquette! Now there's a word. You'll go a long way using words like that, son. *(He starts to giggle at his forthcoming joke)* With words like that you could open doors.

**Spike** Go on then. Let's have the punch line.

**Alf** Outside the Odeon. Open doors outside the Odeon. *(The giggling has become louder and infectious)* I could just see 'im in that hat.

**Roy** Hey Spike!

**Spike** Yeah?

**Roy** Tell me. A bright boy like you must have plans. Wha' you got lined up?

**Spike** How d'ya mean?

**Roy** What you got lined up? I mean, are you gonna be a tosser all your life?

**Spike** Like you lot you mean?

**Alf** Careful, lad.

**Spike** I know one thing, I won't be luggin' furniture around when I'm your age.

**Roy** Three A-levels and he still doesn't have a clue. His father's a doctor, his mother's a barrister, big house in Prestbury, *(or local 'posh' area)* and look at him.

**Alf** Bloody disgustin' if you ask me. I'd been round the world twice when I was his age. I lost my cherry in Singapore, had the clap three times and could hold my ale as good as anyone. And what's he done? Bugger all.

**Spike** Well, I haven't had the clap, that's for sure.

**Alf** 'Course you 'aven't. You've got to have your end away to get that.

*They all laugh at Spike. He gives them the finger and slumps onto the chaise longue.*

**Alf** Aye. Them were the days.

**Roy** Here we go.

*Focus lights down on Alf for this monologue.*

**Alf** No, but, things were different. You knew where you were, like. We all had a bit of pride then. Eighteen, and a First Class steward with Cunard. All silver service mind. Oh yes. That meant somethin'. You were someone. Respected, ya know. I'd be there, in my tux, smelling of cologne, dickey bow, the lot. Razor sharp crease in my kecks. The gear. "Yes sir! Of course, sir. Straight away, sir. Leave it to me. I'll look after you." Oh yeah. The yanks loved all that. And they paid for it. We made sure of that. Not half. A decent dropsy made it all worth-while, ya know wha' I mean. Oh yes. And I was fit. My God was I fit. Slim, bronzed, Tony Curtis hair-style. I did all the cruises; the Med, Caribbean, North Cape, the World. I was alive. Of course, I never had a regular Judy, like. That was never on the cards. Judies want you there, don't they. As long as you're down at the Locarno on a Saturday for a few bevvies and a jive, then they're made up. Then I went down to Durban. Union Castle Line. Nice run tha'. Loved it. Mind you, Durban was a bit stuffy. Too hot for me. Capetown was favourite, as long as you didn't get mixed up with the local nutters. You only had to look at a Cape Coloured Judy and tha' was tha'. Bang! Locked up ... throw away the key job. No joke! Right bastards. Then one trip I met this girl, young woman, Cynthia Marsden. Lady Cynthia Marsden, no less. And she fancied me. Can you believe that? She fancied me. Me. An aristocrat fancying me. Stroll on! Might have been the sea air and the moonlight, but whatever it was she came on strong. Bloody hell! Esher she came from. Pots of money. Family photos in 'Tatler' and 'Country Life', that sort of thing. I went down there, met 'em all. Very nice people. At least, that's what I thought. Then her father took me on one side and gave me a right bollockin'. "What's your game, laddie?", he said. He shoved fifty quid in my hand and told me to sod off. Told me to keep to my own sort. That's what it was like. Anyway, I took the money and scarpered. Didn't even say goodbye to her. Fifty quid went a long way in them days. I should say. I had many a good one night stand on that lot, I can tell ya'. I doubt if she stayed heartbroken for too long. See, that's what I liked about Canada. None of this class rubbish there, at least I didn't see any. They say things are changin'. But I haven't noticed. It's still them and us. Funny, isn't it, how your whole life comes down to a lottery. A toss of the coin. The right bed. The wrong bed. Funny tha'.

*Lights up.*

**Roy** What you muttering about, Alf?  
**Alf** Me? Lottery. Wondering if I've done the lottery.  
**Roy** Last year I won fifty quid. But what can you do with fifty quid these days? Goes nowhere.  
**Willie** I would take my wife to 'La Pirandelle'. She likes French. Then, maybe a concert, Mozart or Rachmaninov, something romantic.  
**Roy** Oh yeah? So still a bit of juice stirring away in the old loins then Willie? Still up for it are we?  
**Spike** *(Standing)* Talking about loins ... I need a piss.  
**Roy** Hear that everyone? Spike wants a piss. Any suggestions.  
**Alf** Yeah! Spike! Piss off!  
**Roy** And take these flasks back with you.  
**Spike** Soddin' dogsbody. That's all I am.

*Spike collects the flasks and boxes.*

**Alf** *(Watching Spike)* Look at tha'. That's poetry in motion, tha' is. Sheer poetry. Tha' should be put to music. They'd pay to come an' see tha'. They would.  
**Spike** Sod off, Alf.  
**Alf** Oooooooooooh! She's angry now. Look at her.  
**Spike** You wouldn't know poetry if it bit you in the arse and bit your balls off.  
**Alf** Well that's where you're wrong, my young friend. For instance, and I quote:  
"The boy stood on the burning deck,  
His feet were full of blisters.  
He had one finger up his arse  
The other up his sister's."  
Boom, boom!!  
**Spike** Alf mate, you're a star. A star prick!

*Alf gets up in mock anger and chases Spike off.*

**Alf** Cheeky git!  
**Roy** Right lads. Time to attack. Sideboard, the table, the cabinet, the clock and finally the chaise longue.  
**Alf** (Sings) “Hey ho, hey ho.  
It’s off to work we go.  
We work all day  
For sod all pay.  
Hey ho, hey ho!”

*Willie and Alf grab hold of the sideboard and proceed to carry it off.*

**Alf** Alright mate?  
**Willie** Fine. Fine.  
**Alf** Good lad.  
**Roy** Don’t rush it fellas. We don’t want any scratches, scrapes or ‘orrible splinters, thank you.  
**Alf** It weighs a bloody ton this thing.  
**Willie** Solid mahogany.  
**Alf** Hope you’re wearing a truss, Willie mate. This could ruin your sex life.  
**Willie** What sex life?

*Exit Willie and Alf. Roy moves around the room soaking in the atmosphere. He stands centre stage, lights focus down tight on him. We hear Viennese waltz music gradually getting louder. Mixed with the music we can hear lively conversations, laughter and the clinking of glasses. Roy looks around as if he can see these ghosts from the past. Gradually the sounds fade away.*

**Roy** I know this room. I’ve been ‘ere twice before. First time ... Christmas, 1946. I was six months old. The Cartwrights give us woollen dolls ... for the year’s new born. Still got it somewhere. We didn’t have a car so my old mum had to carry me the two miles here and back for the sixpenny doll. That’s the only reason I kept it ... to remind me of ‘er. Next time I come up here it were 1967. I were twenty one and bloody angry. And I had a gob on me, that’s why the lads asked me to speak for ‘em. I drove up ‘ere full of it. What I were going to say to the knobs were nobody’s business. Talk about the riot act. They were going to get it right between the eyes. They were laying people off you see, right, left and centre and we weren’t having it. All this Far Eastern rubbish were coming in, swampin’ the market. We were going down the pan, right smartish. I had a mate ... Pete Armstrong. Good footballer he was. Young wife, two kids. Topped himself. That’s not right. There were nothing left of his face when we fished him out the canal. He were like a heap of ... well ... discarded rubbish. So I came in here that day with a right cob on. The butler showed me in, took my coat and gave me a whisky, for which I was very grateful. I sat on that very settee, or chaise longue as we call it. They kept me waiting for forty minutes. I tried not to be, but I were ... I felt over-powered, if you like, by the room. It were eating away at my anger ... if you understand ... eating it away. I wanted to be part of this, part of this wealth, this tradition, this garden-party world, with the high rustic walls hiding the ugliness and not a worry in the world. This is where the power was, not on the shop floor. I felt shame. Oh yes. How could I turn my back on everythin’ I believed in, in forty minutes? Big Thomas Cartwright came in, smoking a cigar and built like a bull. He shoved a statement of company accounts in my face. “Righto, lad”, he said, “you tell me what to do.” I could see it in his eyes ... things were coming to an end. As we say, “You can’t hold a beggar to ransom.” I said nowt. I shook me ‘ead and crawled away. Joined the army. Quartermaster’s stores in Catterick. Cushy enough. “Yes, sir. Right away, sir. Three bags full, sir. Sod off, sir!”. The sergeants’ mess ran the whole shooting match. Oh, yes. We were the dog’s bollocks. When I got back here they’d turned the mill into a workin’ museum. It’s full of school kids now and the pink-rinse brigade havin’ a day out. They’ve got a photograph of me and the lads in the foyer. ‘Picket line, 1967’. I’m part of history already. A museum piece. Makes you smile doesn’t it!

*Lights back to full as Spike enters.*

**Spike** Couldn’t find a bog so I gave the plants a good going over.  
**Roy** You took your time.  
**Spike** Can’t help it, cowboy. Got a big bladder haven’t I.  
**Roy** Hey! Less of the ‘cowboy’. It’s Roy or sir to you.  
**Spike** Whatever’s cool, sir. What’s next, sir?

**Roy** Okay! Okay! Just keep it Roy. Alright?  
**Spike** Certainly, Roy. So, Roy?  
**Roy** What?  
**Spike** What's next, Roy?  
**Roy** That small cabinet...and don't drop it.  
**Spike** As if. Where's all this stuff going, anyway, Roy?  
**Roy** Stockport then auction, Spike. You still here?  
**Spike** Can I get my breath?  
**Roy** Move it!  
**Spike** They run courses these days for people like you. 'Man Management' and stuff like that. Do you never think of my self-esteem?  
**Roy** All the time. You're full of it. Now, move it.  
**Spike** I'm working for barbarians.

*Spike exits with the cabinet. Enter Willie and Alf.*

**Roy** The legs on this table fold down. That goes next.  
**Alf** Okay, chief!  
**Roy** You might need a screwdriver.  
**Willie** You know that cabinet Spike was carrying.  
**Roy** What about it?  
**Willie** It's French. Louis Quinze. Rare. Worth a few bob.  
**Roy** Bloody hell. Spike! Spike! Wait! Wait!

*Roy runs off.*

**Alf** Go 'ead, Roy! You're in the next Olympics, pal.

*Willie and Alf bring the table down stage, and attempt to lower the legs but they don't succeed.*

**Willie** A friend of mine ran for the number 92 bus in Piccadilly and dropped down dead. Forty three years old.  
**Alf** Get away.  
**Willie** Forty three. And all his life, perfect health. Perfect.  
**Alf** Tragic. Perfect health, eh? Tragic. Bad luck though tha', isn't it, dying when you're in perfect health.  
**Willie** Don't joke, Alf. You never know.  
**Alf** That's a fact. I only hope I'm in perfect health when I pop my clogs. When I go I want to go quick. Quick, sudden-finito. That's for me.  
**Willie** Don't tempt the almighty. You never know. He might shuffle your card to the top of the pack.  
**Alf** Do you still believe in all that stuff then, God and all tha'?  
**Willie** Well, I go along every Saturday ... show my face ... say hello, how are you, how's everything ... how are the kids ... who's died, who's born, all that stuff. And it's one place where I still get shown a bit of respect.  
**Alf** And you don't get much of that for half a crown these days.  
**Willie** Right! So, I enjoy the company, I don't rock the boat ... and what I believe is my own affair ... and we need a proper screwdriver or we'll be here all day.  
**Alf** Hang on! I'll run to the van.

*Alf exits. Willie moves around inspecting the remaining furniture.*

**Willie** Very nice. Very nice. I'd like to look after you but you're much too grand for our small flat, more's the pity. You need space, lots of space, an ambience. I bet you could tell a few stories.

*He moves down stage. The lights focus down on him.*

**Willie** *(Looking up to the heavens)* Sorry if I upset you back there, but you got to admit you could have made things a lot easier down here for all of us. A sign would have been good ... just so we could have settled a few arguments. I don't think this 'inscrutable' thing goes down too well these days. People like to be more 'up front' as they say, more open. However, if you are there I just thought you'd like to know ... I've enjoyed the experience. "It's been a gas," as my American cousin Solomon would say. If you are responsible, thank you for the talent. Thank you.

I think I was a good watchmaker. No. I am a good watchmaker. I made good money, well enough ... and I had respect. I'd joke with my friends, I'd say, "My business is so good it runs like clockwork". And it did. Just like clockwork. But then time ran out. They don't mend anymore. They throw away. The 'throw away society' they call it. You look inside a watch today, what do you see? A heap of junk. Sure, it works, it tells the time, but where's the craftsmanship? Where do I come in? Nowhere. For a hobby, I pull old watches apart and put them back together again. Keeps me busy. Keeps me sane. I'm lucky. I see young men on the scrap heap. "But for the will of God, there go I", I say ... but to be honest, I don't think you've got anything to do with it. One good thing ... I'm blessed with good health. Sixty-odd, who's counting, and everything works, for which my wife is eternally grateful. Listen to me. Sooner or later we're all on the scrap heap. Even you. For many people down here you don't exist anymore. I know how that feels. That's why I still go to the synagogue. There I exist. Do me a favour. Give us a sign. In your own time ... no rush ... but as soon as you can. If you don't exist ... well ... it was an interesting idea.

*Lights back up as Alf enters with a screwdriver followed by Roy and Spike. Spike is nursing a hand, and is clearly in pain. He places the injured hand between his legs and moves around in circles.*

**Alf** Make way for reinforcements and walking-wounded.  
**Willie** What's he done?  
**Roy** Jammed his hand in the van door, silly beggar.  
**Spike** I jammed it? You trapped it, you mean.  
**Roy** You were half asleep, you dozy article. When I close the doors you remove your hands from the doors. Get it?  
**Spike** You slammed it. I had no chance. Ow!ow!ow! bloody hell, it hurts.

*Willie takes hold of Spike's hand.*

**Spike** Careful.  
**Willie** Relax. Can you move your fingers?  
**Spike** Yeah! Oooh!  
**Alf** Is there no end to your talents, Willie?  
**Willie** I was a Boy Scout.  
**Alf** Dib-dib-dib.  
**Willie** Dob-dob-dob.  
**Alf** What was all tha' about? Dib-dib-dib.  
**Willie** You're okay. You'll live. Bit of bruising, that's all. Go and put it under the tap.  
**Spike** This is a severe industrial injury this is. I want compensation.  
**Roy** You'll get compensation ... if it drops off. You need to liven your ideas up, sunshine. Get with it and get on the ball.  
**Spike** Management skills, nil!

*Spike exits. Alf and Willie stare at Roy.*

**Roy** What?  
**Alf** Nothin'. It was an accident.  
**Roy** Yeah! You saw what happened. It was an accident.  
**Alf** Yeah! You were just havin' a laugh, that's all. He should have moved his arse. He was too slow. You caught him. You took him by surprise. That's all there was to it.  
**Roy** Exactly. He should've seen it coming.  
**Alf** 'Course he should.  
**Roy** He was asking for it, leaning against the van like that.  
**Alf** 'Course he was. You lean against a van you're asking for it.  
**Roy** Well, he was.  
**Alf** 'Course he was.  
**Roy** It was a laugh.  
**Alf** That's all it was.  
**Roy** I didn't mean it. 'Course I didn't. I'm not stupid.  
**Alf** It was a laugh. That's all it was.  
**Roy** All right. I'll apologise. Okay?

*Willie and Alf give Roy the thumbs up and proceed to unscrew the legs of the table and fold it down flat. Alf begins a raucous rendering of the song "They Tried To Tell Us We're Too Young", which is then eventually accompanied by Willie and Roy. Roy carries off the grandfather clock, and Willie and Alf carry the table off stage right. Spike enters with his hand wrapped in a wet rag. He goes to centre stage where the lights focus down on him. The following monologue must be acted with energy and humour.*

**Spike** This is all I need. Christ! How can I play lead guitar with one hand? My parents will make a meal out of this. "If you'd gone to university this would never have happened", she'll say. "No, but if I'd gone to university I could've been out of my mind on amphetamines by now, mother". "Amphetamines? What do you know about amphetamines?". "Well, aren't they a sort of drug, mother, that make you go all woozy and take you out of it for a while". "Harry! Did you hear your son. He's a drug addict". "Surely not, dear. Not in our house. After all, we're hardly a deprived family. He's got everything he wants, even a motor car". "Peter, I do wish you'd stop doing that silly job. It's not going to look too good on ones' CV now, is it". "But I like the silly job because it's a laugh most of the time, and it's good exercise. Why do we have to take ourselves so seriously all the time?". "Harry, tell him". "Your mother's right, Peter. There's no future in the removal business. A profession is what you need". "Your father's right, Peter. You've sown a few wild oats, now it's time to knuckle down to a proper career. We want you to be like us". "Like you? Why should I want to be like you?". "You're being silly again, Peter. Harry, tell him". "Your mother's perfectly right, Peter. You won't get your Aston Martin, your big house or get into a decent club, until you stop being silly. I had to stop being silly years ago otherwise we couldn't have packed you off to boarding school". "I didn't like boarding school". "Of course you did. You are just being silly again. And you can cut out that idea of being a rock musician. That is extremely silly. You'd ruin your health and end up looking very, very silly in the 'News of the World' or some other silly rag, with some girls' knickers wrapped around your head. Now, how silly would you feel then? So, put off all this silliness, put it all behind you and do exactly what we tell you to do. Got it?". *(Pause. Suddenly serious)*. Got it? I've had it all my life. Time to move on.

*Spike moves to the chaise longue and sits. Roy enters, followed by Alf and Willie.*

**Roy** Sorry, your Lordship. It's the maid's day off.  
**Spike** And here I was looking forward to a bit of crumpet.  
**Roy** How is it then, the hand?  
**Spike** Throbbin'.  
**Roy** Yes. Well ... have a day off ... with pay.  
**Spike** What?  
**Roy** Okay! Two days. I want you back Wednesday. Big job in Wilmslow, *(or local large town)* moving bankrupt stock. You're needed.

*Spike stands and moves to Roy.*

**Spike** Roy?  
**Roy** What?  
**Spike** I've been having a think.  
**Roy** Yeah? What about?  
**Spike** About moving on.  
**Roy** Oh yeah? Where to?  
**Spike** Somewhere different. Something different. I don't know.  
**Roy** Hey lads! The human dynamo here's thinking of bugging off out of it.  
**Alf** You've told him it's a year's notice? We can't replace highly skilled furniture removers at a minute's notice. He does realise that?  
**Willie** Spread your wings, Spike. See the world.  
**Alf** That's it lad. By the time I was your age I'd been all over, behind, on top, underneath. Underneath was favourite.

*Daphne Cartwright, in her wheelchair, is wheeled in by Heather, a young Scottish nurse.*

**Daphne** Gentlemen!  
**Heather** This is Mrs Cartwright. She insisted on coming down to see the house, didn't you Daphne.  
**Daphne** Are we early?

**Roy** Early?

**Daphne** Where are the rest of the guests?

**Heather** This is a very special party, isn't it gentlemen? (*Pause, hoping they will humour her*) Isn't it!

**Roy** Oh yes. Very special. Right. Yes. I should say.

**Daphne** Who are these people, Heather? Do I know them? Come on. Do your job. Chop-chop!

**Heather** Well ... this is ...

**Roy** I'm ...

**Daphne** Are you in the mill? I must try to get down there, you know. This rheumatism doesn't help. How are they all?

**Roy** Sorry?

**Heather** The people in the mill. She wants to know how they are, don't you Daphne?

**Roy** The people ...

**Heather** The workers in the mill. You know, the people who work in the Cartwright mill?

**Roy** Oh, the workers in the mill. Oh, they're fine. Excellent.

**Daphne** I'm so glad. I keep saying to George, "George, make sure you look after that lot. They're damn good workers." So, what do you do, Mr ... er ...

**Roy** Horton. Roy Horton. I'm ... I'm ...

**Spike** He's the new managing director, Mrs Cartwright. We're so pleased he's joined us. He's got so many good ideas, haven't you Mr Horton. Very imaginative.

**Roy** Well, yes ... I ...

**Spike** Man-management techniques. Red hot!

**Daphne** Really. That's very interesting Mr ... Mr ... er ...

**Roy** Horton. Mr. Horton.

**Spike** And this is Herr Willie Voss, a technical wizard from Germany ... yes ...

**Willie** Munich.

**Spike** He's designing the new machinery.

**Daphne** Oh good. Isn't that good, Heather?

**Heather** Very good.

**Spike** The Japanese wanted him, but he preferred our climate.

**Daphne** You enjoy the rain do you Mr ... Mr ...?

**Willie** Voss. Willie ... er ... Wilhem Voss. Of course, I can't get enough of the rain.

**Daphne** That's nice. And this is?

**Roy** This is ...

**Alf** Alfred Stone ... shipping.

**Daphne** Do we have ships now?

**Roy** He's a special guest.

**Daphne** How wonderful. Welcome. And you are?

**Spike** I'm ... er ...

**Willie** He's our new chemist. We're sending him out to the Amazon basin to research natural fibres. Very exciting.

**Daphne** Isn't it. Don't they have cannibals out there?

**Roy** We hope so.

**Daphne** I think you're pulling my leg, aren't you Mr ... Mr ... er ...

**Roy** Horton. Well...

**Daphne** This is all very jolly. Have we ordered an orchestra? I hope so. As long as they can belt out a good tango, that's the main thing. Do you tango ... Mr ... er ...

**Alf** Stone. Not only can I tango, missus, er ... Mrs Cartwright, but ...

**Daphne** Daphne, please. We're all friends here.

**Alf** Right, yeah, Daphne ... but I've tangoed in Buenos Aires, on the Rio de la Plata, the home of the tango.

**Daphne** Never! That's where I learnt to tango, on the coast, near Brighton. Come on then. Show me. Heather, dance with the young man.

**Heather** Daphne, I don't tango.

**Daphne** Then it's about time you did. Come on Mr. Stone, sweep her away.

**Heather** No music. What a shame.

Roy takes out a comb, takes some paper off his clip-board, and plays "Jealousy" on the comb. Alf immediately assumes the pose of the tango expert. He grabs hold of Heather and whisks her through a dynamic tango routine. The others "Lah" along to the tune, clap their hands and stamp their feet. The dance ends with a great flourish with Heather wrapped tightly in Alf's arms.

**Daphne** (Applauding) Encore! Bravo! Bravo!  
**Heather** Thank you, Mr Stone.  
**Alf** My pleasure.  
**Daphne** Is cook preparing the buffet, or are we getting the caterers in?  
**Heather** Well, I'm not sure, Daphne.  
**Daphne** You should be sure. I pay you to be sure.  
**Spike** I'll have a word with the chef.  
**Daphne** Good! Good!

*Spike exits.*

**The remainder of this play has been deleted from this preview copy, but the following synopsis completes the action ...**

Daphne in her confusion is expecting an orchestra to play at her party, but the best that the movers can offer is Roy's comb and paper again playing a slow waltz. Daphne now dreams she is a young girl again, and in a short dream-like interlude a full orchestra is heard as, to her delight, Willie sweeps her up out of her wheelchair and waltzes her once round the stage.

Spike then brings on the 'banquet' (his lunch and a mug of tea). Daphne now reminisces about her life and how times have changed for her into an existence which she doesn't quite understand. She snaps out of this reverie, and is suddenly frightened by the situation, so Heather takes her home. The last item of furniture is removed and the lights fade to black.

---

For further details on purchasing a full copy of the script, or for information on royalties, please contact :-

The Plays And Musicals Group  
Lantern House  
84 Littlehaven Lane  
Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 4JB  
UK

Tel : +44 (0)700 593 8842

Fax : +44 (0)700593 8843

[sales@playsandmusicals.co.uk](mailto:sales@playsandmusicals.co.uk)

[www.playsandmusicals.co.uk](http://www.playsandmusicals.co.uk)

