

# **LITTLE LUCY'S LOCKET**

by Honoria Mary Robertson Dick

## **A MELODRAMA**

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## CAST

<b>SEB</b>	Sebastian Scavenger	A villain
<b>HOR</b>	Horace Trueheart	Guardian to Linda
<b>JAS</b>	James	Butler at Pureheart Hall
<b>TOM</b>	Thomas Withers	A Country Squire
<b>WILL</b>	William Yorks (alias Willie Twiddle) from America	
<b>ZOE</b>	Zoe (alias Lucinda De Reske)	masquerading as a gypsy
<b>ESME</b>	Esmeralda	A gypsy princess and clairvoyant
<b>DAN</b>	Gypsy Dan	Leader of the gypsies
<b>LIN</b>	Linda (alias Lucinda or Little Lucy)	
<b>NELL</b>	Georgina Jarvis (alias Nellie Trimmer)	
<b>Chorus</b>	Ladies and Gentlemen	

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Honorina Mary Robertson Dick was born in Yorkshire, England but lived much of her adult life in Perth, Western Australia. Honorina read English Literature and Classics at the University of Western Australia and wrote a series of 13 original melodramas in the 1970s-early 2000s. They were performed exclusively by an amateur cast at St Michael's Anglican Church Mt Pleasant and St Christopher's Anglican Church Bicton-Attadale for church fundraising purposes.

It was Honorina's wish that her melodramas be made available for other theatre groups to adapt and perform as required.

**Setting:** England, 1800s

**At Rise:** Lights dimmed, sound effects to suggest storm, falling snow, hollow tree stage prop

**SCENE 1 – THE SNOW STORM**

**SEB**

*Entry through centre*

Out! Out! Out! You meddlesome baggage. Out! I say Out!

**ZOE**

No! No! No! Sebastian, the snow is already knee deep, you cannot be so cruel as to turn us out on such a dark and stormy night.

*(Background music for villain)*

**SEB**

Away with you!

**ZOE**

I ask nothing for myself, but ok! Sebastian, spare the babe. Oh! Spare Little Lucy.

**SEB**

Hear me wench, and little well – you and that mewling brat stand between me and a fortune. I'd throttle you this minute but I want to be free from suspicion when they find your bodies. Ha! Ha! Ha! The icy blizzard will do the deed for me. Ha! Ha! Ha! I'm so clever.

**ZOE**

No! No! Not Little Lucy, not our own flesh and blood! Have mercy Sebastian, throw us not out into the cold, cold snow with no-one to aid us and nowhere to go.

**SEB**

What are you wailing about? I'm giving you a sporting chance – all you have to do is to walk 24 miles in a howling blizzard through 20 foot snow drifts, through a forest and across the blasted heath -just an ice stroll – Oh! I'm so witty!

**ZOE**

You villain! You libertine! You drunken scoundrel! You-You-Dastard!

**SEB**

Mind your language you saucy wench – damn if I don't find your show of spirit attractive!

**ZOE**

Keep your distance you blaggard, I would rather face the blizzard than you!

**SEB**

Then I'll help you on your way. Ha! Ha! Ha!

**ZOE**

Oh! My poor babe! Sweet angels protect us.

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*Exit left*

**SEB**

I must go where no suspicion can fall on me. Let me plan. Today is December 13<sup>th</sup> so I need to nip across to the continent where I am well known and return to London in the Spring by which time the bodies will have been found and I can claim the fortune. Having lived in France, Marianne is unknown here, and the child is a well kept secret. All that lovely lucre will be mine. Mine! And then, Oh! Then! There will be liquor, ladies and licentious living – I am so gorgeously depraved!

*Exit right*

*Background music “A Maiden’s Prayer”*

**ZOE**

*Enters centre*

Oh! My Little Lucy! I can walk no further. We are lost, lost in the forest. If we are to survive I must cross the blasted heath to get help. My strength is ebbing fast and I cannot carry you with me. I will wrap you in my cloak and tuck you into the hollow of this blasted oak tree. Around your neck I will hand my locket in which there is a secret compartment containing my portrait with the details of your lineage written on the back of it. Angels guard thee my precious whilst I stagger forth into the blinding storm to see succor.

*Exit left*

*Time quickly passes to April*

*Lights full*

**SEB**

*Enter right*

A malediction on all females – Curses! Curses! And more curses!

*Background music for villain*

**SEB**

What has happened to the bodies? Someone has buried them no doubt. But what do I find on my return from the continent? That my late unlamented half-brother had diddled me again. For having disposed of the impediment, I find by his tortuous last will and testament, that the fortune will not be mine until the date on which Lucy would have had her eighteenth birthday and that event. Curses and more curses, is over seventeen years away. But I, Sebastian Scavenger, can wait! Meanwhile, I'll live a life of glorious dissipation – gambling, and aha! A little bit of blackmail here and there and for titillation, I'll work the old madeira trick!

*SONG: Have Some Madeira M'Dear*

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Tally ho! Tally ho! Off to the chase I go!

*Exit right*

**SCENE 2 – SIR THOMAS TRUEHEART’S ESTATE**

**TIME SLOWLY PASSES OVER SEVENTEEN YEARS**

*Enter left Tom and Horace*

**TOM**

Are you definitely going to London, Horace?

**HOR**

I am! I am, Tom! Thought a bit of gaiety wouldn't go amiss. How about coming with me?

**TOM**

Fact is old man, I have a guest staying at the manor, an American chappie, 'bout your age, name of William Yorks. Came with an introduction from my cousin in Boston. He's interested in race horses, that's why I cam over, I want you to meet him. Told him you raise thoroughbreds. Cousin says he's a dollar millionaire.

**HOR**

If you vouch for him Tom that's good enough for me. But why let his presence prevent you from taking a jaunt to the bright lights? Bring him along! Is he married?

**TOM**

Not married, seems to like the ladies so he says.

**HOR**

Settled then, we leave on Friday.

**TOM**

Are you taking Linda with you?

**HOR**

Certainly not! Can't kick my heels up if I have to keep an eye on Linda.

**TOM**

Where is she?

**HOR**

In that damnable wood across the meadow.

**TOM**

I can't see why you so dislike that wood, think it very pretty myself. I'll walk that way home. Cheery-bye for now.

*Exit centre*

*Horace also exits right*

*Background Music "A Maiden's Prayer"*

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**LIN**

*Enter left*

It is so sad to be a foundling; And even though Lady Trueheart brought me to live here; And though; Since his mother's death Sir Horace has been my guardian; I have only whatever dowry he will allow me and who would want to wed a maid who knows neither her name nor her birthday. Oh! Oh! Oh!

**TOM**

*Enter left*

Dear Linda, Why are you do sad? (If only I dare to put my arms around her!)

**LIN**

Why? Because! Because, Horace will not take me to London, he says I am too young. But I'm grown up and no longer to be treated like a little girl.

**TOM**

You have grown up to be lovely in fairness of face, form and character, dear Linda.

**LIN**

Tom! I didn't know that you could make such a pretty speech.

**TOM**

Perhaps you don't really know me at all.

**LIN**

Not know you! Why Tom, all my life you have been like a big brother to me, all my memories are bound up with you my dear old friend.

**TOM**

(Old! Old! I'm only seven or eight years older than she). Is that how you regard me, as a big brother?

**LIN**

A very special brother. Do you remember when I was very young I use to call you sweetheart. It was in this wood where we always gathered bluebells that I made you promise to marry me when I grew up.

*SONG: I'll Be Your Sweetheart*

**TOM**

Oh! Linda! Linda! You have always been my sweetheart, let me ask Horace for leave to pay my addresses to you. I want to marry you Linda. I want you for my own.

**LIN**

Stop! Stop! You must not be so forward.

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**TOM**

Forward? Why I wouldn't hurt one hair of your lovely head. (Oh! That I should affront such innocence!)

**LIN**

(Surely he's not going to desist already! Am I never to know the ecstasy of a man's lips upon mine?)

**TOM**

All I want to do is to cherish you!

**LIN**

Cherish me! (Oh! Why can't he be masterful and romantic?)

**TOM**

(I can see that I have been too passionate; I have frightened her) Linda! I know I am just a solid country squire, but I shan't change in my affection for you. (If only she wasn't so young and innocent; if only my tongue could speak sweet words of love). Let me speak to Horace.

**LIN**

No! No! I'm sorry Tom! It's so sudden, I never dreamed... (Tom cannot marry a penniless nobody, I must protect him from himself. But how?) Give me some time to get used to the idea Tom...until you return from London.

**TOM**

So be it. I shall keep on hoping and counting every hour until my return to you.

*Linda exits left and Tom exits right*

**HOR**

*Enters centre*  
James! James!

**JAS**

*Enters centre*  
Sir!

**HOR**

Has miss Linda come home?

**JAS**

Not yet sir.

**HOR**

The Squire is in love with her James, and marriage to him would be the perfect solution but I don't think she regards him in the light of a possible husband and I won't force her to accept him. The care of a young lady is a great worry James. How I wish my dear Mama was alive to guide Linda's footsteps through the quick-sands of this wicked world.

**JAS**

Every girl needs a mother, sir.

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**HOR**

Don't we all James, don't we all!

*SONG: Mother*

**HOR**

Seventeen years since she joined the angels and I was left with Little Linda to care for.

**JAS**

You should have married sir! You can't waste all your life on a dream.

*Exit right*

**HOR**

A dream! I sometimes think that glorious summer of sunshine and love was a dream. But here, pressed against my heart is the rose she gave me when first we met ... sixteen long years ago.

*Exit centre – re-enter left*

*Background music: Narcissus*

### **SCENE 3 – PUREHEART WOOD**

**TIME RECEDES SIXTEEN YEARS**

**ZOE**

*Enter left*

What a pretty wood this is, such soft green grass, such graceful trees. Trees! Trees! Trees! Why do they strike such terror in my breast? Oh! Who are you?

**HOR**

I didn't mean to startle you, please don't be afraid. Who are you?

**ZOE**

I'm a Romany – our camp is at the edge of this wood.

**HOR**

A gypsy! No! You do not speak like a gypsy! What is your name?

**DAN**

*Enter centre*

Her name is Zoe and she is my sister. Who are you?

**HOR**

I am Horace Trueheart of Pureheart Hall and you are trespassing in my wood.

**DAN**

A thousand apologies sire, I am gypsy Dan, the leader of the Roman band to whom you gave permission to camp on your property. Zoe didn't mean to trespass.

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**HOR**

I found this young lady here, something had frightened her.

**ZOE**

It was the trees, Dan, suddenly they terrified me.

**DAN**

There's nothing to be afraid of Zoe. The trees are friendly to gypsies. We talk to the trees. Zoe has been ill, she is timid with strangers sir.

**HOR**

She has nothing to fear from me. You have the word of a gentleman. Do you mind if I stay and talk with her? She is welcome to come to this wood whenever she pleases and will be quite safe I assure you.

**ZOE**

Please let me stay Dan, it is such a pretty wood.

**DAN**

Guard her well sir, she has been very ill and perhaps you will honour our camp by sometimes visiting it during our summer stay here.

*Exit centre*

**ZOE**

I had been picking wild roses at the edge of the wood, so I suppose I have been stealing your property as well as trespassing?

**HOR**

Indeed you have and even a thief as pretty as you must pay a forfeit.

**ZOE**

Then my forfeit shall be in song.

*SONG: Take Thou This Rose*

**HOR**

(What is this breathless ecstasy I feel when she is near me?) You are unlike other gypsies I have met. Are the rest of your family in the camp?

**ZOE**

There is only Dan, he and his sweetheart the Princess Esmeralda take care of me. You shall be my friend, and as you have permitted me the freedom of your wood so shall I offer you the freedom of our camp. We are a happy people; come and sing and dance with me tonight.

**HOR**

If you will promise to be my partner I will come. (Surely I am gripped by a mid-summer madness! But Oh! How my heart pounds! Can this be love?)

**ZOE**

I love to sing and dance beneath the start on a summer's night, I feel truly happy then, as I use to feel before I..

**HOR**

Before?

**ZOE**

I can't remember – I've been ill – and since that time I've forgotten ...

**HOR**

Smile for me Zoe. There! Let us be happy because today we have met!

**ZOE**

Come!

*Exit centre*

*Enter right – Dan and Esmeralda – Lights dimmed*

**ESME**

Be not troubled my beloved. This young stranger had brought joy and happiness to us and it was written that we should befriend her.

**DAN**

She has mixed her blood with ours my Princess and is therefore a Romany...Esmeralda! What do you see?

*Background music for a villain*

**ESME**

I see a tree. A tree that bespeaks both evil and happiness. I see a tall, dark clad man. Oh! Oh! Hold me my beloved he is evil! Evil! Evil! He has brought disaster and will come to bring more...But all is blurred...This young sir, is he tall and dark?

**DAN**

No! His heart is as true as his name, that I would swear. You shall judge for yourself because I see him coming towards the camp with Zoe.

*Enter centre – Zoe and Horace – coloured lights*

**ESME**

Welcome friend of Zoe.

**DAN**

This is our Princess, Esmeralda, my betrothed.

**ESME**

Join our band and be a gypsy with us young sir.

**DAN**

Come! We gypsies will dance and sing for you. Let us live, laugh and love throughout this night.

**GYPSIES**

*Enter left and right*

**ESME**

Music my gypsies!

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*SONG: Live, Laugh, Love chorus – verse sung by Zoe*

*Gypsies exist left and right – Zoe exits centre*

*Background music: Narcissus – Full lights*

**HOR**

*Stepping to centre stage front*

And so throughout the summer Zoe and I rambled through the woods and fields on my property and I lived as much in the gypsy camp as at home. I knew I was in love with Zoe and had asked my dear widowed Mama to receive her but fate stepped in...

*Exit right as Dan and Esmeralda enter centre*

**ESME**

I tell you Dan that they are in love and it cannot be, you must speak to Zoe.

**DAN**

I have not foreseen this complication and my heart is heavy when I see how happy they are but they must be separated and quickly.

**ESME**

It is Zoe I fear for, she must now carry an intolerable burden in her heart. She comes! Cut the knot now, now Dan!

**ZOE**

*Enter left – singing Live, Laugh, Love*

**DAN**

Zoe my little one! We must speak of you and Horace.

**ZOE**

I love him Dan, and I am sure that he loves me, but I am a gypsy, and he is rich and owns great property. Will he wish to marry a Romany?

**ESME**

It cannot be! Not because you are unworthy of him but for another reason.

**DAN**

Zoe, can you remember anything of the time before your illness?

**ZOE**

No! Only of being so cold and a fear of trees.

**DAN**

We have told you how we found you wandering alone in the snow on a blasted heath far from habitation many day travel from here.

**ZOE**

Yes, I was ill and you cared for me and made me your sister.

**ESME**

Your memory had gone and though we tried to find some trace of your home and family we were unsuccessful. It is as though you had never existed. Our only clue

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was that throughout your feverish ramblings you spoke only in French.

**DAN**

And something more. You were wearing a gold band on your finger. A wedding band. We took it off and kept it in the hope that your memory would return. Inside the ring are the initials M and V. Do they mean anything to you?

**ZOE**

No! A wedding band! Oh! No! No! No!

**ESME**

Sweet Zoe, we would have spare you this knowledge but though you love Sir Horace Trueheart you are not free to marry him.

**DAN**

It is almost the end of summer and time for us to move on. This year all gypsies will be meeting in Spain. It is there that Esmeralda and I will marry. We will move in the darkness tonight. Leaving no trace for him to follow us.

**ZOE**

I promised to meet him in the wood this afternoon, he will come to the camp if I am not there.

**ESME**

Have you the courage to meet him and not tell him you are leaving?

**ZOE**

Yes! For this one last meeting must last me a lifetime.

**ESME**

Show me your palm. I feel such sadness and there is evil coming into this wood but they will vanish for I see in the far distance much great happiness for you. Hold fast to the memory of this halcyon summer to lighten the dark days ahead.

**DAN**

Come Esmeralda we must break camp, perhaps never to return here. Zoe, I see Horace approaching, make a swift ending.

*Exit centre*

**HOR**

*Enter right*

Zoe! Zoe! My dearest one. I want you to come and stay with us at Pureheart Hall. Dear mother is so anxious to meet you as my future wife. Will you marry me my little Romany? Why are there tears in your eyes?

**ZOE**

I am so happy. I love you Horace, now and forever I love only you.

**HOR**

Let us go and tell Dan and the Princess Esmeralda our news.

**ZOE**

No! No! I want to tell them myself.

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**JAS**

*Enter right*

Sir Horace! Sir Horace! A tragedy sir, come quickly, Her Ladyship has just come a header over the water jump and they have carried her home on a hurdle. Alas! She will gallop no more.

**HOR**

Not my dear Mama! Oh! What bitter news. I will follow you home James. I must go my darling but I will return this evening.

*Exit right*

**ZOE**

Kiss me goodbye my love.

**HOR**

Say au-revoir not goodbye. Farewell my Zoe.

*Exit right*

*Song: Say Au Revoir But Not Goodbye*

*Exit left – Zoe*

#### **SCENE 4 – PUREHEART HALL**

**HOR**

Sixteen long years have now gone by yet I cannot forget her. When I returned that night the gypsies had disappeared taking Zoe with them. I could find no trace of them. In all these years no gypsy has ever come here to camp. She trifled with my affections and left me distraught, determined to remain a bachelor, never again to trust in a woman's promises.

*Background music: A Maiden's Prayer*

**JAS**

The bags are packed and the Squire and Mr Yorks are awaiting you in the carriage.

**HOR**

I will say goodbye to Linda and join you there James. Linda! Linda!

**LIN**

*Enter left*

I shall be so miserable without you Horace.

**HOR**

Be a good girl and perhaps I will send for you to join us.

**LIN**

Dear, dear Horace I promise to do just as you tell me.

**HOR**

Keep away from that beastly wood unless someone is with you.

*Exit right – Horace; Exit left – Linda*

**SCENE 5 - LONDON – THE BACHELORS' CLUB**

**NELL**

*Enter centre*

I've just had a word that Sir Horace and the Squire are bringing a friend with them tonight so they'll be meeting all their old cronies. It won't 'arf be a gay old night. I must spread the good news around.

*Background music for villain*

**SEB**

*Enter right*

Good morning Madam! Do I address Mrs Georgina Jarvis, the famous hostess of the Bachelors' Club?

**NELL**

(Here's a right smarmy piece of work – watch it Nellie!) You do! And I am! What is your business here?

**SEB**

(Dirty work at the cross-roads if I get the chance) Dear Lady, and I can see that the word Lady takes on a new aura when applied to you.

**NELL**

(Blimey!)

**SEB**

I am Sebastian Scavenger a new member of the Bachelors' Club, at your service.

**NELL**

Name your sponsors, sir.

**SEB**

Sir Algernon Ram and Mr Archibald Tupp!

**NELL**

(Well there's a couple of well known black sheep I do declare!) Indeed! Then I must bid you welcome to the Club.

**SEB**

How about a smile from those pretty lips dear Lady.

**NELL**

(These pretty lips hide some very sharp teeth you slithery toad!) Sir!

**SEB**

Ah! The smile is all I hoped it would be, quite charming. So let me celebrate my

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membership by sharing a glass of Madeira with you.

**NELL**

(Strewth! The old Madeira trick, 'e must think I came down with the last shower)  
Actually I'm strictly a champagne lady Mr Scavenger.

**SEB**

(A high flyer this one – expensive tastes!) But with my wit, charm and handsome visage she won't be able to resist me) Then champagne it shall be on the night of my initiation into the Bachelors' Club. I am absenting myself for a few days to attend to some business in the county of Bucks.

**NELL**

(Dirty business I bet!) We shall look forward to your return Mr Scavenger.

**SEB**

My friends call me Sebastian, dear Lady, and I know that we are going to be the very best of friends, may I say intimate friends!

*Slow exit right*

**NELL**

(Intimate! That's a short word for a swift seduction you scurvy knave!) Enjoy your journey sir.

**ZOE**

*Enter left*

Good morning! I am Madam Zoe to see Mrs Jarvis.

**NELL**

I am Mrs Jarvis, and we are so honoured to have you come to sing for us.

**ZOE**

As I shall be spending the winter in London it gives me great pleasure to sing in the Bachelors' Club.

**NELL**

I'm so glad you speak English, I thought that as a continental star of the theatre you'd speak a foreign language. We have reserved a suite of rooms for you here. It will be nice to have someone to talk to besides the girls who come to perform in the chorus.

**ZOE**

Is Mr Jarvis the owner?

**NELL**

There ain't; isn't a Mr Jarvis – he joined the angels not long after we were married so I've been a widow for a very long time. He left me this valuable property so I started the Bachelors' Club for single gentlemen It's a very proper and exclusive Club but we do have musical entertainment especially prior to the Christmas season and it is for that you were engaged to sing. Pardon me if I seem inquisitive but are you married?

**ZOE**

No! The “Madam” is for professional reasons. I shall never marry.

**NELL**

Well I don't suppose I'll ever marry again, you see the late Mr Jarvis was a lot of years older than me – forty years to be exact but he was so kind, just like a father to me. Everyone calls me Georgina but you can call me Nellie, that's my real name but Georgina sounds more elegant don't you think?

**ZOE**

Oh! Yes indeed, but Nellie is a warmer, friendlier name, I like it.

**NELL**

I can see that we're going to get along together, come on, I'll show you the suite.

*Exit left*

*Enter centre – Horace, William, Tom, James and friends*

**TOM**

Georgina! Georgina we're here. She must be in the Club room. Now gentlemen, you know the rules, you cannot enter without the proper passwords and that is the Bachelors' song. Are you ready?

**ALL**

Yes!

*SONG: A Bachelor Gay am I*

**HOR**

Ah! Georgina! Georgina! Looking even more beautiful.

**NELL**

Now then Sir Horace!

**HOR**

Permit me to introduce our American guest, Mr William Yorks. William, this is our hostess Mrs Georgina Jarvis.

**NELL**

(Lovely manners! Not handsome but definitely winsome, I like him) You are very welcome Mr Yorks, Oh now you behave yourself Squire.

**TOM**

How did you know it was me?

**NELL**

Because you play the same trick on me every time you come here! We have a very special treat for you tonight, our ladies of the chorus joined by a special guest from the continent. How's Miss Linda, Sir Horace?

**HOR**

She's to join us next week, on the 13<sup>th</sup> December to be exact. James is returning for her.

**TOM**

Look Horace, there's Uffingham and Gerald, let's join them in the bar.

*Exit right*

**NELL**

And is this your first visit to London, Mr Yorks?

**WILL**

My second stay in London, Mrs Jarvis. Am I to have the pleasure of meeting your husband?

**NELL**

Alas! He has been gone these many years!

**WILL**

Gone?

**NELL**

To heaven sir! I'm a widow, all alone in the world.

**WILL**

Are you indeed! Would it be presumptuous of me to ask you if you would favour me with your company whilst I am sojourning in London. We could perhaps go riding some afternoon.

**NELL**

Riding! I'm afraid I don't know much about horses except that they have a head, a tail and a leg in each corner.

**WILL**

I came over from America to buy horses – race horses and some cattle. I am sure I can find you a nice, quiet horse to ride.

**NELL**

A dray horse is about my limit.

**WILL**

For myself I prefer a skittish filly with a soft muzzle, slim fetlocks, a proud head and smooth action.

**NELL**

(I can't quite put my finger on it but somehow that description sounds very cheeky! I wonder if e's having me on?) Do you then have a farm in America?

**WILL**

In America, what I have is called a ranch. I run cattle and some oil wells in Texas and some gaming clubs in California where I mostly live.

**NELL**

Gambling clubs!

**WILL**

Yes! I made my stake by gambling. Does that fact make me unfit to seek further acquaintance with you?

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**NELL**

I once knew a gambler, a very young one. His old m...father taught him and he was the fastest card turner I've ever seen.

**WILL**

You grew up with a card-sharp?

**NELL**

Oh! No! His father was my Aunt's handyman. (Watch it Nellie! You haven't thought of Willie Twiddle for years. Oh! What a time we youngsters had – broke me 'eart when his old man was sent to Wandsworth and he moved away).

**WILL**

(Nellie! Nellie! Have you forgotten me entirely) You have dropped your glove. If from a glove you take the letter 'G' then glove is love...shall we join the other gentlemen?

*Exit left*

**NELL**

(I feel like I've been running. Real queer!)

*Enter right Tom, Gerald, James and Horace*

**HOR**

Cheer up Tom, enjoy yourself.

**TOM**

It's no use Horace, I'm tired of being a bachelor, I want to settle down and I want to marry Linda.

**HOR**

I can't force her to marry you Tom but I promise to do what I can to help your suit. I think she worries not knowing who she is, perhaps I shouldn't have told her but it would have to come out sometime, poor little girl. I'll send James for her tomorrow.

**TOM**

Bless you Horace – now I can enjoy myself – bring on the ladies!

*While Tom is speaking, Will enters left before the ladies enter centre*

*Ladies – parade around stage once before song*

*SONG: Ladies of the Chorus*

**HOR**

(Yes! It is! Older, self-assured, a woman of the world. No doubt someone's Cher Ami; but Oh! How she still stirs my heart. I'll spurn her, ignore her)

**ZOE**

(He recognizes me, I know he does, but Oh! The scorn in his eyes is more than I can bear! How can I expect him to come to me when he believes that I betrayed him. It is better this way for the wedding ring will forever keep us apart. Oh! Why cannot I remember – remember!)

■ ■■ ■

**NELL**

What is it love? You look as though you're going to faint?

**ZOE**

It is nothing – I will retire for the moment.

*Exit left*

**TOM**

Come on lads, bring the ladies into supper.

*All exit centre*

### **SCENE 6 – PUREHEART ESTATE – THE WOOD**

**LIN**

*Enter left*

**SEB**

*Enter right*

(Now here's a dainty morsel with which to whet my appetite!) Good morrow sweet maiden, I am en route to London and the wheel of my coach has broken, I am taking a walk whilst it is being repaired (Is she alone?)

**LIN**

Oh! Are you going to London? So am I. I am awaiting news of the arrival of my conveyance.

**SEB**

(Conveyance! She must mean the post coach – probably the daughter of a gentleman farmer – easy game for me). Why wait my lovely one? I shall be more than happy to carry you off – I mean, to convey you thither in my carriage. What a shy little maid it is. You mustn't be afraid of me my pretty!

**LIN**

I'm not afraid, I am trembling with cold – there is snow in the air.

**SEB**

Come within the shelter of my cloak little bird, you will soon be warmed (Oh! You lucky dog Sebastian).

**LIN**

(I'm all of a flutter) You are as warm as a fire sir! Oh! I do so much want to go to London and I can pay for my conveyance if you would take me with you sir.

**SEB**

(Would take her! Will take her!) How could I refuse such charming company? Stay here for but a few minutes whilst I ascertain if the coach is ready. You will wait?

**LIN**

Oh! Yes sir.

*Exit Sebastian right*

What a handsome man, so tall, such address, such enticing manners. How surprised Horace will be when I arrive unheralded!

*Dan and Esmeralda enter centre*

**DAN**

I ask you again Esmeralda, why have we left our gypsy camp in sunny Spain to come back to this wood in the winter?

**ESME**

Because the wheel of fate is about to turn. I tell you Dan, this wood, the trees, that man and this maid are all woven into Zoe's fortune.

**LIN**

Gypsies! But no gypsies ever come here.

**DAN**

It is sixteen years since last we came to this wood vowing never to return unless we were needed. Do you know if Sir Horace is at home?

**LIN**

He is in London where I too am going.

**ESME**

Not with that man, he is evil! Evil! Listen to my warning.

*SONG: The Gypsy's Warning*

**DAN**

Hist! He returns – to the shelter of the trees Esmeralda beloved.

**SEB**

The coach awaits you my delicious darling, and now, a little advance on your fee.

**LIN**

Advance on my fee?

**DAN**

Loose her you dastard or I'll slit your throat.

**JAS**

*Enter left*

Miss Linda! Miss Linda! Oh! My little mistress – she is fainting.

**ESME**

That villain was intent on despoiling this innocent child. Take her to safety. Come my heart – we must to London – to Zoe.

*Exit centre*

**JAS**

Gypsies! There! There! My little one, you are safe now and I have come to take

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you to Sir Horace, to London.

**LIN**

Oh! James, the gypsies have saved me from a fate worse than death! How could I know he was such a villain, he spoke so sweetly. I am so confused. The Squire wants to marry me and I know that I love him but I am a foundling without name, money, or anything to offer.

**JAS**

Your name is innocence, and you have everything a good man could wish for in a wife. The Squire has money enough, and money is not needed for happiness.

*SONG: When I Leave the World Behind*

**LIN**

James! The Squire has never even kissed my lips and surely love must have some outward display of affection! When he kissed my cheek and I told him to desist – he did!

**JAS**

The Squire is an honourable man and would not step beyond the bounds of decorum, and every man needs some encouragement.

**LIN**

Encouragement! You mean that I should kiss him?

**JAS**

That would certainly be a step in the right direction. Try it when next you meet him. Now pack your trunks, we leave for London.

*Both exit left*

## **SCENE 7: THE BACHELORS' CLUB**

**HOR**

*Enter right with Tom*

Well Tom, tonight is Ladies Night at the Club and I have a surprise for you – Linda will be my guest tonight, James I'm bringing her to London.

**TOM**

You're not having me on Horace? Linda...here tonight! If only I could convey to her the depth of my affection but I'm a man of action, not words. I can't mouth pretty speeches; and if I make the slightest move to touch her she backs away, so it's obvious that she is not in love with me.

**HOR**

She is shy and unworldly Tom, after all, she can't be more than eighteen. You know she was a babe in arms when we found her just over seventeen years ago. Have patience Tom.

**TOM**

I'll wait forever if there is any chance of marrying her. Are you feeling just the thing Horace? Since that first night at the Club you've been looking downright pecky.

**HOR**

I am staying in London for Linda's sake. I promised to bring her to Ladies Night at the Club and that, dear boy, is tomorrow.

**TOM**

It's today, already it is 2am on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December. It is St Lucy's Day. We'd better get some sleep before tonight's festivities. That enchanting Madam Zoe is to sing tonight.

**HOR**

Where's William?

**TOM**

Out on the town with the fair Georgina. He's making play for her favours.

**HOR**

Is he now? Never known Georgina to favour any man so he must have considerable charm. Come on Tom, let's go.

*Exit right – Horace and Tom*

*Enter centre – Nell and Will*

**NELL**

I can't remember when I've enjoyed myself so much as I have this past week. (But I begin to wonder if I'm losing my attraction, he never makes a wrong move. Always charming and witty, but Oh! So proper even with a little encouragement).

**WILL**

I thought I saw Sir Horace and the Squire leaving as we came in. (I want for her to admit who she really is, to love me for myself not for the wealth I have).

**NELL**

Yes! It was the Squire and Horace; it will be home James and don't spare the horses for them, and we too need a bit of rest before tonight's festivities.

**WILL**

(We kids used to sing a music hall ditty about James and the horses, I wonder does she remember it?) Say Georgina! Do you know the old music hall song about home James and don't spare the horses?

**NELL**

(Every time we meet he mentions horses, stirs up old memories I want to forget). Yes! I do! Let's see – how does it go?

*SONG: Home James and Don't Spare the Horses*

**WILL**

Georgina! You did say that you've enjoyed yourself this past week – have I

contributed to your pleasure my dear?

**NELL**

Oh you have William, you have. I've never been so happy.

**WILL**

You must know that my feelings for you are not only those of a friend – Georgina I love you, madly, passionately, and beg you to do me the honour of accepting my hand in marriage.

**NELL**

(Oh! Lawks! Now I'm properly in the basket. If I didn't love him to distraction I'd say "yes", but I can't go on pretending I'm a lady born. I'm just a Cockney Coster's daughter and I'll have to tell him so). William, I can't tell you how honoured I am that you want to marry me, but I wouldn't fit into your society. I'm not what you think me, I'm not a real lady, me father drove a dray at Covent Garden and it was only by marrying a wealthy merchant that it was possible for me to be the 'ostess 'ere – you see, as soon as I gets agitated I can't even speak proper and you deserve the very best so I can't marry you: You see!

**WILL**

Nellie! Nellie! You don't have to worry about the way you speak. In America no-one speaks the Queen's English! Just say you will marry me.

**NELL**

You called me Nellie! Who told you my real name?

**WILL**

Nellie, look me right in the eye, forget the trappings. Who do I look like? Have I changed so much?

**NELL**

Without the moustache – no! Cards and horses! – No! It isn't possible!

**WILL**

It is Nellie my little trimmer, it is.

**NELL**

"Nellie my little trimmer" only one person ever called me that – Willie Twiddle!

**WILL**

I new the pun on your name would jog your memory Nellie. I emigrated at fourteen, changed my name to Yorks and now I'm a millionaire. I want the only thing my money can't buy – I want little Nellie Trimmer.

**NELL**

Oh! Will -e Twiddle!

**WILL**

The same old pun! But he will! He will! Just marry me Nellie.

**NELL**

I loves you Willie and if you want me I'll learn to be everything you deserve. Here! Let's stop gabbing and give me a great big smacker – oo–er! Will-e-ever

■ ■■ ■

*Exit centre – Nell and Will*

*Enter left – Zoe; Enter right – Horace*

**HOR**

You! You jezebel! You heartless gypsy. How you must be gloating! Taking all my love and laughingly destroying my dreams. No message – nothing – just cast aside like a wilted rose.

**ZOE**

(Doe he remember the rose I gave him? How can I speak in my own defence? I must laugh – pretend to be heartless while my heart is breaking) Come! Sir Horace, surely a summer flirtation in your green years cannot have ruined your life? Can you tell me that our springtime romance has stopped you from ever kidding another woman?

**HOR**

Oh! Yes, I've kissed many a lovely maid but your betrayal has left me incapable of ever trusting another woman. Look at you – decked out to entice more fools into your snare.

**ZOE**

Horace, I did you a great wrong but not for the reason you came to believe. Can you not rather remember my last words? They were true then, and now.

**HOR**

Don't try to make me believe that you ever cared for me. And now – Ha! I don't need Esmeralda to predict your future.

*SONG: A Girl That Men Forget*

**HOR**

I'll shed no tears for you Zoe, but here is something to remember me by!

**ZOE**

Oh Horace! That was unworthy of you – after tonight I shall be gone out of your life forever, vowing never, never to return to England.

*Exit left*

### **SCENE 8 – THE BACHELORS' CLUB CONT..**

*Enter right – James and Linda*

**JAS**

Here, safe and sound is our little Miss, Sir Horace.

**TOM**

*Enter left*

(Linda here! Must I go through all that agony of love again?)

**LIN**

Tom! Tom! Darling Tom!..... Have I been too forward Tom? (And at last I have known the exquisite rapture of a man's lips pressed to mine. Ahhhhhhhh!)

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**TOM**

Too forward! (You're a man of action Tom, seize the opportunity now!) Too forward – never! Put your hand in mine and let us go ever forward together.

**HOR**

You have my blessings Tom and Linda. What is it James?

**JAS**

Sir Horace, must tell you that a man in the home wood tried to – hmm – abduct Miss Linda who was saved only by the timely intervention of two gypsies. A man and a woman, both known to you Sir!

**TOM**

Who was this man you tried to abduct you?

**LIN**

I don't know his name.

**HOR**

Gypsies back in the home wood! Zoe in London! What strange quirk of fate is this? Linda, you are safe and Tom will take good care of you; forget it.

**TOM**

I won't forget it, just let me find the villain!

**LIN**

Horace, Tom; Surely this is a night for happiness.

**HOR**

It is my sweet. It is also the occasion for giving you a part of your dowry.

*Retrieve a locket from pocket*

Look! It was around your neck when we found you in the hollow of the blasted oak tree. The locket is empty so you can put Tom's picture in it.

**LIN**

Oh! I must find a mirror so I can see myself wearing it.

*Exit right*

**NELL**

*Enter left with Will*

I see James is back with Miss Linda? I 'ave some news for you all. May I have the honour of introducing my future...

**WILL**

Very near future...!

**NELL**

Husband, William Yorks Esquire.

**TOM**

Congratulations William, but you can give them right back to me because I'm going to marry Horace's ward, Linda.

**HOR**

Dear Georgina, I foresee nothing but happiness for you. Tell me William, how did you win such a prize?

**SEB**

*Enter centre*

**NELL**

He has a fatal charm that I couldn't resist and speaking of charm, urgh! There's the new member, his name is Sebastian Scavenger, do you know him Sir Horace?

**TOM**

Scavenger, Scavenger, was he not half-brother to Vernon Loverton?

**HOR**

Yes! He was, Scavenger's mother married Loverton's father. Vernon was drowned in a boating accident in France, I seem to think that there was some young woman drowned with him. Can't remember all the details, it was a long time ago.

### **SCENE 9 – THE BACHELOR'S CLUB CONT...**

**LIN**

*Enter right*

**SEB**

So you managed to get to London after all my dear, and how charming you look. Come! I insist on your joining me for a glass of madeira m'dear. Ha! Ha! Ha!

*Hold Lin's arm and pull*

**LIN**

You are hurting my arm – and let me go, let me go – Tom! Tom!

*Locket falls to the ground in the struggle*

**TOM**

Linda! What the devil!!! Unhand her Sir, unhand her I say. Hold him Horace!

**LIN**

My locket! My locket! I've lost my little locket!

*Enter centre – Dan, Zoe and Esmeralda*

**DAN**

*Picks up locket*

Is this the trinket you are looking for?

**LIN**

Oh thank you! Why, you are the gypsy who saved me in the wood.

**ZOE**

The trees! The trees! The trees!

**ESME**

Zoe has become demented again!

**DAN**

You are safe Zoe, there aren't any trees here!

**ESME**

It was instantaneous – it was when she saw that trinket. Let me see it.

**LIN**

It is only an empty locket.

**ESME**

Empty! Indeed it is not, it has a secret compartment in which there is a portrait of  
.....

**LIN**

*Turn to Zoe*

Why, the portrait in this locket is of you. Oh mother, mother, I have found you at last.

**ZOE**

The locket! The locket! Little Lucy's locket, I remember it all, remember all of it and.....Little Lucy was saved, she was saved.

**HOR**

Zoe...Linda's mother! Oh what further horrors are in store for me?

**ZOE**

It was he, that villain. He who was the perpetrator of all the evil that befell us. Sebastian Scavenger you dastard! Look at me and remember a night of gales and snow seventeen years ago.

**SEB**

She's raving mad, I don't know this woman, don't listen to her. (That meddling baggage alive – I am completely undone! No! She can't prove her case)

**ZOE**

This villain cast myself and Little Lucy out into the snow to die.

**ALL**

Oh! Villain!

**ZOE**

I carried the babe as far as the forest, then almost exhausted I wrapped her in my cloak, put my locket around her neck, tucked her safely into the hollow of a blasted oak tree and set out to cross the blasted heath, it was the 13<sup>th</sup> of December seventeen years ago.

**ALL**

St Lucy's Day!

**HOR**

On that date at that time, my Mama and I were driving north, to spend Christmas with my Uncle. We took a short cut across a blasted heath and past the edge of a dense forest. James heard a baby crying and we followed the sound into the forest and found a bay in the hollow of a blasted oak tree, wrapped in a cloak and wearing that locket. My Mama name the child Linda in memory of a little daughter who had died.

**DAN**

We found Zoe on the morning of December the 15<sup>th</sup> at the edge of the blasted heath, she was huddled against a wall in a flock of sheep, their warmth saved her life. She was ill for months and her memory has gone until this moment.

**ZOE**

Now I remember everything. That is Lucinda, named for me, Lucinda De Reske. My father was French, my mother English and while they were alive we lived in both countries. Later we ...

**HOR**

We?

**ZOE**

I and my sister, Marianne, who married Vernon Loverton. We have no relatives left and Vernon had only one half-brother – you, Sebastian Scavenger. Lucinda was but a few weeks old when Marianne and Vernon were drowned and I decided to bring their child to England to make claim to Vernon's estate for her. That monster met us, all tears and sympathy. Whisked us off to the north so that no-one knew we were in England or that the child existed. He wanted the fortune for himself, he is a would-be murderer and a thief.

**ALL**

Oh! Oh! Oh! The wicked dastard.

**SEB**

Hold on! I haven't touched a penny of the inheritance – can't, because it is held in trust until the day on which the brat will have her eighteenth birthday. What is more, my fine lady, there is only your word that this brat is Lucinda Loverton.

**NELL**

Who else would have been tucked into a hollow tree on exactly that date! You're a real villain – I knew it as soon as I met you.

**ESME**

Give me the locket...I see a tree, a tree with names on the branches, what does this mean?

**ZOE**

The family tree, Little Lucy's lineage is traced on the back of my portrait in the locket.

**HOR**

Give me the picture...it is as you say Zoe, Linda is Lucinda Loverton and an heiress.

**LIN**

Oh Aunty! Oh Tom! It will be nice to have a dowry, even though I know now that we can live on love.

**TOM**

I don't mind trying.

**ZOE**

And I'm not married, never was married. (I could have married Horace and been happy all these long years). The ring belonged to Marianne; I kept it for Lucy.

**HOR**

What ring does she mean, Dan?

**ESME**

We thought that she was married because when we found her she was wearing a wedding ring. That is why we left and never returned.

**HOR**

Oh my darling love, my Zoe, how you must have suffered, can you ever forgive me?

**ZOE**

I can forgive you anything if you will learn to love me again. And my name is Lucinda my dear.

**HOR**

You will always be Zoe to me my little gypsy. I love you and have never loved another, believe me.

**ZOE**

I do.

**HOR**

We have waited sixteen long years to be together, let us not waste this time talking.

**TOM**

We'll hand this dastard over to the law charged with attempted murder and robbery.

**LIN**

No Tom, I cannot have my Papa's half-brother put into a prison.

**HOR**

And I won't have him in England.

**TOM**

And I won't trust myself near him so...

**SEB**

May I make a suggestion? I cannot live in poverty. I cannot bear to go to prison. I hate the English climate and I need new horizons. I will become a remittance man and go to Australia. I hear that the climate is salubrious and the soil of the Swan River colony ideal for vineyards. I will devote myself to promoting Madeira wine.

**DAN**

On your way you dastard.

**ALL**

*Each speaking the name of their beloved*

Oh Dan! Oh Esmeralda! Oh Tom! Oh Linda! Oh Nellie! Oh Willie! Oh Zoe! Oh Horace! I just want to say:

*SONG: I'll Be Your Sweetheart*

*REPRISE: Ladies of the Chorus*