

Act 1

Scene 1: Victorian Life Christmas 1855. Visual and Audio Montage. Narrator (Voice Over). Nanna (Voice Over). Doctor Brindley (Voice Over). Five Sisters – Elizabeth, Charlotte, Alma, Mary, Trixy (all the sisters are Voice Over).

As audience are entering theatre Victorian scenes, sounds and music greet them as a visual and audio montage (photographic projections, sound and music (choirs singing carols)).

The photographs are a mixture of establishing shots of Victorian life – the landscape, the factories – more general scene; and scenes of the five sisters' (Elizabeth, Charlotte, Alma, Mary, Trixy) family life with their mother and father and nanny.

When all audience are seated and ready:

OFF STAGE

Narrator: Life is illusion. One moment you feel your surroundings are real, the next moment fear and doubt take hold. Queen Victoria, at the tender age of 18, inherited the throne to one of the largest Empires seen by mankind. Great Britain had witnessed a huge expansion of wealth, power, and culture.

Yet, all is not what it seemed in this age of a second English Renaissance. The working class remained shut out from the political process, whilst the upper class maintained control over the political system. The middle class were becoming increasingly powerful, enjoying a more comfortable way of life. New Factories and industries allowed the middle class across the land to take time off work to celebrate the winter festivities.

This story commences at Christmas time of 1855. But there would be no goose, no tree and no Christmas presents for the five sisters of Berkeley Square, London. For they had suffered their own misfortune...

OFF STAGE

Nanna: *(Calling)* Come here girls! Doctor Brindley has certain news to inform you of.

Elizabeth: What is it Nanna?

Nanna: Elizabeth, you must wait until *all* your sisters are present. *(Calling)* Charlotte, Alma, Mary, Beatrice! Where are...

Charlotte: Yes Nanna? What is it?

Nanna: Charlotte, must you charge about like that? And you, Alma and Mary always looking unkempt. Ah, little Beatrice...

Trixy: Is it a Christmas game Nanna?

Nanna: No Beatrice. Doctor Brindley has some distressing news I'm afraid.

Doctor Brindley: Thank you Nanny. Girls, I have to tell you that your mother has passed away during the night.

We hear the sisters react with gasps.

Elizabeth: What? No! It is not so!

Nanna: Now, now, girls. I know this must be upsetting for you.

Mary: (*Angrily*) Where is mother?

Nanna: All the necessary arrangements have been made. You are to stay with...

Charlotte: (*Angrily*) All the necessary arrangements! Where is mother!

Nanna: As I say all the necessary arrangements have been made. You are to stay with your Auntie in the country for a while until the time of the funeral.

Elizabeth: But Nanna, it is just that... It has happened so suddenly... we knew mother was poorly but ... to die. We would wish to see her one last time.

Nanna: ...that is not possible because...

Doctor Brindley: ...because I have had your mother taken to the hospital.

Nanna: Yes, your mother will be at peace there.

Charlotte: But what of father? He will want to come back.

Doctor Brindley: We have already sent word to the front line. It may be hard for him to return so suddenly.

Nanna: Quickly now children, you must pack only the bare essentials, the train leaves shortly. You are to travel north, from Kings Cross to the small village of... of...

Doctor Brindley: ... of Orfeian...

Nanna: ... of Orfeian where you will be meet by your Auntie. She has kindly agreed to look after you.

Elizabeth: But you are not to accompany us Nanna?

Nanna: No my dear. I have other concerns. You will be safe enough. You must look after your siblings now.

Elizabeth: You will send word of the funeral?

Nanna: Yes my child, it is what your mother would have wanted.

Trixy: Elizabeth, will everything be alright?

Elizabeth: Yes, Trixy, everything will be fine. Come now, let us pack. We have a long journey ahead.

BLACK OUT

Act I

Scene 2: Journey into Orfeian: a crowded train station. Exterior. Elizabeth, Charlotte, Alma, Mary, Trixy. Children of all ages and class.

FADE UP TO MID LEVEL LIGHT

Enter Elizabeth, Charlotte, Alma, Mary, Trixy carrying luggage. They have never been on a train before and are overwhelmed by the excitement of all the commotion. They each begin to mix with the different groups and wander in and out until one particular group begins to notice them (Milly and Molly begin talking to the sisters whilst Nelly keeps back and just watches).

Milly: Oh look, more posh chavies. (*Milly knocks Charlotte's hat from her head, it falls to Molly who picks it up*)

Charlotte: Hey! (*Tries to get hat back*)

Molly: A fine hat, if ever I saw one.

Charlotte: Yes, and it's mine. Please may I have it back?

Milly: Manners too! We've a right stuck up one here!

Elizabeth: (*defending*) Her name is Charlotte, this is Alma and Mary, and this is Beatrice but we call her Trixy.

Molly: A whole gang of 'em!

Elizabeth: We are sisters. My name is Elizabeth, pleased to meet you.

Milly & Molly: (*friendly mocking – curtsying*) Oh, pleased to meet you too! (*Molly hands back Charlotte's hat*)

Milly: I'm Milly and she's Molly.

Elizabeth: We are one our way to stay with our Auntie.

Milly: Auntie?

Molly: Auntie?

Milly: You've family?

Elizabeth: (*looking sad*) Well, yes... we have an Auntie we are staying with. Only for a couple of weeks.

Molly: Then what are you doing in this queue?

Milly: Yes, children with families shouldn't queue 'ere!

Charlotte: Why ever not? We have money for our tickets.

Milly & Molly: (*excited*) Money!

Milly: Well, why didn't you say! (*Milly signals to Molly to tell Nelly. Molly gets Nelly*)

Nelly: You must be Elizabeth. Milly was just explaining your ... circumstance. My name is Nelly. How very, very upsetting. I could be of some help you know.

Charlotte: Upsetting? What would you know?

Nelly: Charlotte? Well, Charlotte, from your clothes I would say you are from a wealthy family, right? Of which you must have a nanny. Your nanny must have good cause to send you away to your Auntie on your own.

Charlotte: We could just be visiting.

Nelly: Travelling on your own? Your father must be fighting in the war. So, as logic has it, your nanny must be taking care of your dead mother.

Sisters begin to get upset on mention of their mother.

Elizabeth: Now steady on, Nelly. What right do you have upsetting us like that!

Nelly: It is elementary and I have every right.

Milly: We're in this line for a reason. Just like all the other poor sods.

Molly: We're on our own too.

Elizabeth: You mean...

Nelly: That's right Dutchess, we ain't got no folks neither.

(Pause)

Elizabeth: Oh, Milly, Molly... Nelly, we are all terribly...

Nelly: Upset for us?

Elizabeth: Yes.

Nelly: Ah, save it. It don't matter no more. One day you 'ave parents, the next day you ain't. One day it's all warm and soft inside, next it's just plain numb.

Charlotte: But that's awful.

Nelly: Yeah, you'll get used to it. Where does this Auntie of yours live anyhow?

Trixy: We are going on a train.

Nelly: *(moves close to Trixy)* How sweet! We're all going on the train. Where does your Auntie live?

Trixy: In a big house!

Alma: *(protectively)* Our Auntie lives in a small village in the north called Orfeian.

Nelly starts laughing and signals to Milly and Molly who then starts laughing too.

Mary: *(protectively)* What is so funny!

Nelly: Your Auntie lives at Orfeian village!

Milly: Orfeian Village!

Molly: Orfeian...

Elizabeth: *(firmly)* Yes, Orfeian Village. What is so funny about that?

Nelly, Milly and Molly are still laughing.

Nelly: *(still laughing)* Orfeian Village. *(sisters look blank)* Or-fei-an Village.
(sisters still look blank) Orphan Village!

Elizabeth: You mean... there is no village?

Nelly: Oh, Elizabeth my dear. There is a village but there ain't no Auntie.

Song 1: **There's a place!**
Sung by Nelly, Milly, Molly, Elizabeth and Chorus - Orphans

Intro: *(spoken but musical)*

Nelly: *(pretend posh)* Elizabeth, my dear...

Milly: *(pretend posh)* ...it seems...

Molly: *(pretend posh)* ...and would appear...

Nelly: *(pretend posh)* ...that you misunderstand, the very nature of your predicament...

Verse 1:

Nelly: There's a place, a secret place
Where no one will know your pretty face
Milly: Now you may wonder, why you're asunder
From your loved ones and polite society
Molly: 'Cos there's a place, a dangerous place
Where no one will be able to trace

Chorus 1:

All on stage: Be scared of the orphan village
Not sisters Be worried of who you might see!
Be scared of the orphan village
Be aware that no one is free!

Verse 2:

Nelly: You see my dear, it is so clear
That from now on you simply disappear!
Milly: There's a place, a mysterious place
Where children are sent who fall from grace
Molly: The ruling classes, no hue and cry
Use the village to hide their sordid lie!

Chorus 2:

All on stage: Be scared of the orphan village
Not sisters Be assured that you're trapped good and proper!
Be scared of the orphan village
Be sad you and your sisters have come a cropper!

Verse 3:

Elizabeth: There is a place? A shameful place?
Where life is crude and rude and in bad taste?
Yes, I do wonder! My face like thunder!
Why we're caught and brought and sold like desperate slaves.
I do not believe, our Nanna would leave,
Us to beg and steal like common thieves!

Chorus 3:

All on stage: Be scared of the orphan village
Not sisters Be afraid of the things they will do!
Be scared of the orphan village
My dears, they are most certainly coming for you!

The Sisters of Berkeley Square written by Ken Boyter, lyrics written by Ken Boyter,
music by Jean Boyter and Ken Boyter

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Dance 1:

During song all the characters present on stage apart from sisters – chorus, Nelly, Milly and Molly to begin. Then the sisters are shown how to dance the dance – after Verse 3 and before Chorus 3

BLACK OUT

Act I

Scene 3: Orfeian Village Train Station. Exterior. Elizabeth, Charlotte, Alma, Mary, Trixy, Nelly, Milly, Molly, Children of all ages and class.

FADE UP TO MID LEVEL LIGHT

Steam and commotion (sound effects train pulling up, whistles, maybe a guard shouting 'Orfeian Village' off stage etc), are present on stage.

The orphan children (noisy), including sisters, enter with their luggage.

Charlotte: Elizabeth, are we really staying with our Auntie?

Elizabeth: I'm not sure Charlotte. Nanna said we were. She would not lie to us.

Mary: How can you be so sure?

Trixy: Where is Auntie?

Alma: Auntie is not here yet, Trixy. I expect she has been held up.

Elizabeth: Yes, maybe the weather has been bad and the country roads are impassable.

Mary: Or Nelly was right and Auntie does not really exist and we are going to that horrible place!

Trixy gets upset.

Elizabeth: *(firmly)* Mary!

Mary: Well, where is this Auntie of ours?

Charlotte: Maybe Mary is right. Nanna was acting strangely and why *has* she not come with us?

Elizabeth: As Nanna said, she had arrangement to attend to.

Mary: I do not remember any Auntie anyway.

Charlotte: Nor do I.

Elizabeth: All I know is we are to wait for our Auntie. She will be here, you will see.

Trixy: *(tearful)* I am scared. Where is mother?

Elizabeth picks up Trixy and hugs her.

Elizabeth: Trixy darling, mother is sleeping now.

Trixy: I want mother.

Elizabeth: Mother is in Heaven, peaceful and resting.

Elizabeth hugs Trixy again, and puts her down. Elizabeth then takes a silver photo frame with a photo of the sisters' mother in it. Elizabeth hands this to Trixy.

Elizabeth: This is for you.

Trixy: *(delighted)* Mother!

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*All of a sudden, a commotion breaks out. The **orphan children** begin to scream and rush about. The sisters are a little slow to react. **Elizabeth** calls out to **Molly** who is running:*

Elizabeth: What is going on?

Molly: You'd better scarper. The orphan snatchers are coming!

***Elizabeth** grabs **Trixy** and begins to run shouting:*

Elizabeth: Charlotte, Alma, Mary, follow me.

***Alma** and **Mary** follow **Elizabeth** with **Trixy** in arms off stage, **Charlotte** stumbles and falls:*

Charlotte: Elizabeth! Help!

BLACK OUT

Act I

Scene 4: Lost in the woods. Twilight. Exterior. Elizabeth, Alma, Mary, Trixy, The Seekers

FADE UP TO TWILIGHT LIGHT

The sisters have been walking for a time. They are tired, cold, hungry and scared. They have lost their luggage in the commotion at the station. They are lost in a menacing wood. It is now twilight. Throughout this scene darkness falls so that at end it is completely dark for night has fallen.

Trixy: Are we there yet?

Elizabeth: No, sweet pea. Just a little further.

Trixy: I am hungry.

Elizabeth: I know Trixy, I know.

Trixy: I am tired too!

Mary: *(sulky)* We are *all* hungry and there is no there!

Alma: Mary!

Mary: What? It is true. We have been walking in this wood for ages and it feels like we have been going around in circles. Our luggage is lost at the station and you do not know where we are!

(Pause)

Elizabeth: We will rest here for a while but we need to find Charlotte quickly before it gets too dark.

Mary: *(sarcastically)* We need to find Charlotte! We need to find Charlotte! All it ever is is Charlotte.

Elizabeth: Trixy, sweet pea?

Trixy: Yes.

Elizabeth: You see that big, strong tree over there? *(Elizabeth points off stage)*

Trixy: That one, the really big one?

Elizabeth: That is the one! How would you like a special Trixy task?

Trixy: Yes please, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth: Well, we need you to climb half way up that tree to look for a river. Do you think you can manage that?

Trixy: Easy, of course I can!

Elizabeth: Good girl. Off you go and have a really good look.

Trixy runs off stage.

Alma: Is that a good idea?

Elizabeth: She will be fine. Trixy is the best at climbing.

(Pause)

Elizabeth takes a deep breath and walks purposefully up to Mary.

Elizabeth: Now Mary, are you cold?

Mary: Yes.

Elizabeth: Are you hungry.

Mary: You know I am.

Elizabeth: Are you tired?

Mary: Yes, but what has...

Elizabeth: Are you on your own?

Mary: What? Of course not. I'm with you and Alma and Trixy and Char...

Mary realises Elizabeth's point.

Mary: *(outburst of sobs and tears)* Elizabeth, I am sorry. It is just that I am upset and scared. *(Mary sinks to the floor)* It has all happened so fast... mother dieing then Charlotte being taken...

Elizabeth rushes to Mary and kneels and hugs her.

Elizabeth: I know Mary, I know... let it out, let it all out.

Mary: *(sobs and tears)* It is hopeless, hopeless. We have lost mother, Charlotte ... now we are lost ... we have no food.

Elizabeth hugs a tearful Mary. After a while (10 seconds), Alma speaks:

Alma: Maybe Mary is right. Maybe we will not find Charlotte. Maybe the orphan snatchers have gone a long way by now. And we will be left here, all alone.

Alma sinks to the floor too next Elizabeth and Mary. There is a feeling of hopelessness. They are downstage.

LIGHTS DIM on sisters.

*Up stage, a figure appears and walks along the stage (not looking at sisters). This is **The Traveller** and she has been tracking the sisters (the audience need not know who this figure is yet as all will be revealed in Act I Scene 5). **The Traveller** is singing the song to herself but the sisters take comfort from it as though the song is carried through the trees.*

SPOT LIGHT on The Traveller

Song 2:

What hope is there?

Sung by The Traveller

Do you know the birds will sing their song?

Do you know the breeze is in the trees?

Is it so that night will follow day?

Think, what hope is there? Have faith.

Would you guess the sun will rise again?

Could you guess the flowers bloom in spring?
Are you sure the fish will swim once more?

Just ask, what hope is there? Have faith.

Do you wonder why the stars come out at night?
Do you doubt the bees will make their honey?
May you dream of love and peace

And ask, what hope is there? Have faith.

Let light be your guide in times of strife
Let love teach you how to lead your life
Happiness will surly find you home

And say, there is hope and faith.

Let light be your guide in times of strife
Let love teach you how to lead your life
Happiness will surly find you home

And say, there is hope and faith.

*After the Second Song, **Trixy** comes running in:*

Trixy: Elizabeth, Alma, Mary! They are here, they are coming!

***Trixy** naturally stands behind **Elizabeth** for comfort and protection but watches **The Seekers** dance.*

Dance 2:

***The Seekers** (a group of blind clairvoyants girls are highly tuned into the 'vibes' of the souls of every human) enter stage and dance a spiritual and mythic dance around the sisters.*

Seeker 1: ...pain is present...

Seeker 2: ...distress and misery...

Seeker 3: ...upset and guilt...

Seeker 4: ...hunger and fear...

Seeker 5: ...you carry the weight of all...

Seeker 6: ...joy has abandoned your hearts...

Elizabeth: Who... who ... are ... you?

Seeker 1: ...we are the light...

Seeker 2: ...we are the dark...

Seeker 3: ...we are the thoughts you have not had...

Seeker 4: ...we are the sound...

Seeker 5: ...we are the touch...

Seeker 6: ...we are the truth that you seek... we are the seekers...

Elizabeth: What do you want with us? We wish you no harm!

Seeker 1: ...it is not a case of what we want with you...

Seeker 2: ... but what you will find from us...

Mary: We want you to go away!

Elizabeth: *(to Mary)* Mary!

Seeker 3: ...your commands are meaningless...

Seeker 4: ...there is great sorrow...

Seeker 5: ...ask and you shall seek...

Seeker 6: ...seek and you shall ask...

Alma: Where is our sister lost sister?

Seeker 1: ...Charlotte is the land of marsh...

Alma: How did you know her name?

Seeker 2: ...we see far...

Seeker 3: ...even if our flesh eyes have long since withered...

Elizabeth: Is Charlotte safe?

Seeker 4: ...Charlotte is safe...

Seeker 5: ...for now...

Seeker 6: ...yes, safe is safe...

Elizabeth: For now?

Seeker 1: ...all events happen in unison...

Seeker 2: ...what has happened has also not happened...

Seeker 3: ...and what will not happen will happen...

Mary: Is she in danger?

Seeker 4: ...danger is present...

Seeker 5: ...and danger can pass...

Seeker 6: ...the future can be influenced...

Mary: What does that mean?

Elizabeth: I think the seekers mean Charlotte is in danger but we can change her future.

Alma: We have to find her!

Elizabeth: Can you show us the way to the marshlands you speak of?
Seeker 1: ...the marshlands are fraught with extreme peril...
Elizabeth: But can you show us where it is?
Seeker 2: ...there is another in great distress...
Seeker 3: ...an older female...
Seeker 4: ...a female who needs comfort and help...
Seeker 5: ...she is calling out to her loved ones...
Seeker 6: ...she is your mother...

(Pause)

The sisters are momentarily stunned.

Elizabeth: But, mother is dead. She is heaven.
Alma: Yes, Nanna told us so.
Seeker 1: ...the truth did not pass her lips...
Elizabeth: I do not understand. Why would Nanna lie to us?
Seeker 2: ...what is hidden remains so...
Mary: Maybe Nanna has planned all of this so she can get our house and money!
Seeker 3: ...others have killed for less...
Alma: Then where is our mother?
Seeker 4: ...she is calling for you all...
Seeker 5: ...from where you love the most...
Trixy: Home!
Seeker 6: ...your spirit is pure, so pure...
Elizabeth: What should we do? Charlotte is lost and mother needs us!
Seeker 1: ...you must search deep inside...
Seeker 2: ...trust your oneness with all life...
Seeker 3: ...there is a known chosen one...
Seeker 4: ...she has powers beyond this realm...
Mary: What do you mean 'beyond this realm'? All these mystery!
Seeker 5: ...you would do well to hold your council, Mary...
Seeker 6: ...for one who talks, does not listen...

Elizabeth: Forgive us. We are confused and desperate for your help.

Seeker 1: ...we can help no more...

Seeker 2: ...our shadows grow near...

Seeker 3: ...the place you seek is called Orphan Village...

Mary: We should get back to the train station and help mother.

Seeker 4: ...that is not possible now...

Seeker 5: ...you have passed into a land outside your natural laws of time...

Seeker 6: ...one who can use her powers can save you...

Mary: Powers! Natural laws of time! What is this place!

Elizabeth: I'm not sure Mary, but for now we have to trust the seekers. Unless you have another idea?

(Pause)

Mary remains silent.

The Seekers begin to melt away...(mist swirls around them)

Elizabeth: *(calling)* How can we find this village?

Seeker 1: ...there is a traveller who visits us...

Seeker 2: ...and brings us provisions...

Seeker 3: ...she is our flesh eyes...

Seeker 4: ...seek and you shall ask...

Seeker 5: ...ask and you shall seek...

Seeker 6: ...for all things are connected...

The Seekers have melted away into the background...

(Pause)

Mary: What do we do now?

Elizabeth: We wait...

Trixy begins to yawn and stretch.

Elizabeth: ...and sleep.

The sisters get comfy and go to sleep.

FADE TO BLACK

Act I

Scene 5: The Visitation. Early Morning. Woods. Exterior. Elizabeth, Alma, Mary, Trixy, Vrykolakas, Vôrdană, The Traveller.

FADE UP TO MORNING MIST LIGHTS

The sleeping sisters are hugged tightly by early morning mist. From nowhere, with stealth and precision, several vrykolakas begin to examine the sleeping sisters. They are careful and curious, but they do not touch. It is as if they are the tendrils to a much more powerful being, exploring and sensing their new found possessions.

Out of the fabric of life, a tall mysterious figure emerges, Vôrdană. She slowly raises one of her long, spindly arms and begins to pull. Elizabeth stirs, she begins to get up, she appears to be in a trance, as she slowly walks towards the strange figure, Vôrdană. All the while Elizabeth is trying to wake up, she manages to do so:

Elizabeth: Where am I?

Vôrdană: You are where you belong my child...

Elizabeth: Who are you?

Vôrdană: Do you not recognise me child? I am your mother...come with me...

Elizabeth: Mother? Is it really you?

Vôrdană: Follow child... I have missed you...

Elizabeth: I have missed you too mother. We thought you were dead.

Vôrdană: Then follow child... follow us now...

Elizabeth: Why mother? Why must I follow? What about the others?

Vôrdană: Let them sleep... follow us now my child...

Elizabeth: And Charlotte, she is lost and in danger.

Vôrdană: It matters not... all that matters is you follow us child...

Elizabeth: *(thinking)* Follow us now? *(realisation)* You are not my mother!

Vôrdană: Do not cross me child...

Elizabeth: My mother would never leave the others. *(Pause)* What magic and trickery is this!

BLACK OUT

QUICK FULL WHITE LIGHTS (Loud thunder and lightning) – still see Vôrdană

BLACK OUT – vrykolakas and Vôrdană off stage

**QUICK FULL WHITE LIGHTS (Loud thunder and lightning)
– New figure (The Traveller) standing in place of Vôrdană**

BLACK OUT

Act I

Scene 6: The Traveller. Early Morning. Woods. Exterior. Elizabeth, Alma, Mary, Trixy, The Traveller.

FADE FROM BLACK TO EARLY MORNING LIGHT SLOWLY

– The Traveller is fully visible where Vôrdană stood.

Elizabeth is scared. She keeps staring at the figure.

The Traveller: Good day to you.

Elizabeth is too scared to reply. The Traveller moves closer.

The Traveller: You are wise to be cautious. There are hazards in these woods.

Elizabeth is still too scared to reply.

The Traveller: I have been tracking you.

Elizabeth: Tracking us?

The Traveller: I picked up your scent. It is a long time since I smelt human.

Elizabeth: You have changed.

The Traveller: Changed?

Elizabeth: Yes, you were pretending to be my mother.

The Traveller: You have been hallucinating. Best you keep off the berries.

Elizabeth: Keep away from us!

The Traveller: I am no spirit, no ghoul, no creature of the marshlands.

Elizabeth: You know of the marshlands?

The Traveller: They are seeped with danger. I do not hail from there.

Elizabeth: But there are... creatures... that do?

The Traveller: Yes, they are the Gylloudes or the Vrykolakas to some. They answer to one. Her name is Vôrdană.

Elizabeth: She must be the one I saw!

The Traveller: It is believed that Vôrdană is a spirit existing in both our worlds and the realm of the Heavens, taking the life force from all she meets.

Elizabeth: Why did she let me go?

The Traveller: You were lucky. What is the way of your nature in this land?

Elizabeth: My sisters and I are lost. We were tricked. I'm not sure how we got here. We were on the train and when we alighted we were chased.

The Traveller: The snatchers.

Elizabeth: You know them?

The Traveller: I know of them. They keep to their village. I have no quarrel with them now.

Elizabeth: They took our sister, Charlotte. Will you lead us to this village?

The Traveller: *(laughs)* Why would I risk my life for you?

Elizabeth: The seekers said you would help.

The Traveller: I bring them food but they have no rights over me. I am free of all authority.

Elizabeth: Then at least tell me where the village is. We are hungry and cold.

The Traveller: You will find no comfort there. *(The Traveller takes out some food from her pack and hands it to Elizabeth)*

Elizabeth: Thank you. You are kind.

The Traveller: That village belongs to the realm of humans. I do not wish to encounter too many of them!

Elizabeth looks upset.

The Traveller: Thousands of years ago, humans were welcomed into this land. We gave them food and shelter. We taught them magic, shared our technology. But they became greedy. They plundered our resources. They violated nature. In their lust for wealth and power they attacked our peoples. We had no choice but to defend ourselves against such savages. We managed to drive them back into their world. Some were left to wander the lands.

Elizabeth: I'm sorry.

(Pause)

The Traveller: Look, I mean you no harm, girl. What is your name?

Elizabeth: I am Elizabeth. We live at Berkeley Square in London.

The Traveller: I am known as the Traveller. You must be a long way from home then. I have not heard that place be spoken of in years.

Elizabeth: You know of it, you know London?

The Traveller: Yes, but it is not of my world.

Elizabeth: Are there many of your world?

The Traveller: There are a few. Most keep themselves to themselves. Small villages and settlements are scattered across the lands.

Elizabeth: Are you from one of those?

The Traveller: *(smiles)* No.

Elizabeth: *(sensing The Traveller is uncomfortable)* What is this world?

The Traveller: It is a world with many names. The Shape shifters call it Tir-Nan-ōg, whilst the Demtracs have named it Tir Tairngiré. It is a land where your people only exist in our dreams. Some cross to live amongst us. At first they were unable to accept certain natural laws that construct our world. Magic and illusion are real. Here, time can be suspended. Shaman heal with the power

of thought. Great sorceresses and necromancers roam freely to practice their art.

Elizabeth: And what do your people call it?

The Traveller: My people are no more. I am alone.

Song 3: **Heaven's Heart**
Sung by The Traveller

Keep walking in the wilderness
To be met by fear and doubt
Never knowing what to say
When my life has been without
A damaged world with a painful past
Fractured souls unable to last

I cried for Heaven's heart, cried for Heaven's heart

Darkness turns to light
As the white candles burn
Greeting pleasure as a friend
I shook its hand to learn
He spoke by firelight
Words burned my heart so bright

I cried for Heaven's heart, cried for Heaven's heart

I watched a thousand souls
Each one cut so deep
Our world ran with rivers of red
What we sowed we did reap
Ancient ruins lay across the land
I walk in the wilderness
Alone I stand

I cried for Heaven's heart, cried for Heaven's heart

I search for no redemption
For peace knows my name
Keep walking in the wilderness
Demons I try to tame
Enclosed in nature's hand
Light wraps me tight, alone and where I stand

I cry for Heaven's heart, cry for Heaven's heart

Elizabeth: *(softly)* Will you guide us to the village? We must find our sister and get back to our mother.

The Traveller: *(grumpy)* It is not on my usual route.

Elizabeth: We are desperate. We know of no other who can help.

The Traveller: I do not want trouble. People with sense keep away from that place.

Elizabeth: Charlotte is alone.

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(Pause)

The Traveller: *(reluctantly)* Wake the others. We leave immediately...

FADE TO BLACK

Act I

Scene 7: The Orphan Village. Exterior. Elizabeth, Alma, Mary, Trixy, The Traveller, Orphan children, Boniface, Grismond.

FADE UP TO MORNING LIGHTS

Dance 3:

*Scene opens with a colourful dance with several groups of girls in the in the Orphan Village. Towards the end of dance, the **Traveller** leads the **sisters** into the Orphan Village. The **sisters** look overwhelmed. Song 4 begins... (Dance 3 continues whilst singing)*

Song 4:

Is it right when things ain't right?

Sung by Chorus (Orphan Village Children)

Is it right when things ain't right
To shun your fellow human?
Is it right when things ain't right
Think twice, don't be a fool man!
Is it right when things ain't right
To lose your sense of purpose?
Is it right when things ain't right
When all they do is hurt us?

Chorus:

We are the children of the orphan village
Nobody loves us now
We are the children of the orphan village
Pleased to meet you, let us bow!

Is it right when things ain't right
For children to go missing?
Is it right when things ain't right
To shout but they ain't lis'nin'?
Is it right when things ain't right
For us to be mistreated?
Is it right when things ain't right
To know you you've been defeated?

Chorus:

We are the children of the orphan village
Nobody loves us now
We are the children of the orphan village
Pleased to meet you, let us bow!

Chorus:

We are the children of the orphan village
Nobody loves us now
We are the children of the orphan village
Pleased to meet you, let us bow!

The Traveller:

(to the sisters) I must leave you now.

Elizabeth:

Will you not come see the rest of the village?

The Traveller:

No, there is nothing for me here.

Alma:

But we have not thanked you.

Mary:

Yes, thank you so much.

Trixy:

This village looks fun!

The Traveller: (*kindly*) To leave you in such a place runs against my nature. Mark my words, only evil haunts this village. Be careful you do not trade in fools' gold.

Elizabeth: Thank you. Your kindness has touched us. Without you we would never have found our way. May your journeys bring you much happiness.

The Traveller: Godspede.

*The sisters wave **The Traveller** as she departs. Meanwhile **Boneface** and **Grismond** (two orphan village children) have been watching the **sisters** with some interest. **Boneface** and **Grismond** approach the **sisters**:*

Boneface: Good day to you and what a fine day it is. Allow me to introduce myself. I am the fabled, the most desired, the most renowned, the most...

Grismond: Modest!

Boneface: (*gives **Grismond** a big whack*) ...the most courteous Dr Boneface, at your service (*takes a big bow*).

The sisters react with giggles and curiosity.

***Grismond** makes an 'excuse me' cough.*

Boneface: Oh yes, this is **Grismond**.

Grismond: I'm **Grismond**, and I am the most...

***Boneface** covers **Grismond's** mouth with her hand. **Grismond** continues to talk but it is muffled.*

Boneface: You'll find we offer the most varied of services on offer.

Elizabeth: Well, pleased to meet you both. My name is Elizabeth.

Trixy: I am Trixy!

Mary: I am Mary and this is Alma.

***Boneface** uncovers **Grismond's** mouth. **Grismond** has continued to talk:*

Grismond: (*bit upset*) ...and the most patient **Grismond**!

*Everyone looks at him. **Grismond** grins back. **Boneface** carries on as though **Grismond** isn't there.*

Boneface: (*to the sisters*) Charmed, I'm sure you are.

Elizabeth: You mentioned services?

Boneface: Indeed I did Elizabeth. I did indeed. You'll find no one cheaper, that's a Dr Boneface guarantee.

Grismond: What about Master Mogget of Old Mogget's Way? He's nearly 40 per cent cheaper.

Boneface: Excuse me ladies for just one moment.

Boniface walks over to **Grismond**. Takes **Grismond's** top hat off her head, spins it in her hands, replaces it on **Grismond's** head and pushed it down as far as it goes. **Boniface** walks calmly back to the sisters.

Boniface: Here is my card.

Boniface hands one to each of the girls.

Elizabeth: (*reading*) Mrs Frapton's Tea Rooms. Feeling hungry? Come taste the finest scones and creamiest buns. Queen Victoria loves them! Will deliver.

Boniface: Er... ah, try this one.

Elizabeth: (*reading*) 'Dr W.B. Boniface, gentelady extraordinaire. If we can't do it, we know someone who does do it!' Well I'm not sure what it is you do.

Boniface: It is more a case of what we don't do. Our services range from food gathering to food recycling; water carrying to water recycling; tours of the village; tours outside the village; health care to health protection!

Mary: Health protection?

Grismond: We stop you getting bashed up!

Alma: Bashed up? From whom?

Grismond: Us!

Boniface: Er... excuse my associate, she gets a little excited when she meets new money... er... new people.

Elizabeth: Well, if we need any of your services we know how to get hold of you.

Boniface: Elizabeth, we are both girls of the world, well at least of different worlds. You see, it's all different here. In the orphan village the rulebook has been burnt.

Grismond: (*proudly*) I did that.

Boniface: Normal values don't apply anymore.

Alma: How do you mean?

Boniface: Alma, there are simply no adults!

The sisters look amazed – a new concept.

Boniface: Under such circumstances, a certain natural law has occurred.

Grismond: Muscle power!

Boniface: Now you must be hungry and sleepy?

Elizabeth: Yes we are. We have had what little food the traveller gave us but we wanted to get here as quickly as possible.

Boniface: You *wanted* to come here?

Mary: Yes, our sister is missing and we think she is being held here.

Boniface: I see your predicament.

Elizabeth: Her name is Charlotte Alice Orchard. Have you seen her?

Boniface: A mystery? Intriguing. Grismond, get them to put 'detective' on my card.

Elizabeth: Can you help us?

Boniface: It's elementary my dear. You do have money?

Elizabeth: Yes, the remainder of our train fair.

Boniface: Grismond, kindly relieve these fine ladies of their consultancy fee. Good. As I promise, if we can't do it, we know someone who does do it! Come on Grismond.

Boniface begins to exit.

Grismond: Why, where are we going?

Boniface stops still suddenly, slowly turns and says:

Boniface: To see the Priestess...

BLACK OUT

Act I

Scene 8: Charlotte. Marshlands. Exterior. Charlotte, Gail, Ellyn, Orphan Children, Vordană, Vrykolakas.

FADE UP TO LOW LEVEL SCARRY LIGHTS

*Mist swirls around a group of children huddled together. They are scared and cold. One lone figure is looking into the distance. It is **Charlotte**.*

Song 5:

What hope is there? (Reprise)

Sung by Charlotte

Do I know the birds will sing their song?
Do I know the breeze is in the trees?
Is it so that night will follow day?

Think, what hope is there? Have faith.

Would I guess the sun will rise again?
Could I guess the flowers bloom in spring?
Am I sure the fish will swim once more?

Just ask, what hope is there? Have faith.

I'll let light be my guide in times of strife
I'll let love teach me how to lead your life
Happiness will surly find me home

Charlotte is determined to escape:

Charlotte: We could at least try and escape!

Gail: You know what happened last time Charlotte.

Ellyn: There is no way through. It's magic!

Charlotte: Magic? Do we really believe it is magic?

*No one answers. The **children** have begun to believe that if they talk about it, the magic will do bad things to them.*

Charlotte: *(appealing to them to answer her)* Gail, Ellyn?

Gail: Yes. Of course it is magic. How else to do explain the, the power that keeps us here?

Charlotte: I do not know. But magic? Do you believe in St. Nicholas?

Ellyn: That's just stories to keep children good.

Charlotte: Exactly! St. Nicholas flying through the air using magic. It is not really real.

Gail: Are you saying that this, power, this force is just an illusion?

Charlotte: *(becoming excited)* Maybe it is all in our minds. Maybe we only have to think we are free and we will be!

Ellyn: Do you really think so?

Charlotte: We can try! Everybody stand up. Come on, stand up. This could be our only chance.

All the children stand up

Charlotte: Now all we have to do is think we are free. Think you are back home. Think you are running in fields, swimming in the rivers, just think you are somewhere else.

All the children begin to think.

Charlotte: That right. Think! Now all of you should have your own power to walk through this power. You are free. You are walking through the light.

All of a sudden, quick and graceful, the Vrykolakas dart onstage.

Forth Dance:

The Vrykolakas begin a strange, mystic, ritualistic dance in and around the children. From the Vrykolakas a hissing noise begins to emanate. The children begin to clutch their ears and heads as if in pain. The hissing then turns into song 6:

Song 6:

Vrykolakas!

Sung by the Vrykolakas

Chorus A

From soft hissing
to loud chanting:

Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!

Normal singing:

We are the mist that chills your bones
We are the night that darkens your days
We are the gloom that fills your mind
We are the hiss that tortures your ears!

Chorus A

From soft hissing
to loud chanting:

Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!

Chorus B

Normal singing:

So much terror strikes you dumb
Power magic souls turn numb
In a trance Vôrdană traps
Children frightened like scared rats

Chorus A

From soft hissing
to loud chanting:

Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!

Normal singing:

We are the spirits dark of soul
We are the phantoms of speed and stealth
We are the creatures of your fears
We are the ghosts who haunt your dreams!

Chorus A

From soft hissing
to loud chanting:

Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!

Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!

Chorus B

Normal singing:

So much terror strikes you dumb
Power magic souls turn numb
In a trance Vôrdanã traps
Children frightened like scared rats

Normal singing:

You may try to break the spell
You may find you're trapped in hell
You may see your future self
Twisted, broken, drained of health!

Chorus A

From soft hissing
to loud chanting:

Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!

Chorus A

From soft hissing
to loud chanting:

Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!
Vrykolakas! Vrykolakas!

After the song and dance Vôrdanã appears as a show of its power. It is clear that the children remain under its power.

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT I