

ENCHANTED APRIL:
A Musical

book by
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music by
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based on the novel by
Elizabeth von Arnim

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LOTTY WILKINS - (*early 30s*) - in the beginning is a mousey, dowdy, though, becoming woman who is a "seer" of things. She is candid, sincere and guileless, so much so that it both intrigues, charms and annoys. It's her yearning for a respite from her dreary and loveless life that propels her toward the enchanted April where she blossoms into the confident, strong, desirable woman hidden beneath.

ROSE ARBUTHNOT - (*mid-30s*) - is a rigid, reserved and sad sort of woman constrained by restrictions and duties. She and her husband, whom she is unable to approach, have grown apart since the death of their only child. She longs for a bit of beauty in her life, a rest from her self-imposed obligations.

MRS. FISHER - (*60s*) - is a forthright and solid woman ensconced in a world of dark dusty old things and who is on the verge of being a "dusty old thing" herself. She does not "suffer fools gladly" and is intolerant of impertinence, idiocy and youth, and pines for a place she can sit and forget.

LADY CAROLINE DESTER - (*late 20s*) - a ravishing, yet melancholy beauty who has sustained her despondency with liquor and men, and only the liquor does she embrace. She is tired of her station, her life, her parents, her...everything and aches for a place she can ponder the existential questions facing her.

MELLERSH WILKINS - (*mid to late 30s*) - is a handsome, distinguished and overbearing solicitor. Used to commanding his wife in all things, he has long since discounted her as a lost cause and had found an acceptable state of tolerance. Meticulous in his appearance and ambitious in nature, success and partnership is what he wants.

FREDERICK ARBUTHNOT - (*early 40s*) - is an amiable man hovering on the precipice of middle-age. With a slight paunch and kind face, he is confused by his current relationship with Rose and a bit baffled by her and her "causes." A successful author of lurid novels, Frederick misses his wife...the wife he remembers from their youth and wonders if she will ever return to him.

THOMAS BRIGGS - (*early 30s*) - is a respectable-looking, bespectacled, solitary man. Wealthy, but unassuming, is smitten with Rose upon their first meeting. Assuming she is a war-widow, he wishes for the family and home he's never had, and sees that possibility in Rose.

FRANCESCA - (*50s*) - is San Salvatore's housekeeper and cook. Long-suffering with visitors to Italy, she does her best to feed and understand these odd English people.

ENCHANTED APRIL

SCENE AND SONG LIST AS OF August 2014

ACT ONE

#1--Overture -- ORCHESTRA

Scene One--London -- February 1922

#1A--Opening Act One -- LOTTY, ROSE, MRS. FISHER, LADY CAROLINE

#2--Rain -- LOTTY, ROSE, LADY CAROLINE, MRS. FISHER

#3--Just Think/Wisteria and Sunshine - LOTTY, ROSE

#3b--I See Us There -- ROSE, LOTTY

#3c--Wonderful/Wisteria and Sunshine -- ROSE, LOTTY

Scene Two--Various locations in London

#4--Wisteria & Frederick -- ROSE

#4a--Everything Has Changed -- FREDERICK & ROSE

Scene Three -- The Women's Club

#5--Sixty Pounds! -- ROSE, LOTTY, BRIGGS

Scene Four--Briggs's Home

#5a -- Glance At Me! -- BRIGGS

Scene Five -- Women's Club and Dester & Fisher Home

#6 --I Dare Not Go! -- MRS. FISHER

Scene Six--Wilkins' Flat

#7--A Solicitor's Wife -- MELLERSH

Scene Seven--Victoria Station To Mezzago, Italy)

#8--The Journey -- ROSE, LOTTY, MELLERSH, FREDERICK, FISHER,
LADY CAROLINE, BRIGGS

Scene Eight--San Salvatore

#9--In Dreams -- LOTTY

#10--Alone On A Hill -- LOTTY, ROSE, LADY CAROLINE, MRS. FISHER

#11--Sick Of Beauty -- LADY CAROLINE

#12--Out Of Millions -- LADY CAROLINE & MRS. FISHER

Scene Nine--Dining Room

#13--In Dreams (reprise1) -- LOTTY & ROSE

Scene Ten--Dining Room

#14--I Wish! -- LADY CAROLINE, MRS. FISHER, ROSE, LOTTY

INTERMISSION

ACT TWO

Scene One--The Gardens

#15--For A Week Now -- LADY CAROLINE, ROSE, MRS. FISHER

Scene Two--The Gardens and Main Hall

#16--And Soon Mellersh -- LOTTY

Scene Three--Dining Room

#17--Scene Change

#18--Scene Change

#19--Dearest Frederick -- ROSE & LOTTY

Scene Four--The Gardens

#20--Show Me The View -- LOTTY, MELLERSH

Scene Five--The Gardens

#21--This Feeling -- MRS. FISHER

Scene Six--The Gardens

#22--Glance At Me! (reprise) -- BRIGGS

#23--Old Wisteria Tree -- BRIGGS

#24--She's Blushing -- ROSE, MRS. FISHER

#25--Show Me The View (reprise) -- LADYCAROLINE

Scene Seven -- The Gardens

#26--It's This Place -- ROSE, FREDERICK, MRS. FISHER, LADY CAROLINE, BRIGGS

#27--It's This Place (reprise) -- BRIGGS, LADY CAROLINE, ROSE, FREDERICK, LOTTY,
MELLERSH, MRS. FISHER

#28--Underscore

#29--Finale -- COMPANY

#30--Bows -- COMPANY

ACT I

SCENE 1

LONDON: FEBRUARY, 1922

A SCRIM acts as the curtain. On the SCRIM is a page out of the CLASSIFIEDS of the London Times: "To Those who Appreciate Wisteria and Sunshine. Small medieval Italian Castle on the shores of the Mediterranean to be Let Furnished for the month of April. Necessary servants remain. Z, Box 1000, The Times."

(The lights rise. Through the SCRIM we see dreariness, an almost rain-soaked backdrop of London. There are outlines of buildings, but the outlines are fuzzy, like a watercolor washing away. And the dim but ever-present sound of rain.)

LOTTY WILKINS enters holding an umbrella, drenched, fighting against the rain.)

#1A - I WISH/WISTERIA

LOTTY SINGS:

I WISH!

(She turns and gazes at the ad on the scrim, while, on another part of the stage, a light rises on a Victorian sitting room where MRS. FISHER, lowers her Newspaper.)

MRS FISHER SINGS:

I WISH!

(The luxurious bedroom of LADY CAROLINE DESTER, who lowers her newspaper.)

LADY CAROLINE SINGS:

I WISH!

(The SMOKING ROOM of a WOMEN'S CLUB where ROSE ARBUTHNOT, lowers her newspaper.)

ROSE SINGS:

I WISH!

ALL WOMEN SING:

A VILLA, ITALIAN, NOT TOO FAR FROM ROME.
 WITH SERVANTS AND SEA COAST;
 A SHRINE!
 WITH HILLTOP AND CASTLE AND ACRES TO ROAM;
 LACED WITH WISTERIA AND SUNSHINE!

(A HUGE clap of THUNDER and the ever-present sound of rain.)

#2 - ENDLESS RAINALL WOMEN SING:

RAIN, IT'S ALWAYS RAIN.
 NO SUN AT ALL.
 NO EMPTY DRAIN.

LOTTY SINGS:

WITH FIVE MORE CHORES MY LIST'S COMPLETE.

ROSE SINGS:

TOO MANY DUTIES I MUST MEET.

MRS. FISHER SINGS:

I'LL HAVE TO STAY INSIDE AGAIN.

LADY CAROLINE SINGS:

WHEN DID I EVER LIKE THE RAIN?

ALL WOMEN:

AS IT INVADES MY HOME
 I STAY INSIDE AND CLOSE THE DOOR.

LADY CAROLINE SINGS:

THE RAIN IS SEEPING;

LOTTY AND MRS. FISHER SING:

JUST WEeping ON THE FLOOR.

(They sigh. The scrim rises onto the Women's Club. LOTTY walks in and sits by ROSE.)

LOTTY SINGS:

I CANNOT BREATHE.

LOTTY AND ROSE SING:

I'M THUNDERSTRUCK.

LOTTY, ROSE AND LADY CAROLINE:

I SCREAM INSIDE.

LOTTY, ROSE, LADY CAROLINE AND MRS. FISHER:

I'M ALWAYS STUCK HERE WITH THIS RAIN...

LOTTY, MRS. FISHER AND ROSE SING:
THIS STIFLING RAIN...

LOTTY AND ROSE SING:
THIS ENDLESS RAIN.

(MRS. FISHER and LADY CAROLINE slip back into their original poses as their lights fade. LOTTY and ROSE return to their newspapers. ROSE sighs. LOTTY looks over.)

LOTTY

Are you reading about the medieval castle and the wisteria?

ROSE

Are you speaking to me?

LOTTY

(Nods.)

A-are you reading about the medieval castle and the wisteria?

ROSE

Why would you ask me that?

LOTTY

Because I saw it too, and I thought perhaps, I thought that somehow, perhaps.... And I know you. You're Mrs. Arbuthnot. I see you, every Sunday. I see you in church every Sunday. You march in the poor and the needy.

ROSE

Well, I don't think I "march" them in—

LOTTY

Oh, yes you do. Every Sunday.

(They both go back to their papers.)

And this seems such a wonderful thing— This advertisement about the wisteria, and, and, and it's such a miserable day...

ROSE

It's February. It always rains in February.

LOTTY

But...

#3 - JUST THINK/WISTERIA & SUNSHINE

LOTTY SINGS:
JUST THINK...

ROSE SINGS:
RAIN!

LOTTY SINGS:
MY DREAM...

ROSE SINGS:
RAIN!

LOTTY SINGS:
I WANT...

ROSE SINGS:
WANT...

LOTTY AND ROSE SING:
TO SEE SUN AND FLOWERS!

LOTTY SINGS:
TO FLY...

ROSE SINGS:
FLY...

LOTTY SINGS:
TAKE WING...

ROSE SINGS:
WING!

LOTTY SINGS:
AND SOAR...

LOTTY AND ROSE SING:
OVER BRIDGE AND TOWERS.

LOTTY SINGS:
A MEDIEVAL CASTLE,

ROSE:
JUST THINK OF ME!

LOTTY SINGS:
NEAR VIEWS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA,
NOT JUST FOR THE RICH,

ROSE SINGS:
OR THE BOURGEOISIE,

LOTTY AND ROSE SING SING:
AN INCREDIBLE DABBLE IN LUXURY.

ROSE SINGS:
I'D GET AWAY EVERYDAY
LIVE IN THE RAPTURE OF ROSES ON THE VINE!

LOTTY SINGS:

A RUNAWAY HOLIDAY GIFT TO MYSELF
WHERE THERE'S MORE THAN SUN THAT'S SHINING!

ROSE SINGS:

AFTERNOON NAPS WITH A DIP IN THE SEA
JUST BEFORE SUNSET HOVERS AND LINGERS!

LOTTY SINGS:

MORNINGS WITH FLOWERS AND WALKS ON THE BEACH
AS THE SAND RUNS THROUGH MY FINGERS!

LOTTY AND ROSE SING:

IMAGINE THE LIGHT AND THE FRAGRANCE, TOO,
FOR CASTLE GUESTS LOOKING FOR ROMANCE: WHO
ABIDE NEAR THE SEA: AN ENTRANCING VIEW,
SO ENCHANTED BY RIPPLES OF DANCING BLUE.

LOTTY (cont.)

Isn't it a wonderful thought?

ROSE

I'm sorry?

LOTTY

An Italian castle full of flowers and—

ROSE

Yes, but it's no use wasting one's time thinking of such things.

LOTTY

Oh, but it is! And, and, and just the considering of "such things" is worthwhile in itself and sometimes I believe—I really do believe—if one considers hard enough one gets things.

ROSE

Who are you?

LOTTY

Oh, yes, how stupid of me. I'm Mrs. Wilkins. Mrs. Mellersh-Wilkins. Mellersh is my h-husband. Mellersh is a solicitor and very handsome.

ROSE

Well, that must be a great pleasure to you.

LOTTY

Why?

ROSE

Well, because, beauty is something . A gift from God.

LOTTY

No, he isn't. Mellersh has seen you at church as well.

Really? ROSE

He calls you the "Field Marshal." LOTTY

Does he. ROSE

What does your husband do? LOTTY

Frederick? Frederick...writes. ROSE

Really? What? LOTTY

Books. ROSE

Honestly?! Have I read him? LOTTY

I-I don't wish to be rude, but I— ROSE

(LOTTY gasps.)

Oh...Ohhhhh! LOTTY

Are you all right? ROSE

#3B - I SEE US THERE

LOTTY SINGS:
SITTING TOGETHER;

I beg your pardon. ROSE (cont.)

LOTTY SINGS:
I SEE US THERE.

I don't understand. ROSE (cont.)

LOTTY SINGS:
TRAILING WISTERIA.

What are you talking about? ROSE (cont.)

LOTTY SINGS:
I SEE US...THERE!

MUSIC CONTINUES UNDERNEATH.

LOTTY
 You and I...at the medieval castle. I see us there!

(LOTTY gapes at ROSE.)

ROSE SINGS:
WHY IS SHE LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?
WHAT IS SHE THINKING?
WHY DOESN'T SHE LEAVE ME ALONE?

LOTTY SINGS: [PROMINENT]
IF WE ARRANGE THINGS,
CAREFULLY PLAN,
LIE TO OUR HUSBANDS...
WE COULD BE THERE!

ROSE SINGS: [SUBDUED]
WHY WAS SHE LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?
WHAT IS SHE THINKING?
WHY DOESN'T SHE
LEAVE ME ALONE?

ROSE
 Really, Mrs. Wilkins, dreams are lovely things, but—

LOTTY
 Let's get it?!

MUSIC STOPS ABRUPTLY.

ROSE
 Get it?

LOTTY
 Yes!

ROSE
 But...how do you mean..."get it?"

LOTTY
 Rent it! Hire it! Have it! Not just sit here and say how beautiful, and then go home to Hampstead without having put out a finger—go home just as usual and see about the dinner and the fish just as we've been doing for years and years...

(Working herself into a frenzy.)

And will go on doing for years and years! In fact, I see no end to it!

ROSE
 Shh!

LOTTY
 (Whispers)
 There is no end to it! Why, we would really be unselfish to go away and be happy for a little because we would come back so much nicer,

(MORE)

ROSE

But my nest egg?

ROSE SINGS:

**I COULDN'T, I SHOULDN'T,
I WOULDN'T, JUST USE IT FOR ANYTHING.
TO SPEND IT ON ME
NOT THE POOR OR THE SICK IS UNTHINKABLE.**

**IT'S TRUE, ITALY, WOULD BE BEAUTIFUL.
YES, TRUE, ITALY, SOUNDS SO BEAUTIFUL.
IT'S SELFISH, TO SPEND SUCH TIME IN COMFORT.
IT'S SINFUL, THOUGH SURE A TRUE DELIGHT.**

ROSE (cont.)

But there are many delightful things one would like to do, but why is strength given to one, except to help one not to do them?

LOTTY

But we haven't been doing them, and it's time to start! It's time to be happy!

ROSE

I am happy.

LOTTY

No, you're not.

ROSE

Mrs. Wilkins!

LOTTY

I see us there, you and me, this April in the medieval castle.

ROSE

Do you?

LOTTY

Don't you ever see things in a kind of flash before they happen?

ROSE

Not anymore.

LOTTY

And even if it were wrong, it would only be for a month. Anyway, I'm sure it's wrong to go on being good for too long till one gets miserable. And I can see you've been good for years and years because you look miserable. And I've done nothing but duties, things for other people ever since I was a little girl and I don't believe anybody loves me a bit, a bit the better for it. And I long... Oh, I long for something else.

(She starts to cry. ROSE hands her a hanky.)

Would you believe that I've never spoken to anyone like this in my

(MORE)

LOTTY (Continued)

life?

ROSE

I would believe it.

LOTTY

I can't think...I simply don't know what's come over me.

ROSE

It's the advertisement.

LOTTY

Yes... And us both being so miserable.

ROSE

I'm wondering...I don't think it would do any harm to answer the advertisement.

(LOTTY brightens.)

Just an inquiry.

LOTTY

Yes, yes, yes!

ROSE

And it isn't as if it committed us to anything.

LOTTY

No, no, of course not!

LOTTY SINGS:

A VILLA ITALIAN, NOT
TOO FAR FROM ROME, WITH
SERVANTS AND SEACOAST:
A SHRINE!
WITH HILLTOP AND CASTLE, AND
ACRES TO ROAM.
LACED WITH WISTERIA AND
SUNSHINE.

LOTTY SINGS:

AFTERNOON NAPS WITH A
DIP IN THE SEA,
JUST BEFORE SUNSET
HOVERS AND LINGERS.
MORNINGS WITH FLOWERS
AND WALKS ON THE BEACH,
AS THE SAND RUNS THROUGH
MY FINGERS!

ROSE SINGS:

PICTURE ME, BY THE SEA
BASKING IN LUXURY
SERVANTS AT MY CALL.
COULD I BE, ON A SPREE?
WANDERING ON AN ESTATE
WOULD BE ENTHRALLING.

ROSE SINGS:

STAYING ON A,
SEACOAST
WE MOSTLY WOULD
LOUNGE IN THE LIGHT.
COULD I, OR WOULD I?
THE PERFUME IN MY ROOM IN A
CASTLE COULD BE A DELIGHT.

LOTTY AND ROSE SING:

**JUST THINK OF THE TIME I WILL HAVE TO INHALE
ALL THE SCENTS, AS MY SENSES START REELING!
THE FEELING IT GIVES ME I CAN'T QUITE CONVEY;
OF FRAGRANT WISTERIA AND SUNSHINE.**

ROSE

(They move to a writing table. ROSE
takes paper, pen and writes:)

To Mr. "Z" Box one thousand. The Times. Please
send..."particulars."

LOTTY AND ROSE SING:

**LET'S HOPE FOR
WISTERIA AND SUNSHINE!**

(LOTTY exits. The lights around ROSE dim
as a CLAP of THUNDER is heard and the set
moves off. ROSE dons her raincoat and
opens her umbrella as the LIGHTS CROSS-
FADE.)

ACT I

SCENE 2

The SOUND of rain intensifies. From above, a sea of umbrellas descend as well as a sign reading: VICTORIA STATION. PLATFORM 6. HAMPSTEAD HEATH. ROSE crosses CENTER.

#4 - WISTERIA AND FREDDIE**ROSE SINGS:**

WISTERIA... WOULD BE DELIGHTFUL...
 I'M READY NOW, I WANT TO FLY AWAY
 TO BEAUTY...
 I WANT SOME BEAUTY...
 SO LITTLE BEAUTY...
 OH, TO GET AWAY.
 FROM DUTY; THE POOR. AND DUTY;
 THE SICK. AND DUTY...
 THESE MEM'RIES THAT I CANNOT CHANGE.

(ROSE crosses into her home.)

I SAW HIM ON THE FLOOR,
 OUR LITTLE FREDDIE THERE,
 WITH TOYS ENOUGH TO SHARE.
 AND THEN PERHAPS A LITTLE SISTER;
 BUT THAT NEVER HAPPENED.

I HEARD HIS SIGHS,
 I FELT HIS CRIES,
 I SAW HIS EYES!

OUR FREDDIE HAD...
 EYES LIKE FRED'RICK
 HAIR LIKE FRED'RICK.

(The SOUND of a door opening and closing.)

ROSE

Frederick?

(FREDERICK ARBUTHNOT, an attractive man on the precipice of middle age, dressed in evening clothes, peeks in.)

FREDERICK (O.S.)

Hello? Rose? Are, are you waiting up for me?

ROSE

Yes, well, only because, I-I wanted to—

ROSE SINGS:
EYES LIKE FRED'RICK...
HAIR LIKE FRED'RICK...

ROSE (cont.)

Were you at a party?

FREDERICK

Yes, at Lord and Lady Dester's?

ROSE

Dester?

FREDERICK

Yes, Dester. Certainly you've heard of the Desters? They're in all the papers. Oh, that's right, you don't read the papers. Anyway, it was their daughter's engagement party to Lord Darlington. Quite a bash, I must say. Everybody was there.

(ROSE looks to him.)

Not to worry, I went as my "nom de plume" B.D. Baxter. Your reputation is quite safe.

ROSE

How reassuring. Have they all read your books?

FREDERICK

Yes, I believe they have.

ROSE

And they still invited you?

(FREDERICK turns, hurt.)

And how did Mr. Baxter do? Was he charming? Cavalier? Debonair?

FREDERICK

Me, debonair? No, but I'm flattered you think I could be. Made a good joke or two at dinner, though. Lady Dester laughed. The daughter, Caroline, didn't seem to keen on the whole affair. Kept slipping away. More than likely to avoid being grabbed by every male in the room, regardless of the circumstances. A looker that one is.

(ROSE looks at him.)

Not that I've ever grabbed, or looked! Lord, no. She thinks I'm old and boring.

ROSE

How do you know she thinks that?

FREDERICK

Because she said, "Baxter, you're old and boring."

(An awkward pause.)

I started a new book.

ROSE

Really? Does it contain the word "lurid" or "titillating" in the

(MORE)

ROSE (Continued)

title?

FREDERICK

(A bit crestfallen.)

"Lurid," actually.

(Another pause.)

So...were you waiting up for me?

ROSE

No, not at all. Well, yes, I—I wanted to... I wanted to tell you...

(She loses courage.)

I should go to bed.

FREDERICK

No, please. Don't leave. Tell me about your day.

ROSE

Well, I was at the club and I met this most interesting woman...We started talking...well, we talked about...Oh, nevermind. I meet with the Vicar.

FREDERICK

Ah, the Vicar.

ROSE

We are to buy boots for the poor. In Cheapside.

FREDERICK

I see. How fortunate for the poor.

ROSE

(Summoning all her courage.)

Frederick, I'm thinking of, well, I'm entertaining the idea of going to Italy for the month of April.

FREDERICK

Are you?

ROSE

Yes. I would like to go, I want to go—

FREDERICK

Really?

ROSE

Unless you need me—

FREDERICK

It's a splendid idea!

ROSE

But if you need me—

FREDERICK

No, no. Do it. You should. Enjoy yourself for a change. I have to start that wretched book tour, anyway. How much will you need?
(He moves to a desk, and writes a check.)

ROSE

Oh, no, no, no, I shall use my nest egg—

FREDERICK

Nonsense. I have plenty. I would like to do it. Would two hundred pounds be enough?

ROSE

No, no, please, nothing so extravagant. One hundred. One hundred would be more than plenty.

FREDERICK

One hundred it is then.

ROSE

You could write the other hundred to the Parish Charities.

(Hands her the check.)

FREDERICK

Here you go. One hundred pounds. I shall let the poor fend for themselves.

ROSE

Thank you. It's...very generous. But if you need me to stay, you need only say the word.

FREDERICK

Really...?

(He turns from her.)

#5 - EVERYTHING WAS CHANGED

FREDERICK SINGS:

**YOU MEAN THERE'S JUST A WORD?
JUST ONE WORD TO CHANGE YOUR TACK?
I'VE TRIED EVERY WORD I KNOW,
BUT I ALWAYS SEE YOUR BACK AND NOT YOUR
EYES LIKE ROSIE...
HAIR LIKE ROSIE...**

FREDERICK (cont.)

No. I'm glad you're going.

ROSE SINGS:

YOU'RE SOMEONE I DON'T KNOW.
 YOU LEFT ME YEARS AGO
 AND EVERYDAY SINCE THEN
 WE'VE BOTH LIVED HERE ALONE TOGETHER.
 OH, HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?

FREDERICK SINGS:

WE SIT NIGHT AFTER NIGHT.
 WE SMILE BUT NEVER SPEAK,
 A TEAR SLIPS DOWN YOUR CHEEK.
 WE SEEM TO BE JUST THROWN TOGETHER.
 OH, HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?

FREDERICK (cont.)

You'll enjoy Italy.

ROSE

Yes, I thought as much.

FREDERICK

You used to love to
 travel...

ROSE

I used to love to
 travel...

FREDERICK AND ROSE

Until.

ROSE AND FREDERICK SING:

EVERYTHING WAS CHANGED IN A SECOND.
 THIS WAS NOT THE LIFE THAT HAD BECKONED.

FREDERICK SINGS:

I COULDN'T GET IT THROUGH TO YOU
 THAT IT WAS NEVER DUE TO YOU
 THAT FREDDIE DIED AND LEFT US.

ROSE AND FREDERICK SING:

WHEN HE LEFT, THEN WE LEFT
 AND HERE WE ARE GONE TOGETHER.

FREDERICK

(He touches her arm. She pulls away.)

At least you'll get some sun. Miserable weather here.

ROSE

Yes...

ROSE SINGS:

AND WE'RE MISERABLE IN IT.
 IRONIC, BUT IT'S TRUE
 I LOST HIM, THEN LOST YOU.
 A CHILD WE ALMOST KNEW.
 WE LOST WHAT WE HAD KNOWN TOGETHER.
 OH, HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?

ROSE AND FREDERICK SING:
 EVERYTHING WAS CHANGED IN A SECOND.
 THIS WAS NOT THE LIFE THAT HAD BECKONED.

ROSE SINGS:
 I WOULDN'T CARE ABOUT THE BOOKS,
 IF I COULD HAVE THE LOVING LOOKS;
 JUST LOVE ME LIKE YOU...USED TO.

OH, FRED'RICK

ROSE SINGS:
 I NEED TO GO...
 IF I DON'T GO...
 I'M SURE I'D NEED TO LEAVE.

I LOVE YOU SO,
 IF I DON'T GO
 THERE WILL BE NO REPRIEVE.

FREDERICK SINGS:
 YOU'RE SOMEONE I DON'T KNOW.
 YOU LEFT ME YEARS AGO
 AND EVERYDAY SINCE THEN
 WE'VE BOTH LIVE HERE ALONE
 TOGETHER.
 OH, HOW COULD IT HAPPEN?

 WE SIT NIGHT AFTER NIGHT.
 WE SMILE BUT NEVER SPEAK,
 A TEAR SLIPS DOWN YOUR CHEEK.
 WE SEEM TO BE JUST THROWN
 TOGETHER.
 OH, HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?

ROSE AND FREDERICK SING:
 EVERYTHING WAS CHANGED IN A SECOND.
 THIS IS NOT THE LIFE THAT HAD BECKONED.

ROSE SINGS:
 YOU WROTE THE BOOKS I DREAD,
 I HELPED THE POOR INSTEAD
 CAUSE FREDDIE DIED AND LEFT
 US.

FREDERICK SINGS:
 HOW CAN I GET IT THROUGH TO
 YOU
 THAT IT WAS NEVER DUE TO YOU
 THAT FREDDIE DIED AND LEFT US.

ROSE SINGS:
 THEN I LEFT

FREDERICK SINGS:
 THEN I LEFT

ROSE AND FREDERICK SING:
 AND HERE WE ARE GONE TOGETHER.

SO YOU/I MIGHT AS WELL LEAVE,
 LEAVING'S BETTER THAN TO GRIEVE.
 AND IT WON'T BE MISERABLE IN IT'LY
 MISERABLE AS LONDON IS...

ROSE (cont.)

Well... Good-night, then.

FREDERICK

Yes...good-night.

(They stand facing each other.)

ROSE AND FREDERICK SING:
EYES LIKE FREDDIE,
HAIR LIKE FREDDIE,
WE WERE SO ALIVE WITH FREDDIE.
HE WAS SUCH A JOY
OUR DARLING LITTLE BOY.

ROSE

Thank you again for the...

(ROSE exits, leaving FREDERICK alone. The
lights...)

BLACKOUT.

ACT I

SCENE 3

Lights up on the WOMEN'S CLUB.
 LOTTY enters, a letter in hand. ROSE
 enters from the opposite direction.

LOTTY

It's called San Salvatore and it's owned by a Mr. Briggs of London. It has beds enough for eight, exclusive of servants, three sitting-rooms, battlements, dungeons—we might not need a dungeon but one is always nice to have—and electric light. And it's only...

(LOTTY stands stunned.)

ROSE

What? It's only what?

(ROSE takes the letter and reads.)

Sixty pounds!?

LOTTY

It has battlements!

ROSE

Yes, but sixty pounds!

LOTTY

And a dungeon!

ROSE

Lotty! Sixty pounds!?

LOTTY

And beds enough for eight!

ROSE

Yes, but there aren't eight of us, are there? Sixty pounds! That's a small fortune.

(Back to the letter.)

And the servants' wages are extra! Then there will be food, and the rail out and home!

LOTTY

Don't you have your half in your nest egg?

ROSE

That's not the point, it's the principle of the thing.

(Reading.)

And the man wants references! It's all too much!

(LOTTY snatches the letter, dismayed.)

LOTTY

He wants references!?

ROSE
From a solicitor.

LOTTY
References?

ROSE
Or a doctor.

LOTTY
But references?!

ROSE
Or a clergyman.

LOTTY
The only reference I have is the man who sells me fish. Whatever shall we do?

ROSE
We shall do without.

LOTTY
Do without!? But...I see us there?

ROSE
You see us there? You and I?

LOTTY
Yes.

ROSE
Truly?

LOTTY
Yes.

ROSE
Really?

LOTTY
Yes!

ROSE
I don't understand why I'm doing this, but...we shall find two others to share!

LOTTY
Marvelous idea! But what about the references?

(ROSE thinks a moment.)

ROSE
I'll take care of the references! You take care of the others!

(ROSE exits. LOTTY moves to the desk,
pulls out a piece of paper and writes.
The ad appears on the scrim.)

LOTTY

Needed: Women to share just a slice of heaven in April...

(Lights up on LADY CAROLINE in her
bedroom and MRS. FISHER in her parlor
reading the newspaper.)

MRS. FISHER

Heaven...

LADY CAROLINE

In April...

MRS. FISHER & LADY CAROLINE

Fifteen pounds!

MRS. FISHER

Overpriced.

LADY CAROLINE

Perfect.

(LIGHTS CROSS-FADE to:)

SCENE 4

ACT I

The room of MR. BRIGGS, a respectable-looking man in his 30s. ROSE enters and hands him the envelope.

BRIGGS
All of it?

ROSE
Is that all right?

BRIGGS
Yes, but all of it?

ROSE
About the references.

BRIGGS
To whom should I make the receipt?

ROSE
Mrs. Rose Arbuthnot. So about the references—

BRIGGS
(He moves to his desk and writes.)
You can send them 'round.

ROSE
But—

BRIGGS
(Thunder.)
Nasty day, isn't it? You'll find the old castle has lots of sunshine, whatever else it hasn't got.

ROSE
But you see, my hope, my intention, rather, was to pay in advance so that we would have no need of references.

BRIGGS
Really?
(He looks to her.)
Is your husband going?

ROSE
Ah, well, you see, my husband...rather, I...I'm afraid that my husband...

BRIGGS
Oh! Oh, yes, of course, yes I understand. Forgive me. I didn't mean to pry. The war took so many young men, didn't it?

ROSE

Yes...it did. There were a great many tragedies because of it.

BRIGGS

I am so sorry. Of course references will not be needed.

ROSE

You're very kind.

BRIGGS

It's the least I can do. I'm off to Italy as well. Business...in Rome.

ROSE

Are you?

BRIGGS

Yes. April in Italy. There's nothing like it.

(He hands her a receipt.)

There you are. Now...I've got money, and you've got San Salvatore. I wonder which "got" is best.

(He laughs just a little too much.)

ROSE

Thank you, Mr. Briggs. You have been more than generous.

BRIGGS

I wish there was more I could do.

ROSE

Well, perhaps there will be.

(She starts to leave.)

Oh, and our plan is to have four of us ladies.

BRIGGS

Four?!

ROSE

They will need no references, I can assure you.

BRIGGS

May I ask who they are?

ROSE

I don't know. But their character will be beyond reproach.

BRIGGS

If they're your friends, I'm sure that goes without saying.

ROSE

Thank you, again.

(She starts for the door. He stops her.)

BRIGGS

Oh, ah...and I hope you and your friends will like the old place.
In April, you know, it's simply a mass of flowers...

(She pauses, then offers her hand.)

ROSE

I look forward to the flowers. Thank you, Mr. Briggs.

(He takes it.)

BRIGGS

My pleasure.

(She tries to go, but he holds her fast.)

ROSE

Ah...I'll have that back if you don't mind...?

(She points to her hand.)

BRIGGS

Oh, I'm sorry, yes. I suppose you'll need that.

(They laugh. ROSE exits. He calls after her.)

BRIGGS (cont.)

Enjoy San Salvatore.

(ROSE stops looks back to BRIGGS, then continues off.)

Rose Arbuthnot. Rose...pretty name.

#6 - GLANCE AT ME

BRIGGS SINGS:

**SO MANY THINGS TO ATTEND TO.
FIRST, I MUST WRITE TO THE STAFF,
TELL THEM THERE'S SOMEONE TO TEND TO...
AND YOU KNOW, SHE MADE ME LAUGH.**

**SO MANY THINGS TO ARRANGE FOR...
THE WAY THAT THE LIGHT CAUGHT HER HAIR...
DON'T BE A HALF-WIT NOW, OLD MAN, JUST BEWARE!
CAN'T LIVE A FANCY! IT COULD NEVER BE!**

**THERE ISN'T A CHANCE...
DID I SEE HER GLANCE AT ME?**

(The lights...)

BLACKOUT.

ACT I

SCENE 5

The lights rise on the WOMEN'S CLUB.
LOTTY enters, waving two envelopes.

LOTTY
We have two responses.

ROSE
Only two?

LOTTY
The first is...
(Reading with astonishment.)
Lady Caroline Dester!

(The lights rise on a fashionable parlor.)

ROSE
Dester? Why does that name sound familiar?

LOTTY
Because she's Lady Caroline Dester! She's the most beautiful, the most...everything. She's going to marry Lord Darlington, the fifth Duke of something or other.

ROSE
Oh, good lord!

LOTTY
It's in all the papers—

ROSE
I know who she is. No, Lotty, we cannot have her.

(They walk into the Dester's parlor.)

LOTTY
Why?

ROSE
Because...we can't, is all!

LOTTY
She's expecting us.

ROSE
But she'll ruin everything.

LOTTY
She couldn't possibly. She's the most beautiful, the most gracious the most eloquent—