

We'll Meet Again

Junior Script

by

Keith Dawson & Gawen
Robinson

Ideal Cast Size 70

Speaking Roles 48

Minimum Cast Size 36

Duration (minutes) 60

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CAST LIST

N.B. In the following list, the bracketed number shows the number of spoken lines each role has.

An asterisk (*) before the character's name indicates that this character ALSO has solo or featured sung lines.

The Evacuees

Tommy	(4)
Alan	(15)
Terence	(28)
Harry	(17)
Eileen	(30)
*Margaret	(27)
Ronald	(20)
Alice	(5)
Jack	(4)
Lil	(6)
William	(4)
Ray	(10)
Christine	(8)
Isobel	(0)
Sam	(0)
Wendy	(28)
Bert	(9)

Parents of Evacuees

Mr Arnold	(15)
Mr Nunn	(10)
Mrs Fitzgerald	(15)
Mrs Lloyd	(13)
Mrs Davidson	(23)
Mr Roach	(20)

London

Miss Reynolds	(42)
Mr Townsend	(2)
Minister	(11)
Station Master	(7)
Janet Lightly	(5)
ARP Warden	(14)

Country Village

Geoff	(14)
Barfoot	(37)
Mollie	(6)
Jimmy	(5)
*Villager 1	(4)
*Villager 2	(4)
*Villager 3	(1)
*Villager 4	(1)
Mr Jones	(7)
Mrs Howe	(6)
Mr Glenister	(9)
Teacher	(17)

Wales

Brian	(10)
Beryl	(2)
Emmie	(3)
Mrs Pugh	(10)
Kath	(21)
Mrs Evans	(5)
John	(1)
Mary	(1)
Jean	(3)

In addition to the Characters listed above a Chorus of Soldiers, Sailors, Women, Children, Teachers and a Family Group will be required.

SPEAKING ROLES BY NUMBER OF LINES

N.B. In the following list, the number shows the number of spoken lines each role has.

An asterisk (*) before the character's name indicates that this character ALSO has solo or featured sung lines.

Miss Reynolds	42
Barfoot	37
Eileen.....	30
Terence	28
Wendy	28
*Margaret.....	27
Mrs Davidson.....	23
Kath	21
Ronald	20
Mr Roach.....	20
Harry.....	17
Teacher	17
Mr Arnold.....	15
Mrs Fitzgerald.....	15
Alan	15
ARP Warden.....	14
Geoff.....	14
Mrs Lloyd.....	13
Minister	11
Ray	10
Mr Nunn.....	10
Brian	10
Mrs Pugh	10
Mr Glenister	9
Bert.....	9
Christine	8
Station Master	7
Mr Jones.....	7
Lil.....	6
Mollie	6
Mrs Howe	6
Alice.....	5

Janet Lightly	5
Jimmy	5
Mrs Evans.....	5
Tommy.....	4
Jack	4
William	4
*Villager 1	4
*Villager 2	4
Jean.....	3
Emmie	3
Mr Townsend.....	2
Beryl	2
*Villager 3	1
*Villager 4	1
John.....	1
Mary.....	1

CAST LIST IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER (WITH LINE COUNT)

N.B. In the following list, the number shows the number of spoken lines each role has.

An asterisk (*) before the character's name indicates that this character ALSO has solo or featured sung lines.

Alan	15
Alice.....	5
ARP Warden.....	14
Barfoot.....	37
Bert.....	9
Beryl	2
Brian	10
Christine	8
Eileen.....	30
Emmie	3
Geoff.....	14
Harry.....	17
Jack	4
Janet Lightly	5
Jean.....	3
Jimmy	5
John.....	1
Kath	21
Lil.....	6
*Margaret.....	27
Mary.....	1
Minister	11
Miss Reynolds	42
Mollie	6
Mr Arnold.....	15
Mr Glenister	9
Mr Jones.....	7
Mr Nunn.....	10
Mr Roach.....	20
Mr Townsend.....	2
Mrs Davidson.....	23
Mrs Evans.....	5

Mrs Fitzgerald.....	15
Mrs Howe	6
Mrs Lloyd.....	13
Mrs Pugh.....	10
Ray.....	10
Ronald.....	20
Station Master	7
Teacher	17
Terence	28
Tommy.....	4
*Villager 1	4
*Villager 2	4
*Villager 3	1
*Villager 4	1
Wendy	28
William.....	4

Non-speaking roles: Sam, Isobel, Family Group, Chorus of Soldiers, Sailors, Women Children and Teachers.

CHARACTERS IN EACH SCENE**Scene One**

Alan
 Chorus of Soldiers, Sailors, Women and Children
 Eileen
 Harry
 Isobel
 Margaret
 Miss Reynolds
 Mr Townsend
 Sam
 Terence
 Tommy

Scene Two

Alice
 Bert
 Christine
 Family Group
 Jack
 Janet Lightly
 Lil
 Minister
 Mr Arnold
 Mr Nunn
 Mr Roach
 Mrs Davidson
 Mrs Fitzgerald
 Mrs Lloyd
 Ray
 Ronald
 Station Master
 Teachers
 Wendy

Scene Three

Alan
 Alice
 Barfoot
 Christine
 Geoff
 Jack
 Janet Lightly
 Lil
 Mollie
 Mr Glenister
 Mr Jones
 Mrs Howe
 Ray
 Ronald
 Teacher
 Terence
 Tommy
 *Villagers 1-4
 William
 Evacuees & Country Children

Scene Four

Eileen
 Geoff
 Jimmy
 Margaret
 Ronald
 Terence
 Wendy
 Country Children
 Evacuees

Scene Five

ARP Warden
Bert
Mr Arnold
Mr Nunn
Mr Roach
Mrs Davidson
Mrs Fitzgerald
Mrs Lloyd
Ray
Wendy

Scene Six

Alan
Beryl
Brian
Eileen
Emmie
Harry
Jean
Kath
Margaret
Mary
Mrs Evans
Mrs Pugh
Terence
John

Scene Seven

Alan
Alice
Bert
Chorus of Soldiers, Sailors, Women and Children
Christine
Eileen
Entire Cast for final song
Harry
Jack
Lil
Margaret
Mr Arnold
Mr Roach
Mrs Davidson
Mrs Fitzgerald
Mrs Lloyd
Ray
Ronald
Terence
Tommy

LIST OF PROPERTIES**Scene One**

Flags..... Women & Children
 Desk & chairsScene Props
 Cardboard boxes containing gas masks.....Children

Scene Two

Radio on a table or dresser Scene Prop
 Gas mask boxes.....Children
 Suitcases.....Children
 Name labels.....Children
 Banners bearing school namesChildren

Scene Three

Desk & chair Scene Prop
 Cases Evacuees
 List of evacuees..... Janet Lightly
 Barrow Mr Jones
 Paper bags containing food Within barrow

Scene Four

Balls.....Children
 Marbles.....Children
 Skipping ropes.....Children
 Bag containing notebook and pencil..... Eileen

Scene Five

Pot of tea Scene Prop

Scene Six

Tin bath tub..... Scene Prop
 Scrubbing brushes..... Scene Prop
 Jug of water Scene Prop
 Jam jar on string Emmie

Scene Seven

Bunting Scene Prop
 Balloons..... Scene Prop
 Sandbags (optional) Stage Prop
 Tables..... Scene Prop
 Table cloths Scene Prop
 Food Scene Props
 Other items of food Mrs Fitzgerald & Mrs Lloyd

SCENE ONE: A CLASSROOM SOMEWHERE IN LONDON

(As the lights dim the music strikes up to Track 1 and we see a scene at the start of the war. This is a series of cameos showing different partings. It could be done by using Pathé News Reel clips of the time or could be acted out by several groups. One group are clearly at a railway station and we see loved ones saying farewell to their husbands and boyfriends (soldiers and sailors) who are boarding a train. In another cameo there is a gangplank going up to rostra in an image of a ship's rails. Sailors are seen going on board, whilst on land women and children are seen waving flags and waving goodbyes. In yet another cameo a group of soldiers are seen assembling and marching off whilst more loved ones wave them off. This should be an emotional scene emphasising the heartbreak of loved ones leaving to go to war. Track 1 is sung during this setting and could be sung by the cast in the on-stage cameos or by an off-stage chorus.)

TRACK 1: SONG WE'LL MEET AGAIN

CHORUS: WE'LL MEET AGAIN SOME DAY.
 YOU'LL SOON BE HOME, I PRAY.
 BACK IN THE ARMS OF THOSE WHO LOVE YOU.
 THOUGH YOU'LL BE FAR AWAY,
 CLOSE TO MY HEART YOU'LL STAY
 'TIL YOU'RE SAFELY BACK HOME AGAIN.

IN TIMES OF TROUBLE, IN TIMES OF STRIFE
 WE HOLD ON TO WHAT IS DEAR IN LIFE;
 TO WHAT WE CHERISH; TO THOSE WE LOVE;
 AND PRAY TO OUR GOD ABOVE:

WE'LL MEET AGAIN SOME DAY.
 YOU'LL SOON BE HOME, I PRAY.
 DARK IS THE NIGHT ALONE WITHOUT YOU,
 AUTUMN SKIES ARE GREY.
 BUT BRIGHT IS THE DAWNING DAY
 WHEN YOU COME SAFELY HOME AGAIN.

WE'LL MEET AGAIN SOME DAY.
 YOU'LL SOON BE HOME, I PRAY.
 SAY "AU REVOIR", MY DEAR, NOT "FAREWELL",
 WE'LL MEET AGAIN SOME DAY.
 THEN IN MY HEART YOU'LL STAY,
 PRAY RETURN SAFELY HOME AGAIN.
 PRAY RETURN SAFELY HOME AGAIN.

(As the song finishes, the lights fade out on the cameos and we hear a siren. N.B. For performances using live music, Track 3 (of the Vocal and Backing Tracks) should be played.)

TRACK 2: SFX SIREN #1 INTO AIR RAID SONG

(As the siren develops its cadence a search light sweeps the stage and we glimpse the setting of a classroom and a few children scurrying about. The siren resolves into the song as the lights come up and the children and teacher sing. N.B. if using live music, fade the SFX out and start playing the song as soon as the actors are ready.)

**CHILDREN
& TEACHER:** SIRENS SOUND, WE RUN TO GROUND;
 HITLER'S ON HIS WAY.
 PLANES DRAW NEAR, CAUSING FEAR
 TO EV'RYONE AROUND.
 HELTER SKELTER TO THE SHELTER,
 LET'S GET UNDERGROUND.
 SIREN'S BLASTING, EVERLASTING;
 HITLER'S ON HIS WAY.

AIR RAID, AIR RAID, ACTION STATIONS PLEASE.
MAN THE GUNS, PUT OUT THOSE LIGHTS,
OBEY THE A-R-PS.
AIR RAID, AIR RAID, ACTION STATIONS PLEASE.
GRAB YOUR BAG, GET UNDERGROUND,
WATCH OUT FOR U-X-BS!

FEARFUL DRONE, SEARCHLIGHTS COMB,
ACK-ACK HITS THE SKY.
BOMBS WILL FALL, FEAR FOR ALL.
ARE WE GOING TO DIE?
HELTER SKELTER TO THE SHELTER,
WE'LL BE SAFE DOWN THERE.
SIRENS SCREAMING, SEARCHLIGHTS BEAMING.
HITLER BEST BEWARE!

AIR RAID, AIR RAID, ACTION STATIONS PLEASE.
MAN THE GUNS, PUT OUT THOSE LIGHTS,
OBEY THE A-R-PS.
AIR RAID, AIR RAID, ACTION STATIONS PLEASE.
GRAB YOUR BAG, GET UNDERGROUND,
WATCH OUT FOR U-X-BS!

TRACK 3:**SFX AIR RAID SIREN #2**

(As the song concludes, a siren is heard wailing again [Track 3 - SFX Air Raid Siren #2] setting tension amongst the children. Some children hide under their desks, others are hidden about the set – it is a bit too scary for these children. The teacher is attempting to instruct the children in the correct way to don their gas masks. Most of the children put theirs on. Some of them are on the wrong way round, upside down etc. Some of the children are having fun with them making rude noises etc. As the siren fades, Miss Reynolds picks up the dialogue...)

MISS REYNOLDS: It's just another practice drill - we aren't at war, despite what you may have heard. I want you all to get your gas masks out. Quietly...

(They each pick up a cardboard box containing a gas mask.)

MISS REYNOLDS: Now take them carefully out of their boxes - no, no, Isobel, don't drag at it... you show her how to do it, Margaret, will you? Have we all done that? Good. I want you to put them on... and let's see if everyone can get it right this time. Wait a minute. Remember, chin in, right in first, before you begin to pull the straps over your head. No don't rush at it Eileen, take your time. Now, is everybody ready? I'll tell you what I want you to do...

(She is interrupted by the caretaker, Mr Townsend, entering the classroom with some good news for the children.)

CARETAKER: Ah, Miss Reynolds. The ARP Warden sends his apologies, but he's just testing the new air-raid siren. Apparently it's all about to...

MISS REYNOLDS: *(Interrupting him)* Thank you Mr Townsend.

(He exits.)

MISS REYNOLDS: Right, children. You all heard that – nothing to worry about, but nevertheless, let us use the opportunity to practise our drill. I want you to get your books back out and settle down comfortably at your desks, then I want to see just how long you can sit there with your gas masks on.

(Harry fiddles with his mask and makes it stick on top of his head.)

MISS REYNOLDS: Eileen, give Sam his mask back...

(Eileen has two masks on, one on each side of her head. She pulls one off and hands it to Sam, who fiddles with it in a perplexed manner and tries unsuccessfully to put it on.)

MISS REYNOLDS: Margaret, show Sam how to put his mask on properly.

(Margaret does as she is asked.)

TRACK 4:

SFX ALL CLEAR SIREN

MISS REYNOLDS: Now remember, that sound is the all clear, that means that the planes have passed over and it is safe to come out of the shelter. The warbling sound that we heard first is the warning siren. You can take your gas masks off now.

ALAN: I didn't like that sound, Miss, it frightens me.

MISS REYNOLDS: I'm sure that it did, Alan. But we mustn't panic when we hear it. We must go straight to the shelters. And if you hear the rattle being sounded by the warden we must put our gas masks on – sensibly, Harry and a few others – and then do as we are instructed. Anyway, I am sure it won't come to that as you will all be off to the countryside soon and Mr Hitler won't take his bombs there.

TERENCE: What do you mean, Miss? Are we going on a holiday?

MISS REYNOLDS: Sort of. If the Germans do invade us, Mr Chamberlain has said that all the children will go away from the cities and the ports and docks to what he calls Reception Areas. Some of you will be going to the countryside; others will be going to the seaside.

ALL CHILDREN: Wow!

HARRY: What's in the countryside, Miss?

MISS REYNOLDS: Well... er... country... things. Animals and trees and flowers and hills and streams and lots of things.

HARRY: I'd rather have the seaside – with sea and sand and rock pools and things.

TERENCE: I'd rather stay here with my mates.

ALAN: Will my mum and dad be going on holiday with me?

MISS REYNOLDS: Well – no, Alan. Your mother and father will stay here; they have work to do to help us win the war.

ALAN: I don't want to go away, then. I want to stay with my mum and dad.

MISS REYNOLDS: It may not be safe for you to stay here.

ALAN: If it's not safe for me, it's not safe for my mum and dad, is it?

MISS REYNOLDS: *(Skirting the issue)* You must carry the box and mask all the time, wherever you go. Now, put your gas masks back in their boxes and let's carry on with our lesson.

(The children remove their gas masks during the ensuing dialogue.)

- EILEEN:** My dad's in the army – he's already gone away.
TOMMY: Well my dad's in the Navy – he says that it's the best because it is the senior service.
EILEEN: Yeah – but they don't do proper fighting like in the army...
MISS REYNOLDS: That will do now, children. Everybody who is fighting for our country is doing a marvellous job and we must support them all.

TRACK 5: SFX SIREN #3 INTO AIR RAID SONG REPRISE

(The children start to move back to their desks when the air-raid warning sounds again. N.B. For performances using live music, Track 6 should instead be used at this point.)

- MISS REYNOLDS:** ***(Over the siren)*** Okay, children. It's another drill – what do we do?
EILEEN: Form two lines, Miss.
MARGARET: Then we go to the shelter.
TERENCE: And skive off our lessons...
MISS REYNOLDS: Terence...

(They all line up as the music starts. N.B. If using live music, start playing the song at this point and fade the SFX out.)

- CHILDREN
& TEACHER:** SIRENS SOUND, WE RUN TO GROUND;
 HITLER'S ON HIS WAY.
 PLANES DRAW NEAR, CAUSING FEAR
 TO EV'RYONE AROUND.
 HELTER SKELTER TO THE SHELTER,
 LET'S GET UNDERGROUND.
 SIREN'S BLASTING, EVERLASTING;
 HITLER'S ON HIS WAY.

 AIR RAID, AIR RAID, ACTION STATIONS PLEASE.
 MAN THE GUNS, PUT OUT THOSE LIGHTS,
 OBEY THE A-R-PS.
 AIR RAID, AIR RAID, ACTION STATIONS PLEASE.
 GRAB YOUR BAG, GET UNDERGROUND,
 WATCH OUT FOR U-X-BS!

FEARFUL DRONE, SEARCHLIGHTS COMB,
ACK-ACK HITS THE SKY.
BOMBS WILL FALL, FEAR FOR ALL.
ARE WE GOING TO DIE?
HELTER SKELTER TO THE SHELTER,
WE'LL BE SAFE DOWN THERE.
SIRENS SCREAMING, SEARCHLIGHTS BEAMING.
HITLER BEST BEWARE!

AIR RAID, AIR RAID, ACTION STATIONS PLEASE.
MAN THE GUNS, PUT OUT THOSE LIGHTS,
OBEY THE A-R-PS.
AIR RAID, AIR RAID, ACTION STATIONS PLEASE.
GRAB YOUR BAG, GET UNDERGROUND,
WATCH OUT FOR U-X-BS!

TRACK 6:

SFX AIR RAID SIREN #4

(As the refrain finishes, the children are seen marching out of the classroom as the siren continues to warble. (Track 6 - SFX Air Raid Siren #4) The lights fade to a repeat of searchlights scanning the stage then blackout.)

SCENE TWO:**EVACUATION**

(The scene is set at the local railway station – 11.15 hrs, September 3rd 1939. If using a backcloth, it could depict a few buses lined up outside the station, having discharged their cargo of children. Before the lights come up, we hear a government announcement.)

TRACK 7:**SFX PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH**

CHAMBERLAIN: "I AM SPEAKING TO YOU FROM THE CABINET ROOM AT 10 DOWNING STREET. THIS MORNING THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN BERLIN HANDED THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT A FINAL NOTE STATING THAT, UNLESS WE HEAR FROM THEM BY 11 O'CLOCK THAT THEY WERE PREPARED AT ONCE TO WITHDRAW THEIR TROOPS FROM POLAND, A STATE OF WAR WOULD EXIST BETWEEN US. I HAVE TO TELL YOU NOW THAT NO SUCH UNDERTAKING HAS BEEN RECEIVED, AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY THIS COUNTRY IS AT WAR WITH GERMANY."

(A spotlight comes up on a government minister making a statement from the Lord Privy Seal's office. Another spotlight picks out a small family group gathered around a radio on a table or dresser, listening intently to the speech. The Minister's speech could be a recording played back.)

MINISTER: As you know, the government has made plans for the removal from "evacuable" areas to safer places called "reception" areas, of school children, children below school age if accompanied by their mothers or other responsible persons, and expectant mothers and blind persons. The scheme is entirely a voluntary one, but clearly the children will be much safer and happier away from the big cities where the dangers will be greatest. There is room in the safer areas for these children; householders have volunteered to provide it. They have offered homes where the children will be made welcome. The children will have their schoolteachers and other helpers with them and their schooling will be continued.

(The spotlights fade out on the Government Minister and the family group as the music strikes up for Track 8. During the song, the children march on watched by their parents etc. and finally form their various groups as the song concludes. The children, carrying their cardboard gas mask boxes around their necks and a suitcase in their hands, are gathered in tight groups with some parents and teachers. There is tension, fear, trepidation and excitement all mingled together. This should be clear in the song as well as the ensuing dialogue. The children all wear a label on their jackets indicating their names. Some of them carry banners bearing the name of their school.)

TRACK 8: SONG NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

CHILDREN: THEY SAY THAT PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW,
 THAT I SHALL SAY GOODNIGHT TILL IT BE 'MORROW.
 IT'S NEVER EASY TO WALK AWAY
 FROM THOSE WE KNOW AND LOVE TODAY.
 FOR THOSE WE CARE FOR; NEAR AND DEAR,
 AND THOSE WE CHERISH; FRIENDS SINCERE,
 HUSBANDS, WIVES, DAUGHTERS, SONS,
 LONG-TIME FRIENDS, SCHOOL-DAY CHUMS, BUT...

NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE,
 NOT TO SIGH OR SHED A TEAR.
 THOUGH FAR I GO, YOU ALWAYS KNOW,
 IN MY HEART YOU WILL EVER BE NEAR.
 WITH A CHEER, NOT A TEAR, WAVE GOODBYE.
 KEEP A SMILE, FOR A WHILE, DON'T SIGH!
 THERE'S A SONG IN MY HEART AS WE SADLY DEPART,
 FOR I KNOW THAT ONE DAY WE'LL RETURN.

NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE,
 NOT TO SIGH OR SHED A TEAR.
 THOUGH FAR I GO, YOU ALWAYS KNOW,
 IN MY HEART YOU WILL EVER BE NEAR.
 WITH A CHEER, NOT A TEAR, WAVE GOODBYE.
 KEEP A SMILE, FOR A WHILE, DON'T SIGH!
 THERE'S A SONG IN MY HEART AS WE SADLY DEPART,
 FOR I KNOW THAT ONE DAY WE'LL RETURN.
 FOR I KNOW THAT ONE DAY WE'LL RETURN!

TRACK 9: SFX TRAIN STATION BACKGROUND

(This sound effect runs as an underscore of atmospheric sounds through the next section.)

MR ARNOLD: *(To his son)* Now remember, Ray, whatever happens, you must look after your little sister. Stick together.

RAY: *(Tearful)* I don't want to go, Dad. Why can't I stay here with you and Mum?

MR ARNOLD: It wouldn't be safe for you. There might be bombs dropping on the town – anything.

RAY: But what about you and Mum?

CHRISTINE: Don't want to go!

MR ARNOLD: Now, look, you've set your sister off! Mum and I will be all right. We've got the Anderson down the garden.

RAY: You're dumpin' us. You don't want us!

MR ARNOLD: Now don't be so silly. It's for your own safety. You'll be back here in a couple of months.

CHRISTINE: How long's a couple of months?

MR ARNOLD: Not long.

RAY: *(At the same time)* A quarter of a year... nearly!

CHRISTINE: *(Tearful)* I don't want to go.

MR ARNOLD: Now come on, children. Be brave. It's for your own good. You'll be safe in the country.

(The three characters huddle together as the lights fade on them or they move back upstage. Another group move downstage or, if possible, the lights come up on them. They are three parents discussing the latest information, whilst their children, Ronald, Alice, Jack and Lil play unconcernedly nearby.)

MR NUNN: Have you heard any more about where they are going to?

MRS FITZGERALD: *(Tears in her eyes)* Nothing. I don't know what the big secret is. After all, we're not gonna tell Hitler where our kids are, now are we?

MRS LLOYD: 'Course not! Have you heard anything at all?

MR NUNN: Nothing. Not a bloomin' thing.

MRS FITZGERALD: *(Still upset)* Do you think the school knows something they're not telling us?

MRS LLOYD: Could be. I mean, they must know where the kids are going. After all, some of the teachers are going with them.

RONALD: Can't wait to get away from here – it's gonna be a great holiday.

ALICE: If it's just a holiday, why are all our mums crying?

JACK: It's what mums do when their kids grow up and leave them.

LIL: I don't want to leave my mum – not when she's crying, anyway.

RONALD: Don't be a cissy, Lil. She's not really crying; and if she is, it's because she isn't coming on holiday with us.

LIL: I don't believe you.

JACK: Come on, let's play hide and seek again.

ALICE: Bags I'm on!

THE OTHERS: Right! Shut your eyes.

(The three children run off and Alice stands with the adults with her hands over her eyes as the lights fade on this cameo scene.)

(Enter the Stationmaster with Mrs Davidson and her daughter Wendy.)

STATIONMASTER: *(To Mrs Davidson)* I wish all of our passengers were this easy to manage.

MRS DAVIDSON: They're very well behaved, aren't they?

STATIONMASTER: Where's the teacher in charge of this lot, then?

MRS DAVIDSON: Over there somewhere?

STATIONMASTER: I don't know. At this rate, the war will be over before we get these kids away. I need to get them sorted into groups for each carriage.

MRS DAVIDSON: Where are they going to?

STATIONMASTER: Can't say; in the country, somewhere.

MRS DAVIDSON: But you must know.

STATIONMASTER: Don't think the train-driver knows, let alone me.

(He wanders off in search of the teachers.)

MRS DAVIDSON: *(To Wendy, her daughter)* Now, just remember to brush your teeth.

WENDY: Yes, Mum.

MRS DAVIDSON: And make sure you write as soon as you get there.

WENDY: Yes, Mum.

MRS DAVIDSON: Stay close to Miss Johnson and do what she tells you!

WENDY: Yes, Mum.

MRS DAVIDSON: And be a good girl and eat all your greens.

WENDY: Yes, Mum.

MRS DAVIDSON: And don't suck or eat your label!

WENDY: Yes, Mum – er – no, Mum.

(Once again, the light fades on this cameo and comes up on another group.)

MR ROACH: Got your comics, Bert?

BERT: Yes, Dad.

MR ROACH: Good.

BERT: Dad, Are you going to be in the air force?

MR ROACH: I don't know, son. I haven't been called up yet. But I hope so. If that Hitler thinks he can come over here and bomb us, he hasn't reckoned with the likes of me.

BERT: Good on you, Dad. I'll be in the fields watching the RAF fly over. Will you wave if you see me?

MR ROACH: Course I will, son. I'll make my bloomin' plane wave to you.

(He extends his arms like a plane's wings and wobbles them up and down. They both laugh. Then Janet Lightly, a teacher, approaches.)

JANET: Come on then, Bert. Let's join the others and get on board.

BERT: Okay, Miss.

(Bert starts to follow the teacher a little way across the stage as Mr Roach stands motionless watching him. Suddenly, Bert stops in his tracks, turns and looks at his father, pauses, then runs back to Mr Roach.)

BERT: I'll miss you, Dad.

(He hugs him.)

MR ROACH: *(Fighting back the emotion)* I'll miss you too, son. Now go on, get along with you and join your friends.

(Bert turns and walks back to his teacher who has stood waiting for him, watching this emotive scene.)

JANET: Okay, Bert. Off we go – on a jolly holiday!

(All of the children assemble into columns to march off to the train, to the reprise of 'Now It's Time...'.)

TRACK 10: SONG NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE REPRISE

CHILDREN: THEY SAY THAT PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW,
THAT I SHALL SAY GOODNIGHT TILL IT BE 'MORROW.
IT'S NEVER EASY TO WALK AWAY
FROM THOSE WE KNOW AND LOVE TODAY.
FOR THOSE WE CARE FOR; NEAR AND DEAR,
AND THOSE WE CHERISH; FRIENDS SINCERE,
HUSBANDS, WIVES, DAUGHTERS, SONS,
LONG-TIME FRIENDS, SCHOOL-DAY CHUMS, BUT...

NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE,
NOT TO SIGH OR SHED A TEAR.
THOUGH FAR I GO, YOU ALWAYS KNOW,
IN MY HEART YOU WILL EVER BE NEAR.
WITH A CHEER, NOT A TEAR, WAVE GOODBYE.
KEEP A SMILE, FOR A WHILE, DON'T SIGH!
THERE'S A SONG IN MY HEART AS WE SADLY DEPART,
FOR I KNOW THAT ONE DAY WE'LL RETURN.

NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE,
 NOT TO SIGH OR SHED A TEAR.
 THOUGH FAR I GO, YOU ALWAYS KNOW,
 IN MY HEART YOU WILL EVER BE NEAR.
 WITH A CHEER, NOT A TEAR, WAVE GOODBYE.
 KEEP A SMILE, FOR A WHILE, DON'T SIGH!
 THERE'S A SONG IN MY HEART AS WE SADLY DEPART,
 FOR I KNOW THAT ONE DAY WE'LL RETURN.
 FOR I KNOW THAT ONE DAY WE'LL RETURN!

SCENE THREE:**THE ARRIVAL**

(The main emphasis in this scene must be the huge difference between life in the city during the blitz, and life in the country. It is very clear that there are two very different points of view with regard to it all; some local children despise the evacuees being there, taking over their space, sharing their homes etc. Many evacuees want to be at home and don't understand why their parents have sent them away; some local adults are kind-hearted volunteers and go out of their way to help the evacuees, whilst others are only accepting them begrudgingly. The scene is set in the Village Hall. As the tabs open or the lights come up, a group of local kids run into the hall, to be met by the billeting officer - Barfoot, sitting at a desk - and a couple of villagers.)

GEOFF: The evacuees are coming! The evacuees are coming!

(The group of youngsters are met by the stony-faced billeting officer and come to a rapid halt.)

BARFOOT: Kindly do not run in here and do not scream and screech like some kind of lunatics.

GEOFF: Sorry. But the city kids are here. The evacuees!

BARFOOT: That may be so, but a little decorum if you please. This is the village hall, not the cattle market.

MOLLIE: The bus has arrived and it's full of them.

GEOFF: I bet they've all got nits! City nits!

BARFOOT: That will do. Now, go and tell the rest of the villagers to come down here, immediately.

MOLLIE: *(As they move towards the exit)* What are they running away from?

GEOFF: Who?

MOLLIE: These evackees.

GEOFF: Evacuees! Don't you know nothing? They're running away from Jerry.

MOLLIE: Who's Jerry?

GEOFF: Hitler, of course.

MOLLIE: Oh, him. *(Not having a clue who they are talking about – but thinks about it for a moment.)* What's Jerry Hitler done to them, then?

GEOFF: It's not Jerry Hitler – oh, never mind. Come on.

(The Kids start to run out of the hall.)

BARFOOT: Walk! Don't run!

(The Kids exit and one of the Villagers approaches the Billeting Officer.)

VILLAGER 1: How much do we get then?

BARFOOT: *(Being a bit obstructive)* How much do you get for what?

VILLAGER 1: For billeting them, of course.

BARFOOT: You get ten shillings and sixpence for one child and if you take more than one you get eight shillings and sixpence for each. Really, I have told you all a dozen times!

VILLAGER 1: All right, all right! I'm only asking!

VILLAGER 2: Well, I don't want to take any. And that's final. It'll cost me more than that to keep 'em.

BARFOOT: You don't have any choice. If you don't take them, you will end up in court with a fifty pound fine for your trouble.

VILLAGER 2: Bah! *(Turns away and moves back)*

(At this moment, the first group of evacuees enter the hall, accompanied by a female teacher, Janet Lightly, and are swiftly met by Barfoot.)

BARFOOT: Right! Line up over here on the stage.

JANET: There we go, children. Up on the stage please.

(The evacuees line up on the stage with their cases, whilst Janet presents Barfoot with the list of evacuees. He arises from his desk and subjects the children to a scrutinising, looking for head lice and how clean they are. Various 'hmms' and 'tuts' are made as the inspection takes place.)

BARFOOT: Mr Jones; kindly give each of the children their rations.

(Mr Jones steps forward with a barrow containing brown paper bags each of which has a large chocolate bar, a small packet of tea, a small tin of corned beef, some biscuits and an orange.)

MR JONES: Here you are then, kids. Now you're not to have any of this until you get to your billet; and, it's got to last you for two days.

TERENCE: *(Looking into his bag)* Blimey! Is this it; an orange, corned beef and a bar of chocolate? Won't last me two days.

ALAN: More like two minutes.

MR JONES: Now then, lads. There's some biscuits and a packet of tea as well. You won't be getting anything else until you've been sorted out. It's got to last you, remember.

ALAN: Don't like tea. Rather have melonade! *(Not a misprint!)*

(The lads pull a face. Shortly, the villagers start to gather in the hall. There are various comments such as "They're a motley crew", "He'll be handy down on the farm", "Strapping lad", "She looks a quiet one", "Poor things!", "Ain't old enough to be on their own", etc.)

BARFOOT: Right. If you'd like to inspect the children and make your choices. And be quick, I have a lot to do.

JANET: Is this really necessary, Mr Barfoot? They are only children.

BARFOOT: Quite! And probably haven't washed in days!

JANET: Well, really! *(She walks a little way from him and encourages some of the younger ones.)*

(The villagers walk up and down the line of children, prodding and poking as if they were cattle up for sale. Some break away a little and have whispered discussions, before turning back to the children and nodding. As this ensues, the music starts up for Track 11.)

TRACK 11:**SONG I'LL TAKE THAT ONE**

VILLAGER 1: I'LL JUST TAKE TWO!
VILLAGER 2: CRIKEY, ONE WILL DO!
VILLAGER 3: THREE'S THE MOST FOR ME.
 I CAN'T HAVE FOUR, UNLESS THEY SLEEP ON THE FLOOR,
VILLAGERS: IT'S THE BEST WE CAN DO, YOU SEE.
VILLAGER 4: I KNOW THERE'S A WAR,
VILLAGER 1: WE'VE HEARD IT ALL BEFORE.
VILLAGER 2: DON'T GO ON AND ON.
VILLAGER 3: BUT FOR TEN AND BLOOMIN' SIX
VILLAGER 4: I'LL JUST HAVE MY PICK
VILLAGERS: AND TAKE HOME ONLY ONE.

ALL: I'LL TAKE THAT ONE, NO NOT THAT ONE,
 HIM WIV' ALL THE 'AIR.
 WE'LL TAKE THAT ONE, NOT JUST ANYONE,
 THEY DON'T SEEM TO CARE.
 KIDS FROM THE CITY, ALL NITTY-GRITTY,
 'AVEN'T HAD A BATH IN WEEKS.
 OH WHAT A PITY, NOT PRETTY OR WITTY,
 I BET THEY'RE FULL OF CHEEK.

(Dance Break)

VILLAGER 1: I COULD TAKE FOUR,
VILLAGER 2: BUT NOT ANY MORE,
VILLAGER 3: ME 'OUSE IS FULL, YOU SEE.
 I GOT NO ROOM, NOT A SPARE BEDROOM,
VILLAGERS: IT'S THE BEST WE CAN DO, YOU SEE.
VILLAGER 4: I HOPE THERE'S NO MORE,
VILLAGER 1: THEY'LL BE SLEEPING ON THE FLOOR,
VILLAGER 2: CRAMMED IN HEAD TO TOE.
VILLAGER 3: WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT,
VILLAGER 4: GONNA BE A TIGHT FIT,
VILLAGERS: FOR NOW WE'LL TAKE THEM HOME.

ALL: I'LL TAKE THAT ONE, NO NOT THAT ONE,
 HIM WIV' ALL THE 'AIR.
 WE'LL TAKE THAT ONE, NOT JUST ANYONE,
 THEY DON'T SEEM TO CARE.
 KIDS FROM THE CITY, ALL NITTY-GRITTY,
 'AVEN'T HAD A BATH IN WEEKS.
 OH WHAT A PITY, NOT PRETTY OR WITTY,
 I BET THEY'RE FULL OF CHEEK.
 KIDS FROM THE CITY, ALL NITTY-GRITTY,
 BET THEY'RE FULL OF CHEEK!

MRS HOWE: *(A kindly lady)* I'll take a couple of boys. They'll be handy on my farm. Could do with a couple of strapping lads to help out.

BARFOOT: Right. *(He peers at the labels on their coats)* Terence and Alan, you go with Mrs Howe.

TERENCE: Hear that, Al. We're going on a farm. That's one of them places that has pigs and things, innit?

ALAN: Not half, mate. What a holiday this is gonna be.

MRS HOWE: Chickens actually.

ALAN: Eh?

MRS HOWE: We breed chickens, not pigs. And cider apples.

TERENCE: What's cider apples?

MRS HOWE: Apples that are used for making cider. Lor! You've got some learning to do. Come on!

(Mrs Howe leads the two boys off with her and they exit.)

VILLAGER 2: *(Prodding one of the children)* I'll have him.

VILLAGER 1: *(Pointing to Ray & Christine)* Them two, the missus and me will have them.

VILLAGER 4: *(Pointing at Tommy)* He looks all right to me, I don't want none that's too big...

TOMMY: I ain't too big!

BARFOOT: Go with these very kind people. No gratitude, some people!

(The various groups of villagers and evacuees drift off as they are matched, leaving fewer and fewer behind.)

VILLAGER 3: *(Approaches one child)* All right, sonny. You come with us. Not you! *(Indicates the child next to this one)* You!

MR GLENISTER: *(Indicating Ronald)* I'll take that one.

RONALD: You'll have to take all of us.

MR GLENISTER: Oh, I can't do that. My little home isn't big enough for all of you.

RONALD: *(Emphatic)* You'll have to take all of us! I'm not going without the others.

MR GLENISTER: Don't be silly. I can't possibly take you all.

BARFOOT: *(Noticing the little set-to)* What's going on, Mr Glenister?

RONALD: He wants just me, and I'm not going without my brother and sisters.

MR GLENISTER: But I don't have the room.

RONALD: I promised me ma and pa that I wouldn't be separated from them and I'm not!

- BARFOOT:** You'll be stopping in this hall on your own, if you don't mind your lip, young man. And it's not a nice place at night.
- MR GLENISTER:** Perhaps Mr and Mrs Roberts, my neighbours, could take the others in. Have they been down here yet?
- BARFOOT:** Not yet, Mr Glenister.
- RONALD:** I'm not budging!
- MR GLENISTER:** Perhaps I could take the small one as well. Yes, if I have the two boys they can share the bed. But I can't squeeze any more in.
- RONALD:** And my sisters can go next door?
- BARFOOT:** I'll see what I can do, when I have finished in here.
- JACK:** Thanks, Ron.
- ALICE:** I don't want to be split up from you, Ron.
- RONALD:** Maybe you won't. Like the man says, if them next door can put you up, we'll see each other all the time.
- LIL:** I think it'll be great – away from him. **(She pulls her tongue out at Ronald)**. We'll be able to do what we want, without him bossing us about all the time.
- MR GLENISTER:** Come on, you two. Let's get you two home and bathed.

(They exit, leaving Alice & Lil with Mr Jones and Barfoot.)

- BARFOOT:** Right! That seems to be that for now. Before the next lot arrives let's see if we can find someone that'll take you two in. Come on.

(They are about to exit as another crowd of evacuees are heard off. A teacher enters, followed at a distance by William.)

- TEACHER:** **(Speaking off the acting area)** Right, children, wait there. **(The teacher approaches Barfoot.)** I presume that you are the Billeting Officer.
- BARFOOT:** That is correct.
- TEACHER:** Splendid! We are St John's Primary School, Shelidon.
- BARFOOT:** Very good. And what can I do for you?
- TEACHER:** Billet us, of course!
- BARFOOT:** I think there has been some mistake. Most of my billets are filled now.
- TEACHER:** There's no mistake on my part. We embarked on the train, we disembarked at the railway station. We boarded the bus, the bus arrived in this village, and we are here.
- BARFOOT:** **(Checking lists)** I have no record of St John's – where did you say?
- TEACHER:** Shelidon! Heavens above, do I need to spell it for you?
- BARFOOT:** No – because it is not on my list.

TEACHER: *(Becoming impatient)* Well this is disgraceful! Disorganised and disgraceful.

BARFOOT: I am sure you are right, but it is not my fault. I am only the Billeting Officer.

TEACHER: Quite! And therefore the person with absolute responsibility here.

BARFOOT: I can hardly be held responsible if you have arrived at the wrong place.

WILLIAM: *(Butting in and clearly in desperate need for the toilet)* Please, Miss; I need a wee!

TEACHER: We have not arrived at the wrong place – this is the destination that we were sent to.

BARFOOT: Well, there must be some mistake.

WILLIAM: *(More urgent)* Pleeease, Miss!

TEACHER: There is no mistake on our behalf. The error is clearly yours!

WILLIAM: Misssss! I need it now!

TEACHER: Be quiet, William! *(To Barfoot)* Well! What are you going to do about it?

(William starts hopping about in desperation like some kind of apache dance.)

TEACHER: William! Have you got St Vitus' dance? Keep still will you?

WILLIAM: But, Miss, I need the toilet!

TEACHER: Well, why didn't you say! *(To Barfoot)* Do you have such a thing in this place?

BARFOOT: We are not primitive, you know! Mr Jones, will you kindly show this young... person... where the toilet is, before we have an accident.

MR JONES: Come on, young man. *(With a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye)* There's a bucket out here! I'll show you.

(William waddles across the stage in desperate need, in a comic manner and exits with Jones.)