

And we went dancing.  
We went dancing.

Then, of course, I found  
That I was six weeks overdue.  
We got married at the registry an' then we had a "do".  
We all had curly salmon sandwiches,  
An' how the ale did flow,  
They said the bride was lovelier than Marilyn Monroe.

And we went dancing,  
Yes, we went dancing.

Then the baby came along,  
We called him Darren Wayne,  
Then three months on I found that I was in the club  
again.

An' though I still fancied dancing,  
My husband wouldn't go  
With a wife he said was twice the size of Marilyn  
Monroe.

No more dancing  
No more dancing.

By the time I was twenty-five,  
I looked like forty-two,  
With seven hungry mouths to feed and one more nearly  
due.

Me husband, he'd walked out on me,  
A month or two ago,  
For a girl they say who looks a bit like Marilyn Monroe.

And they go dancing  
They go dancing

Yes they go dancing  
They go ...

*An irate Milkman (the Narrator) rushes in to rudely interrupt the song*  
**Milkman** Listen love, I'm up to here with hard luck stories; you owe me  
three pounds, seventeen and fourpence an' either you pay up today, like  
now, or I'll be forced to cut off your deliveries.

**Mrs Johnstone** I said, I said, I said, look, next week I'll pay y' ...  
**Milkman** Next week, next week! Next week never arrives around here. I'd  
be a rich man if next week ever came.  
**Mrs Johnstone** But look, look, I start a job next week. I'll have money  
comin' in an' I'll be able to pay y'. Y' can't stop the milk. I need the milk.  
I'm pregnant.

**Milkman** Well, don't look at me, love. I might be a milkman but it's got  
nothin' to do with me. Now you've been told, no money, no milk.

*The Milkman exits*

*Mrs Johnstone stands alone and we hear some of her kids, off*

**Kid One (off)** Mam, Mam the baby's cryin'. He wants his bottle. Where's  
the milk?

**Kid Two (off)** 'Ey Mam, how come I'm on free dinners? All the other kids  
laugh at me.

**Kid Three (off)** 'Ey Mother, I'm starvin' an' ther's nothin' in. There never  
bloody well is.

**Mrs Johnstone (perfunctorily)** Don't swear, I've told y'.

**Kid Four (off)** Mum, I can't sleep, I'm hungry, I'm starvin' ...

**Kids (off)** An' me, Mam. An' me. An' me.

**Music 2A: Marilyn Monroe (reprise)**

**Mrs Johnstone**  
(singing)

I know it's hard on all you kids,  
But try and get some sleep.  
Next week I'll be earnin',  
We'll have loads of things to eat,  
We'll have ham, an' jam, an' spam an'

(Speaking) Roast Beef, Yorkshire Pudding, Battenberg Cake, Chicken an'  
Chips, Corned Beef, Sausages, Treacle Tart, Mince an' Spuds, Milk  
Shake Mix for the Baby:

*There is a chorus of groaning ecstasy from the kids*

*Mrs Johnstone picks up the tune again*

When I bring home the dough,  
We'll live like kings, like bright young things,  
Like Marilyn Monroe.

And we'll go dancing ...

*Mrs Johnstone hums a few bars of the song, and dances a few steps, as she  
makes her way to her place of work—Mrs Lyons' house. During the dance she  
acquires a brush, dusters and a mop bucket*

*The Lights crossfade to Mrs Lyons' house where Mrs Johnstone is seen  
working*

*Mrs Lyons enters, carrying a parcel containing new shoes*

**Mrs Lyons** Hello, Mrs Johnstone, how are you? Is the job working out all  
right for you?

**Mrs Johnstone** It's, erm, great. Thank you. It's such a lovely house it's a  
pleasure to clean it.

**Mrs Lyons** It's a pretty house isn't it? It's a pity it's so big. I'm finding it  
rather large at present.

**Mrs Johnstone** Oh. Yeh. With Mr Lyons being away an' that? When does he come back, Mrs Lyons?

**Mrs Lyons** Oh, it seems such a long time. The Company sent him out there for nine months, so, what's that, he'll be back in about five months' time.

**Mrs Johnstone** Ah, you'll be glad when he's back won't you? The house won't feel so empty then, will it?

*Mrs Lyons begins to unwrap her parcel*

**Mrs Lyons** Actually, Mrs J, we bought such a large house for the—for the children—we thought children would come along.

**Mrs Johnstone** Well y' might still be able to . . .

**Mrs Lyons** No, I'm afraid . . . We've been trying for such a long time now . . . I wanted to adopt but . . . Mr Lyons is . . . well he says he wanted his own son, not somebody else's. Myself, I believe that an adopted child can become one's own.

**Mrs Johnstone** Ah yeh . . . yeh. Ey, it's weird though, isn't it. Here's you can't have kids, an' me, I can't stop havin' them. Me husband used to say that all we had to do was shake hands and I'd be in the club. He must have shook hands with me before he left. I'm havin' another one y' know.

**Mrs Lyons** Oh, I see . . .

**Mrs Johnstone** Oh but look, look it's all right, Mrs Lyons, I'll still be able to do me work. Havin' babies, it's like clockwork to me. I'm back on me feet an' workin' the next day y' know. If I have this one at the weekend I won't even need to take one day off. I love this job, y'know. We can just manage to get by now—

*She is stopped by Mrs Lyons putting the contents of the package, a pair of new shoes, on to the table*

Jesus Christ, Mrs Lyons, what are y' trying to do?

**Mrs Lyons** My God, what's wrong?

**Mrs Johnstone** The shoes . . . the shoes. . . .

**Mrs Lyons** Pardon?

**Mrs Johnstone** New shoes on the table, take them off . . .

*Mrs Lyons does so*

(*Relieved*) Oh God, Mrs Lyons, never put new shoes on a table . . . You never know what'll happen.

**Mrs Lyons** (*twiggling it; laughing*) Oh . . . you mean you're superstitious?

**Mrs Johnstone** No, but you never put new shoes on the table.

**Mrs Lyons** Oh go on with you. Look, if it will make you any happier I'll put them away . . .

*Mrs Lyons exits with the shoes*

**Music 3: Underscoring**

*Mrs Johnstone warily approaches the table*

*The Narrator enters*

**Narrator** There's shoes upon the table an' a joker in the pack, The salt's been spilled and a looking glass cracked, There's one lone magpie overhead.

**Mrs Johnstone** I'm not superstitious.

**Narrator** The Mother said

**Mrs Johnstone** I'm not superstitious

**Narrator** The Mother said.

*The Narrator exits to re-enter as a Gynaecologist*

**Mrs Johnstone** What are you doin' here? The milk bill's not due 'till Thursday.

**Gynaecologist** (*producing a listening funnel*) Actually I've given up the milk round and gone into medicine. I'm your gynaecologist. (*He begins to examine her*) OK, Mummy, let's have a little listen to the baby's ticker, shall we?

**Mrs Johnstone** I was dead worried about havin' another baby, you know, Doctor. I didn't see how we were gonna manage with another mouth to feed. But now I've got me a little job we'll be OK. If I'm careful we can just scrape by, even with another mouth to feed

*The Gynaecologist completes his examination*

**Gynaecologist** Mouths, Mummy.

**Mrs Johnstone** What?

**Gynaecologist** Plural, Mrs Johnstone. Mouths to feed. You're expecting twins. Congratulations. And the next one please, Nurse.

*The Gynaecologist exits*

**Music 4: Underscoring**

*Mrs Johnstone, numbed by the news, moves back to her work, dusting the table upon which the shoes had been placed*

*Mrs Lyons enters*

**Mrs Lyons** Hello, Mrs J. How are you?

*There is no reply*

(*Registering the silence*) Mrs J? Anything wrong?

**Mrs Johnstone** I had it all worked out.

**Mrs Lyons** What's the matter?

**Mrs Johnstone** We were just getting straight.

**Mrs Johnstone** Why don't you sit down.

**Mrs Johnstone** With one more baby we could have managed. But not with two. The Welfare have already been on to me. They say I'm incapable of controllin' the kids I've already got. They say I should put some of them into care. But I won't. I love them. I love the bones of every one of them. I'll even love these two when they come along. But like they say at the Welfare, kids can't live on love alone.

**Mrs Lyons** Twins? You're expecting twins?

**Music 5: Underscoring**

*The Narrator enters*

**Narrator** How quickly an idea, planted, can  
Take root and grow into a plan.  
The thought conceived in this very room  
Grew as surely as a seed, in a mother's womb.

*The Narrator exits*

**Mrs Lyons** (*almost inaudibly*) Give one to me.  
**Mrs Johnstone** What?  
**Mrs Lyons** (*containing her excitement*) Give one of them to me.  
**Mrs Johnstone** Give one to you?  
**Mrs Lyons** Yes ... yes.  
**Mrs Johnstone** (*taking it almost as a joke*) But y' can't just ...  
**Mrs Lyons** When are you due?  
**Mrs Johnstone** Erm, well about ... Oh, but Mrs ...  
**Mrs Lyons** Quickly, quickly tell me ... when are you due?  
**Mrs Johnstone** July he said, the beginning of ...  
**Mrs Lyons** July ... and my husband doesn't get back until, the middle of July. He need never guess ...  
**Mrs Johnstone** (*amused*) Oh, it's mad ...  
**Mrs Lyons** I know, it is. It's mad ... but it's wonderful, it's perfect. Look, look, you're what, four months pregnant, but you're only just beginning to show ... so, so I'm four months pregnant and I'm only just beginning to show. (*She grabs a cushion and arranges it beneath her dress*) Look, look. I could have got pregnant just before he went away. But I didn't tell him in case I miscarried, I didn't want to worry him whilst he was away. But when he arrives home I tell him we were wrong, the doctors were wrong. I have a baby, our baby. Mrs Johnstone, it will work, it will if only you'll ...

**Mrs Johnstone** Oh, Mrs Lyons, you can't be serious.  
**Mrs Lyons** You said yourself, you said you had too many children already.  
**Mrs Johnstone** Yeh, but I don't know if I wanna give one away.  
**Mrs Lyons** Already you're being threatened by the Welfare people. Mrs Johnstone, with two more children how can you possibly avoid some of them being put into care. Surely, Mrs Johnstone, surely it's better to give one child to me. Look, at least if the child was with me you'd be able to see him every day, as you came to work.

*Mrs Lyons stares at Mrs Johnstone, willing her to agree*

Please, Mrs Johnstone. Please

**Mrs Johnstone** Are y' ... are y' that desperate to have a baby?

**Music 6: My Child**

**Mrs Lyons** Each day I look out from this window,  
(*singing*) I see him with his friends, I hear him call,  
I rush down but as I fold my arms around him,  
He's gone. Was he ever there at all?

I've dreamed of all the places I would take him,  
The games we'd play the stories I would tell,  
The jokes we'd share, the clothing I would make him,  
I reach out. But as I do. He fades away.

*The melody shifts into that of Mrs Johnstone who is looking at Mrs Lyons, feeling for her. Mrs Lyons, gives a half smile and a shrug, perhaps slightly embarrassed at what she has revealed. Mrs Johnstone, turns and looks at the room she is in. Looking up in awe at the comparative opulence and ease of the place. Tentatively and wondering she sings*

**Mrs Johnstone** If my child was raised  
In a palace like this one,  
(He) wouldn't have to worry where  
His next meal was comin' from.  
His clothing would be (supplied by)  
George Henry Lee

*Mrs Lyons sees that Mrs Johnstone might be persuaded*

**Mrs Lyons** He'd have all his own toys  
(*singing*) And a garden to play in.  
**Mrs Johnstone** He could make too much noise  
Without the neighbours complainin'.  
**Mrs Lyons** Silver trays to take meals on  
**Mrs Johnstone** A bike with both wheels on?

*Mrs Lyons nods enthusiastically*

**Mrs Lyons** And he'd sleep every night  
In a bed of his own.

**Mrs Johnstone** He wouldn't get into fights  
He'd leave matches alone.  
And you'd never find him  
Effin' and blindin'.

And when he grew up  
He could never be told  
To stand and queue up  
For hours on end at the dole  
He'd grow up to be

**Mrs Lyons** (together) A credit to me  
**Mrs Johnstone** To you  
**Mrs Johnstone** To you

*Underscoring for the following dialogue*

**Mrs Johnstone** I would still be able to see him every day, wouldn't I?  
**Mrs Lyons** Of course.

**Mrs Johnstone** An' ... an' you would look after him, wouldn't y'?

**Mrs Lyons** I'd keep him warm in the winter  
(*singing*) And cool when it shines.  
I'd pull out his splinters  
Without making him cry.