

LISA You weren't listening, were you?!

HOPKINS Oh look, Snuggles, I'm sorry –

LISA I just want to know what I'm supposed to do all day long in the middle of the Essex countryside.

HOPKINS Don't start. Not now.

LISA When is a good time to start?

HOPKINS Look! I bought you a horse.

LISA It doesn't like me!

HOPKINS Listen, I'm under a lot of pressure at the moment. And I need you to stand by me. Got to go! "Trouble at mill".

(He's gone. LISA stabs the carving knife into the chopping block.)

SCENE EIGHT

The school.

Music No. 9: SCHOOL SONG

ENSEMBLE MEN

WHERE THE IRON HEART OF ENGLAND BLEEDS
BENEATH ITS NOBLE GOWN
STANDS A SCHOOL WHOSE SONS ALL FIGHT WITH MIGHT
TO FURTHER IT'S RENOWN

GRAHAM

ONWARD THROUGH ALL KNOCKS AND HARDSHIP
DO NOT FEAR WHEN DEATH STOMPS BY
HOLD YOUR NERVE AND THINK OF ALBION
WHATEVER HAPPENS – DO NOT CRY.

(RITA finds herself alone with Mr. BUCKTON.)

RITA Mr. Buckton?

- BUCKTON Ah! Let me guess. Mrs. O'Grady.
- RITA Yeah. Well done.
- BUCKTON How can I help?
- RITA I'm not . . . what I want to say is . . . you bin caning my son?
- BUCKTON Yes.
- RITA Oh. You admit it then.
- BUCKTON An integral element of an elite education is discipline. Ergo,
- RITA – Ergo? That's Latin, is it?
- BUCKTON Yes, it means therefore. Ergo, it is incumbent on me to cane your son, and constrain his natural recalcitrance.
- RITA I dunno what that word means either.
- BUCKTON He's insolent, he kicks against tradition. Like most of the scholarship boys he conforms to the current fashion of individualism, which is antithetical to the core values of the school.
- RITA I don't want you caning him. He's a child, ergo, it ain't right.
- BUCKTON I'm afraid your outrage is misplaced.
- RITA My outrage?
- BUCKTON Do you want your boy to do A levels, sixth form, to go to university? I do. Are you saying you'd be happier if he left at sixteen and got a job in a factory? I don't know if you've ever been in a factory but –
- RITA – I work in a factory!
- BUCKTON Then you should know better. Is there anything else I can help with?
- RITA No.

(RITA is defeated. The teacher turns his back on her. RITA leaves. She bumps into LISA HOPKINS. LISA is wearing a red Biba dress.)

LISA Excuse me!

RITA Oh piss off!

LISA I beg your pardon!

RITA Sorry, I thought you were a teacher. I'm in a mood. Mister Buckton's caning my boy.

LISA Mine too. That's why I'm here.

RITA Rita O'Grady.

(Handshake.)

LISA Lisa Hopkins.

RITA I like that dress.

LISA It's Biba.

RITA Someone should do summat about it. The caning, not the dress. The dress is fab. Don't do anything about that. Leave the dress alone! It's perfect! I love it! Don't touch the dress! Ha! Sorry, I go weird when I've got the hump.

LISA We should start a petition. What do you think? Shall we?

RITA Oh God, I dunno. I'm not political.

LISA It's not politics, I'm not asking you to stand for Parliament. This is cruelty, we parents have to stand up to him.

RITA Yeah, good luck. I gotta go.

MEN

DO NOT CRY, DO NOT CRY
DO NOT BAWL, DO NOT WEEP
DO NOT HOWL FOR YOUR MAMMY
OR YOUR GRANNY WHEN YOU SLEEP

CRUSH ALL FEELING AND NEVER EVER COWER
 PREPARE FOR A CAREER
 IN THE CORRIDORS OF POWER

(End of scene.)

SCENE NINE

BARBARA CASTLE *and* HAROLD WILSON *and* AIDES. HAROLD *is smoking a pipe with a cup of tea in his hand. BARBARA has a cup of tea and a Cadbury's chocolate finger.*

HAROLD So Barbara, you've had those lovely legs of yours under the desk for a week now. Who do you blame for this country's pitiful record of industrial productivity?

BARBARA The problem as I see it is we have to get our people to go to work and stay there. We need a no-strike agreement with the TUC.

HAROLD Are you mad, woman? I told you the Labour Party is dependent on the TUC.

BARBARA This is not easy for me either, it's tearing me apart. This is my draft white paper, 'In Place of Strife'. We have to ban strikes.

(HAROLD stands in a huff.)

HAROLD We can't ban strikes! The TUC have six million block votes at the Labour Party conference. They bought me this pipe. They pay for my holidays in the Scilly Isles. They underlay in my bathroom!

BARBARA But Harold . . .

HAROLD No, Barbara, you've got this all wrong. I'm going. And I'm not coming back until you've got a solution.

(HAROLD opens a door, goes in, closes the door. He opens the door, comes back in.)

So that's a cupboard is it?

AIDE 3 I think it's a stationery cupboard, Sir.