

Private Joe
a musical

Adapted from Screenplay to Stage by:
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ROLES

(In order of appearance)

VERITY	OLD PARK-KEEPER
JOE	GENERAL WUNWARS
FOUR JOB CENTRE STAFF:- Ms Kahn, Mr-Ms Talulah, Mr Gupta, Mr Singh	TOUGHLUCKISTAN POLICE CHIEF TALIBAN WARRIORS'
SIX NATIONAL FRONT SKINHEADS	BLACKSMITH
JACEY (Joe's girl)	BLACKSMITH'S WIFE
JOE'S MUM	LEGIONNAIRES' LEADER
MAJOR BLUNDER	LEGIONNAIRE 2
GENERAL CHAOS	5 GRENADIER GUARDSMEN
SERGEANT WELSHMAN	COLONEL COCK-UP
SAM	SAMS MUM
SOL	SOL'S MUM
BIG DAMON	BIG DAMON'S MUM & DAD
TOUGHLUCKISTAN WOMEN	
SORAB THE PASHTUN	
FARAH	
PM TONY SCARE	
PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSHFIRE	
FRONT BENCHERS 1-4	
OPPOSITION MPs 1-4	
U.S. GENERAL WISERMAN	
AHMAD AL FATUSSI	
FARAH'S FRIEND	
PASHTUN GRANDFATHER	
PASHTUN GRANDDAUGHTER	

Place

UK, Toughluckistan, Ifark
war-time

Time

2001-2014

Musical Numbers

TRUTH	Verity
A JOB	Joe
BRITS	The six skinheads
I'M FOR WAR	General Chaos
ROSES	Toughluckistan Women
THE BRITISH GRENADIERS	Five Guardsmen
MY JOE	Joe's Mum, Jacey, Mothers & Dad
FORBIDDEN LOVE	Welshman, Farah
MAIWAND	Grandfather, Sorab, Pashtuns
SHOULDER TO SHOULDER	Tony Scare & George Bushfire puppets
W.M. DEEDLE	Tony Scare puppet, MPs,
WHY WOULD I?	Jacey
BLOODY BRITS	U.S. General Wiserman, American Officers
TEENAGE SOLDIERS	Welshman, Joe & Platoon
CRACK ON!	General Chaos, Major Blunder, Colonel Cock-up
WHY WOULD YOU? (same tune as Why would I)	Verity, Jacey
YOUTH (not yet composed)	Old Park-keeper, Jacey
'ERE WE GO/MY JOE (Mash-up)	Joe & Platoon, Jacey
WHAT KIND OF MEN	Welshman, Joe

MAIWAND reprise	Sorab, Pashtuns
PSALM 23	Verity, Welshman, Joe & Platoon
ABSOLUTELY NOT	Toughluck Police Chief
BLUNDER	Joe, Welshman
SPIN, SPIN, SPIN	Major Blunder, Platoon
BLAMELESS	General Chaos, Senior Officers
WATCHES	Sorab, Balavan Warriors
GREAT?	Welshman, Joe, Joe's Mum, Jacey, Big Damon's Mum & Dad, Ensemble

THREE OPTIONAL RAPS to be used if required are shown after the end of this libretto:

PATROL Pts 1 & 2. Written, and performed on the CD by real ex-SAS rapper Chaz. Could be installed in Act 2 Scene 7.

MIXED UP sung by Welshman and Farah could go into Act 1 Scene 7

WHY sung by Farah could also go in Act 1 Scene 7

SHAME sung by Welshman could go in Act 1 Scene 17

SCENE 1: Crate

(A bare stage except for an 8-foot high and 8-foot wide closed black crate. Staring at it stands JOE (17).

Faint thumps are heard from inside the crate.

As well as the thumps a drum begins tapping, one beat at a time . . . tap . . . thump . . . tap . . . thump . . . tap tap . . . thump thump . . . tap TAP . . . Thump THUMP . . .

*Gradually they build to a climax till, with a final mighty **THUMP** from inside the crate . . . the front of it crashes outwards onto the floor - **whoosh bang**.*

Inside the crate stands the person who's pushed it out; a slight figure dressed like a mime in pure white, VERITY.)

VERITY

Oops!

(She looks around apologetically. She speaks to the audience.)

Verity is my name.

Truth is my aim. Truth? We haven't been told the half of it.

Know what they say about truth? In war it's the first casualty.

(She ducks as shots ring out and bullets whine. Joe watches, listening to this strange creature. She straightens up)

See? Truth? Truth?! They haven't let us break out of their version.

(She points at the crate which frames her.

She runs around inside it, pummeling its sides with her little fists and singing.)

(Song: "TRUTH")

VERITY

IF OUR BOYS GO TO WAR WE SHOULD KNOW WHAT IT'S FOR
WE'VE BEEN FOBBED OFF WITH HALF-TRUTHS AND LIES
WEASEL-WORDS AND DECEIT BOX ME IN TILL I'M BEAT
WHITE LIES ARE A COP-OUT, HALF-TRUTHS ARE NO GOOD
HALVING ME? TRUTH? DO I LOOK LIKE THEY COULD?
IS VERITY SOMETHING TO BEND AND DISTORT?
IS TRUTH MADE OF DARKNESS?
OR LIGHT?

TRUTH, TRUTH WE JUST NEED THE TRUTH
WHY'S IT SO HARD TO FIND OUT?
MUST THE PEOPLE WHO LEAD US ALL SPIN AND MIS-LEAD US
HIDE THE TRUTH IN CONFUSION AND DOUBT?

(She takes another futile swipe at the inside of the crate.)

VERITY: Ooh! When I'm angry I have no manners at all.

(She flings her frail little body at the side of the crate.)

I'm gonna find out. I'm gonna!

(Finally, exhausted and resigned, she steps daintily out of the unyielding crate. She goes to Joe.)

(She leads back him into the front of the crate)

Joe Willing aye? I know where you're headed, Joe. Not too much truth there, y'know.

I'm gonna be watching.

(Joe looks puzzled. Verity goes on.)

Gonna see how you get sucked into those stupid wars, and what really happens.

We've not been told the half of it.

SCENE 2: A London street, then a Job Center

(Outside the Job Center Joe kicks a ball around with his mate RAJ and sings.)

(Song: "A JOB")

JOE

MY DAD HAD ONE, HE HAD A JOB
HE WORKED, GOT PAID, BROUGHT MONEY HOME
BUT I CAN'T GET NO WORK AT ALL
AM I SOME KIND OF USELESS SLOB?

MY DAD FELT PRIDE, HE STOOD TALL
HE KNEW HE MATTERED IN THIS WORLD
BUT ME AND MY MATES CAN'T FIND A JOB
THERE'S NONE OUT THERE AT ALL

(Joe leaves Raj and goes into the Job Centre.

Facing him sit four officials: MS KHAN wearing a head-scarf; MR SINGH wearing a turban; MR GUPTA wearing a Hindu long jacket, and MR-MS TALULAH wearing a dress but looking male.

Joe sizes them up, decides Mr Gupta looks the least forbidding, and addresses him like some new Oliver Twist.)

JOE

Please Sir I want a job.

MR GUPTA

A job! A job! You?

(Mr Gupta, astounded, turns to his three colleagues and booms:)

He wants - a job!

(They all look shocked. And stern. Mr Gupta turns back to Joe)

You want a job? You don't look like a Hindu.

JOE

Yes please I want a job. Please. Sir.

(Nonplussed, Mr Gupta turns to headscarfed Ms Khan. She addresses Joe incredulously).

MS KHAN

You? But are you a Moslem?

(Mr Singh in the turban, startled, chips in).

MR SINGH

What's your name?

JOE

Willing, Joe Willing. I've got my National Insurance card, Sir.

(Joe holds it out but Mr Singh ignores it)

MR SINGH

Willing is not a Sikh name. What was your mother's name?

JOE

Rita Atkins.

*(Mr Singh snorts. He turns to **Mr-Ms Talulah**)*

MR SINGH

What do you think Talulah?

(He-she looks a little sympathetic to poor confused Joe)

MR-MS TALULAH

Are you gay, Mr Willing? Or transgender maybe? LGBT? You might be a transgender lesbian perhaps? But I don't really think you are any of the above?

(Joe shrugs helplessly and shakes his head.)

JOE

Sorry. Does it matter? Please, I just want a job.

MR-MS TALULAH

Well yes dear, we get that. But there are priorities, you know, you need to tick the right boxes. And I'm afraid you just don't. Your box is, well, White British Male. I wonder, have you thought of a sex-change?

(Shocked and disappointed, Joe stands before them with his head drooping. In unison they dismiss him.)

MR SINGH, MS KHAN,
MR GUPTA, MR-MS TALULAH

White British Male. Nothing here for you then. We wish you luck, young man.

(They point to the door. Joe turns and sadly leaves the building.)

(Song: “ A JOB” continued)

(Outside, Raj rejoins him and he slumps on a garden wall and sings.)

JOE

I’M PRETTY SURE I’M NOT A FOOL
I DIDN’T DO TOO BAD IN SCHOOL
BUT NO ONE SAID THAT’S NOT ENOUGH
HELL, BEING JOBLESS ISN’T COOL

*(Behind Joe the four Job Centre officials come out and start a smug little dance.
Dancing, they gloat)*

MR SINGH, MS KHAN,
MR GUPTA, MR-MS TALULAH

Yess! Minorities are us! Yesss! Minorities rule! Yesss!

*(But their gloating will be short-lived. An antidote is on the way.
Invisible to all, Verity appears. She looks worried.
There’s a sound of stamping and shouting from as-yet unseen SIX SKINHEADS as they
make their first appearance in the show)*

SIX SKINHEADS (OS)

England rah rah rah! England rah rah rah! In-ger-**land!** In-ger- **land!** Ing . . .ger . . .**land!**

*(They stomp in shouting and waving Saint George’s flags and National Front and British
Defense League placards.)*

SIX SKINHEADS

Gotta make England great mate
Gotta make England great mate
Gotta make England great mate
You want some?

(On “you want some” they shake their fists menacingly)

Gotta make England great mate
Gotta make England great mate
Gotta make England great mate
You want some?

*(Advancing on the Job Center officials they stamp and chant.
Raj quickly hides round a corner
The officials shriek.)*

MR SINGH, MS KHAN,
MR GUPTA, MR-MS TALULAH

Aaagh! Eeeeh! Run!

*(They vanish back into the Job Centre.
Rav quickly hides round a corner.*

*The Skinheads gather round Joe. One drapes a flag over his shoulders and nods towards
the Job Centre)*

SKINHEAD 1

Bet you got fuckall in there.

*(Joe nods forlornly.
To the tune of the **National Anthem** no less, the Skinheads stamp, roar and sing).*

(Song: "BRITS")

SIX SKINHEADS

WE ARE THE BRIT'S WE ARE
WE SAY IT'S GONE TOO FAR
WE SAY FUCK OFF.
PAKKIES AND BLACKS GO BACK
DON'T WAIT TILL WE ATTACK
YOUR HEADS WE'RE GONNA CRACK
WE SAY FUCK OFF

*(The Skinheads surround Joe protectively. They launch into their song again, getting
more and more rabid as they sing, while Joe sings his own song sadly).*

JOE

MY DAD FELT PRIDE, HE STOOD TALL
HE KNEW HE MATTERED IN THIS WORLD
IF I HAD A JOB YOU WOULD SEE
THAT I AM THE MAN WHO PAYS FOR ME
BUT MY MA'S THE ONE I LIVE OFF NOW
AND THE DOLE JUST HUMBLER ME

SKINHEADS

WE ARE THE BRITS WE ARE
WE SAY IT'S GONE TOO FAR
WE SAY FUCK OFF
PAKKIES AND BLACKS GO BACK
DON'T WAIT TILL WE ATTACK
YOUR HEADS WE'RE GONNA CRACK
WE SAY FUCK OFF

(The Skinheads pull out knives and clubs. One smashes a bottle as a weapon. They foam and roar, so eaten up by their anger that smoke starts to rise from their shirts.)

SKINHEADS

WE ARE THE BRITS WE ARE
WE SAY IT'S GONE TOO FAR
WE SAY FUCK OFF

(They're so enraged that their faces are vivid red. Thick smoke rises from their shirts now. Joe watches horrified)

PAKKIES AND BLACKS GO BACK
DON'T WAIT TILL WE ATTACK
YOUR HEADS WE'RE GONNA CRACK
WE SAY FUCK OFF

(In a blast of smoke, flame and fury the six irate Skinheads self-combust - WOOMP! In the score the tune of the National Anthem shatters. With the Skinheads gone, Raj comes through the smoke and rejoins Joe.)

A MAN WITH A BROOM and a bucket of paste arrives. He unrolls a poster against a wall. He splashes paste over it with the broom.)

JOE

I'D PUSH A BROOM, I'D SCRUB A WALL
I'M STRONG, I'M FIT, I WANT TO WORK AND ALL
BEING USELESS AIN'T WHAT I FEEL I'M FOR
DO YOU THINK THERE'S NOTHING MORE?

(The man finishes putting up the poster. It shows a smart young soldier.)

MY DAD HAD ONE, HE HAD A JOB
HE WORKED, GOT PAID, BROUGHT MONEY HOME
BUT I CAN'T GET NO WORK AT ALL
AM I SOME KIND OF USELESS SLOB?

JOE: Well am I?

(Joe gazes at the poster. Above the soldier are words. Rav hobbles over and tries to block Joe's view of them. Joe cranes his neck and peers round him at the enticing words. He reads them out.)

JOE

“You’re somebody in today’s army. Be the best”

RAJ

Fuck no!

JOE’S MUM (O.S.)

Joe! Supper!

(Joe stuffs the army leaflet into his pocket and leaves with Raj.)

SCENE 3: Kitchen

(JOE'S MUM is at the microwave. Joe sits at the table. His Mum looks shocked).

JOE'S MUM

Joe why? Why?

JOE

I wasn't getting nowhere. Need to get started, Mum. Y'know.

(There's a knock at the kitchen door. Joe's Mum goes to it and lets in Joe's girl JACEY (18). She's holding a letter and she's exuberant.)

JACEY

I got it!

(She hands the letter to Joe. His Mum comes over to look at it with him. They read it together.)

JOE'S MUM , JOE

Work experience! At Radio Bassetshire. That's great Jacey!

(Joe sees a chance to break some news of his own to Jacey.)

JOE

Looks like we're both gonna be a credit to the county: I've just signed up with the Bassetshire Fusiliers.

(Jacey is gobsmacked.)

JACEY

You're gonna get yourself bloody killed mate!

JOE

Come on. I'm gonna be a general in the Bassetshires and you're gonna be a DJ on Radio Bassetshire .

JACEY

No, it says they're attaching me to the newsroom.

JOE

Orright, a general and a star reporter then!

JACEY

You've gone an' joined the bloody army!

JOE

Jacey, I wanna earn some money. Make a life. For us. You know?

JACEY

You went and sodding signed on!

JOE

Come on, I can look after myself . . . and our army's the best!

JACEY

I don't know if I can wait for you Joe. Don't know if I want to. Knowing you might not come back.

(Joe's Mum winces. He's focused on his girl)

JOE

Jace, please. It's a future. I start basic training next week.

JACEY

Oh I'm gonna fck'n cry . . . I'm not gonna be taking you to the bus station, Joe. If you're going in the army you can take yourself. Or just don't go!

(She turns away from him. He holds her a bit as she cries.

Joe's Mum looks on wringing her hands).

SCENE 4: British Army Assault Course, then Toughluckistan village of Dammit

(MAJOR BLUNDER and GENERAL CHAOS watch a PLATOON of recruits jog in with Joe, BIG DAMON, SOL and SAM. They halt in front of young Sergeant WELSHMAN. Behind them is an assault course.

Big Damon tugs at his khaki fatigues – the trousers and sleeves are way too short and the chest too tight. He appeals to Welshman.)

BIG DAMON

Sarge, I can't 'ardly breath. When they gonna get my size in?

WELSHMAN

Large? Don't think we've had any of them this year. You'll have to manage, soldier. Now lads, that's General Chaos with Major Blunder over there. Come to see if you're ready. See if you'll make Bassets.

*(They all look towards the two officers.
Then Welshman points away to the assault course's obstacles.)*

WELSHMAN

Right lads, we'll be timing you. When I say 'Go,' Go. GO!

(They rush at the first obstacle, a 10-foot high climbing net, and start scrambling up it. Leaping quickly onto the foot of the net, Big Damon and Sam get ahead. Soon Joe is just below them, with Sol straining below him. Sol is plump for a soldier and he's gasping for breath. Joe reaches down, grabs his arm and starts to pull him up. Suddenly the net gives way and comes down on top of them, dumping them all on the ground, wrapping them up in a huddle. They struggle to get free.

Watching the confusion, Major Blunder turns to General Chaos.)

MAJOR BLUNDER

Oh I say, Sir. We've been waiting all year to get that net replaced.

*(General Chaos shrugs.
Welshman rushes to the netted men.)*

WELSHMAN

Come on now. Get y'selves outta there before the enemy gets at you with bayonets. Look around you. Do you see any bouncy castles? Do you see any balloons? No you don't. This isn't some kids' party – this is war.

*(Our four recruits manage to disentangle themselves.
They get up and stagger to the next obstacle – a seven-foot high ‘brick’ wall made of plywood. They leap at it, reaching for the top to haul themselves up.
With a creaking of rending wood the wall tilts, leans and crashes forward onto the ground under their weight.
They fall on top of it and each other.
Major Blunder winces and turns again to General Chaos.)*

MAJOR BLUNDER

It’s needed rebuilding for months, Sir. Nothing in the Maintenance Budget you see.

GENERAL CHAOS

Can’t be helped. I’ve seen enough anyway. Pass them right away, Major. Need them in the regiment. Looks as if the we’re going to be deployed. Form the men up and I’ll address them.
*(Major Blunder signals to Sergeant Welshman who quickly gets the recruits together at attention, turns and salutes the major who in turn salutes the general who strolls over and faces them.
Verity appears and stands unseen behind General Chaos as he speaks)*

GENERAL CHAOS

Well done men. Never let faulty equipment stop you. Fortunes of war. Think what the Bassets did in 1759 under General Wolfe in Canada: Out of ammunition; out of supplies; freezing; and surrounded. But they fought on. To the death.
Now, you may have heard it said that we, and indeed the whole of Her Majesty’s armed forces, are erm over-extended.

*(Behind him Verity nods that it’s no surprise to her.
But Joe and his mates are shocked.)*

JOE

No one told me that when I signed on.

GENERAL CHAOS

Yes, it is said that we don’t have enough men and weapons to do the job. But I say to you, fear not.
*(Watched by Verity who undercuts his bluster with a look, General Chaos sings.
Major Blunder mimes sycophantically beside him)*

(Song: “I’M FOR WAR”)

GENERAL CHAOS
 IF A POLITICIAN TELLS ME HE WANTS TO GOT TO WAR
 WE HAVEN'T GOT THE NUMBERS
 BUT I'D NEVER CLOSE THAT DOOR.
 THE MISSION LOOKS TOO BIG FOR US.
 BUT HELL THAT'S WHAT WE'RE FOR.
 WE KID OURSELVES THAT BRITAIN'S GREAT
 THOUGH IT ISN'T ANY MORE

(The Platoon murmurs in concern. Joe is stunned.)

JOE

But no one told us!

GENERAL CHAOS
 WE'RE SHORT OF HELICOPTERS
 CAN'T SHOP TO BUY SOME MORE.
 OUR LAND ROVER IS TINNY
 SHRAPNEL COMES UP THROUGH THE FLOOR.

(He walks to the recruits. Major Blunder follows behind, worried at his general's openness.)

IT'LL GET YOU IN THE GOOLIES

(The recruits are horrified. They grab their groins and shout.)

PLATOON

Ouch!

GENERAL CHAOS
 AND YOUR VEST WON'T STOP A SHELL.
 BUT I'M NOT HERE TO DEALWITH THAT
 I GUESS YOU KNOW DAMN WELL.

(He grabs Joe's shirt pulling him close.)

GENERAL CHAOS: Private Joe Willing, right?

JOE

Yessir.

(Major Blunder humbly tries to head off his general.)

MAJOR BLUNDER

Um, General Chaos, Sir, I believe we are going to be late.

(The general shoves Major Blunder aside and lets go of Joe's shirt.)

GENERAL CHAOS

WE PRETEND TO PUNCH ABOVE OUR WEIGHT.
WE SACRIFICE OUR YOUTH.

GENERAL CHAOS: That's you right? Do you think we shape the course of world events?

JOE

Yessir!

GENERAL CHAOS

NOT REALLY, NOT IN TRUTH.

(Shocked, Joe claps his hand to his mouth.)

JOE

But Sir --

(Sergeant Welshman isn't having that.)

WELSHMAN

Stand still in the ranks you 'orrible little man !

(Chastened, Joe snaps back to attention.

General Chaos carries on as if he hadn't noticed.)

GENERALCHAOS

Your enthusiasm is excellent, men!

(He walks along their ranks singing personally to each man)

THE RUSSIANS COULDN'T HACK IT;
THE YANKS? I'M NOT IMPRESSED.
BUT I'M A BRITISH GENERAL
I NEED MEDALS ON MY CHEST.

(He swats his puffed chest. Verity shakes her head, resigned.)

SO NEVER MIND THE NUMBERS.
WAR IS WHAT I DREAM OF
BLOOD AND THUNDER, GUNS AND GORE

GENERAL CHAOS: I repeat.

NEVER MIND THE NUMBERS
WAR IS WHAT I'M FOR.

(He turns to Major Blunder)

GENERAL CHAOS: Thank you Major Blunder. Carry on please.

*(The general strolls away.
He looks back at the platoon and addresses the audience.)*

GENERAL CHAOS

If I bite off more than those young men can chew, well that'll be down to them.

*(The major salutes after him and says something to Sergeant Welshman.
Welshman turns to the platoon).*

WELSHMAN

One final lesson, men. And remember: first I tell you what I'm gonna tell you, then I tell you, and then I tell you what I've told you.

(He points at plump Sol's girth.)

WELSHMAN.

Hmmm . . . so who ate all the pies aye? Your're gonna have to try extra hard carrying all that.

(Welshman points to a tank-like Armoured Personnel Carrier parked by the ruins of the obstacle course.)

WELSHMAN

Now pay attention. When I say go you will run to that APC. Platoon . . . wait for it . . . Go!

*(With Joe in the lead they sprint to the vehicle and wait by its rear door.
Welshman joins them, and gestures to Joe, Sol, Sam and Big Damon to climb inside.
They do.
From inside they call out.)*

JOE (OS)

Sarge there's no floor in here.

BIG DAMON (OS)

No engine. There's just a hole where it oughta be, Sarge.

WELSHMAN

Correct. No spares available Lads. So what do we Bassets do? We push it.
Feet on the ground now and . . . For . . . ward!

*(With their feet working visibly underneath, the APC lurches forward.
It makes a jerky circuit of the stage with the rest of the **Platoon** jogging behind, shouting their regimental chant.)*

PLATOON

I don't know but I've been told
Left right left right left right left.

That Eskimo pussy is mighty cold.
 Left right left right left right left right left . . .
 I don't know but I've been told
 Left right left right left right left.
 That Eskimo pussy is mighty cold.
 Left right left right left right left right left . . .

(With a circuit completed, Welshman halts the APC, gets the men out and forms them up in front of him.

Joe breaks away and comes to confide in the theatre audience.)

JOE

We're going to war in that? Christ, what sort of army have I got meself into?

(He rejoins the squad as Welshman addresses them.)

WELSHMAN

Well done lads. Now, General Chaos says you've successfully completed Basic Training.

JOE

That mean we're off Sarge?

WELSHMAN

Probably fly out next week. You've all turned eighteen now.

SAM

Toughluckistan, Sarge?

WELSHMAN

Yes. We were there two years ago. Bloody well we did too. Operation Enduring Freedom.

JOE

You did good?

WELSHMAN

Yeah, two years ago. Big deal it was.

FLASHBACK:

THE SQUARE IN THE TOUGHLUCK VILLAGE OF DAMMIT

(Patrolling Bassets with Welshman, younger and just a corporal then, walk into the square. Toughluck music is heard. A dozen TOUGHLUCK WOMEN are daring to dance to it. Comically they are galumphing around inside burkas.

They slowly emerge from the burkas and dance freely as they sing their version of the rousing old march of the British Suffragettes.)

(Song: "ROSES")

TOUGHLUCK WOMEN
TELL ME DOESN'T EVERY WOMAN
KNOW HER BEAUTY IS HER RIGHT?
THE WOMEN OF MY COUNTRY
ARE EMERGING IN THE LIGHT

WE'RE TOUCHED WITH ALL THE RADIANCE
THAT A SUDDEN SUN DISCLOSES
THE WOMEN HERE ARE SINGING
BREAD AND ROSES,
BREAD AND ROSES

(Six menacing BALAVAN appear, led by SORAB. They close in on the dancing women.

*Welshman and the **Bassets** drive them away.*

*At the edge of the square **Sorab** looks back and points.)*

SORAB

Traitors! And Infidels! 'Angrish' what do you know of us? What do you know of our country that you invade - again?

(Sorab and his Balavan melt away.

The women carry right on dancing and singing and peeling off their burkas)

TOUGHLUCK WOMEN
WE'RE COMING FROM THE DARKNESS
TO A WORLD THAT'S BRAVE AND FREE
THE RISING OF ALL WOMEN
SHOULD BE EVERY NATION'S PLEA
LET MY WOMAN'S HEART BE TENDER
LET ME FIND THE STRENGTH TO RENDER
A FAR BETTER LIFE FOR ALL HERE
BREAD AND ROSES
BREAD AND ROSES

AS WE GO MARCHING, MARCHING
 WE BATTLE TOO FOR MEN
 FOR THEY ARE WOMEN'S CHILDREN
 AND WE MOTHER THEM AGAIN

NO MORE THEIR THREATS AND VIOLENCE
 WILL WE BEAR IN ABJECT SILENCE

THE WOMEN HERE ARE SINGING
 BREAD AND ROSES
 BREAD AND ROSES

(All are free from their burkas now, except one, FARAH. Welshman helps her extricate herself from the heavy black robe. Last is her veil, the niqab. Standing face to face, their eyes meet over it. And it's electric. They're almost laughing—it's so wicked. Welshman whips out his mobile phone.)

WELSHMAN

May I?

(Farah nods with a smile. He holds the mobile phone up to her face. But she teases, pulling her niqab down then up then down then up again in a game of peekaboo. Welshman's men join in the fun chanting Up . . . Down . . . Up – words that will be echoed later in very different circumstances. Finally when Welshman's well frustrated Farah keeps her face uncovered and lets him take a photo. Now, to his surprise, she takes out a phone from her pantaloons.)

FARAH

May I?

(She snaps a shot and puts her phone triumphantly back into her pantaloons.)

WELSHMAN

Where can I contact you?

(Farah smiles and leans close to him.)

END FLASHBACK

(By the obstacle course Welshman – now Sergeant Welshman again - addresses his men,)

WELSHMAN

Yeah, it was good there

BIG DAMON

You still in touch with her Sarge?

(Welshman stares at him, giving nothing away.)

WELSHMAN

Any questions Lads?

(Joe hesitates. He plucks up courage.)

JOE

Sarge, what's it like in a war zone?

(Welshman's not saying.)

WELSHMAN

You'll see Soldier.

That's it Lads, you are now officially soldiers of the Bassetshire Fusiliers.

Well done!

Bassets dis . . . miss!

SCENE 5: NAAFI ARMY CANTEEN

(FIVE GRENADIER GUARDSMEN in smart ‘walking-out’ uniforms are drinking at the bar.

*Still in their assault–course fatigues **Joe, Sol, Sam and Big Damon** arrive to celebrate their success. Plump Sol buys beers and hands them to his mates.)*

SOL

Here’s to us, the army’s finest, right?

(They clink glasses and drink.

Sam takes out his mouth organ and plays their regimental chant and they all join in)

JOE, SOL, BIG DAMON

I don’t know but I’ve been told
 Eskimo pussy is mighty cold
 I don’t know but I’ve been told
 Left right left right left right left.
 That Eskimo pussy is mighty cold.
 Left right left right left right left right left.
 I don’t know—

(Song: “THE BRITISH GRENADIERS”)

*(The **Guardsmen** interrupt.)*

GUARDSMEN

Hey what’s that crap? Play our song. For real soldiers!

(The Guardsmen start to sing the Grenadiers’ march)

GUARDSMEN

SOME TALK OF ALEXANDER
 AND SOME OF HERCULES
 OF HECTOR AND LYSANDER
 AND SUCH GREAT MEN AS THESE.

(They come along the bar aggressively to confront the four Bassets.

BUT OF ALL THE WORLD’S GREAT HEROES
 THERE’S NONE THAT CAN COMPARE
 WITH THE TA RA TA RA TA RA RAR
 OF THE BRITISH GRENADIER