

LET'S PUT ON AN OPERA!
A Prologue to The Little Sweep
by Martha Collins & Jesse Martins

THE LITTLE SWEEP
An entertainment for young people!
by Eric Crozier & Benjamin Britten

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A Prologue to Benjamin Britten's *The Little Sweep*

By Martha Collins and Jesse Martins

(As the audience is arriving in the theater, groups of YO enter casually as though they are arriving for a regular weekly rehearsal. Finally the house lights go down and the lights intensify on stage.)

MAESTRO: *(Entering with his baton)* Okay! Time to start! Everyone in your places!

(The rest of YO enter and all get into choral formation and sing "Shenandoah". During the song Nicole, Brent and Sam enter to listen.)

CHORUS:

Oh Shenandoah,
I long to see you,
Away you rolling river.
Oh Shenandoah,
I long to see you,
Away, I'm bound away
'Cross the wide Missouri.

ADULTS: Bravi! You guys sound fabulous! Etc.

(YO wave and call excitedly to them.)

AA: Why are you back in Sarasota?

MAESTRO Actually I invited Nicole, Brent and Sam to help us put on our own opera!

BB: *(Excitedly)* Really? Which opera are we going to do?

MAESTRO: *The Little Sweep* by Benjamin Britten! I'll go get scores for everyone.

(All react happily as Mo. Jesse goes to the orchestra pit to conduct while Nicole shows the score to AA and BB.)

NICOLE: This opera is the story of a little sweep...

BB: (*Looking uncertainly at the score*) ...I'm not sure an opera about 'sweeping' sounds very interesting....

AA: (*Dryly*) If it's about kids doing the cleaning, my mother will love it!

NICOLE: (*Laughing*) No! Not that kind of sweeping! Chimney sweeping! In the old days everyone had fireplaces and they had to go into the chimney to clean away all the built up soot.

AA: Hey! We know a song about a chimney-sweep!!

NICOLE: Really?

AA: Lo Spazzacamino by Verdi!

BB: That's right! In it the sweep says that although she's covered in soot no one's life could be happier.

NICOLE: We'd love to hear it!

(*Nicole, Sam and Brent move to the side as all get into position and sing "Lo Spazzacamino".*)

CHORUS:

¹Lo spazzacamin! Son d'aspetto brutto e nero,
Tingo ognun che mi vien presso;
Sono d'abiti mal messo,
Sempre scalzo intorno io vo.

Ah! di me chi sia più lieto
Sulla terra dir non so.
Spazzacamin! Signori, signore, lo spazzacamin
Vi salva dal fuoco per pochi quattrin.

¹ TRANSLATION: The Chimney-sweep! I seem ugly and black, I stain everyone who presses against me; I am badly dressed, Ever barefoot around I go. Ah! Who could be as happy as I— On earth I cannot say! Chimney-sweep! Ladies and gentlemen, the chimney-sweep Will save you from fire for a few pennies. Ah! ladies and gentlemen, the chimney-sweep! I get up before the sun And through all the city With my cry I fill the streets And I do not have one enemy. Ah! Who could be as happy as I— On earth I cannot say! Chimney-sweep! Ladies and gentlemen, the chimney-sweep Will save you from fire for a few pennies. Ah! ladies and gentlemen, the chimney-sweep! Now I rise to the rooftops Now I go through the rooms With my name the little children Timid and quiet I make Ah! Who could be as happy as I— On earth I cannot say! Chimney-sweep! Ladies and gentlemen, the chimney-sweep Will save you from fire for a few pennies. Ah! ladies and gentlemen, the chimney-sweep!

Ah! Signori, signore, lo spazzacamin!
Io mi levo innanzi al sole
E di tutta la cittade
Col mio grido empio le strade
E nemico alcun non ho.

Ah, di me chi sia più lieto
Sulla terra dir non so.
Spazzacamin! Signori, signore, lo spazzacamin
Vi salva dal fuoco per pochi quattrin.
Ah! Signori, signore, lo spazzacamin!

Talor m'alzo sovra i tetti,
Talor vado per le sale;
Col mio nome i fanciulletti
Timorosi e quieti io fo.

Ah, di me chi sia più lieto
Sulla terra dir non so.
Spazzacamin! Signori, signore, lo spazzacamin
Vi salva dal fuoco per pochi quattrin.
Ah! Signori, signore, lo spazzacamin!

NICOLE: That is such a happy song, but actually sometimes there was a darker side to chimney sweeping. The opera is about Sammy, a young boy whose father becomes ill. The family has no money, so Sammy is sent to learn from Big Bob how to be a chimney-sweep.

CC: I bet I could do that! I love to climb!

NICOLE: No one would love this kind of climbing. Imagine if you were high up in a chimney and lost your grip and fell or got stuck and couldn't get out.

BRENT: Or worse, sometimes a maid might not know a boy was working in the chimney and start a fire under him in the fireplace...

CC: That's terrible!

SAM: ...and on top of all that, to keep the children small enough to fit inside the chimneys - they often starved them.

CC: *(Shocked)* Sammy's parents must be terrible people!

NICOLE: But they didn't know how dangerous it was...

BRENT: ...or that they couldn't trust Big Bob.

CC: It doesn't sound like a very happy story....

NICOLE: Ah!...just wait till you hear the rest of it!

CC: *(Hopeful)* Do you really think we could do it?

NICOLE/
BRENT/SAM: Of course! Certainly! You bet!...etc...

ALL: *(Excited)* Yay! Great! Let's do it! Etc.

DD: Where do we start?

BRENT: We need to pick singers with the right voice types and ranges for the parts.

SAM: He means whether they need to sing *(using a high voice)* high...

BRENT: *(using a low voice)* ...or low. *(All laugh)*

EE: Besides Sammy the Little Sweep, who are the other characters?

BRENT: Let's see....there's the governess, Rowan...

SAM: ... the children of the house...

DD: *(Has looked at the score and interrupts)*. Hey, listen to the description of these 3 characters; Big Bob a brutal sweepmaster....

EE: ... Clem his nasty assistant....

DD:and Miss Baggott, the bossy housekeeper!

EE: I know who would be perfect!

DD/EE: *(They point to the adults)* You!

NICOLE: Are you saying I'm bossy!

BRENT/SAM: (*Teasingly*) GRRR....we'll show ya brutal...! (*All laugh as Brent and Sam tries to catch DD*)

EE: Is that why you're here?

DD: Will you be in the show with us?

NIC/SAM/BR? You bet! Sure! Yes we will! We will indeed! Etc..

ALL: Hurray! Yay! Etc.

NICOLE: Next everyone will need to learn the music. There are arias and....

EE: ...an aria is for one singer, right?

NICOLE: Exactly. There are also duets, trios, quartets...

DD: (*Interrupting hopefully*) Is there a part for all of us?

NICOLE: Absolutely! -- because the opera also needs a chorus!

ALL: (*All*) Great! Yay! What fun! Etc.

EE: Will there be dancing?

NICOLE: You like to dance? Well then.... !!

(*Nicole starts the Czardas and all join in.*)

CHORUS &
ADULTS

Did I hear you say that you like dancing?

I myself find nothing more entrancing.

The minuet, the allemande and Tango.

{ The allemande, quadrille and reel. The passacaglia, contradance;
Chaconne and gigue, the contradance, the rigaudon, musette;
The sarabande, the cotillion, ballet, bourree, gavotte, the waltz;

Tarantella, polka and Fandango!
Music fills your heart and sets it humming, ...
...it goes down to your feet and sets them drumming.
But music, dance, and rhythm beating to a gypsy is like breathing.

Living life by chance; our home is the sky's expanse.
Heija! But a true gypsy soul needs to dance!
The gypsy soul is strong!
Bravo! A gypsy song!

Thro' the forest, wild and free,
Sounds our gypsy melody;
Sets you dancing, none can be
Half so merry as are we.

Ever singing Heija! We sing our song,
Hei! Come ye gypsies, heija! Come sing along!
Ever singing Heija! The life is free,
Hei! Come ye gypsies, heija! Come dance with me!

Thro' the forest, wild and free,
Sounds our gypsy melody;
Sets you dancing, none can be
Half so merry as are we.

Sing ye Romany, sing ye ever,
Sing ye Romany, gypsies all!
Live life! Come live it free!

Thro' the forest, wild and free,
Sounds our gypsy melody;
Sets you dancing, none can be

Half so merry as are Romany;

Come let's dance our gypsy melody!

Let life be free!

Heija!

- BRENT: Let's get back to planning. The opera takes place in London, England in the early 1800s.
- FF: Why can't it take place in America?
- GG: Yeah! I bet there were dirty chimneys here too!
- BRENT: Okay! But where?
- FF: How about Boston? It was already a city by then...
- GG:and they have really cold winters so I bet there were lots of chimneys!
- BRENT: Boston it is!
- BRENT: Next we're going to need some of you to go on a treasure hunt.
- FF: What for?
- BRENT: Because we need to set the stage!
- BRENT: The opera takes place in a children's playroom with...
- GG: ...let me guess...a fireplace and chimney!
- BRENT: Excellent deduction! And here is a list of the props. (*He shows it.*)
- FF: What's the difference between props and sets?
- BRENT: Sets are the big pieces – like the walls and doors of a room. Props are the things that the characters hold in their hands or move on stage.
- GG: I get it! Like brooms for the sweeps....
- FF: ...and toys for the children's playroom...
- GG: Let's go see what we can find!

(Brent exits with some YO to find props and sets)

HH: Will there be costumes?

NICOLE: Of course! Costumes help the singers get into character.

HH: What about stage makeup?

NICOLE: That is definitely a must!

(Nicole hands her a sheet of information about costumes.)

HH: Wow! They dressed like this every day?

NICOLE: Let's see what we can find in the costume shop.

(NICOLE exits with a small group.)

JJ: Will we have an orchestra?

SAM: Absolutely! The score calls for a string quartet, 4 hand piano and...

JJ: How can a piano have 4 hands?

SAM: There are 4 hands when 2 people play at the same time. That way the sound is richer. *(Looks at score)* And wait till you hear all the amazing sounds the percussionist will play!

JJ: I can't wait to get started!! Let's go!

SAM: *(Pulling him back)* Not so fast....!

JJ: There's more?

SAM: A few more people are necessary to make it all work. We need a lighting designer to create atmosphere and make sure we aren't in the dark.

JJ: ...got it.... *(stopping him from running away)*

SAM: ...we'll also need Stage Management and a strong crew to move our sets.

JJ: ...now....?

SAM: Finally we need the person who brings it all together! The stage director is in charge of everything the audience sees on the stage. *(Looks around)* Okay, is everyone ready to get started?

ALL: Yes!!!

SAM: Let's go!

(SAM runs off as YO sings "Goin' to Boston". When the song finishes all YO exit excitedly as the stage lights dim and the set is assembled on stage.)

CHORUS Come on now we're goin' to Boston!
 Come along and join us!
 Won't we have fun when we get there?
 Come along and join us!

ORCHESTRA Segue "Pantomime (Scene change)"

THE LITTLE SWEEP
By Benjamin Britten

The Opera from
“Let’s Make an Opera!”
An Entertainment for Young People Op.45

Libretto by Eric Crozier

I. THE SWEEP’S SONG (Chorus Song I, later Clem and Big Bob)

CHORUS Sweep! Sweep!
 Saddle your pony and set on your way!
 There’s chimneys need sweeping and cleaning today.
 Bring brushes and scrapers and baskets and sacks
 To harvest the soot from our chimney stacks.
 So Sweep! Sweep!

Big Bob is coming and with him his son,
 For cruel behavior they’re second to none;
 Their cries as they ride through the sharp morning air
 Set partridges fleeing and startle the hare.
 So Sweep! Sweep!

Sam is the new boy and sweep is his job
 His father has sent him to cruel Big Bob.
 Today is his first day: today he must climb
 A chimney stack for the very first time.
 So Sweep! Sweep!

Over the hilltop, and over the bridge
 They turn to the left by a narrowing ridge;
 Then follow the wandering road on it’s way
 To get to the city for working today.
 So Sweep! Sweep! (Tacet)

[The nursery at Iken Hall]
[Enter Clem and Bob singing gaily, driving a miserable and tear-stained Sam before them]

CLEM & BIG BOB Saddle your pony and set on your way!
 There’s chimneys need sweeping and cleaning today.
 Bring brushes and scrapers and baskets and sacks
 To harvest the soot from our chimney stacks.
 So Sweep! Sweep! Sweep!

II. QUARTET (Rowan, Miss Baggott, Clem and Big Bob)

[entering, followed by Rowan. To the Sweeps]

Ms. BAGGOTT Sweep this chimney, sweep this chimney,
Then next door, next door!
Hurry, Rowan! Hurry, Rowan!
Don't stand gaping, don't stand gaping!
Four more chimneys on this floor! Four!
Give them all a thorough scraping!

ROWAN Small and frail and stained with tears,
Wrapped in scarecrow rags and tatters,
Faint with terror, full of fears,
Just to see the child my heart shatters.

CLEM & BIG BOB *[The Sweeps take up dignified attitudes]*
Chimney-sweeping's right for boys
That's what's best for chimney spaces.
Brushes, rods and suchlike toys
Can't get in so many places.

Ms. BAGGOTT Filthy rascals, don't you dare
Spread your soot in careless fashion!
Lord have mercy, I declare,
Sweeps! Sweeps! I hate sweeps with greatest passion.

ROWAN Torn from play and sold for pay,
Taught his job with kicks and curses.
What can he do but obey
Meekly glad of little mercies.

CLEM & BIG BOB Choose 'em nimble, sly and thin
That's the best for chimney sweeping
Easy, too, for breaking in,
Though there'll be some tears and weeping.

[DIALOGUE]

Ms. BAGGOTT Hurry, Rowan! Sheets on the furniture next door! *[She hurries off]*

ROWAN Mister Sweep! for mercy's sake, don't send that little boy up the chimney! He's weeping in fear!

BIG BOB Fear..? Ha! Them's tears of gratitude! He's aching fer it, ain't cha, Sam?

[Bob and Clem laugh horribly]

[Rowan runs from the room in distress. In the next duet the Sweeps turn menacingly on Sam, pull off his clothes, tie a rope round his waist and drag him over to the hearth.]

III. DUET (Clem and Big Bob)

BIG BOB Now little sprite boy!

CLEM Shiver with fright boy!

BIG BOB Scared-of-the-night boy!

TOGETHER Time for your climb!

BIG BOB Clothes off! my bright boy!

CLEM Don't kick or fight, boy!

BIG BOB Oh! so you'd bite, boy?

TOGETHER Time for your climb!

BIG BOB Pull the rope tight, boy!

CLEM Kiss us goodnight, boy!

BIG BOB Pull the rope tight, boy!

CLEM Climb out of sight, boy!

TOGETHER Time for your climb!

[Sam's legs hurriedly disappear up the flue.]

[shouts]

BIG BOB Scrape that flue clean, or I'll roast you alive!

CLEM Go earn your keep, boy!

BIG BOB Don't make a peep, boy!

CLEM Whiney and weep boy!

BIG BOB Go be a sweep boy!

CLEM A climb and creep boy!

TOGETHER A chimney sweep boy!
Covered with grime! *[they laugh]*

[The Sweeps collect their tools and march off into the next room.]

[The nursery is left empty. Only the rope dangling in the hearth shows that Sam is up the chimney]

IIIa. HIDE AND SEEK (Children)

CHILDREN *[off stage]*

TWINS Juliet! (+ SOPHIE, GEORGE) We're coming!

[The door opens gently. Juliet slips in, shuts it carefully behind her and crosses to an armchair covered with a dust sheet]

JONNY *[far]* Try the pantry room. *[quick]*

SOPHIE No the linen cupboard. *[quick]*

TWINS *[near]* Wait for us.

[Juliet slips into the chair beneath the sheet. The door flies suddenly open and the Twins pop their heads in.]
[speaking] She's not in here!

SOPHIE Hughie! Tina. *[The Twins disappear hurriedly]*

TWINS Wait for us!

[Juliet pokes her head above the sheet, emerges and approaches the door. It begins slowly to open.]

GEORGE/So/Tw Harness room!

JONNY *[speaking]* Caught you!

JULIET *[speaking]* Quick, Jonny! You hide too!

There's lots of room for me and you!

[They both hide in the chair with the sheet over them.]

TWINS Jonny! (+ SOPHIE) Jonny! (+GEORGE) Where are you?

[Giggles from underneath the sheet. Suddenly the rope in the fireplace begins to waggle violently.]

SAM *[crying, off]* Help! I'm stuck!

JONNY/JULIET *[showing themselves]* What's that?

SAM *[off]* Pull me down!

JULIET It's a sweep boy!

JONNY In the flue!

OTHERS *[far]* Jonny! Jonny! Where are you?

SAM *[off]* Help! Help!

JULIET Call the others quickly, Jon!

JONNY Sophie, Hughie, Tina, George! Come quickly!

CHILDREN *[bursting into the nursery]* Here we are! What's going on?

JONNY/JULIET Shhhh!

SAM *[from the chimney]* Help! I'm suffocating!

JULIET Pull him down!

JONNY It's no good waiting!

JULIET *[calls up the chimney]* Hold very tight, and don't let go!

We'll pull the rope from down below!

[The children pick up the rope, ready to pull.]

BOYS Ready?

SAM *[from the fireplace]* Ready!

JULIET Pull as gently as you can.

We mustn't hurt the little man.

IV. SHANTY (Children)

GIRLS Pull the rope gently until he is free, O
Pull O! Heave O!

BOYS Pull the rope gently until he is free, O
Pull O! Heave O!

SAM *[from the chimney]* No good!

JULIET Pull harder this time – but not *too* hard.

GIRLS Pull the rope harder and give a good heave, O
Pull O! Strongly O!

BOYS Pull the rope harder and give a good heave, O
Pull O! Strongly O!

SAM *[off]* I'm still stuck!

JULIET Try once more!

GIRLS Pull the rope smartly with one two three jerk!
One two three jerk!

BOYS Pull the rope smartly with one two three jerk!
One two three jerk!

[With a loud scream Sam falls down the chimney and lies flat in the hearth.]

CHILDREN Oooooohh!

/TWINS/SOPHIE You've killed them!

[The children anxiously surround Sam and lift him up.]

V. ENSEMBLE (Children)

SOPHIE Is he wounded?

JULIET Please forgive us!

JONNY Are you very much in pain?

TWINS All we wanted was to help you

/GEORGE All we wanted was to help you

SAM Please don't send me up again!

SOPHIE Poor young boy!

JULIET He's just a baby!

JONNY Weak from toil and pale with strain!

TWINS How could he be sweeping chimneys!

/GEORGE How could he be sweeping chimneys!

SAM Please don't send me up again!

JULIET Will Miss Baggott let us keep him?
 JONNY No she won't!
 /SOPHIE No she won't!
 /JULIET We'd ask in vain!
 TWINS She'd be first to tell his master.
 /GEORGE She'd be first to tell his master.
 SAM Please don't send me up again!

JULIET Can't we rescue him from sweeping?
 SOPHIE/JONNY Hide him safe? And not explain
 TWINS Till the sweeps have gone and left him
 /GEORGE Till the sweeps have gone and left him
 ALL We won't give you up again!
 SAM Please don't send me up again!
 ALL We won't give you up again!

[DIALOGUE]

GEORGE *[at the toy-cupboard]* Hide him *here* among our toys
 JONNY Here there's room for twenty boys!
 ALL Quickly then!
 JULIET But wait! I say! *They* must think he's run away!
 SOPHIE Through the window
 TWINS Let's be clever!
 ALL Make them think he's gone forever!

IV. MARCHING SONG (Children, later Ms. Baggott, Big Bob, Clem)

[The children lead Sam across the room, planting his feet to make tracks on the sheet.]
 CHILDREN Sooty tracks upon the sheet,
 Sooty marks of sooty feet,
 Soot upon the window-seat
 Make our evidence complete!

Soot upon the window-sill,
 Soot put on with loving skill,
 Soot to fool their eyes, until
 They'll never see he's with us still!

Scramble up and smudge the brick
 Just a little, not too thick!
 It's a disappearing trick
 Someone's coming! Hide him! Quick!

[The boys carry Sam to the toy cupboard, snatch up his clothes, and dive under the shrouded furniture with the other children as Ms. Baggott enters, followed by Clem and Bob, with Rowan behind them.]

[DIALOGUE]

Ms. BAGGOTT Half-past eleven! Hurry, you slackers! Attics next!
 BIG BOB Barks just like a little ol' fox-terrier!
 CLEM Real old battleax, ain't she?
 Ms. BAGGOTT What's this? Window open?

[all observing the marks of Sam's disappearance]

Ms. BAGGOTT/ Sooty tracks upon the sheet
 CLEM/BIG BOB Soot upon the window seat
 Sooty rope and sooty noose
 After him! Young Sammy's loose!

VII. TRIO (Ms. Baggott, Clem, Big Bob)

BIG BOB Sam!
 ALL Wait until we catch him
 We'll whip him till he howls
 We'll teach him to run off and leave his duty!

Chain him up and kennel him
 Keep him with the fowls
 Humiliate his pride the little beauty!

[The Sweeps run off shouting furiously. Miss Baggott follows, calling them back.]

BIG BOB I'll catch that 'runaway'!
 Ms. BAGGOTT Come back!
 CLEM Chicken-hearted brat
 BIG BOB Then I'll beat him till he's lame!
 Ms. BAGGOTT Come back!
 CLEM Tar and feather him!
 Ms. BAGGOTT Come back, you scoundrels!
 Six more chimneys! Come back!

VIII Rowan's Aria (Rowan, later Children)

[Rowan thinking herself alone gives way to her distress]

ROWAN Run poor sweep boy
 Run much faster!
 Run much faster I implore!
 Close behind you comes your master,
 Mad to bring you back once more!

Far along the frozen river,
 Clear across the frosty air,
 Fearsome echoes make Sam shiver,
 Fill his heart with new despair.

Run, poor boy! O quickly hurry!
 Big Bob follows right behind!
 See his features twist with fury!
 Rage and anger make him blind!

How I wish that I could save you!
 I would hide you far away
 From those tyrants who enslave you
 And torment you day by day!
 How I wish that I could save you!
 How I wish that I could save you!

[During the last verse the children's heads emerge from under their coverings, unnoticed by Rowan, and they watch her in admiration. She sees them suddenly. They stand up one by one, and beam at her.]

How I wish... Ah!

JONNY Dear Rowan!

SOPHIE Dear, dear Rowan!

JULIET Dearest Rowan!

GEORGE Dearest, darling Rowan!

TWINS Dear, dearest, darlingest Rowan!

ROWAN What does this mean?

CHILDREN Sssh!

[The children go to the cupboard door and beckon. Sam pokes out a timid and very sooty head.]

[DIALOGUE]

ROWAN Goodness gracious me! The Little Sweep!

CHILDREN OUR Little Sweep!

ROWAN But what will Miss Baggott say about him?

GEORGE She doesn't know...

JONNY She needn't know...

JULIET And she's *not* to know!

TWINS He's a secret!

ROWAN But what are you going to do with him?

TWINS Feed him...!

SOPHIE The poor boy's hungry.

JULIET You see, Rowan, we can't possibly hand him over to those horrible sweeps, can we? *[Rowan hesitates, so the children answer for her]*

CHILDREN No!

JULIET ...we can't possibly tell mama, 'cos she's away...

GEORGE ...seeing papa off on his ship!

JULIET ...we can't possibly tell Miss Baggott...

TWINS 'Cos she'd turn him out of the house!

JULIET ...so you are the only grown-up we can tell!

ROWAN That's all very well for you, Miss Juliet, and for Master George and Miss Sophie, I daresay, but you must remember that your cousins and I are only visitors in your house...

JULIET *[interrupting]* Never mind about cousins and visitors! This is our latest visitor, and when you have a visitor who is cold and hungry and covered with soot from top to toe, what do you do with him...?

TWINS Bath him!

GEORGE Of course you do!

SOPHIE But what about Miss Baggott?

JONNY O bother Miss Baggott!

ROWAN Perhaps we don't need to worry just yet. I saw her chasing the sweeps across the courtyard.

JONNY Hooray!

GEORGE That should give us some time....

ROWAN I'm sure I don't know if this is right

JULIET *[firmly]* Look at him! Does he need a bath or doesn't he?

CHILDREN Yes!

ROWAN Would you like to have a bath, Sammy?

SAM Yes, please, Miss!

ROWAN *[To Jonny and George]* Call the maids...

JULIET We'll need buckets of water...

TWINS We'll need the bath from the attic...

SOPHIE I'll get some of Jonny's clothes...

JULIET We'll need soap and towels...

ALL Here they are!

IX. SAMMY'S BATH (Chorus Song II, later Children, Rowan)

CHORUS The kettles are singing like midsummer larks,
The fire is flinging a shower of sparks,
The children run flying to fetch what's required,
For washing and drying the boy they've acquired.

They hurry upstairs in excitement and joy.
Where Rowan's preparing the bath for the boy.
With brushes to scrub him, with basins to flood him,
With flannels to rub him, with soapballs to suds him.

SPLASH! In he plunges and Rowan lets fly
With sopping wet sponges and sparks in her eye!
She washes and rinses and scrubs him all over,
Till poor Sammy winces but smells like fresh clover.

Now Sammy is gleaming like coins in the sun,
While Rowan stands beaming to see her work done.
And all who were frightened now see he's excited.
To see how he's brightened, and show you're delighted.

[The nursery as before. The children are watching the new Sam, as he finishes drying. Rowan is on her knees besides him]

CHILDREN So Sammy's as fresh as a new apple pie!
 /ROWAN O Sammy is brighter than stars in the sky!
 O Sam is as clean as the billowing seas
 As fresh as a butterfly borne on the breeze.
 The hateful employment he suffered so blindly
 Gives way to enjoyment and thank...
 SAM Thank you all kindly!

[DIALOGUE]

ROWAN Quick, children! We must tidy the room before Miss Baggott comes back.
 JULIET Just one moment, Rowan! Tell me, Sammy, haven't you any father or mother?
 SAM Yes, Miss.
 GEORGE Then where are they?
 SAM At home...
 JONNY Where's home?
 SAM Just north of the city.
 ROWAN But I come from north of the city myself! Whose boy are you?
 SAM Dad's name is Josiah Sparrow the Waggoner.
 ROWAN Josiah Sparrow, from along the ten-acre field?
 SAM That's him, Miss.
 JULIET And he apprenticed you to that wicked sweep...?
 GEORGE You're so young...!
 TWINS How *could* he...?
 SAM He didn't want to, but he broke his hip last year, and there wasn't anything to eat...
 ROWAN Poor man!
 CHILDREN Poor Sammy!
 SAM But I had to help out. And I'll be nine next birthday.
 CHILDREN *[shocked]* Only nine...!
[The children are dismayed and unhappy to hear what Sammy has told them. They turn sadly to their task of tidying the room and help Sam into the clean clothes they have found for him.]

X. ENSEMBLE (Sam, Rowan, Children)

ROWAN O why do you weep through the working day?
 SOPHIE O why do you weep at your task, poor boy
 ALL Father and mother are far away
 SAM How shall I laugh and play?

JONNY O where is the home where you used to stay?
 GEORGE O where is the home that you loved, poor boy?
 ALL Home is a hundred miles away.
 SAM How shall I laugh and play?

JULIET O what is that voice that you must obey?
 TWINS O what is that voice that you fear, dear boy?
 ALL Master is angry again today
 SAM How shall I laugh and play?

[DIALOGUE]

JONNY I have an idea!
 JULIET What is it?
 JONNY Rowan, when will you be packing our trunk?
 ROWAN Tonight, when you are in bed.
 JONNY Will you leave an empty space in the top?
 GEORGE I see! Put Sammy in the trunk...
 JULIET And take him home with you!
 SOPHIE Oh yes!
 TWINS Hooray!
 ROWAN But he'll suffocate in a trunk...!
 GEORGE No, he won't.
 JULIET You can let him out as soon as you're clear of the house.
 ROWAN I can't think what your father and mother will say.
 JONNY They'll help us, I'm positive they will!
 ROWAN And where will you keep him for tonight?
 GEORGE In the cupboard! It's the only place.
 TWINS *[at the window]* Quick! Quick! Miss Baggot's coming!
 GEORGE Where?
 SOPHIE Through the garden gate!
 ALL Hurry! Hide Sammy! Tidy the room!
[The children are thrown into confusion by unexpected return of Miss Baggott]

XI & XII. PANTOMIME AND SCENA (Miss Baggott)

[Sam leaps into the toy-cupboard, and the children fasten the door securely. George and Jonny carry the hip bath out, Sophie takes the towel horse, Rowan and Juliet whisk off the remaining dust sheets. Every trace of the bathing is removed. The children tumble over each other with desperate haste to make the room look clean and tidy. Then they fetch books, toys and games with which to occupy themselves. Rowan takes a last quick look round the room, and settles in the armchair with her knitting]

[The children form a sedate tableau around the fire]

[Enters Miss Baggott in hat and boots]

Ms. BAGGOTT Ah! Scoundrels! Scalawags! Snakes!
 Oh my poor feet!
 Ah! The vermin!
 All the way cross town and back!
 Oh my joints!
 Never in all my born days!
 "Come back", says I, "and finish your honest work"
 Their language! The insults!
 O curse the sweeps!

For they that cheat shall one day pay for their wrongdoing,
 And the good shall trample them underfoot!
 The insults! Accused me of hiding their beastly boy!
 I'll hide him! If once I lay my hands on him! *[she sits]*

Curtains crooked, Rowan!
 Carelessness! Such sloppiness! Help me up!
[The children assist her to rise, and she moves slowly around the room inspecting it.]

Look at the creases in the curtain!
 Look at the footprints on the floor!
 You haven't tidied up, that's certain!
 Look at that filthy cupboard door!
 Fireplace is grubby, mantle covered!
 Blasted Big Bob and both his boys!
 Smudges of soot all round the cupboard!
 Have you arranged the children's toys?
[She moves determinedly towards the toy-cupboard. The children are on tiptoe in alarm.]
 Toys must be tidied up completely.
 Come over here, you girls and boys!
 Open the door and pack them neatly.
 Time that you tidied up your toys!

JULIET *[collapsing dramatically]* Aaahhhh! *[They surround the prostrate girl.]*

XIII. FINALE (Rowan, Ms. Baggott, Children)

Ms. BAGGOTT Help, help she's collapsed!
 Oh what a disaster, disaster!
 She's fainted! Stand back!
 Move faster! Move faster!
 Bring some water, quick!
 Lift up her head!
 Rub her hands,
 How lucky I caught her!

JULIET Quick! Lift up her head!
 Rub her hands! Bring some water
 We'll put her to bed
 How lucky you caught her!

CHILDREN Poor Juliet's ill! *[kneeling reverently]* Look how she's lying!
/ except Juliet So silent and still
 Can she be dying?
 Her cheeks are so pale
 Will she recover?

From what does she ail?
We must discover.

[Rowan and Ms. Baggott carry Juliet out, while the children dance round in a frenzy of excitement and relief.]
CHILDREN Blankets feathers warming pan
Run as quickly as you can!
Brandy is the remedy
Sugar water, cups of tea!
Lift her legs! No keep her flat!
Any simpleton knows that!
Raise her head! Undo her frock!
Cold for fever! Warmth for shock!

[Jonny runs to the cupboard, opens the door and calls to Sam.]
JONNY Sit tight Sammy!
And tomorrow you're a free man!

CHILDREN Juliet has won the day
In a very simple way!
Sammy's safe and he can stay
In his hiding place! Hooray!

CHORUS **XIV. THE NIGHT SONG (Chorus Song III)**

I-OWLS The owl wide winging through the sky
Surveys the world from up on high
Repeats his loud unhappy cry! Tuwhoo!

II-HERONS The heron listens, thin and still
Within his nest upon the hill
Then sings his song both loud and shrill! Kaah!

III-DOVES The turtle dove begins to stir
Removes the leaves that shelter her
And answers with melodious purr! Prrroooo!

IV-CHAFFINCHES The chaffinch and his mate rejoice
To exercise their singing voice
They take the high notes for their choice! Pink! Pink! Pink!

ALL From North and South and East and West
The birds compete for who sings best
But who shall choose the loveliest?
The night is past, the owl's at rest
The finches slumber in their nest
The heron stoops, the turtle droops.

[The following morning. Rowan has just entered the nursery with a breakfast-tray for Juliet, who is wearing a warm quilted dressing-gown. She puts the tray down and they go to the cupboard to fetch Sammy.]

ROWAN Breakfast, Sammy!
 JULIET Ham and eggs!
 ROWAN Stretch yourself –
 JULIET - and kick your legs!
 ROWAN Only twenty minutes more till the coach is at the door!
 JULIET Hungry Sammy?
 SAM Oh yes, Miss!
 JULIET Eat away then, while I check on the trunk.

XV. ARIA (Juliet)

JULIET Soon the coach will carry you away
 And we will laugh with joy!
 And smile to see the little sweep we rescued yesterday
 ... is now a free and happy boy.

Sad you were a poor, unhappy sight!
 And very filthy too, I must confess
 Today your smile is bright and gleaming white
 And radiant with joy and happiness

Sammy dear, today at last you are free!
 Your cruel apprenticeship is at an end
 Accept this gift from Sophie, George and me
 To show our fondness for our new young friend
[She holds out to Sam three shining half-crowns.]

[DIALOGUE]

SAM Oh no, Miss! I couldn't accept it; really I couldn't, though it's so very kind of you...
 JULIET Please take it, Sammy!
 SAM But I've never seen so much money in my life!
 JULIET Then put it in your pocket and you'll be a rich man!
 SAM Oh, but, Miss...!
 JULIET Quickly! Here come the others!

XVI. ENSEMBLE (Sam and Children)

JONNY 'Morning Sammy! Lovely weather
 For our journey home together!
 SAM 'Morning! 'Morning! *[Enter Sophie]*
 SOPHIE 'Morning Sammy! You look splendid
 Now your sweeping days are ended
 SAM 'Morning! 'Morning! *[Enter George]*

GEORGE 'Morning Sammy! Time to travel
I hear coach wheels on the gravel!

SAM 'Morning! 'Morning! *[Enter Twins]*

TWINS Morning Sammy! We're delighted
That you're safe and so excited!

ALL 'Morning Sammy! 'Morning Sammy!

SAM 'Morning! 'Morning

[DIALOGUE]

JONNY The coach is coming –

GEORGE Into the trunk with you!

ROWAN I'll fetch your hats and coats. *[She goes off quickly to get them.]*

JULIET In you jump!

GEORGE Take some bread and butter with you. *[Sam gets into the trunk and kneels.]*

JULIET Goodbye, Sammy dear, and very good luck! *[She kisses him.]*

SOPHIE Goodbye, dear Sammy! *[She kisses him.]*

GEORGE Good luck to you! *[Handshake.]*

ROWAN *[returning with hats and coats]* Hurry, children! The coach is at the door!

[Juliet and George hastily strap up the trunk, while Sophie watches at the door, and Rowan helps Jonny and the Twins into their traveling clothes.]

SOPHIE Quickly! I hear voices!

GEORGE Finished!

JULIET *[kneeling by the trunk]* Are you all right Sammy?

SAM *[muffled from inside]* Yes, thank you, Miss!

[The children clap their hands in silent glee.]

Ms. BAGGOTT *[off]* Come along the pair of you! If you chip the paint you'll answer to me! *[She enters the room followed by Tom, the coachman from Woodbridge, who is muffled up in an enormous overcoat, and by Alfred, the gardener, in apron and leggings. They are not a bit afraid of Miss Baggott.]*

TOM Whoo! Stairs took my wind away! Whoo!

ALFRED Terrible old house for stairs, this.

Ms. BAGGOTT That's the trunk and mind the corners.

TOM Who, Missus, whoa! Take it easy.

Ms. BAGGOTT Baggott: Come along, my men!

TOM Gently, gently!

ALFRED It's the small of the back does me, Tom. The spirit's willing, but the small of the back says "Careful, Alfred, careful!"

TOM Shall we take a stab at that little old trunk?

ALFRED No hurry, Tom. Whenever you've caught your breath.

TOM Now, let's understand each other, Alfred boy. When I says three we life, if you take my meaning. "One-two-three", and up she'll come easy as pie.

XVII. TRIO AND ENSEMBLE (Alfred, Tom, Ms. Baggott, later Rowan and Children)

TOM Ready Alfred?
 ALFRED Up she goes
 TOM Gently does it.
 ALFRED Mind your toes
 TOM One and two and...
 ALFRED Wait for me
 TOM Sorry Alfred...one two three?

Ms. BAGGOTT Heave it up and off you go
 ALFRED One two and three and lift!
 TOM No the cursed thing won't shift!

Ms. BAGGOTT Hurry! Carry it below!
 ALFRED What's inside it?
 TOM Full of books
 ALFRED Twice as heavy as it looks.
 TOM Come along we'll carry it below.

Ms. BAGGOTT What a stupid fuss to make about a trunk
 For goodness sake!

ALFRED Think it's screwed down to the floor.
 Weighs like lead, but twice as much.
 TOM Full of stones or sand or such!

Ms. BAGGOTT Can't you lift one little box
 Packed with shoes and shirts and socks?

TOM Can't be done Missus!
 ALFRED Much too heavy!

Ms. BAGGOTT Nonsense! I packed it myself!
 TOM Then you'll have to unpack it!

Ms. BAGGOTT I'll do nothing of the sort!
 TOM Then here she stays!

Ms. BAGGOTT The impertinence!
 ALFRED/TOM Either that there box is unpacked
 Or we leave it where it lies!

CHILDREN Oh no!
 ALFRED/TOM Oh yes!

ROWAN Mister Tom, we'll help you to lift the box!
 CHILDREN Yes, please let us help!

TOM Well, that's a fair offer, Miss, and kindly meant!
 What's your view, Alfred?
 ALFRED Very kind indeed!

ROWAN Good, everyone help lift!
 CHILDREN Ev'ryone help lift! *[All except Ms. Baggott gather round the trunk.]*

[With a concerted effort they help the men lift the trunk.]

ALL One and two and three hooray!
 Up she comes, hip hip hooray!
 Many hands make labour light
 Now you'll manage her all right!

[The men go off carrying the trunk. Miss Baggott following.]

Ms. BAGGOTT Mind the paint! Don't drop it!
 Easy round the corners! *[Miss Baggott continues until inaudible...]*

XVIII. FINALE – COACHING SONG (Chorus Song IV with stage)

[spoken]

ROWAN He's gone, thank goodness, on his way. – And thank you for our holiday.
 /CHILDREN - Goodbye! Goodbye!

GEORGE/JULIET Quick, open the window! Look! There's the trunk! They're lifting it into the coach!
 /SOPHIE He's safe at last! Sammy's safe!

GEORGE/JULIET There come the others! They're climbing into the coach. Goodbye, Jonny!
 /SOPHIE Goodbye, Twins!
 OTHERS *[off]* Goodbye, Goodbye!

GEORGE/JULIET And goodbye, Sammy! dear Sammy!
 /SOPHIE

JULIET Tom's on his box... He's lifting his whip... And away they go!
[The whole cast has come quickly back on stage. They improvise a coach with the trunk, rocking-horse and a chair or two. The Twins kneel twirling parasols, Sam rides the horse and Tom flourishes a whip.]

ALL ON STAGE The horses are chomping,
 Eagerly stomping,
 Crack! Goes the whip
 They take off at a clip!
 So there! Good brown mare,
 Lead away at a lively trot!

The gravel is churning.
 Look! They are turning
 Off to the right,
 And away from our sight.
 So there! Good brown mare,
 Lead away at a lively trot!

They swing from the side road
On to the high road,
Gathering pace for the home again race!
Ho there! Ho there!
Let me see you gallop good brown mare!

Now Sam has arisen
Out of his prison,
Grinning with glee
to be happy and free!
Ho there! Ho there!
Let me see you gallop good brown mare!

Our story is ended.
You who've attended
Join in the song
As the coach runs along!
Go there! Let me see you gallop!
Good brown mare!
Whoa there! Slacken pace!
Steady now, you've won the race!
Time to stop, our journey's done.
Goodbye to you ev'ryone!