

# *Rockin' Oliver!*

**Stage Script**



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James B. Alcock (Jivin' Jimmy)

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## **ROCKIN' OLIVER! -A SYNOPSIS OF THE STORY**

*Rockin' Oliver!* is a sequel to Lionel Bart's masterpiece *Oliver!* which is about *Oliver Twist's* great-great grandson, *Oliver Philip Brownlow*, who lives in South London a century later.

*Oliver Twist* has just asked for more gruel in the workhouse and all of the boys at his table are punished for taking part in drawing straws to ask for more. They have their gruel ration cut in half and their work day extended. *Oliver's* best friends, *Dick* and *John*, who sat at his table, soon die from hunger. They come back as ghosts in the 1950's and go to find whatever became of *Oliver*. *Oliver Twist* had run off to London and had been adopted by the wealthy *Brownlow* family. *Oliver Twist's* great-great grandson, also known as *Oliver*, was born to the *Brownlow* family in 1945, is a child musical prodigy with a younger brother, *Wesley*, who is in to football (soccer).

In 1956, at the age of 11, *Oliver* has joined the *Clarrington House School* choir and has become proficient on an electric rhythm and blues guitar that his parents have bought for him. He gets into trouble with the conservative headmaster for playing rock 'n roll at school. *Wesley*, aged 9, is on a school football team. *Oliver* heads off to the east end of London, and stumbles across a coffee bar called "The '2 i's'" where rock 'n roll is being played. *Oliver* gets up on stage and plays a rocking number, where he is a big hit. He is discovered by the *Artful Bopper*, also a singer and the great-great grandson of the *Artful Dodger*, and *Bill Fagin*, President of *Fagin Records*, who wants to record *Oliver*. Unknown to *Oliver*, *Bill Fagin* is a corrupt and crooked record dealer who bribes radio stations to play *Oliver's* records, a practice then known as 'payola'. When *Oliver* becomes successful, *Bill* keeps two sets of accounting books and steals most of *Oliver's* royalties and lives a lavish lifestyle. *Seth Sykes*, also a crooked teddy boy associate of *Bill's*, is in on the secret of the second set of accounting books. Another boy, *David Freedman*, who plays drums, backs up *Oliver* and becomes his best friend. *Oliver* becomes an overnight success. In 1957, he takes on his professional name of *Rockin' Oliver* and forms a band called the *Twisters*, named in honour of *Oliver Twist*. He has the number one record on the pop charts, with a gold record and a huge sum of money coming in, *Oliver's* father begins to notice his son's royalty cheques shrinking even though his record sales are going higher. He questions *Bill Fagin* and gets vague answers. He is told that *Bill* has set up a trust fund for *Oliver*.

In the summer of 1958, *Oliver* performs at the *Summer Fete* in the *Midlands town*, site of the workhouse, now a ruin. He and *David* stroll through the ruins of the workhouse and meet up with the spirits of *Dick* and *John* who befriend him with an hilarious encounter. *Oliver* performs rock 'n roll afterwards which shocks the little spirits who are exasperated at the money that he has made. *Oliver* has their graves blessed so that they can get to heaven. In 1959, *Dick* and *John* are appointed to watch over *Oliver* and *Wesley*, after the deaths of *Buddy Holly*, the *Big Bopper* and *Ritchie Valens*. However, they are given insight into the future and are foretold of the fall of *Rockin' Oliver's* career and the rise of *Wesley* as a great footballer. *Sebastian* is appointed to watch over the *Artful Bopper*, who has joined *Rockin' Oliver's* group.

Meanwhile, *Oliver's* father, *Philip*, demands to see the accounting books. There are two sets of accounting books and a set of false receipts kept hidden. *Bill* and *Seth* are afraid of it getting found out, so when *Mary*, proprietor of "The '2 i's" coffee bar, warns them about it, he threatens to kill both *Oliver* and *Philip*, if *Philip* goes too far with his enquiries about the situation. *Mary* eventually tells the *Brownlows* about what is going on and *Philip Brownlow* goes to the police. An investigation leads to the arrest of both *Bill* and *Seth* after it is discovered that a trust fund had not existed and that the money had been embezzled. *Oliver* is given what is left of his royalties, which is still a tidy sum, and decides to form his own record company with his father as manager and print his own labels. The *Artful Bopper* becomes the new record producer. The workhouse spirits know that *Rockin' Oliver* would not be able to compete with the new sound of the coming sixties and with the rise of the *Beatles*.

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## LIST OF CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Oliver Twist	David Freedman, the Drummer
Mr. Bumble	The Artful Bopper
Dick	Bill Fagin of Fagin Records
John	Mr. Philip Brownlow
Sebastian and other Workhouse Boys	Mrs. Jean Brownlow
Lady with Baked Goods Stall	Rose the Housekeeper
Ghost of John	Charlie the Piano Player
Ghost of Dick	"The Twisters" rock 'n roll band
Teacher	Seth Sykes
Rockin' Oliver (Oliver Brownlow)	Tommy Steele
Wesley Brownlow	Peter Allen (Clarington House schoolboy)
Young Clarington House Prep Schoolboys	The Mayor of Midlands Town
Clarington House Boys' Prep School Students	Ghost of Sebastian the Chimney Sweep
(Henley, Cottrington, Rajeet and others)	Ghost of Luke, workhouse boy and other workhouse ghosts
Mr. Church, the Choirmaster	Midlands Town Summer Fete Crowd
Captain Breen CGM, DSO, RN (R'td), the Headmaster	Mayor's wife
Mary	Elizabeth
The '2 i's' Coffee Bar Crowd	D.I. Clouston

## **ROCKIN' OLIVER! LIST OF SONGS**

Rockin' Oliver (introduction)  
Ooby Dooby (Oliver Brownlow & Schoolboys - 1956)  
Shake, Rattle & Roll (Artful Bopper and '2 i's' Band - 1956)  
Rockabilly Boogie (Oliver Brownlow and '2 i's' Band - 1956)  
Roll Over Beethoven (Oliver Brownlow - 1956)  
Whole Lotta Shakin' - Studio (Rockin' Oliver - 1957)  
Rock Around The Town (Tommy Steele - 1957)  
Whole Lotta Shakin' - Television Performance (Rockin' Oliver - 1957)  
Come On, Let's Go (Rockin' Oliver - 1958)  
Johnny B. Goode (Rockin' Oliver - 1958)  
That'll Be The Day (Rockin' Oliver - 1959)  
Move It (Artful Bopper - 1959)  
The Twist (Rockin' Oliver - 1960)  
Jailhouse Rock (Rockin' Oliver and Artful Bopper - 1960)

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

Axe	Cool term for a Guitar
Be-Bop	Early term for rock 'n roll music
Cockney	A central London working class accent
Dig	Cool term for liking something
Geezer	A Cockney term for a stupid person
HepCat	A cool with-it person
Jam	To perform
Jive	A '50's dance, usually done to fast music
Mike	Microphone
Riff	Guitar solo
Rockabilly	A raw, very fast simple rocking music, popular in the 1950's, a type of rock 'n roll
Skins	Cool term for a set of Drums
Square	Not cool, old-fashioned
Tea Leaf	Cockney rhyming slang for thief
Teddy Boy	Cool, with-it person, a greaser in a leather jacket
Tizer	A British soft drink
Toff	A wealthy well-to-do gentleman
Toggs	Cockney slang for clothes
Torch	Battery-powered flashlight
Wireless	Radio

### Format

A character's lines are shown by text written in standard print such as this: Please Sir, I want some more.  
Descriptions of situations and the behaviour of a character are in italics print: *holding up his bowl*

## **Introduction Song - Rockin' Oliver! (P.J. Durward)**

### **GUITAR INTRODUCTION**

He's the be bop boy yeah baby!  
He's the be bop boy yeah yeah oh yeah!  
Rockin' Oliver is his a.k.a. and he's singing a be bop song.  
If you want you can sing along too.  
He's gotta red Fender Stratocaster guitar whoo!  
He's cute, he's blond a ton of fun 'n' blue eyed too.  
He attends the prep school scene whoo!  
South London born precocious good mannered  
A singer of renown born in 1945 in Old London Town - 0  
A grey shorted, red blazer wearing always caring  
Oliver Philip Brown low!

### **GUITAR SOLO**

He's the be bop boy yeah baby!  
He's the be bop boy yeah yeah oh yeah!  
Rockin' Oliver is his a.k.a. and he's singing a be bop song.  
If you want you can sing along too.  
He's gotta red Fender Stratocaster guitar whoo!  
He's zap of electricity on stage, he might blow a fuse or two.  
Cause he's Rockin' Oliver uniformed prep boy star.  
Cause he's Rockin' Oliver he plays a real mean guitar.  
Elvis shakes his pelvis, Chubby Checker does the twist  
Chuck Berry plays the guitar, Buddy Holly's music does the trick.  
He's the be bop boy yeah baby!  
He's the be bop boy yeah yeah oh yeah!  
Rockin' Oliver is his a.k.a. and he's singing a be bop song.  
If you want you can sing along too.  
He's gotta red Fender Stratocaster guitar whoo!

### **GUITAR SOLO**

A great-great grandson of young Oliver Twist,  
Jammin' all day like this.  
Boy spirits of the old workhouse from an old northern town,  
Still hanging around 'cause they're waiting to hear,  
Rockin' Oliver boot out that be bop sound  
Bill Fagin, David Freedman, The Artful Bopper too  
Along with a host of ghosts, Dick 'n John,  
Be bop be bop be bop ditto ditto be bop.  
He's the be bop boy yeah baby!  
He's the be bop boy yeah yeah oh yeah!  
Rockin' Oliver is his a.k.a. and he's singing a be bop song.  
If you want you can sing along too.  
He's gotta red Fender Stratocaster guitar whoo!

### **GUITAR FINALE**

**ACT ONE, SCENE 1**  
**The Midlands Town Workhouse, Northwest of London**  
**Winter Mid 1800's**

*It is a cold and snowy evening and the workhouse looks even more gloomy and miserable than usual. In the large stone hall, are seven tables with benches on either side. Three tables are located end to end on either side of the hall and one table is across the back. A large tub of hot gruel is simmering up at the front over a small wood fire.*

*Enter Boys (including Oliver Twist, Dick, John, Sebastian and others), Mr. And Mrs. Bumble. The boys (about seventy of them in total), barefooted and dressed in rags, have just finished their supper of one bowl of gruel.*

*Oliver Twist, Dick, John and Sebastian draw straws to see who will ask for more, Oliver draws the short one. Oliver Twist gets up and walks to the front from the back table.*

OLIVER TWIST (holding up his bowl)  
Please Sir, I want some more.

BUMBLE  
What?

OLIVER TWIST  
Please Sir, I want some, more?

BUMBLE  
More?

*Oliver Twist runs around the hall and is caught. Exit Mr. Bumble with Oliver Twist. Mr. Bumble, the fat and domineering beadle of the workhouse, immediately drags poor Oliver off to see the governors, who in turn demand that Oliver leave the workhouse. Oliver is then locked up in a small room until Mr. Bumble later takes him off to be apprenticed. The other boys remain at their seats, keeping quiet. The governors are absolutely furious that Oliver has asked for more and are determined to squash any possibility of it ever happening again. The boys wait patiently and nervously, not knowing what to expect. They keep very quiet because they are scared of any consequences. After a short while, Mr. Bumble returns and enters the hall. He walks slowly up between the tables, noticing the frightened look on all of the boys. When he reaches the back table, where Oliver had sat, he becomes very angry. Lying on the table are the straws that had been drawn to determine who would go up to ask for more. Immediately in front was the empty space at the table where Oliver had sat before. On either side are his best friends. On the left is a small dark-haired boy named Dick, who had known Oliver all of his life. On the right is another small boy with bright blond hair who had come to the workhouse recently after his parents had died. His name is John and he looks the most frightened of them all.*

BUMBLE (noticing the straws, taking a deep breath)  
Straws!!! You drew straws!!! You were all in on it, weren't you?!!  
*He picks up the straws and throws them down on the ground in a rage.*

DICK (turning to Mr. Bumble in a quiet voice)  
Yes sir.  
*John starts to cry quietly.*

BUMBLE (*shouting at the boys*)  
Why?

DICK  
We were hungry, sir.

BUMBLE  
That's a poor excuse for greed! The dietary allows you one bowl and that is that!! I am going to make an example of the boys at this table. From now on until further notice, you will be allowed only half a bowl of gruel and will work an extra two hours per day. (*He then turns around and addresses the others*) I hope you are all listening, if anyone dares to do something like that again, your ration will be cut in half too.  
*The boys just stare at Mr. Bumble in amazement and partial disbelief*

JOHN (*turning to Dick*)  
Half a bowl and more work! We'll starve to death!

*John sobs and Dick just lowers his head and stares at the table quietly. Mr. Bumble then returns to the front of the hall and dismisses the boys by banging his staff on the floor. They line up and march up the stairs to bed without making a sound. There are mixed feelings of fear and anger over the punishment dealt to the back table. The boys who sat at the other six tables are just relieved that they could still have a full bowl. Dick and John and the other boys at their table are repeatedly caned before they go to bed that night. Dick stares at Oliver's empty bed and begins to think that Oliver was the lucky one because he had got out. The next day is more miserable than usual. Dick and John and the others from their table are made to work the big grain wheel which they stand above and move with their feet. It grinds up the grain to make the gruel. This is the hardest and most tiring job of all. It is made far worse when the work day is extended by two hours and your ration of gruel is cut in half. Dick, who is only a very small boy, becomes very weak.*

DICK (*exhausted*)  
Water! Please Water!

BUMBLE  
Get on with your work, boy!

DICK  
Please Sir, just a little water!

*Mr. Bumble obliges him by throwing the contents of the fire bucket at him. Eventually, the lack of food becomes overwhelming. Dick screams as he slips, then loses consciousness and falls from the wheel. His head hits the floor and he dies instantly. The remaining boys on the wheel stop working immediately after hearing Dick's screams. Exit live Dick.*

SEBASTIAN  
Mr. Bumble, sir, there has been a terrible accident!

BUMBLE  
What happened?

SEBASTIAN (*trembling with shock*)  
Dick Swubble has fallen from the grain wheel, sir.

BUMBLE

Well, get him up again.

SEBASTIAN *(in a low voice)*

I can't. He's dead, sir.

BUMBLE

Well, Sebastian Arkwright, take Dick out and bury him.

*Meanwhile, John jumps down from the wheel and upon seeing Dick's lifeless body, starts to cry loudly.*

JOHN *(turning to another boy)*

Mr. Bumble did this! He killed Dick! He would be alive if we had not have been put on half rations!! I have now lost both my best friends. Oliver is gone and Dick is dead, and it's Mr. Bumble's fault!!

*Exit John. John grabs some shoes and ran out the door. He is so thin, that he manages to fit through the iron bars of the front gate. He walks into town in search of food. He comes to the market and finds a stall with a lady selling bread and buns. John has no money, but he is starving.*

JOHN

Excuse me, ma'am, can I sweep up or mind the stall for a few of them buns, please?

*Enter lady with baked goods stall. The lady notices his rags for clothes and recognises him as a workhouse orphan. She immediately turns on him.*

LADY

You're from the workhouse, aint you? I'll have no workhouse brats hanging around my stall! Now be off with you! *(She chases John away with a broomstick, hitting him with it)*

*John creeps quietly back towards the stall. He stares at the baked goods with his mouth watering, and waits for the lady to turn away. Exit lady with baked goods stall.*

JOHN *(turning his head toward heaven and in a very quiet voice)*

Forgive me, Lord, but I'm desperate

*He then steals as many buns as he can, stuffing them under his shirt. He manages to get about six of them underneath, then he runs back to the workhouse, before the lady turns around again. He does not get caught. He knows that what he did was wrong, but his hunger is too overwhelming. He stops and eats one of the buns, scoffing it as quickly as he can, he then squeezes through the workhouse gate and runs through the door. Removing his shoes, he shares the rest of the buns with the other boys from his table, who treat John as a hero. Enter John, Sebastian and other boys.*

SEBASTIAN

Where did you get these?

JOHN

I slipped away into town and got them.

SEBASTIAN

I never knew you had any money.

JOHN

I don't.

SEBASTIAN (*with a worried look on his face*)  
You mean, you stole them?

JOHN  
Yes. So we'd better eat them up quickly before anyone notices.

*Enter Mr. Bumble. The boys then eat the buns as quickly as they can. However, the boys' little party is very short, Mr. Bumble comes in and catches them. He sees John take a bun from under his shirt and give it to another boy. Mr. Bumble pushes his way in and grabs the bun away from the boy. He then turns on John.*

BUMBLE (*extremely angry*)  
What are you doing with these?

*John does not answer but just looks down at his feet and begins to tremble with fear.*

BUMBLE  
You've been stealing food, haven't you?

JOHN (*with tears flowing down his face*)  
Yes sir! I was starving sir.

BUMBLE  
What's your name, boy?

JOHN  
Johnny, sir, John Unwin.

*Mr. Bumble loses his temper and starts caning John over and over again. As the boys are removing Dick's body and taking it outside for a burial, Mr. Bumble throws John out the door into the snow to cool off from his hysterical crying. John is thrown barefooted wearing only a thin shirt and trousers into the snow.*

BUMBLE  
I'll return for you when you calm down! You'll hang for this, boy!

*Mr. Bumble turns and locks the door on John.*

JOHN  
Sir! Let me in! I'll freeze out here! I have no shoes or coat! I'll freeze! Let me in!! Please! Please!

*His shouts were to no avail. Mr. Bumble had said that he would return for John when the boy had calmed down, but Bumble forgets about him. The next morning, John's frozen and lifeless body is found on the doorstep by a boy who opens the door to fetch wood in to build a fire to heat up the gruel. Exit live John.*

*Both Dick and John are buried the following day in paupers' graves in the back of the workhouse, by the rubbish dump. Mr. Sowerberry, the undertaker, builds them the cheapest of coffins and very simple prayers are said for them. Their graves only have crosses with no names on them. Even though Dick and John are both dead, they are at last at peace. Miserable workhouse life is at least over for them. During their cheap funerals, Sebastian is asked to say prayers.*

SEBASTIAN

For what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful.

BUMBLE

No that's for supper!

SEBASTIAN

For health and strength and food to eat, we give thee thanks, Amen.

BUMBLE

No that's for dinner, you stupid boy! (*Bumble then removes his cocked hat and says a brief and not very complimentary prayer for the two departed boys*)

Lord, forgive these two ungrateful and naughty orphans!

*Dick's and John's bodies, in cheap crates for coffins, are then thrown into the graves, which are covered over. Dick Swubble and John Unwin are now at rest. Sebastian Arkwright is later apprenticed to Mr. Gamfield, the chimney sweep. Exit Sebastian, Mr. Bumble and other boys.*

## **ACT ONE, SCENE 2**

### **The Ruin of the Midlands Town Workhouse, Northwest of London November 1956**

*Dick and John's spirits sleep for many years, until John's spirit finally wakes up a century later. His spirit rises and sits on his grave. He is still wearing the thin shirt and trousers, still barefooted, but he now has chains crossing his chest. Looking around, he can see that there are no longer only two graves, but are now over seventy. All of them are of children who had starved to death in the workhouse after Dick and John's deaths.*

*John's ghost decides to take a walk around and haunt the workhouse, which is now an abandoned ruin. Dick's spirit is still sleeping. Later on, Dick's spirit rises and walks up towards John. He too, has chains crossing his chest. However, both spirits have another chain hanging off their waists which each hold a bowl and spoon. Dick's spirit sees John and runs towards him. Enter spirits of John and Dick.*

DICK

Johnny! Johnny!

JOHN

Oh hallo, Dick! Have you just woken up?

DICK

Yes, I have had a nice long rest since I died. John, how long have we been asleep?

JOHN

A long, long time.

DICK

Do you have any idea what year it is?

JOHN

No. Suddenly, Johnny notices a newspaper lying on the ground. He goes over and picks it up.

DICK

Can you read? I can't.

JOHN

Yes, I can a little. I know some numbers.

DICK

Look at the date.

JOHN

Er, er, it's the fifth of November, why, it's Guy Fawkes Day! *(It is yesterday's newspaper)*

DICK

What year?

JOHN *(looking at the paper again)*

Nineteen hundred and fifty-six!

DICK

1956!!! Don't you mean 1856?

JOHN

Nope. That's definitely a nine. It's 1956.

DICK

1956! It's been over a hundred years!! !

JOHN

I have been awake for several years and you should see the strange things I've seen.

DICK

Like what?

JOHN *(standing up)*

Well, carriages without horses and big birds that smash houses with their droppings!

*Dick starts to laugh really hard.*

JOHN *(pointing up to the sky at an aeroplane)*

Look! There's one of them big birds, now!

DICK *(looking up and became scared)*

You're right. *(He then turns and looked at the ruin of the workhouse)* Look at the workhouse, it's broken apart! *(he yells with delight).*

JOHN

Yes, it must have closed down a long time ago 'cause there's nobody in there.

*The workhouse had been closed and abandoned years before and the building was falling down. It looked like a broken down old ruin; a real eyesore. The two little spirits then sit down on the ground, shake hands and renew their friendship.*

DICK

Just think:, we're free! We can go wherever we want and do whatever we want for eternity!

JOHN

Yeah! Let's look around and see some more of them strange new-fangled things they've got. Hey Dick, aint it nice not feeling hungry no more?

DICK (*becoming very pensive*)

Yeah right! John, I wonder whatever became of Oliver.

JOHN

He was apprenticed to Mr. Sowerberry, the undertaker. I saw him leading a funeral past the workhouse gate. I heard that he ran away from the Sowerberrys" replied John, "but I don't know what became of him after that.

DICK

Oliver must be dead by now, so we can find him in the spirit world somewhere. We've got all eternity. I want to find him because I want to speak to him.

JOHN

Alright.

*The two spirits shake hands again with a big smile and walk off to look for any sign of Oliver and his spirit. Exit spirits of Dick and John.*

### **ACT ONE, SCENE 3**

**Clarington House Boys' Prep School, Kent,  
November 1956**

*Oliver Twist had run off to London and was eventually adopted by the wealthy Brownlow family, who lived in a beautiful Georgian mansion in Bloomsbury in west London. Philip Brownlow is Oliver Twist's great-grandson and, with his wife Jean, they had moved to a three storey Victorian house in Kent, a beautiful south-east London suburb, after the Second World War. They now have two children, both boys, and a housekeeper called Rose. The two boys are named Oliver Philip Brownlow and Wesley George Brownlow. Young Oliver is a child prodigy with a musical talent for playing guitar, but Wesley was an average child with an interest in sports. At school, Oliver is Brownlow I and Wesley is Brownlow II*

*Oliver is eleven years old and his brother Wesley is nine. The two boys arrive at school together, both dressed in their bright red school uniforms. Oliver has grown tall and has quite a deep voice. He has become very proficient with his guitar playing since he has been loyally taking lessons for three years. He has also joined the school choir and will sing the solo parts at Christmas. Wesley is not as bright as Oliver and has not developed any great talents as his brother has. However, Wesley is very interested in playing football. Both boys have bright blond hair and are tall for their ages. Oliver comes to school carrying his guitar over his left shoulder. He has received a second hand electric guitar from his parents for his tenth birthday, the previous August. It is a beautiful red Fender Stratocaster guitar that has a great sound, which he loves. He carries it everywhere he goes. 1956 is a year of great changes in music. The big band jazz swing sound of the 1940's has died, and a new simpler sound, known for the time being as be-bop, is becoming popular. Oliver loves fast rollicking music and is fascinated in the new be-bop sound, which some people are starting to call rock 'n roll. The electric guitar is king with this new music and Oliver Brownlow is obsessed with it. The boys enter the school, Oliver with his guitar over his shoulder, and go to their separate classrooms and take their seats. Enter eleven year old Oliver, nine year old Wesley, schoolboys and Teacher. Oliver puts his guitar down next to his desk.*

TEACHER

Good Morning, boys. Now for another day for Form 4 at Clarington House School.

BOYS

Good Morning, sir.

TEACHER

I hope you have all completed your history essays on famous people from British history.

BOYS

Yes sir.

TEACHER (*pointing to a boy in the front row*)

Henley, who did you do your essay on?

HENLEY

Winston Churchill, sir.

TEACHER

Oh that must have been easy, he retired only last year. (*He points to another boy*) Cottrington, who did you do yours on?

COTTRINGTON

William the Conqueror, sir.

TEACHER

Excellent (*He then signals to an Indian boy in the class*) Rajeev, who did you do yours on?

RAJEEV

Robert Clive, sir. The man my school house is named after.

TEACHER

Very good (*He then points at Oliver*) Brownlow I, how about you?

OLIVER (*rising up out of his seat*)

Sir Oliver Twist, sir.

*The other boys start laughing after Oliver says that.*

HENLEY (*turning around and facing Oliver*)

Please sir, I want some more! (*in a mocking tone*)

TEACHER (*banging his desk and shouting*)

Boys! Boys! That will do. Stop laughing! Brownlow I has made an excellent choice. Sir Oliver Twist was a great man.

COTTRINGTON

But sir? What did he do? He didn't lead the country or win any wars for us. All he did was ask for more food in a workhouse. What's so important about that?

TEACHER

Oliver Twist grew up to become a great social reformer. He went into parliament and passed many laws helping the poor, particularly children. He understood what they were going through because he had experienced it himself. He made many changes in British society and started moving things towards the way they are today. He was a social revolutionary in his time. He was eventually knighted. I think that will make an interesting paper. Brownlow I, you and your brother are descended from Oliver Twist, aren't you?

OLIVER

Yes sir, he was my great-great grandfather, and I was named after him.

TEACHER

Well, I shall look forward to reading your paper, then. *(He then goes over to the world map on the wall and points to several countries from east to west with his pointer)* New Zealand, Australia, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, South Africa, Canada and us *(finally pointing at the British Isles)* These countries are all shown in pink. What does that mean? *(He then singles out Oliver, knowing that he is very bright)* Brownlow I?

OLIVER *(standing up and speaking very proudly)*

That's the Empire, sir. I have cousins in both Canada and Australia, sir.

TEACHER

It's now called the Commonwealth; we don't rule these countries any more. Look at how we have just given up the Suez Canal last month. *(The teacher points to the Suez, in Egypt, on the map)*. Rajeet comes from India, a Commonwealth country. You boys live in a changing world that will be very different from the one that I knew as a boy. The poverty that I remember in this country is now gone. For history, we are going to discuss generals such as Wellington. Can anyone tell me something about Wellington?

HENLEY

He invented Wellies, Wellington boots, didn't he sir? *(The boys laugh)*

TEACHER

Don't be funny, Henley. I was referring to the Duke of Wellington and the battle of Waterloo against the French under Napoleon!" exclaimed the teacher angrily. "Now hand in your essays and we will discuss Wellington.

*The boys give in their papers and settle down to their history lesson. At dinner time, the boys march into the dining hall and receive their lunch. Each boy is given a plate of stew with boiled potatoes and a dumpling. Most of the boys do not like the school stew and grumble when they get it. They take their seats at the tables in the dining hall. Each place has a red mat, a knife, a fork, a spoon and a glass of water. The headmaster and the other masters are all seated at the head table. Enter Captain Breen (a retired navy officer) and teachers.*

CAPTAIN BREEN *(the headmaster rises and gives the grace in Latin)*

Benedictus, Benedicat. You may now begin your dinner, boys.

BOYS

Amen *(they then eat their lunch)*

OLIVER *(After finishing his plate, he rises and walks up to the cook, who was seated off to the side of the head table with the big pot of stew)* Please cook, I'd like some more.

*Suddenly, the dining hall goes quiet and all eyes are upon Oliver. After hearing that, some of the boys begin to laugh.*

BOYS

Yuk! *(in disgust)*

OLIVER

Please cook, I'd like some more.

*The teachers at the head table start to laugh. Here is the great-great grandson of Oliver Twist repeating history.*

CAPTAIN BREEN *(turning to Oliver)*

Brownlow I, I know you are descended from Oliver Twist, but you don't have to perform it! You know you are allowed a second helping when I announce it.

OLIVER

Sorry sir. I forgot, but I really do like this delicious casserole.

*The boys laugh even harder when they hear that.*

BOYS

Yuk!

HENLEY

He actually likes it!

CAPTAIN BREEN

Go on, then. Cook, give it to him if he appreciates it.

*The cook then fills up Oliver's plate again and he happily returns to his seat. Henley is sitting beside him and he turns to Oliver.*

HENLEY

Brownlow I, you actually like this stuff?

OLIVER

Oh yes, I like the chunks of meat and the thick gravy.

HENLEY

But the meat's fatty and the gravy's lumpy! My dog eats better than this. I guess, you won't be joining us at the fish and chip shop on London Road after choir practice tonight, eh Brownlow I?

OLIVER

Yes, I'll still come for fish 'n chips.

CAPTAIN BREEN

Boys, second helpings are now being served. *Only the masters ask for some.*

WESLEY *(coming up to Oliver Wesley speaks with a heavy lisp, so 's' came out as 'th')*

Oliver, I'm playing football after school, so you'll have to wait for me if you are going to take me home.

HENLEY (*turning to Wesley*)

Brownlow II, your brother has choir tonight, so you can meet him afterwards.

WESLEY

Thanks! (*he goes back to his place to wait for his pudding*)

HENLEY

Hurry up and finish, Brownlow I, we want our pudding.

CAPTAIN BREEN

Pudding is now being served.

*Unlike the serving of the stew, the boys enthusiastically run to line up before Cook to get a serving of the spotted dick pudding and custard.*

*After school, Oliver goes to choir practice in the gym and sings the solo. The choir is practising for the upcoming Christmas concert. Oliver is performing the solo singing "Greensleaves" and playing an acoustic guitar while singing. Mr. Church, the choirmaster is playing the piano. Wesley is waiting outside the gym after his football game. Enter Mr. Church, Oliver and boys.*

MR. CHURCH (*pleased with Oliver's performance*)

Very good, very nice rehearsal. Brownlow I, your solo was magnificent.

OLIVER

Thank you sir.

MR.CHURCH

You know, you might think about a career as a professional singer some day, perhaps in a great choir.

OLIVER

Why not popular music?

MR. CHURCH

You mean jazz or swing?

OLIVER

Sir, this is 1956 and the be-bop sound is in.

MR.CHURCH

Have you heard the rhythms the public is buying today?

OLIVER

I can sing this new rock 'n roll, sir.

MR. CHURCH

Well, let's hope it's just a fad that will be well and truly gone when you're a man.

OLIVER (*getting annoyed*)

We'll see, sir.

*Mr. Church leaves the room and the choir is getting ready to leave. Oliver picks up his electric guitar and plugs it into his amplifier. Exit Mr. Church. The boys then go into a large room next to the gym which has a stage. Oliver then gets up on stage with his guitar and amplifier.*

COTIRINGTON (*the boys gather around Oliver and shout for him to play his guitar*)

Swing it, Oliver! Mr. Church has left, and that rotten Mr. 'Ubi Where', the Latin master, has left too. So Go for it, Brownlow I.

OLIVER (*in disgust*)

Huh! 'Ubi Where!', Ubi, Ooby Dooby! Hey! That gives me an idea for a song to do.

(*into the microphone, singing and playing guitar; another boy plays the school orchestra drums*):

Hey, baby, jump over here,

When you do the Ooby Dooby, I just got to be near.

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby,

Dooby do wah, do wah, do wah.

Well, you wiggle to the left, you wiggle to the right.

You do the Ooby Dooby with all of your might.

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby,

Dooby do wah, do wah, do wah.

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

Well, you wiggle and you shake, like a big rattlesnake,

You do the Ooby Dooby till you make your heart break.

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby,

Dooby do wah, do wah, do wah.

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

Well you've been struttin' so now you know,

How to do the Ooby Dooby, so baby let's go!

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby

Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby,

Dooby do wah, do wah, do wah.

*The boys cheer wildly when Oliver is finished. Enter Captain Breen, the headmaster, very angry.*

CAPTAIN BREEN (*storming into the room and shouting*)

Brownlow I, my study, now!!

OLIVER

Yes sir. *Oliver puts down his guitar and goes into the headmaster's office. Captain Breen hates modern music and is extremely angry with Oliver. The other boys leave to go to the fish and chip shop, but Oliver cannot go.*

CAPTAIN BREEN

I won't have that be-bop rubbish played in my school, is that understood, Brownlow I?

OLIVER (in a frightened voice)

Yes sir.

CAPTAIN BREEN

You have a beautiful voice, don't waste it on that jungle music.

OLIVER

But, sir. I was just having some fun.

CAPTAIN BREEN

Not in my school!! Don't let me catch you doing that again. Next time, you will be forbidden from bringing that instrument to school. I am not having that raucous east end working class noise played in my prep school. Ever! Is this what we fought a war for? Do I make myself clear, Brownlow I?

OLIVER (*with his head down*)

Yes sir.

CAPTAIN BREEN (*finally in a calm voice*)

Brownlow I, you are making a mockery of your house, Raleigh House, with your loud music. Why don't you stick to cricket? You are one of our best cricketers. At least your brother shows Wolfe House proudly with his football. I don't think Clive or Drake Houses would appreciate what you are doing either. Now, it's time you went home, Brownlow II is waiting for you.

*Oliver leaves the headmaster's study in tears. Wesley is waiting outside. Exit Captain Breen and schoolboys.*

WESLEY

What's the matter, Oliver, why are you crying? Was Captain Breen mean to you?

OLIVER (*shaken and sobbing*)

He's just a miserable old goat and a silly old square, who doesn't appreciate music.

*Oliver then collects his guitar and walks out the door with his little brother.*

OLIVER

I've missed fish 'n chips with the others, so I hope Rose will lay on a good tea for us. One day after school, I'm going to find some coffee bar where rock 'n roll is played all day.

*The two boys walk home together to have their tea. Exit Oliver and Wesley.*

#### **ACT ONE, SCENE 4**

**The '2 i's' Coffee Bar, East End of London**

**November 1956**

*The following Saturday, Oliver and Wesley are finished school by mid-day and their father, Philip, comes over to pick the boys up from school. He takes Wesley over to Foxwood Park for his football practice. Jean Brownlow is going up into London to visit her sister, the boys' aunt. Oliver decides to go with his mother, preferring to see the sights of central London instead of watching Wesley play football or even to go visit his friends. Philip needs the car for the afternoon, so Jean and Oliver head for South London*

*Junction station, which is only a short walk from their house at 19 Foxwood Road, and catch the train to Victoria station in central London. Oliver boards the train still in his bright red Clarington House school uniform, with his guitar over his shoulder, as he carries it everywhere he goes. Soon after they arrive at his aunt's house, who still lives in Bloomsbury, in west London, where the Brownlows had originally lived and where Oliver Twist had come to stay. Enter Oliver and Jean.*

OLIVER

Mum, may I go *out* for a while please?

JEAN

Where do you want to go, Oliver?

OLIVER

I'm going where my kind of music is played and enjoyed.

JEAN

Well, don't go too far and be back before tea time.

OLIVER

Alright, Mum. (*happily*) *Exit Jean.*

*Oliver then gets on a bus headed for the east end of town with his guitar over his shoulder. He goes across the city and ends up in a working class district in Aldgate. He enters a coffee bar called "The '2 i's'" where loud rock 'n roll is playing and people are dancing. The place is full of cool tough-looking "teddy boys" in leather jackets. Enter '2 i's' Band and Crowd, Mary, David, Artful Bopper, Bill Fagin, Oliver.*

BAND WITH ARTFUL BOPPER SINGING

Well get *out* of that bed, wash your face and hands  
Get *out* of that bed, wash your face and hands  
Well get in that kitchen  
Make some noise with the pots and pans  
I believe it to my soul you're the devil in nylon hose  
I believe it to my soul you're the devil in nylon hose  
For the harder I work the faster my money goes

Well I said shake, rattle and roll  
I said shake rattle and roll  
I said shake, rattle and roll  
I said shake rattle and roll  
Well you won't do right  
To save your doggone soul  
Shake rattle and roll

SAXOPHONE INSTRUMENTAL

I'm like the one-eyed cat peeping in a seafood store  
I'm like the one-eyed cat peeping in a seafood store  
Well I can look at you tell you aint no child no more  
I believe you're doing me wrong and now I know

I believe you're doing me wrong and now I know  
'Cause the harder I work the faster my money goes

Well I said shake, rattle and roll  
I said shake rattle and roll  
I said shake, rattle and roll  
I said shake rattle and roll  
Well you won't do right  
To save your doggone soul

I went over the hill, way down underneath  
I went over the hill, way down underneath  
You make me roll my eyes  
And then you make me grit my teeth

Well I said shake, rattle and roll  
I said shake rattle and roll  
I said shake, rattle and roll  
I said shake rattle and roll  
Well you won't do right  
To save your doggone soul

*Oliver loves it! He strums his guitar in time to the music, though it is not plugged in. After the song is over, everyone cheers and the band takes a break.*

ARTFUL BOPPER (*in a thick Cockney accent*)

We're gonna tyke a little bryke now, so nobody go nowhere. *The jukebox is then turned on.*

*A young woman who is serving teas sees Oliver and comes up to him.*

MARY

Allo, what's your name, young fellow?

OLIVER (*tipping his cap to her politely*)

Oliver Brownlow, miss.

MAN (*noticing Oliver's smart school uniform and laughing at him*)

Oh look at the little schoolboy, hasn't he got lovely knees!

MARY

Don't you take no notice of them, Oliver, just 'cause you got manners and they aint. My name's Mary, I run this here establishment. Would you like a lemonade or a Tizer?

OLIVER

Oh yes, please, I'd like a Tizer.

*Mary goes and gets Oliver a soft drink, which he gulps down because he was thirsty. He pays her a shilling for the drink. She notices his guitar.*

MARY

Can you play that thing?

OLIVER

Yes. I can play be-bop music quite well. May I go up to the microphone and play a song, please? I like the rockabilly style.

MARY

Ooh I dunno, I don't think this lot will go for a little boy's music.

OLIVER

Please? I can do it.

MARY (*reluctantly*)

Well, alright, since the band is on break.

OLIVER (*smiling*)

Thanks!

MARY (*into the microphone*)

Can I have everybody's attention please. This little fellow's name is Oliver Brownlow and he'd like to sing for us.

*Everybody starts laughing, but Oliver plugs in his guitar and gets ready. Mary lowers the microphone for Oliver to the level of his mouth.*

MAN

What he can he play? "Baa-baa black sheep" or "Mary had a little lamb"?! (*Everybody continues to laugh*)

ANOTHER MAN

Get that kid outa here, put the juke box back on!

OLIVER

My favourite guitarist and singer is Chuck Berry, but I'm still learning to do his songs. So, here's a Johnny Burnette number that's easy for me to play.

*He is going to impress the people with his guitar-playing. Meanwhile, another boy who is just a bit older than Oliver, jumps on the drums and backs Oliver up with a beat.*

OLIVER (*into the microphone and playing guitar*)

[Chorus] Well it's a rock-rock rockabilly boogie

A rock-rock rockabilly boogie

A rock-rock rockabilly boogie

A rock-rock rockabilly boogie

A rock-rock rockabilly boogie tonight

Well I know a little spot on the edge of town  
Where you can really dig 'em up and set 'em down  
It's a little place called 'The Hide-away  
You do the rockabilly 'till the break of day

[Chorus]

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

Well they kick off their shoes, gettin' ready to bop  
They're gonna rockabilly wearin' their socks  
You wiggle your hip, feel the thrill  
So come on little baby do the rockabilly-bill

[Chorus]

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

Well there's little ol' Suzie, turnin' seventeen  
Well everybody knows her as a rockabilly queen  
And there's ol' Slim, as quiet as a mouse  
He grabs ol' Suzie, they'll tear up the house

*Oliver includes some really heavy fancy guitar riffs during the song that shake the place. Band members with a piano, a rhythm guitar and a bass fiddle all join in. People start to dance and jive and clap along as Oliver performs. When he is finished, the whole place breaks into an enormous cheer for Oliver. Scepticism about his music is over, people are impressed. He had played the rockabilly number perfectly. His deep singing voice makes him sound older. It is hard for people to believe that he is only eleven years old.*

OLIVER (*looking at his watch*)  
I've got to go soon.

*As Oliver unplugs his guitar and steps down off the stage, he is greeted with cheers and hugs. The boy on the drums runs down to meet him.*

DAVID (*in a thick Cockney accent*)  
You were fantastic! absolutely amazing! You're a real hep cat, even in a square uniform. Where d'you learn to play like that?

OLIVER  
Oh, I just picked it up.

DAVID  
You were great! My name's David Freedman, and I play the skins. If you ever form a band some day, I'd like to keep the beat for you, like I just did.

OLIVER  
Thanks! I'll keep that in mind.

DAVID  
Ere, do you go to a prep school?

OLIVER  
Yes, Clarington House Boys School, in Kent.

DAVID  
I go to a local comprehensive school. Liverpool Road Secondary.

*David is also in school uniform, which is grey with long trousers and a red and yellow striped tie. It does not look as sharp as Oliver's navy blue uniform with its red piping and pocket crest.*

OLIVER

Perhaps we can get together on Saturday and jam? I'll be finished school by mid-day.

DAVID

Sunday would be better for me. I am at the synagogue on Saturday afternoons.

OLIVER

Oh Shalom! Sunday afternoons then, after church for me.

DAVID *(delighted that Oliver had offered him the Jewish greeting)*

Thanks. Shalom to you too, Sunday afternoons would be perfect.

ARTFUL BOPPER *(aged about fifteen, he comes up to Oliver)*

Cor, you were great! What's your name?

OLIVER

My name's Oliver. Oliver Brownlow.

ARTFUL BOPPER

I'm John Dawkins. Better known by me professional name, the Artful Bopper.

OLIVER

Pleased to meet you, do you play a rock 'n roll instrument?

ARTFUL BOPPER

Ofcourse! A Gibson guitar! I want you to meet someone.

OLIVER

I haven't got time. I must go. I'll come back another day. *(He then leaves quickly. Exit Oliver)*

*The teenage Artful Bopper then goes over to a gentleman sitting in the corner.*

BILL FAGIN

Who was that? Who was that amazing little boy who can play the guitar? He is fantastic!

ARTFUL BOPPER

His name is Oliver Brownlow, but I don't know where he lives.

BILL FAGIN *(turning to David, the drummer)*

David, follow him and find out where he lives, I want to talk to that boy. Whatever you do, don't lose him!

*David runs off and follows Oliver, who is now waiting on the westbound platform of Aldgate Underground Station. David runs and just manages to catch up to Oliver on the platform.*

DAVID

Hey, Oliver, where do you live?

OLIVER

19 Foxwood Road, in Foxwood, Kent, south-east of London, past where Crystal Palace once stood. It's a one hour train ride from Victoria Station in central London to Foxwood Junction. *Exit Oliver.*

MARY

Hey Bill, what do you want to talk to that Brownlow boy for?

BILL FAGIN

Because I want to record him, that kid is going to go somewhere. He can become a star.

*Enter David into the coffee bar.*

DAVID

Bill, Bill, I found out where that Brownlow kid lives.

BILL FAGIN

Where?

DAVID

19 Foxwood Road, in Foxwood, Kent, south-east of London.

BILL FAGIN

Right, I'm going to pay him a little visit.

*Exit Mary, David, Artful Bopper and '2 i's' Band and Crowd.*

**ACT ONE, SCENE 5**

**The Brownlow Home, Kent**

**November 1956**

*The next evening, Bill shows up at the Brownlow home in South London and knocks on the door. Rose, the housekeeper, answers it. Enter Bill Fagin, Rose the Housekeeper. Bill drives a 1954 Ford Anglia.*

BILL FAGIN

I'd like to speak to Mr. or Mrs. Brownlow please.

ROSE

Whom shall I say is calling?

BILL FAGIN

Bill Fagin, President of Fagin Records in the City.

ROSE

Please come in.

*Bill enters the front hall of the house. Enter Philip Brownlow*

PHILIP

What can I do for you?

BILL FAGIN

I've come about your son, Oliver. Could you get him for a moment, please?

PHILIP

Oliver! There's a man who wants to talk to you.

*Oliver can't hear his father because he is listening to the radio and playing along very enthusiastically with his guitar. Wesley is jumping up and down to the music.*

PHILIP (*shouting loudly*)

Oliver! Come downstairs! There's a man who wants to talk to you.

*Enter Oliver, running down the stairs and greets Bill, he remembers seeing him at the coffee bar.*

BILL FAGIN (*removing his hat*)

Well, I'm Bill Fagin, President of Fagin Records on Whitechapel Road in Aldgate. (*He gives Philip one of his business cards*) Look Oliver, I really dig your music and I'd like to record it.

OLIVER

Oh a record company. Wow! Record me?

BILL FAGIN

Yes that's right. Yes, you are very talented and I think you're as good as Tommy Steele, that new rock 'n roll singer from the east end. I'd like you to come over on the weekend and we'll do some recording. We'll certainly start 1957 with a new singing career for you. How about next Sunday afternoon?

OLIVER

Woweee! Oh please, can I go, Dad? please, please.

PHILIP

Yes, of course. That's wonderful! Here's my card (*He hands Bill one of his business cards*)

BILL FAGIN

Good. I will arrange some recording time for Oliver and a backup band for him. I'll see you next Sunday, about two o'clock. You do know the way to get there, don't you?

PHILIP

Of course. Up past Crystal Place, through Dulwich, Camberwell, right at the Elephant and Castle, over Tower Bridge and then turn right.

BILL FAGIN

That's right! See you Sunday. Goodbye.

*Bill and Philip shake hands and then Bill leaves the house. Exit Bill Fagin, Philip, Rose the Housekeeper, Oliver.*

## **ACT ONE, SCENE 6**

**Fagin Records, Recording Studio, East End of London**

**November 1956**

*On Sunday, after lunch, Oliver's father takes him up to the east end of London to Fagin Records in the car. Oliver is dressed neatly in his new suit and carries his guitar. When they get there, they notice that it was downstairs, in the basement. They descend into the studio and Bill Fagin is waiting for them. Several other musicians are also hanging around. It is a big studio with microphones, a big drum set and recording equipment off to one side. Enter Bill Fagin, Philip, Oliver, Studio Musicians, Charlie the Piano Player.*

OLIVER

Hello Mr. Fagin, Is this your recording studio?

BILL FAGIN

That's right. I work out of the basement. The acoustics are great and the mikes are good. What more do you need? Right, Let's do a few riffs and some vocals and then we'll record a little, okay?

OLIVER

Alright then. I want to try a Chuck Berry number I heard the other day.

BILL FAGIN (*turning to the other musicians*)

Meet Oliver Brownlow! *They all exchange greetings with Oliver.*

*Oliver then plugs in his guitar and practises with the other musicians. He later records two songs with the others backing him up. Oliver always keeps lots of guitar picks and spare strings in his pocket just in case.*

OLIVER (*into a microphone and playing his guitar*)

#### HEAVY GUITAR INTRODUCTION

Well gonna write a little letter, gonna mail it to my local D.J.  
It's a rockin' little record, I want my jockey to play  
Roll over Beethoven, I gotta hear it again today  
*You* know my temperature's risin'  
And the jukebox's blowin' a fuse  
My hearts beatin' rhythm, and my soul keeps singing the blues  
Roll over Beethoven, and tell Tchaikovsky the news  
I got a rockin' pneumonia  
I need a shot of rhythm and blues  
I think I got it off the writer  
Sittin' down by the rhythm review  
Roll over Beethoven, we're rockin' in two by two  
Well if you fell you like it  
Well get your lover and reel and rock it  
Roll it over and move on up  
Just jump around and reel and rock it  
Roll it over, Roll over Beethoven  
A rockin' in two by two, oh

#### GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

Well early in the mornin'  
I'm a givin' you the warnin'  
Don't you step on my blue suede shoes  
Hey dittle dittle, gonna play my fiddle  
Aint got nothing to lost  
Roll over Beethoven, and tell Tchaikovsky the news  
You know she winks like a glow worm  
Dance like a spinnin' top

She got a crazy partner  
Oughta see 'em reel an rock  
Long as she's got a dime, the music will never stop

Roll over Beethoven,  
Roll over Beethoven,  
Roll over Beethoven,  
Roll over Beethoven,  
Roll over Beethoven  
And dig these rhythm and blues

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL TO END

BILL FAGIN (*recording on to a big roll of tape*)  
Fantastic. I think you'll be a hit  
*"Rcoakbilly Boogie", the song that Oliver had played at the coffee bar, is later recorded for the flip side of the record.*

CHARLIE THE PIANO PLAYER  
That kid's amazing!

**ACT ONE, SCENE 7**  
**The Brownlow Home, Kent**  
**November 1956**

*About a week later, after coming home from school, Oliver turns on the wireless and the disc jockey states that he is about to play a new hit record. Bill Fagin had sent Oliver's recording to Radio Luxembourg, the only station that played rock 'n roll. Oliver can hardly contain himself with excitement when he hears it. Enter Oliver, Rose the Housekeeper, Wesley.*

RADIO ANNOUNCER  
Here's a brand new singer making his debut today. From South London in Kent, in the good old U.K., here's little rockin' Oliver Brownlow!

*Then Oliver's version of "Roll Over Beethoven" is played on the radio. Oliver jumps and screams with excitement and Rose runs up and gives him a big hug.*

ROSE  
It's you, Oliver! you're on the wireless! Well done! The whole of Europe can hear you!

WESLEY (*so excited that he spills his tea on the floor*)

Hey Oliver! It's you!

*Oliver and Wesley run to Clarington House Boys' School the next day, where all the boys are talking about Oliver's new record. They cheer him and pat him on the back as he arrives at school. One week later, a box arrives at the Brownlow home, addressed to Oliver. It is a box of 45 r.p.m. singles of Oliver's first record, "Roll Over Beethoven" and "Rockabilly Boogie". Oliver opens the box with extreme delight and gives copies to Rose, his parents and to Wesley. He puts one on the mantelpiece, under the portrait of Oliver Twist. Oliver and Wesley arrive at school and Oliver has the box tucked under his arm. He gives*

*copies to his friends, who are so excited for him. He also signs autographs. The boys cheer Oliver as he enters his Form 4 class.*

HENLEY *(turning to Oliver)*

Brownlow I, you were great! Brilliant! Just like Elvis! Imagine being recorded when you're only eleven years old! Your records a little expensive, though, selling for five shillings and sixpence each.

OLIVER

I get a threepenny bit from that five bob and a tanner from each and every record sold. This is only the beginning. I am just an ordinary schoolboy and I want to stay that way with all of my friends, but I think I was meant for something special. Know what it is?

HENLEY

Rock 'n roll!

*Oliver responded by cheering, he is now becoming a star. That evening, the telephone rings at the Brownlow home and it is the disc jockey from Radio Luxembourg. Rose answers it and immediately calls Oliver to the phone. The disc jockey had been playing Oliver's record on the air for one week and he was flooded with calls from people all over Britain wanting to know more about this young singer. Oliver is becoming extremely popular and his record is rising through the pop charts. The disc jockey is going to do an interview with Oliver over the phone which would be on the air for all to hear. Oliver is to be today's "mystery guest" on the show. Rose and Wesley are listening to the wireless.*

RADIO ANNOUNCER *(on Radio)*

Today's mystery guest comes from the County Borough of South London, in Kent, England, is still in school, and has a song heading up the pop charts with a bullet. The first to call in and guess who it is correctly will win a free catered party for up to ten people. Say hello, mystery guest.

OLIVER *(on telephone)*

Hello.

RADIO ANNOUNCER *(on Radio)*

I'll give you a clue, today's mystery guest has the same Christian name and something in common with a little boy who asked for more. *(Immediately, his telephone begins ringing)*. We have Sally from Halifax, Yorkshire, England on the line. Hello, Sally. Do you know who today's mystery guest is?

SALLY *(on Radio, excited thirteen year old girl with a heavy Yorkshire accent)*

It's rockin' Oliver Brownlow!

RADIO ANNOUNCER *(on Radio)*

That's correct. You're our winner. Would you like to speak to Oliver? He's on the line. Guess how old he is.

SALLY *(on Radio, excited and in a heavy Yorkshire accent)*

Oooh aye! he must be about fourteen.

OLIVER *(on telephone)*

Hello, Sally, this is Oliver Brownlow in South London, near London. I'm only eleven years old!

SALLY (*on Radio, excited and in a heavy Yorkshire accent*)  
(*She screams*) Oh, Oliver, you're the most, you're absolutely champion! You're an absolute dream! You have a grand record. (*She then realizes what Oliver had said*) ELEVEN! You sound so much older and you play the guitar right champion-like!

] OLIVER (*on telephone, holding the receiver away from his ear when the girl screams*)  
Thank you! I have a deep voice, which has helped me with recording.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (*on Radio*)  
Well, thank you everybody. That is young Oliver Brownlow with his version of Chuck Berry's "Roll Over Beethoven" and Sally from Halifax, Yorkshire. Goodbye and let's get on with more great hits on Radio Luxembourg!"

SALLY (*on Radio, excited and in a heavy Yorkshire accent*)  
Goodbye (*she hangs up*)

OLIVER (*on telephone*)  
Goodbye (*he hangs up and then it dawns on him that he is destined for greatness*)

**ACT ONE, SCENE 8**  
**Fagin Records, Recording Studio, East End of London**  
**September 1957**

*The following year, Oliver's popularity grew and grew. By September of 1957, he has released his first album of songs and is continuing to rise in the pop charts. His first album was called "Rock Around With Oliver". Oliver had turned twelve years old in August and what better way to celebrate it than the completion of his first L.P. album. Bill Fagin decided that it was time for Oliver to make a television appearance. David Freedman, the boy Oliver had met at The '2 i's', had joined him as his drummer and Charlie the piano player, along with several other musicians from Fagin Records, had joined in with Oliver also. The Artful Bopper, however, continued to sing and record on his own, backed up by a small band also. Bill Fagin decided that Oliver and his band needed a professional name. They had recorded songs from November 1956 to September of the following year as the "Oliver Brownlow Band". However, Bill wanted a catchy new stage name for the group before they went on national television. Oliver is also thinking about getting a new guitar. The Oliver Brownlow Band assembles at Fagin Records studio as normal to record some songs when Bill Fagin decides to discuss Oliver's future with him. Enter Bill Fagin, Oliver, David, Charlie the Piano Player, other musicians.*

BILL FAGIN  
Oliver?

OLIVER  
Yes

BILL FAGIN  
I'd like to discuss something with you.

OLIVER  
What's that?

BILL FAGIN

Your professional name. The Oliver Brownlow Band is so deadly dull. Now that you're getting very popular, I think it's time we came up with something new and catchy.

OLIVER

What do you suggest?

BILL FAGIN

I've been thinking. How about Ollie and the Rockers?

*David, the drummer, laughs at that name.*

OLIVER (*shouting*)

"Ollie!!! I will not be called Ollie. My name is Oliver!

BILL FAGIN

Well, I've written down some others. How about Shakin' Oliver and the Rockers?

OLIVER

That's better. Look, I think it sounds better if you switch it round. Instead of Oliver and the Rockers, How about Rockin' Oliver? After all I am the lead singer.

BILL FAGIN

Rockin' Oliver! Yes I like that, but it needs something to go at the end for the group. It should be Rockin' Oliver and the ... something.

OLIVER

I've got it. I want to honour my famous ancestor, Oliver Twist. After all, people can relate to him and it would help my image. What do you say to Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters?

BILL FAGIN

Heyyy! that's good. I like it. It's very catchy.

OLIVER

It's settled then. On our next record, put by Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters.

BILL FAGIN

Fine, people will be going around calling you Rockin' Oliver before long.

OLIVER

That's fine, I like it. Rockin' Oliver will be my name from now on.

BILL FAGIN

I've got some exciting news for you, Rockin' Oliver. You're all going on national television next week. I've booked a spot on one of the youth programmes for you.

OLIVER

Oh wow! the telly! That's great! (*The whole group claps and cheers*)

BILL FAGIN

There's more good news, Oliver. Your first album has sold 100,000 copies and is zooming up the pop charts. Your singles sell close to a million each, so, I am pleased to present you with this, your first royalty cheque!

*Bill pulls a cheque out from his pocket and gives it to Oliver. It is his first royalty cheque. It is for one thousand pounds.*

OLIVER (*gasping*)

One Thousand pounds!!!! Oh thank you!

DAVID

A Thousand Quid!!! Cor! What are you going to do with all that money?

OLIVER

First, you will all get your share, and then I am going straight to Mr. Jessop's music shop in Foxwood High Street and get a brand new guitar. This one is second-hand and is worn out.

*Oliver's father, who is his manager also, has the cheque cashed and divided up among the band members, but with Oliver getting the largest share, since he sings and plays lead guitar. Philip also signs a five-year contract for Oliver with Fagin Records. Exit Bill Fagin and Twisters group. Oliver has a new Jaguar car bought for his parents, a new Triumph car bought for Rose and new Raleigh bikes for both himself and Wesley. Then suddenly, something awful happens. Oliver feels faint, and collapses falling on the floor. The others in the studio gasp at the sight of this. Meanwhile David and Bill Fagin come up to Oliver and loosen his tie and remove his guitar.*

BILL FAGIN

This kid's burning up, he's got a fever. He's very hot.

*Bill Fagin calls the Brownlow home and Philip answers. David waits with the unconscious Oliver until Philip arrives. Oliver's father rushes up to him.*

PHILIP

We had better get him home and put him to bed. I'll call a doctor to come to the house.

*Oliver is then rushed to the car and taken straight home and put to bed, still unconscious. Rose has put him in his pyjamas. The doctor is called as Oliver sleeps. Exit Oliver, David, Philip and Bill Fagin.*

## **ACT ONE, SCENE 9**

**The Brownlow Home, Kent**

**September 1957**

*When Oliver wakes up a little later, the doctor and his mother are standing over him. He sits up in bed and the doctor takes his temperature. Enter Oliver and Jean.*

DOCTOR

Hmm, 104, Mrs. Brownlow. This boy is sick.

JEAN

I'll get his father call Bill Fagin and cancel his bookings for a while and I'll put his brother in the spare room.

DOCTOR

Good idea. He has a bad case of the flu. He must stay in bed for at least a week and drink plenty of fluids. Give him some soup, some orange juice and some Lucozade.

JEAN

Very good, doctor. *(Then turning to Oliver)* How are you feeling, Oliver dear?

OLIVER

Awful. My head hurts, I'm hot and I ache all over.

JEAN

Well, you get some rest and don't think about getting up until you're better. I'll put Wesley in the guest room for now.

OLIVER

Thanks, Mum. I'm supposed to be going on television next week.

JEAN

Well, you can't, you're too sick, it will just have to wait till you're better.

OLIVER

Just my luck. I get a really big break and I have to go and get sick. *He falls back on his pillow and rests, feeling very upset.*

*Enter Wesley. Wesley comes in and grabs some clothes, pyjamas and toys and goes to sleep in the guest room so as not to catch Oliver's flu. Phone calls and letters start pouring into the Brownlow home from Oliver's fans when they hear that his concerts have been cancelled owing to his sickness. Wesley tells everyone at school that Oliver would start recording again later. Exit Wesley. One week later, Oliver is feeling much better, and his temperature is back to normal. He is sitting up in bed reading his comic book. His mother and the doctor come in.*

DOCTOR

How are you feeling, young fellow?

OLIVER

Much better now.

DOCTOR *(taking Oliver's temperature)*

Normal.

JEAN

Oh good.

OLIVER

Now I should go back to school, I suppose.

JEAN

Well, that's something your father and I want to talk to you about.

OLIVER

What's the problem?

JEAN

We'll discuss it later. Here, I'll put the television on for you.

*Oliver had bought his own television set with some of his money from his first album and it is in his room between both beds so that both he and Wesley could watch. Jean turns it on. The doctor then tells Mrs. Brownlow that Oliver could get up when he wished. Jean sees the doctor to the door. Oliver gets up and switches the channels on the television until something catches his eye. It is a performance of Jerry Lee Lewis being given in New York. He is playing his hit record "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On" with his pumping piano sound. Oliver jumps up and grabs his guitar and starts strumming to it. He loves the song so much that he begins jumping on his bed with his guitar in time to the music. When it is over, he cheers loudly. Then Wesley comes running into the room. Enter Wesley.*

WESLEY (*still speaking with a heavy lisp*)

Oliver! Oliver! Come and see! Come and see!

OLIVER

What?

WESLEY (*excited*)

All the things for you. People all over England heard you were sick and sent you lots of presents. They're in the lounge!

*Oliver jumps up and runs downstairs, still in his pyjamas, though he puts on his dressing gown and slippers. Sure enough, the lounge is filled with gifts and sacks of letters from his fans.*

OLIVER

Wow!! Look at all this!

WESLEY

It's like the next ten Christmases and birthdays all in one.

*The boys start rummaging through the presents.*

OLIVER

Look at this! (*He sees a beautiful fur-lined guitar case*). Oh yeah! (*he looks inside it*). The boys continue to look and come across a brand new bicycle, which Oliver really likes and then a cricket set, which he is also excited about.

OLIVER

This is amazing. (*Oliver then finds a football*). Hey Wesley, you like football, you can have this! (*Oliver throws the genuine leather ball to Wesley, who catches it*).

WESLEY

Oh gee thanks Oliver!

*Oliver then finds a huge stuffed teddy bear.*

OLIVER

I'm a bit old for this!

WESLEY

I'll have him! *Oliver then gives the teddy bear to Wesley, who gives it a huge hug.*

WESLEY

I'm going to call him Ginger because he's got red fur.

*Oliver then starts to rummage through the sacks of mail.*

OLIVER

How on Earth am I ever going to answer all these letters? There must be thousands of them!

WESLEY

You've got a lot of fans.

*At this point, Jean enters the room and helps Oliver to open the sacks of mail. There are about four of them. Enter Jean.*

OLIVER

How am I going to answer them all, Mum?

JEAN

I thought about that, we'll get hundreds of copies of a standard thank you card printed up and send them out, so you don't have to write them all.

OLIVER

Good idea! I'd be here until the year 2000 if! were to write them all!

JEAN

Your Dad and I will take care of it, so all you have to do is sign them.

OLIVER

Oh Mum, I heard a fantastic song on the telly this afternoon. I want to try it. I'm going to call Mr. Fagin

*The telephone rings and it is Bill Fagin calling to see how Oliver is feeling. Wesley is still rummaging through the presents to see if there are any more good toys he could ask Oliver for.*

OLIVER

I'll get it!

*Oliver answers the telephone and it is Bill on the other end who asks Oliver how he is feeling and when he would be fit enough to record again.*

OLIVER *(on telephone)*

Today! I've got a great song I want to try out. I'll get dressed and be over there in half an hour. Call the rest of the group please!

*Bill agrees and Oliver then hangs up and runs upstairs to get dressed. After he is ready, he runs out the door carrying his guitar and jumps in a taxi and it heads for Aldgate in the east end of London. Oliver has plenty of money to pay the taxi fare.*

JEAN

Oh Oliver, you only just got up. Are you sure you're well enough to go?

OLIVER *(running out the door)*

I'm fine, Mum. See you later.

## **ACT ONE, SCENE 10**

**Fagin Records, Recording Studio, East End of London**

**September 1957**

*Oliver arrives at Fagin Records and Bill, David and the rest of the band are all there to greet him. They are very happy that he has recovered so they set up, practise and then record. Enter Oliver, Bill Fagin, Charlie the Piano Player, Musicians. Oliver sings.*

OLIVER (*singing into microphone and playing guitar*)

Shake it baby! Shake it!

Shake it baby! Shake it!

Come on over baby!

Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On!

*Oliver plays some heavy guitar rhythms and riffs in the song and Charlie does his best to play like Jerry Lee Lewis. The final product sounds great. When they are finished, Oliver turns to Bill.*

OLIVER

Well, what do you think, Mr. Fagin?

BILL FAGIN

Heyy, not bad!! That's going to sell. The kids are going to love it!

OLIVER

I know!!

*Oliver's recording of Jerry Lee Lewis's song is a great success. He performs it at The '2 i's', in the bandstand at Foxwood Park in South London, and at a community dance. He is a big hit on Radio Luxembourg with his Whole Lotta Shakin'. While being interviewed on the radio, Oliver thanks everyone for the gifts he received while he was sick. He is so popular, that the BBC is thinking of starting a rock 'n roll radio programme. Meanwhile, Charlie is getting much better at playing piano like Jerry Lee Lewis. Wherever Oliver goes, he is greeted by screaming girls and autograph seekers. His royalties from the recording increase and he zooms up the pop charts. By the end of September, 1957, Rockin' Oliver has done it, his version of Jerry Lee Lewis's song reaches number one on the pop charts. He is now a national sensation.*

## **ACT ONE, SCENE 11**

**BBC Television Studio, London**

**September 1957**

*Soon after, Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters are booked to go on BBC television for their first national appearance. They all arrive at Broadcasting House in London, wearing tuxedos and carrying their instruments. Oliver had to get used to wearing long trousers instead of shorts. However, as the band leader, he wears a very smart gold-coloured tuxedo, while the rest wear standard black ones. The group looks very smart in tuxedos and shiny '50's style black and white shoes. Oliver is a bit nervous. While they wait to go on, Oliver straps his new Stratocaster guitar on and peeps on to the stage, where an audience is anxiously waiting for his performance. A full drum set with "Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters" printed on the big drum was set up on stage. Philip Brownlow, Oliver's father and manager, had made sure that everything was taken care of properly. Oliver has bought a new Fender Stratocaster guitar, in the same style as his old one. Enter Oliver, Twisters group, Announcer, Audience.*

ANNOUNCER (*into microphone*)

Here's Britain's first rock'n roller, Tommy Steele!  
*Enter Tommy Steele*

TOMMY STEELE (*singing into microphone and playing guitar*)

I was in London a short time ago,  
I said to my friend, your car's too slow,  
He turned round to me and said, you with the fuss,  
Go take a ride on a downtown bus!  
Rock, rock, rock around the town,  
Rock, rock, rock around the town,  
Baby, roll, roll, roll around the town,

Rock, rock rock around the town,  
Everybody's doin' it, London Bridge is falling down!  
He got in a monster, it was painted red,  
A guy in blue turned to me and said,  
His words were followed by quite a stare,  
I said what you want? He said I want your fare!  
Rock, rock, rock around the town,  
Rock, rock, rock around the town,  
Baby, roll, roll, roll around the town,  
Rock, rock rock around the town,  
Everybody's doin' it, London Bridge is falling down!

SAXOPHONE INSTRUMENTAL

We went around half the night,  
And I can say we saw every sight,  
When we came back we looked around,  
Well what you know? we're back in London town!  
Rock, rock, rock around the town,  
Rock, rock, rock around the town,  
Baby, roll, roll, roll around the town,  
Rock, rock rock around the town,  
Everybody's doin' it, London Bridge is falling down!

*When Tommy is finished, the crowd cheers wildly. Tommy exits the stage.*

TOMMY STEELE  
Good luck Oliver!

OLIVER  
Thanks Tommy, you were great!

*Exit Tommy Steele.*

ANNOUNCER (*into microphone*)

Here he is, our youngest little rock 'n roll sensation! Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters!" *The group then comes out on stage to a huge cheer from the audience. Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters then sing with some heavy guitar riffs:*

OLIVER (*singing into microphone and playing guitar*)

Well, come on over baby, whole lotta shakin' gain' on  
I said, come on over baby, baby you can't go wrong,  
I aint fakin', we got a whole lotta shakin' goin' on.  
I said come on over baby, we got kickin' in the barn,  
Come on over baby, baby got the bull by the horn. Oh yeah!

I aint fakin', we got a whole lotta shakin' goin' on.  
Yeah, shake it baby, shake it,  
I said shake it baby, shake it,  
I said shake it baby, shake it,  
Yeah, shake it baby, shake it,  
Come on over, we got a whole lotta shakin' goin' on. Let's go!

#### GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

Well, come on over baby, we got kickin' in the barn,  
Whose barn? Not your barn! My barn!  
Come on over baby, baby got the bull by the horn,  
Oh Yeah!

Come on over, we got a whole lotta shakin' goin' on.  
Yeah, shake it baby, shake it,  
I said shake it baby, shake it,  
I said shake it baby, shake it,  
Yeah, shake it baby, shake it,  
Come on over, we got a whole lotta shakin' goin' on.  
Well, come on over baby, we got kickin' in the barn,  
Oh Yeah!

Come on over baby, whole lotta shakin' goin' on,  
I aint fakin'!  
Come on over, we got a whole lotta shakin' goin' on.

*Oliver takes a deep bow when they are finished as the audience gives him a tumultuous cheer. He is squinting his eyes because of the bright stage and camera lights. He is broadcasted all over Great Britain. Wesley and the rest of the Brownlow family proudly gather around the television at their house, watching Oliver's performance. Friends and relations are all invited over to watch. When Oliver is done, the announcer shakes his hand and the group goes backstage to leave. As the curtain closes to prepare for the next performance, the crowd starts shouting "We want Oliver!" over and over again.*

AUDIENCE (*shouting*)

We want Oliver! We want Oliver! We want Oliver!

*Oliver obliges by coming back out and taking a big bow. He is at the top of the rock 'n roll charts. Oliver and the group then have to be rushed out of the back afterwards and into cars to take them home immediately for their own safety as they are being swarmed by screaming fans. They manage to get away quickly.*

**ACT ONE, SCENE 12**  
**The Brownlow Home, Kent**  
**October 1957**

*One evening, back at the Brownlow home in early October, Oliver and Wesley are playing in the lounge when Bill Fagin knocks on the door. Oliver looks out to see who it is and answers the door. Enter Oliver, Wesley, Bill Fagin, Rose.*

OLIVER  
Hello, Bill! Come in.  
*Bill comes in and takes his hat off, he has a package under his arm.*

BILL FAGIN  
Hey, Oliver I've got great news for you, please assemble your whole family.

OLIVER  
Mum!, Dad! Rose! Come here please!

BILL FAGIN  
Oliver, I'd like to present you with this. *(He then opens the package and gives Oliver his first gold record).*  
Congratulations! Your first gold record! *(It is Oliver's recording of "Whole Lotta Shakin" which is number one on the pop charts).*

OLIVER  
Wow!

BILL FAGIN  
"Whole Lotta Shakin" is now the number one song in Britain and Jerry Lee Lewis is planning to visit here next year.

OLIVER  
Cor! I hope I can meet him!

*There's a knock on the front door, Rose answers it and it is Oliver's friend from school, Peter Allen. Enter Peter Allen (Oliver's classmate from Clarington House School, in uniform).*

OLIVER *(noticing Peter)*  
Hey it's Peter Allen, my friend, the new boy from Clarington House. Hello, Peter!

PETER ALLEN *(straightening his school uniform)*  
Hello, Oliver. Cor! I'm lucky to get through the crowd of girls outside!

BILL FAGIN  
Oliver, I've got you booked on a six month tour of eighteen cities starting next week. Your Mum and Dad have agreed with me that you are not to return to school. You will have private lessons at home from now on. You don't have time for regular schooling.

PETER ALLEN  
Captain Breen, the headmaster, says your music is a disruptive influence at school. I've never heard such beastly rot! I'm one of your biggest fans, I've got every one of your records.

OLIVER (*shouting angrily*)

Thanks, Peter. Crikey! I should buy that school and throw Captain Breen out!

(*Peter bursts out laughing*)

JEAN

Now that's enough of that talk, Oliver! We've arranged for them to send a very good teacher over for your lessons at home between each of your concerts.

WESLEY (*hoping for a positive answer*)

Oh, can I have home lessons too?

PHILIP

No, you're not a star, you will stay in school

WESLEY (*moaning with disappointment*)

Well at least I won't be Brownlow IT any more, just Brownlow from now on.

*Suddenly, the telephone rings and Philip answers it. It is the mayor of the Midlands Town, he is calling to book Rockin' Oliver to perform at their summer fete in August of 1958, They need to raise money for a new development and bringing in a big name star would do it. Oliver was booked up for six months, so Philip, who acts as Rockin' Oliver's manager, agreed that Oliver was free to go to Midlands Town in a year's time*

PHILIP

Oliver, that was the mayor of Midlands Town, Oliver Twist's home town! You are to perform there on your next birthday!

OLIVER

Wow! That's great, Dad! In great-great grandfather Oliver Twist's home town! Wowee!! (*To Peter*) Come on, Peter, let's go upstairs!

*Exit Oliver, Wesley and Peter.*

*That night after Oliver and Wesley go to bed, the boys lie awake for a while, all excited. Oliver sleeps with his guitar as he always does, while Wesley sleeps with his new giant teddy bear, Ginger. They have two twin beds in the same room with a television between them. Enter Oliver and Wesley.*

WESLEY (*While in bed*)

Oliver, does all this fame and fortune scare you?

OLIVER (*Also in bed*)

No. I love it, but I want to stay a normal boy as much as possible. I'm the youngest rock 'n roll star ever. Frankie Lymon is thirteen and Ritchie Valens is sixteen. I've got 'em both beat because I'm only twelve! (*Oliver thinks for a moment*) Wesley, can I ask you something?

WESLEY

Sure.

OLIVER

Do you feel a bit, you know, jealous of my success? Be very honest with me.

WESLEY

I'm not jealous. You've given me so much money and shared your new toys with me. You gave me my teddy, Ginger, my new bike, and my new football. You're the best brother in the world. I am happy about all your success, you really deserve it, you play guitar real well. I like it because you give me stuff. Besides I don't want to have girls screaming at me all the time like you get.

OLIVER (laughs)

And you're a terrific little brother because we have fun together. It's amazing how we don't fight like most brothers do. Anyway, I want our whole family and my group to share in my success. Besides, I owe it to our ancestor, Oliver Twist, who suffered until he came here.

WESLEY

Just think, we're going to great-great grandfather Oliver Twist's town next year.

OLIVER

Yes. I'm looking forward to it.

WESLEY

So am I. I wonder if the old workhouse is still there and if it's haunted.

OLIVER (*yawning*)

I dunno. We'll see when we get there. Now let's get some sleep, I'm very tired. Goodnight, Wesley.

WESLEY

Goodnight, Oliver (*He turns over and goes to sleep, clutching Ginger, his teddy bear*).

*Exit Oliver and Wesley. Meanwhile, down in the front room, Bill Fagin and Philip Brownlow are still talking.*

PHILIP

Bill? May I have a word with you?

BILL FAGIN

Yes. Certainly.

PHILIP

Something puzzles me. I have been looking at Oliver's royalty cheques. His records sales are increasing dramatically, but his royalty cheques are getting smaller. Why is that?

BILL FAGIN

Expenses have gone up considerably with new equipment and booking tours. Well, Phil, you know about these things. You work in Whitehall, after all.

PHILIP (*not satisfied with Bill's answer*)

Expenses are supposed to be your concern. They don't come out of Oliver's royalties. Besides, they can't have gone up that much. He has the number one record, yet he is making less than he did when he first started with you over a year ago. He got one thousand pounds then and now he only gets five hundred. That doesn't make sense to me.

BILL FAGIN

I have set up a trust fund for Oliver. He gets part of it now and will get the rest later. You must understand, Phil. I have the boy's best interests at heart. If I gave him a lot of money now, he would spend it foolishly. This way, there'll be plenty later on. Trust me, Phil.

PHILIP

Hmmm! I want to see some records or some statements.

BILL FAGIN

Ofcourse! I'll let you come in and see the books. My friend Seth Sykes is my accountant. I'll see that you have a word with him.

PHILIP

I can't understand why you didn't mention this before.

BILL FAGIN

Don't worry, Phil. Everything is going just fine.

PHILIP

I hope so, because if it isn't, I want to know about it. I am the boy's manager as well as his father.

BILL FAGIN

As it should be. I've got to go now. I have a very busy schedule. Goodbye. *Exit Bill Fagin.*

PHILIP (*Pensive and confused*)

Something's not right. Oliver should be making more money with more record sales, not less. Well, Bill must know what he is doing.

*Exit Philip, Jean, Rose, Bill Fagin, Peter Allen.*

*Rockin' Oliver now had a gold record and is at the top of the pop charts. But the high point of his life is yet to come the following year in a town about fifty miles north-west of London. One major thing that Oliver's music achieved was that it broke down class barriers and brought people of different social classes to enjoy life together. Toff and Cockney alike were jiving to the rockin' beat of Oliver's swingin' guitar. The membership of the Twisters group proved that.*

## INTERMISSION

**ACT TWO, SCENE 1**  
**The Midlands Town Summer Fete, Northwest of London**  
**August 1958**

*On August 14, 1958, Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters arrive in Midlands Town, a city about 70 miles northwest of London. Enter Oliver, Wesley, Philip and Jean Brownlow, David, Twisters Group, the Mayor of Midlands Town, Dignitaries, Crowd, Actors in the Play, Young Fans.*

MAYOR

You know, the real Oliver Twist story started right here in Midlands Town over a hundred years ago.

OLIVER

Is there anything left of the old workhouse?

MAYOR

Sort of. It closed down a long time ago, but the ruin still stands today. The council is raising money to pull it down and build shops and houses there. Tomorrow's fete should pay for some of it.

OLIVER

Hey, I'd like to go see it. After all, my ancestor was there.

MAYOR

Don't go after dark.

OLIVER

Why?

MAYOR

They say it's haunted.

OLIVER (*getting interested*)

Really?

MAYOR

Yes, haunted with the ghosts of children who died there, and they come out at night. I know someone who has heard them. I also know they don't like loud noise.

DAVID (*listening in on this conversation*)

Do you want to go there at night? I dare you!

OLIVER

Alright. You're on!

MAYOR

Be careful. I hear it's pretty scary.

OLIVER

Better still!

*Exit Mayor*

**ACT TWO, SCENE 2**

**The Ruin of the Midlands Town Workhouse, Northwest of London**

**August 1958**

*The boy actor from the play gives Oliver directions to get to the ruins of the workhouse. Oliver and David say goodnight to Philip and Jean, then change into casual clothes and jackets. They sneak off into the night, carrying battery-operated torches (flashlights). It is thunder storming through the night. They follow the directions closely and come to the workhouse gate, which is hanging off its hinges. The boys enter the property and go inside the building. It is a very creepy place. It is overgrown with weeds and is falling down. They enter the big stone hall where many a gruel supper has been served in the past and notice the remains of some lettering on the back wall which barely make out "GOD IS LOVE". David puts his foot on the stairs and it goes right through.*

DAVID (*lifting his foot out of the broken stair*)

Careful of them stairs. I put me foot right through, they're not safe.

OLIVER (*standing in the very spot where his ancestor had asked for more gruel and he suddenly gets a chill down his spine*)

Gosh! I'm standing where my great-great-grandfather said those famous words.

DAVID

What? You mean, please Sir, I want some more?

OLIVER

Yes, that's right.

*The boys shine their torches around and take a look at the ruin.*

DAVID

Look at this place! What a dump! It looks like a prison!

OLIVER

These workhouses were just like prisons.

*The rattling of ghostly chains can be heard.*

DAVID (*getting scared*)

Hey, do you hear something?

*Just as David says that, the spirits of Dick and John, the best friends of Oliver Twist who sat beside him at meals, begin to appear. They had haunted the workhouse for a long time and hear this conversation. They point at Oliver and whisper to each other because they recognise him. Rockin' Oliver looks exactly like Oliver Twist and the spirits think that Oliver Twist has returned. Enter Ghosts of Dick and John.*

DICK

Hey! It's Oliver!

JOHN

It is Oliver, he's back! He's got a friend with him, too!

*Oliver then touches the wall and cuts his finger on a piece of glass from a broken window. David sees the two little spirits and gets extremely scared.*

OLIVER (*shaking his cut finger*)

Oooooow! *He then turns to David and sees the horrified look on his face.* What's the matter, David? You look like you've seen a ghost!

DAVID

Yes, two of them!

OLIVER (*confidently*)

Oh come off it! There's no such thing as ghosts!

DAVID (*seeing the spirits again and getting very scared*)

Th-then what's that behind you?

*Oliver turns around and sees the two little spirits, barefooted and dressed in rags and ghostly chains. He lets off a blood-curdling scream.*

OLIVER (*extremely scared, shouting*)

GHOSTS!!! Let's get out of here!

*Oliver and David head for the door quickly.*

DICK

No please don't run away. Don't be afraid!

JOHN

We're your friends.

*Oliver and David stop and turn around. They walk back and take a look at these ghostly visitors, but they are still quite scared.*

DICK (*coming up to Oliver*)

John! Oliver's back and look at his toggs! He looks like he's been rich and healthy and he's got no chains! Please, Oliver, put out your candles, they are too bright!

OLIVER (*puzzled*)

What do you mean?

DAVID

He means our torches.

*Oliver and David put out their torches and can see the spirits by moonlight. They have an angelic aura about them.*

JOHN

Don't you remember us, Oliver? Dick and John. Your friends in the workhouse?

OLIVER (*confused*)

I don't know what you're talking about!

DICK (*reaching out and touching Oliver's arm and noticing his cut finger*)

Blood! he's alive!

JOHN

But that can't be. How can Oliver still be living and still be a boy after a hundred years?

OLIVER

Wait a minute! I don't think you know who I am.

DICK

You're Oliver Twist, aint ya?

*David and Oliver burst out laughing.*

OLIVER

No, of course not! He died over fifty years ago. I'm his great-great grandson, Oliver Brownlow, and this is my best friend David Freedman!

DICK

Oh! In life we were Oliver Twist's best friends. I'm the spirit of Dick Swubble and this is the spirit of Johnny Unwin. I'm pleased to meet you.

JOHN

You mustn't be afraid of us. We're just little children, we don't want to scare nobody.

OLIVER (*wrapping a tissue around his cut finger*)

It's just that we've never seen ghosts before.

DICK

Please don't call us ghosts.

JOHN

We prefer to be called spirits. 'Ere Dick, he speaks real good, he's must have had schoolin'.

OLIVER (*observing*)

Everybody goes to school nowadays. Why do you wear those chains?

DICK

These are the chains we forged in life. We made them link by link.

JOHN

Ours are very light. You should see Mr. Bumble's chains. He was the workhouse guardian who starved us to death. His chains are so heavy, his spirit can hardly move!

DAVID

That's justice! That bloomin' geezer got what was comin' to him!

*The spirits nod their heads in agreement*

JOHN

I get the feeling that your chains will be light too, Oliver. You have been a good boy.

OLIVER

I hope so. Boy, talking with you will help me with history!

JOHN

Oliver, what are them big birds that smash houses with their droppings?

OLIVER

Big birds? What big birds?

JOHN

Yes, a few years ago, these big birds flew across the sky and spat at each other. They then dropped stuff and smashed buildings.

DAVID *(laughing very hard)*

Those are aeroplanes! You're talking about the war! They are like carriages that fly through the air. We were at war and they were dropping bombs!

*Dick and John start to laugh with disbelief Enter ghosts of Sebastian, Luke and other workhouse boys. At that moment, the spirits of the other boys who had sat at the same table with Oliver Twist, Dick and John and whose gruel ration had been cut in half appear.*

SEBASTIAN *(he has a dirty, sooty appearance)*

Oliver! You're back! Hey fellahs, look at Oliver's funny clothes and short hair!

DICK

No, no! This is Oliver Brownlow, Oliver Twist's great-great grandson. He's alive! Oliver, this is the spirit of Sebastian Arkwright. Sebastian, I think this Oliver looks very smart!

SEBASTIAN *(not too happy with Oliver because he blamed Oliver Twist for his death)*

Oliver Twist's great-great grandson, eh? Oh really! *(sarcastically)* I want to scare you.

OLIVER

Why?

SEBASTIAN *(shouting)*

We died because your ancestor asked for more gruel and got us all in to trouble. Mr. Bumble cut our rations in half and we starved to death! I'm going to haunt you for the rest of your life and scare all your friends away!

LUKE

Not all of us! I died from being sick.

SEBASTIAN

Be quiet, Luke Vilkins!

OLIVER *(very angry and shouting)*

Listen. Don't blame Oliver Twist and don't take it out on me! Oliver tried to help you and get you more food. He stuck his neck out for you! It's not his fault that the whole thing backfired! Blame Mr. Bubble who sold Oliver Twist for three guineas, like an animal!

DICK (*laughing hard*)  
That's Bumble not Bubble!

OLIVER  
Your getting into trouble has got nothing to do with me! That was over a hundred years ago!

JOHN  
He's got a point there.

OLIVER (*asking Sebastian*)  
Why are you all dirty?

SEBASTIAN  
I was 'prenticed to Mr. Gamfield, the chimney sweep, on account of them buns we ate that John stoled. I died cleaning out a flue.

OLIVER  
Anyway, don't mess with me, because I've got something that will scare you.

SEBASTIAN  
What?

OLIVER  
A Stratocaster.

SEBASTIAN (*turning to Luke*)  
What did he say?

LUKE (*guessing*)  
It sounded like a, er, a sugar caster.

SEBASTIAN (*puzzled*)  
A sugar caster? What's that?

OLIVER (*yelling*)  
Not a sugar caster, you big twit! A Stratocaster!

SEBASTIAN (*getting very frustrated with Oliver*)  
How am I supposed to know what that is?

OLIVER  
A Stratocaster! Why don't you come to the fete tomorrow and you'll find out.

SEBASTIAN  
Alright. I will!! *Exit Sebastian with other spirits of workhouse boys, leaving only Dick and John with Oliver and David.*

JOHN  
He's just jealous 'cause Oliver Twist got out and we died. Hey, what year be it now Oliver?

OLIVER

It's 1958. How come you didn't know about all the things we have now? Didn't you see things come and go all this time? You must have been asleep for the last hundred years.

DICK

We have.

DAVID

A lot's changed.

JOHN

Why have you come here?

OLIVER

To see where my ancestor was born and I am performing tomorrow.

DICK

Where do you live and what do you do?

OLIVER

I live the on other side of London and sing and play an instrument and David here is my drummer.

DICK

Gosh, London! Whatever became of Oliver Twist?

OLIVER

Hey why don't you come to the fete tomorrow. I am playing Oliver Twist in a play about his life at the church hall at one o'clock. Watch it and you'll find out what happened to him. Afterwards, I'll be playing some modern music. By the way, I also have a little brother named Wesley; he's almost eight.

DICK

We'll be there! We now know that Oliver Twist lived, grew up, married and had children.

*Oliver and David notice that it is getting really late, so they say goodbye and leave. They walk back to the hotel and sneak in and go to bed. They are all excited about meeting the spirits and about the upcoming fete. Exit Oliver, David.*

### **ACT TWO, SCENE 3**

#### **The Midlands Town Summer Fete, Northwest of London**

**August 1958**

*Enter Dick and John, amazed at the instruments set up on stage for Rockin' Oliver's performance.*

JOHN *(pointing at the drum kit)*

Look at them drums.

DICK

Maybe they're going to play a marching song! *(looking at the microphone)* I wonder what this thing is?

JOHN

Perhaps it's a lamp, but I wonder how you light it. I can't see the candle!

DICK (*noticing Oliver's Fender Stratocaster electric guitar and pointing at it*)  
What's this?

JOHN  
It's some kind of musical instrument.

DICK  
I know that, but what a strange looking thing. I've never seen an instrument with horns before!

JOHN  
What can it be?

DICK (*picking up the guitar and holding it up to his shoulder like a violin*)  
It must be a fiddle!

JOHN  
It can't be, it's too big!

DICK (*holding the guitar upright like a cello and making moves as though he was holding a bow*)  
Maybe they play it this way.

JOHN  
But there's no bow. (*thinking for a moment*) I think I know what it is.

DICK  
What?

JOHN  
I remember seeing a Spanish instrument called a ..... er .... a guitar. You hold it like this. (*John then picks up the guitar and holds it properly and then strums it. It is not plugged in; the instrument is very quiet unplugged*). It don't make much sound!

DICK  
Well, maybe they play quiet music!

JOHN (*noticing Oliver's name on the strap*)  
Hey, there's writing on it. It says Oliver.

DICK  
It must be that sugarcaster that Oliver was talking about. It's his instrument.

*At that moment, Oliver notices the two spirits and comes over to them.*

OLIVER  
Allo. How do you like the show?

DICK  
Fine. Now we know what happened to Oliver Twist. He got 'prenticed to Mr. Sowerberry, ran off to London, got in with a gang of thieves, got caught, got taken in by this nice old gentleman, Mr. Brownlow.

OLIVER (*interrupting Dick*)

He was Oliver Twist's grandfather, and my great-great-great-great-grandfather.

DICK

He got taken back by the thieves and then returned to Mr. Brownlow to stay.

OLIVER

Oliver Twist went into parliament when he grew up. He later became a colonial governor. It's said that when he was asked if he wanted to be Governor of Tonga, he replied by saying 'please sir, I want Samoa!' And here I am four generations later!

DICK

Gosh. Oliver Twist was so lucky. Imagine ending up in a rich family!

JOHN

While the rest of us died from half rations 'cause of Mr. Bumble!

OLIVER (*gasping*)

You should stick around and hear some of my modern music. Professionally, I'm called "Rockin' Oliver" for what I play.

DICK

I remember at Christmas when we were alive, people used to dance in the street to the fiddle and the hurdy gurdy. It was a jolly affair. Mr. and Mrs. Bumble and the Governors would go out and join them, but we boys weren't allowed, we could only watch from the gate.

OLIVER

What did you have for Christmas dinner?

JOHN

We got a piece of bread with our usual bowl of gruel and it was often stale.

OLIVER (*shocked*)

What? A piece of bread for Christmas? I have turkey and ham and pudding and mince pies.

DICK

Oh stop! We couldn't even imagine that!

OLIVER

I'm on in a minute. Gotta go now, bye. *Oliver leaves and changes into his tuxedo and gets ready to rock 'n roll.*

*Enter Philip.*

PHILIP (*he can not see the two little spirits*)

Oliver, who were you talking to? You shouldn't talk to yourself, you know.

OLIVER (*pointing to the spirits*)

Two people over there.

PHILIP

But there's nobody there! Are you sure you're feeling alright?

OLIVER

Oh they must have left. Oh never mind.

JOHN

Oliver, only children can see us. We don't appear to grown ups; we don't like 'em.

*Enter Sebastian, the chimney sweep spirit, Luke and the other workhouse orphan spirits, joining Dick and John.*

DICK (*gasping*)

Look at Oliver's beautiful suit!! (*the spirits gaze in amazement at Oliver's gold coloured tuxedo*)

SEBASTIAN (*laughing*)

Hey fellahs, What's Oliver doing? And what's that thing he's holding?

DICK

That's his instrument he's going to play, but it don't make no sound!

SEBASTIAN (*laughing*)

Ooohh, I've got to see this!

JOHN

Well, I feel sorry for him. He will be so 'barrassed in front of all them people.

SEBASTIAN

Serves him right

DICK

Shhh. He's getting ready to play that quiet music now (*He points to Oliver who is strapping on his guitar*).

*Oliver will be able to play his guitar perfectly, even with his bandaged finger.*

SEBASTIAN (*To Luke*)

Stop Shoving!

LUKE

Stop rattling your chains!

*Meanwhile, Wesley goes out to the muddy field which holds the fete activities. Exit Wesley.*

MAYOR (*into microphone*)

Now ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, here he is, a great-great grandson of Oliver Twist, that little fellow from London with the rockin' guitar, Rockin' Oliver!

*Enter Oliver with guitar in his gold coloured tuxedo. The young people in the crowd cheer wildly. Oliver plugs his guitar into the large amplifier and notices the little spirits on the side of the stage. Sebastian is standing right in front of the big speaker. Oliver is going to teach him a lesson, so he turns his guitar up full blast. He then shows off playing a very loud blast of rock 'n roll.*

OLIVER (into the microphone)

Here's a new one just hit the charts last month from Ritchie Valens, a young fellow like me!

OLIVER (*singing into microphone playing guitar*)

HEAVY AND LOUD GUITAR INTRODUCTION

Well .... Come on let's go let's go let's go little darlin'  
Tell me that you'll never leave me

Come on Come on let's go again and again and again  
Well.... Now swing me swing me swing me way darling

Come on let's go little darlin'  
Let's go let's go again once more

Well..... I love you so yeah and I'll never let you go  
Come along baby soon

Oh pretty baby I love you so WELL.....  
Let's go let's go let's go little sweet heart  
Now that we can always be together

Come on come on let's go again.  
Let's go!

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

I love you so yeah and I'll never let you go  
Come along baby soon  
Oh pretty baby I love you so WELL.....

Come on let's go let's go let's go little darlin'  
Tell me that you'll never leave me

Come on Come on let's go and again and again and again  
Come on Let's go and do it again and again and again and again  
and again and again and again  
Come on let's go and do it again

*The spirits immediately cover their ears from the loud guitar riffs and look at Oliver and each other in puzzlement. Sebastian starts howling that it is too loud. Oliver is loving it! He has both the physical and spiritual worlds watching him. At the end of the songs, some of the spirits, including Sebastian, run away screaming, making a huge crash from knocking over dustbins and milk bottles. Dick, John, Luke and a couple of other spirits stay and laugh hard at the spirits running away. Exit Sebastian and some spirits.*

CROWD (*cheering*)

We want more! We want more!

OLIVER (*jokingly*)

That's the first time anybody's ever asked me for more!

*Dick and John hear that and start to laugh.*

OLIVER (*into microphone*)

My next song is dedicated to a little spirit I met last night while I was walking through the ruin of the old workhouse. It has his name in it. (*He means John*) Here's a new one from Chuck Berry! (*He turns to the band*) This is an R&B, watch me for the changes and try to keep up. *Oliver plays a heavy riff.*

OLIVER (*singing into microphone playing guitar*)

### GUITAR INTRODUCTION

Deep down in Louisiana, close to New Orleans,  
Back up in the woods, upon the Evergreens,  
There stood a log cabin, made of earth and wood,  
Where there lived a country boy named Johnny B. Goode,  
Who never ever learned to read or write so well,  
But he could play the guitar like he's ringing a bell. Go Go!  
Go Johnny Go Go Go!  
Go Johnny Go Go!  
Go Johnny Go Go!  
Go Johnny Go Go Go!  
Johnny B. Goode!

He used to carry his guitar in a gunny sack,  
Sat beneath the tree, by the railway track,  
Ol' engineer would see him sittin' in the shade,  
Strummin' with the rhythm that the drivers' made,  
People passing by they're gonna stop and say,  
Oh my, but that little country boy can play. Go Go!

Go Johnny Go Go Go!  
Go Johnny Go Go!  
Go Johnny Go Go!  
Go Johnny Go Go Go!  
Johnny B. Goode!

### GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

His mother told him some day you will be a man,  
You will be the leader of a big Ol' band,  
Many people comin' down from miles around,  
Hear you play your music when the sun goes down.  
Maybe some day your name will be in lights,  
Sayin' Johnny B. Goode tonight. Go Go!

Go Johnny Go! Go Go  
Go Johnny Go! Go Go  
Go Johnny Go! Go Go

Go Johnny Go! Go  
Johnny B. Goode!

*Rockin' Oliver really shows off with his guitar, doing the Chuck Berry duckwalk and jumps and moves. Dick pats John on the back and John smiles, thinking that Johnny B. Goode had been written and is being sung for him. When Oliver is finally finished, he gets an enormous standing ovation and even Dick and John cheer. The mayor then comes out and goes up to the microphone.*

MAYOR (*into microphone*)

Rockin' Oliver, we have a surprise for you. *He summons a lady holding a cake to come forward. The lady brings in a huge chocolate cake with thirteen burning candles and everyone sings "Happy Birthday" to Rockin' Oliver. Oliver is touched by this kind gesture.*

MAYOR AND CROWD

Happy Birthday to you!  
Happy Birthday to you!  
Happy Birthday Dear Rockin' Oliver!  
Happy Birthday to you!

MAYOR

It's Rockin' Oliver's birthday today. How old are you?

OLIVER

Thirteen, sir. (*He then blows out the candles*) I was born at the end of the war. I'm a teenager now!

MAYOR

This is just a thank you from the people of Midlands Town for coming to see us today.

OLIVER

Oh thank you! (*He is blushing, but deeply touched*). *The cake is then shared among the rock 'n roll group and guests, after the curtain closes. Exit Mayor. Exit Luke and spirits other than Dick and John. Later, Oliver goes over to Dick and John.*

DICK

Happy Birthday, Oliver!

JOHN

Yes, Happy Birthday, Oliver!

OLIVER

Thank you, spirits!

DICK

Oliver? What was that funny music? You certainly scared Sebastian and some of the others away with it!

OLIVER

Rock 'n roll. Today's music. My style is called rockabilly.

JOHN

Thanks for that Johnny song, Oliver. By the way, I am good. But why does it have to be so loud? (*he then pushes Dick angrily*) Quiet music indeed! It was so loud, it nearly blew me ears off!

DICK (*pointing at the amplifier*)

I didn't know Oliver had a magic box that could make it loud!

OLIVER

That's an amplifier and loud is the way people like it!

DICK

Rock 'n roll? What a strange idea naming some music after a stone and a lump of bread! Say Oliver? Do you get paid when you play that stuff?

OLIVER (*laughing*)

Oh yes!!!

JOHN

The fiddleman and the hurdy-gurdy lady got tuppence ha'penny for playing at Christmas in our time. I'm sure this Oliver gets more than that, things cost more now. He must get about a shilling.

DICK

He's very talented, more like half a crown, I'd say.

OLIVER (*starting to laugh*)

Oh , I get quite a bit more than that!

DICK

five shillings?

JOHN

Ten shillings?

OLIVER (*laughing*)

Keep going

DICK

Fifteen shillings?

OLIVER (*laughing out loud*)

More!

DICK (*in amazement*)

A pound!

JOHN

A guinea!

DICK

Any more than that and you must be very rich.

OLIVER (*after he calms down from laughing*)

Brace yourselves, spirits! I get two hundred pounds every time I perform. I make over a thousand pounds a week!

DICK AND JOHN (*shouting in total shock*)  
TWO HUNDRED POUNDS! OVER A THOUSAND A WEEK!

DICK  
That's a fortune! Just for one or two songs?

OLIVER  
And that's not counting royalties from my records, either.

JOHN  
Oh, he's just joking, nobody gets that much.

OLIVER  
Just look at my wallet! (*He then flashes hundreds of pounds in his wallet in front of the two spirits who look in total astonishment*)

JOHN  
You're right! Things have changed. In life, we never had two pennies to rub together. Did we Dick?

DICK  
No. You'll never have to worry about ending up in the workhouse, Oliver!

OLIVER (*proudly*)  
We don't have workhouses any more. Thanks to the great work of Oliver Twist, child labour's now against the law! People get money, help and kindness and all children go to school! And we don't send boys up to clean out chimneys any more, either! Anyway, I have a family!

DICK  
Well, where do they put orphans then?

OLIVER  
They have nice homes for them and they try to find parents for them.

DICK  
Cor, they're lucky! We were worked to death, fed worse than dogs and beaten!

JOHN  
I wish we could have some of that money you got, Oliver.

DICK  
What good would it do us? We're dead, remember?

JOHN (*embarrassed*)  
Oh yes. I forgot!

DAVID  
Hey Oliver, don't forget they have a big meal for all of us tonight, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding with roast potatoes and blackberry tart with fresh cream for afters! They've even got kosher food for me.

DICK (*Dick and John fall to their knees*)  
Oh please don't talk about food, you're torturing us!

JOHN

You are soooooo lucky, Oliver.

OLIVER

Sorry about that. I know all you had was gruel that was like boiled wallpaper paste. It must hurt you to hear about my dinner! Roast beef! Food, glorious food! Hmm, that would make a good song.

DICK

That's alright. Oliver, can you do us a favour, please?

OLIVER

What's that?

DICK

Get a vicar to come and bless our graves so we can go to heaven. We were buried in a hurry in unholy ground, so we can't get to heaven. You could do it for us.

OLIVER

Sure. I'd be glad to.

DICK AND JOHN

Oh thank you.

JOHN

It's like heaven right here with the way things are now! But I'd like to see my ma and pa again.

DICK

But we should go where we belong! Oliver, we're buried behind the ruin of the workhouse by the rubbish dump in a small plot with crosses but no names.

*Enter Wesley wearing Wellington boots and covered with mud.*

OLIVER

What happened?

WESLEY (*lying*)

I was playing football with some bigger boys and they pushed me into the mud.

OLIVER (*not believing Wesley*)

You play football in your Wellies, do you, Wesley?

*Oliver knows that his brother is lying. Wesley had been playing in the mud and got carried away.*

*Wesley just laughs.*

WESLEY

I'm making mud pies. Do you want to come and join me?

OLIVER

Not now. Well you had better get cleaned up before Mum sees you.

*Exit Wesley to go and get cleaned up. Oliver sees the church vicar*

OLIVER

Excuse me, vicar. May I see you after dinner, tonight? I have a favour to ask you.

VICAR

Yes, of course. I'll be at the dinner.

OLIVER

Could you bless some graves in back of the old workhouse please? Some friends of my ancestor, Oliver Twist.

VICAR

Yes, if you like. I'll drive you over after dinner.

OLIVER

Thank you, vicar.

VICAR

I bless this ground and those who are buried here in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Immediately, Dick and John's chains fall off. They are free at last.*

DICK AND JOHN (*very happily*)

Thank you Oliver and David, God bless you!

*The ghosts of Dick and John leave for heaven, knowing now that they will be able to enter. Rockin' Oliver returns to the hotel and is met by the mayor of the Midlands Town who thanks him for coming. Exit Dick and John.*

MAYOR

Rockin' Oliver. It's been a pleasure. Many happy returns.

OLIVER

Why thank you, sir.

MAYOR'S WIFE

Are you sure you want to keep singing that loud rock 'n roll? I heard it corrupts our youth and leads to impure thoughts. Couldn't you try some calmer music?

OLIVER

Well, Ma'am, I serve God, I sing and shout and make people happy. It's just the way I sing. It hasn't corrupted me. I still go to church every Sunday and I donate money to charity.

MAYOR

Well, Rockin' Oliver, thanks to you we raised a lot of money. We are just five thousand pounds short of having enough money to pull down the ruin of the old workhouse and build some new houses and shops to be called Midlands New Town.

OLIVER

Five thousand short, eh? Tell you what, I'll give you my two hundred pounds I get for singing and performing and I'll give you the other five thousand you need. I've got over a million in the bank and my Dad can write a cheque out for you. *Oliver turns to his Dad*

OLIVER

Dad, can you write a cheque for five thousand pounds on my personal account please, so they can pull down the workhouse?

PHILIP

If you say so. It's your money, son. Is it alright to just make the cheque out to the Midlands Town Treasury?

MAYOR

Oh yes. That will be fine. Thank you.

*Philip gladly fills a cheque out and gives it to the mayor on behalf of Oliver.*

OLIVER (*proudly*)

There you are, Mr. Mayor, from my personal bank account. Anything to take down that old workhouse in honour of my ancestor and his friends.

MAYOR

Oh thank you, Rockin' Oliver, you are so kind. We will name two of the streets in the new development as Oliver Twist Street and Brownlow Road. (*He then turns to his wife*) See dear, his music hasn't corrupted him!

*Enter Bill Fagin and Seth Sykes*

BILL FAGIN

Lovely show, Oliver! Well done. I'd like you to meet someone. This is my friend Seth Sykes. He's my business partner and keeps the books for me.

OLIVER

Oh. How do you do, Seth?

SETH

'Allo! I hear your Dad's been asking a lot of questions about the accounts.

OLIVER

I don't know anything about it. Ask him. All I know is that I've been getting my money and that there have been a lot of expenses.

SETH (*angry*)

Well, if he has a problem with it. He'd better see me. They aint nothing wrong with my set of books. If anyone accuses me of doing anything I'm not supposed to, I settle them. Do you understand?

OLIVER (*scared*)

Yes.

SETH

Just keep your old man's nose out of my business.

OLIVER

Of course.

BILL FAGIN

We had all better get back to London because we've got more shows to do. *Exit everyone.*

*Oliver gets into the car. Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters leave for the other side of London for Oliver's birthday party in South London with his family, his singing group and his friends. Rock 'n roll had received some fairly bad press from opponents, but it had not corrupted Rockin' Oliver who is still the innocent, kind and fun-loving boy he has always been. This is used as an example by promoters of rock 'n roll in Britain. Exit Everyone with Mayor, his wife and fans cheering as the cars pull away.*

#### **ACT TWO, SCENE 4**

**Fagin Records, Recording Studio, East End of London**

**February 1959**

*February 1959 is a time of tragedy for rock 'n roll as three great stars had died in a plane crash. The sudden deaths of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper in America had a profound effect on Rockin' Oliver and the Artful Bopper, who had become very close friends. Shortly after returning from performing in Paris, France, Rockin' Oliver meets the Artful Bopper at Fagin Records to record some songs. By now, Rockin' Oliver's career is at its peak, but the Artful Bopper is falling behind. Rock 'n roll, which has suffered some very bad press, is growing with popularity amongst young people and new bands are forming all the time. Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters and the Artful Bopper are getting ready to go on to record. Enter Oliver, Artful Bopper, Twisters Group, David, Charlie the Piano Player, other musicians, Bill Fagin, Philip Brownlow. The Artful Bopper then comes up to Rockin' Oliver.*

ARTFUL BOPPER

Say, Oliver, aint that awful about Buddy Holly and the others? Gettin' killed like that! February 3, 1959 was a sad day for rock 'n roll.

OLIVER

Yes. I have most of Buddy's records, it was a terrible thing.

ARTFUL BOPPER

Oliver, would you like to sing together?

OLIVER

Yes, sure.

ARTFUL BOPPER

Well, let's do a song and dedicate it to remembering Buddy, Ritchie and the Big Bopper.

*Rockin' Oliver and the Artful Bopper are about to do their first recording together.*

OLIVER

Good idea! In fact, I am looking for another voice for our group, a deep bass voice.

ARTFUL BOPPER

Well then, look no further. I can help you with that.

OLIVER

Great. But don't you have your own group?

ARTFUL BOPPER

No. I sing on me own, but I have the musicians here back me up. I can play rhythm guitar, but I can't play the fancy lead riffs that you can.

OLIVER

Hey, Perfect! You need a lead guitarist and I need a bass singer! Why don't we join up?

ARTFUL BOPPER

That'd be great!

*The Bopper knew that joining the Twisters meant that he could now share in Oliver's huge profits from his appearances and his records.*

OLIVER

Rockin' Oliver, the Artful Bopper and the Twisters would be an awfully long name. We'll just call ourselves the Twisters.

ARTFUL BOPPER

Oliver, why do you call your group the Twisters? Is it a gimmick on Oliver Twist?

OLIVER

Yes. I am descended from Oliver Twist, he was my great-great grandfather. I'm honouring him.

ARTFUL BOPPER

Why the Artful Dodger was my great-great grandfather!!

OLIVER

Hey that's perfect. Then we were meant to sing together. Is Bill Fagin descended from Bob Fagin, then?

ARTFUL BOPPER (*laughing*)

No, it's just a coincidence. There's far more money now in music than stealing!

OLIVER

Oohh Not half! So Artful Bopper, consider yourself one of us.

ARTFUL BOPPER

Thanks. (*He pauses*) Say that again, Oliver.

OLIVER

I said consider yourself one of us.

ARTFUL BOPPER

Hmmm, that's sounds really catchy. I have a friend down the east end who is a songwriter, I should mention that to him. You know, Oliver, it's fine for us to keep singing the hits of the day, but we really should start writing some of our own songs.

OLIVER

I haven't been able to do that yet, but if you have any ideas, I'd like to hear them.

BILL FAGIN (*interrupting Oliver and the Artful Bopper*)

Boys, time is pressing on, are we recording today?

OLIVER

Yes. We would like to sing together a song to remember Buddy Holly.

BILL FAGIN

Alright. *(Bill sets up a roll of recording tape)*

OLIVER *(singing into microphone and playing guitar)*

GUITAR INTRODUCTION

Well that'll be the day when you say goodbye,  
That'll be the day when you make me cry,  
You say you're gonna leave me, you know it's a lie,  
'Cause, that'll be the day when I die.

You give me all your lovin'  
And all your turtle-dovin'  
All your hugs and kisses, and your money too.  
You know you love me baby,  
Still you tell maybe,  
That some day, well, I'll be blue.  
Well that'll be the day when you say goodbye,

That'll be the day when you make me cry,  
You say you're gonna leave me, you know it's a lie,  
'Cause, that'll be the day when I die.

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

Well that'll be the day when you say goodbye,  
That'll be the day when you make me cry,  
You say you're gonna leave me, you know it's a lie,  
'Cause, that'll be the day when I die.

When Cupid shot his dart,  
He shot it at your heart,  
So if we ever part, then I'll leave you.  
You say you'll hold me, then you tell me boldly,  
That some day, well I'll be blue.

Well that'll be the day when you say goodbye,  
That'll be the day when you make me cry,  
You say you're gonna leave me,  
You know it's a lie,  
'Cause, that'll be the day when I die.

That'll be the day, Ooh-Ooh.  
That'll be the day, Ooh-Ooh.  
That'll be the day, Ooh-Ooh.  
That'll be the day.

*During this song, the spirits of Dick, John and Sebastian appear, wave to Oliver and sit down and enjoy the music. After the song is finished, Rockin' Oliver and the Artful Bopper shake hands. Oliver goes over to the spirits and signals for them to follow him outside. Enter Ghosts of Dick, John and Sebastian without chains.*

OLIVER

Hey what are you fellows doing back?

JOHN

We've got something wonderful to tell you.

DICK

We'll tell you at your house.

PHILIP

Oliver, wait outside for me. I would like to talk to Bill.

OLIVER

Alright, Dad! *Exit Everyone, except Philip, Bill and Seth*

BILL FAGIN

What can I do for you, Philip?

PHILIP

Well, for one thing, I would like to see the accounting books on Oliver's royalties.

BILL FAGIN

What for?

PHILIP

As I mentioned to you before, his record sales have gone sky high and yet his royalties have gone down. I just don't believe that the expenses have gone up that much. Something's wrong.

BILL FAGIN

Seth. Go get the books on Oliver's royalties, please.

SETH *(not sure if this is a good idea because they have things to hide)*

Is that really necessary, Bill?

BILL FAGIN *(he winks at Seth as if to signal something secretive)*

The books that are in the cupboard please.

SETH *(finally catching on)*

Oh Yeah. Right away, Governor. *(He goes and gets the books). Exit Seth.*

BILL FAGIN

I'm telling you, Phil. Don't worry. Everything's alright. Trust me.

PHILIP

That's just it. I don't.

BILL FAGIN

Come now, Phil. You've known me for three years. Have I ever steered you wrong?

PHILIP

What about that new car you just bought? A Rolls Royce! Where did you get the money for that?

BILL FAGIN

Business is good! I have plenty of contracts. Besides you and your misses got a new car from Oliver, and so did your housekeeper, Rose. What about the new bicycle for Oliver's brother, Wesley?

*Seth returns with the accounts book and shows it to Philip.*

SETH

Here you are. Everything's in order.

PHILIP (*he checks over the figures briefly*)

Mmmmmm! I see income, expenses, royalties paid. What's this trust fund?

BILL FAGIN

That's the money I've put aside for Oliver when he gets older. You'll get it when he turns twenty-one. By then, it will have earned lots of interest.

PHILIP

But he's only fourteen! He's got years to go before he sees any of that money. Where are the deposit statements for the trust fund? Why are they not with the books?

SETH

What are you implying?

PHILIP

Nothing. I just want to see proof that everything's in order.

SETH

Are you saying that you don't trust me.

PHILIP

You've got that right. I don't. There are no receipts, no deposit slips and we never got any statements.

SETH (*getting very angry*)

Who the hell are you coming in here and questioning my accounts. Are you the boy's manager or something?

PHILIP

As a matter of fact, I am.

SETH

Are you implying that I run a crooked business here!

PHILIP

Well, it looks that way, and I just want proof that it isn't.

BIILFAGIN

I'll show you the receipts tomorrow, Phil. I'm still going through them at the moment.

PHILIP

Well, they had better be ready. *Exit Philip. Enter Mary from 'The '2 i's''*

MARY

What's all the row about?

SETH

Mary, my love, how are you?

MARY

Don't you love me! Who have you been crooking then?

BILL FAGIN

Come now, Mary. We must have civil words. We are just having a bit of difficulty with one of the clients who wants to see the books, that's all.

MARY

Catching on, is he? I told you that one day you'd get into trouble.

SETH (*furious*)

If he accuses me of anything, I'll break every bone in that boy's body. He'll never sing again because he'll be six feet underground. (*Bill is signalling to Seth to be quiet, but he ignores it*). After that, I'll put his manager there! I won't have no snotty-nosed toff of a manager accusing me of being crooked!

MARY (*very angry*)

That kind of talk will get you hung. That's a fact!

BILL FAGIN

I do apologise, Mary, my dear. My partner doesn't know what he's saying. Be quiet, Seth!  
*Mary leaves in disgust. Exit Mary*

BILL FAGIN

For Gawd's sake, Seth! Watch what you're saying about people. That man who was here earlier was the boy's father as well as his manager.

SETH (*lighting a cigarette*)

Blimey, Bill. You could have told me that he was his bloomin' father as well. We've got to do something about him. If he finds out that there's no trust fund and that you spent most of the royalty money on our new cars, your new house, holidays in the south of France and bribing radio stations to play his records, we're up the river.

BILL FAGIN

He won't find out. Trust me. I have a second set of books and a set of false receipts put away just in case the auditors show up.

SETH

Well, that geezer's sniffing around and I don't like it. Something's got to be done about it!

BILL FAGIN

Seth Sykes, don't worry. Just keep calm and if anything goes wrong, we will sit down and decide on a proper course of action.

SETH

While your keeping calm, I'll be out of the country, mate. You got us into this little lot, you can get us out of it. I don't care how you do it, just get that toff off our backs, will you?

*Exit Bill and Seth*

## **ACT TWO, SCENE 5**

**The Brownlow Home, Kent**

**February 1959**

*The recording session is finished, so the Twisters leave for home. Rockin' Oliver returns to the Brownlow home in South London, and the three little spirits follow him. Wesley is returning from his football game and is still dressed in his football uniform, complete with cleated boots. He is all excited. Meanwhile the spirits meet up with Wesley in Foxwood Park as he is coming home. Enter Ghosts of Dick, John, Sebastian, enter Wesley.*

WESLEY (*not in the least bit afraid and he is very interested in the spirits*)

Who are you?

DICK

We're the spirits of Oliver Twist's best friends from the workhouse. I was Dick and these were John and Sebastian. Who are you?

WESLEY

I'm Wesley Brownlow.

JOHN

Oh you're Oliver Brownlow's brother and Oliver Twist's other great-great grandson.

WESLEY

Yes, that's right. You've met my brother, then?

DICK

We met him when he was in Midlands Town last year.

WESLEY

He never told me about that. What a cheek not telling me about it!

DICK

What do you like to do, Wesley?

WESLEY

I like football.

DICK

Oh football! A great game! And your brother plays an instrument.

WESLEY

Yes. When he's practising, he likes to jam to Chuck Berry with his Stratocaster.

*Dick, John and Sebastian looked at each other in puzzlement*

DICK

Your brother likes to make jam by chucking berries with his sugarcaster?!

JOHN

What does he make? Strawberry or raspberry jam?

WESLEY (*laughing*)

No! No! No! Oliver likes to play his guitar to a record of songs by a man named Chuck Berry, he's Oliver's favourite singer and guitar player.

JOHN (*turning to Dick*)

See, I was right. I told you a sugarcaster was a kind of guitar.

WESLEY (*laughing very loudly*)

It's Stratocaster, not sugarcaster!

DICK

Then why did you say he makes jam?

WESLEY

No, he doesn't make jam. To jam means to play something. My mother makes the kind of jam you eat, and marmalade, too.

DICK

Oh, you mean all that talk about jam was just twentieth century small talk?

WESLEY

That's right. It's called hipster talk.

SEBASTIAN

So you jam football, do you?

WESLEY (*beginning to laugh again*)

I play football. Jamming is just for music.

DICK

Oh, we'll never get used to these modern gadgets and the way people talk nowadays!

*After they all arrive at the Brownlow house, and have gone inside, the three spirits are looking at the portrait of Oliver Twist on the wall and are giggling at it in remembrance. They are also in awe about the beautiful Brownlow home. Oliver comes in without his guitar. He had dropped it off at Mr. Jessop's music shop to be fixed. He had been playing it quite heavily and it needed some repairs. Enter Oliver.*

WESLEY

Hey Oliver! I won my match and I made it on to the school team for my age group!

OLIVER

Well done, Wesley. You could be a professional player some day. They make as much money as I do!

WESLEY (*referring to the three spirits*)

Look who's here.

OLIVER

I see them. What are you doing back? I thought I helped you get to heaven? Were you rejected again?

DICK

No! no! We all made it in, even John, after stealing them buns to feed us.

OLIVER

John stole some buns?

JOHN

The people in heaven said it was alright because I had said forgive me and because we were starving and I gave the buns to some of the other boys.

DICK

We've been sent back on a mission.

JOHN (*excited*)

Tell him, Dick.

DICK

You see, Oliver, three rock 'n roll singers died and came into heaven a few days ago. One of them had spectacles, another was a big fat man and the other was a young boy not much older than you. They all spoke foreign sounding. Americans, I think.

OLIVER (*interrupting Dick*)

That would be Buddy Holly, the Big Bopper and Ritchie Valens.

DICK

I talked to them and the one with the spectacles said he knew of you and had heard your music.

OLIVER

Yes, I met Buddy Holly backstage when he played at the London Palladium last year.

DICK

Well, he said that you need extra protection so that you won't die young like them, or us, so spirits would be sent to help your guardian angels take care of you.

OLIVER (*getting interested*)

Really?

DICK

Well, I've been sent to help protect you.

JOHN

And I've been sent to help protect little Wesley, who will be a great footballer some day.

OLIVER

Hey, that's great!! Did you run into Mr. Bumble in heaven?

DICK

No. He didn't go to heaven.

OLIVER (*knowing the answer*)

Where did he go then?

*The three spirits point down toward the ground, meaning only one thing.*

JOHN

He got what he deserved.

DICK (*excited*)

We did meet Oliver Twist in heaven. He was a very old man, content and happy. He turned himself back into a little boy so we could recognise him!

OLIVER

Was he pleased to see you again?

DICK

Oh Yes! He remembered us. He said he was very proud of you too.

*This meant a lot to Oliver*

OLIVER

If you're talking to him again, tell him that Wesley and I are very proud to be his great-great grandsons.

DICK

We'll do that! Now somebody has something to say to you. (*Dick then grabs Sebastian and pushes him towards Oliver*).

JOHN

Go on up and say it. Go on!

DICK

Yes, go on, Sebastian.

*Sebastian walks slowly up to Oliver, deeply embarrassed.*

DICK AND JOHN (*shouting*)

GO ON!! *These were the same words they had used to encourage Oliver Twist to go up and ask for more.*

SEBASTIAN

Oliver, I wanted to say I'm sorry. I'm very sorry for blaming your great-great grandfather for my death and taking it out on you and trying to scare you, like I did. It was Mr. Bumble who killed us, not Oliver Twist, who was only trying to help us.

JOHN

It was Mr. Gamfield, the master sweep, who killed you.

SEBASTIAN

Yes, well, Oliver, please forgive me. I won't haunt or scare you.

OLIVER

Well I owe you an apology too. I'm sorry for turning the music up so loud and scaring you.

DICK (*giggling*)

You must admit, it was funny.

OLIVER

Let's be friends.

SEBASTIAN

Alright. *Sebastian is just relieved that Oliver would not scare him again with the loud music.* By the way, I've been sent to look after the Artful Bopper.

OLIVER

He's joined my group, so we can all be together.

JOHN

We'll all be friends.

DICK

Let's celebrate it with a song.

JOHN

How 'bout that Johnny be a good boy song?

DICK

(*to John*) You've certainly changed your mind about rock 'n roll since you heard a song with your name in it! (*to Oliver*) Is there a song with my name in it?

OLIVER

No Dick. And, John, that song is Johnny B. Goode, it's a name.

DICK

Well, Dick is short for Richard Is there a Richard song?

OLIVER

Still no song I know of, but there's a singer named Little Richard.

DICK (*happy*)

Oh!

JOHN (*impatiently*)

Anyway, how 'bout the Johnny song?

OLIVER

I can't. My guitar is at Mr. Jessop's being fixed, it needs new strings and some new plugs.

WESLEY

What about your old one?

OLIVER

I sold it a while ago.

WESLEY

Alright, what about the Spanish guitar?

OLIVER

It doesn't sound right on that thing.

JOHN (*disappointed*)

Oh well, never mind then.

*Enter Philip (he can not see or hear the spirits)*

OLIVER

Hey Dad, do you remember when we were in Midlands Town last summer, the mayor said that they were going to pull down the remains of the workhouse and build houses and shops and that two streets would be named after Oliver Twist and our family? Is it all done now?

PHILIP

Well, Oliver, I was talking with the mayor of Midlands Town a few days ago and I'm afraid things didn't quite go as planned. They got the workhouse down alright, in fact it fell down when they started demolishing it. Then something went wrong and the developer pulled out of the project.

OLIVER

So, what happened?

PHILIP

The new town was never built, so the workhouse site was levelled and turned into a big municipal car park instead.

*Oliver just laughs. At that moment, there is a knock at the door. A boy from Mr. Jessop's music shop is returning Oliver's guitar, all repaired. Rose answers the door and presents Oliver with his guitar, which he treats like a long lost friend. Oliver gives the delivery boy an autographed photo of himself. Exit Philip.*

WESLEY

Hey Oliver! you got your guitar back!

OLIVER

Let's go upstairs and I can play it. There's a song I'm going to try.

*Meanwhile, the three spirits, who were now all best buddies, are gazing at the Brownlow home.*

DICK

What a beautiful house you have, Oliver.

OLIVER

Yes, but the house Oliver Twist came to live in, number 26 Bloomsbury Square up in London is even nicer. Our family moved down here to South London just before I was born.

SEBASTIAN

Cor, he was very lucky!

OLIVER

Hey fellows! Your workhouse is gone. They've pulled it down.

*The three spirits cheer wildly with excitement as they are happy to hear it.*

OLIVER

Let's celebrate it with a song. Come on, let's go upstairs. *The two boys and the three spirits go up to the attic. In the attic, Philip had built a complete soundproof music studio for Oliver. It contained all the instruments that the Twisters used: a big drum set, a piano, a saxophone, a bass guitar and, of course, amplifiers for Oliver's lead guitar as well as the bass.*

OLIVER

This is the music studio my Dad built for us. It's completely soundproof!

JOHN

What's that mean?

OLIVER

It means that we can make as much noise as we like and they can't hear us downstairs.

SEBASTIAN

Gosh! the inventions you have today are amazing.

DICK

You are so lucky Oliver, you live in a wonderful time, where everybody's happy! You have even made us happy for the first time ever! We just might let your father see us, he is very kind and good!

OLIVER (*proudly*)

Remember, my Dad is descended from Oliver Twist, and our great time is the new Elizabethan age. Our prime minister, Mr. Harold MacMillan, said that we've never had it so good.

DICK

He's certainly right about that! You told us that you get paid two hundred pounds for singing. Imagine making lots of money just for singing or playing a game!

OLIVER (*proudly*)

That's right, and Tommy Steele, a poor east end boy, now a rock 'n roll singer, gets more, he gets five hundred pounds! There's no more poverty now like there was back in the 1800's when you were alive.

DICK

What an age these 1950's are!

OLIVER

They're almost over. This is 1959. I wonder what new and exciting things the sixties will hold for us.

JOHN (*turning to Dick*)  
Don't tell him what we know.

*Charlie, David, the Artful Bopper and the other Twisters then arrive at the front door and Rose lets them in. They go straight upstairs to the sound studio in the attic and meet Oliver and Wesley.*

DAVID (*taking his seat at the drums*)  
Oh you got your guitar back.

OLIVER  
Yes, it came a few minutes ago.

CHARLIE  
Let's rock then.

ARTFUL BOPPER  
I know a good song we should do. Critics of rock 'n roll are saying that the music will soon fade out or die after this plane crash tragedy. Let's do a song that shows they're wrong. How 'bout that new Cliff Richard number "Move It"?

OLIVER  
Great I love that song! You sing lead and I'll back you up and do the riffs.

ARTFUL BOPPER AND OLIVER (*singing into microphone and playing guitars. Oliver plays guitar solos*)

#### GUITAR INTRODUCTION

Come on pretty baby, let's move it and a-groove it.  
Shake it baby, shake it baby, please don't lose it.  
The rhythm that gets into your heart and soul,  
Let me tell you baby, it's called rock 'n roll.  
They say it's gonna die, but honey please let's face it,  
They just don't know what's going to replace it.  
Ballads and calypso have nothing on  
Real country music that just drives along!  
Well move it!

#### GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

Come on pretty baby, let's move it and a-groove it.  
Shake it baby, shake it baby, please don't lose it.  
The rhythm that gets into your heart and soul,  
Let me tell you baby, it's called rock 'n roll.  
They say it's gonna die, but honey please let's face it,  
They just don't know what's going to replace it.  
Ballads and calypso have nothing on,  
Real country music that just drives along!  
Yeah Move it! Yeah Move it! Yeah Move it! Yeah Move it!

*Wesley sits with the spirits, who all enjoy the music. Wesley gets a camera and takes a picture of the spirits, scaring them with the flash. When the song is over, the three spirits leave.*

JOHN

We can't tell Oliver what we know. We can't tell him that in heaven they told us what will happen in the future. That Oliver is a boy of the fifties and his music will go down in the 1960's and four boys from Liverpool will soon take over.

SEBASTIAN

Yes, but it will be Wesley's turn for fame and fortune as he will rise to become a great football player. And it's your job to look after him, Johnny.

JOHN

And Wesley will make as much money with his football as Oliver did with his music.

DICK

Our job is to take care of them no matter what we know and no matter what happens.

DICK, JOHN AND SEBASTIAN

Right!

*The three spirits agree as they leave together. The 1950's are drawing to a close and great changes are to come in the 1960's for both Oliver and Wesley. Exit Dick, John and Sebastian.*

*Enter Mary from the '2 i's' coffee bar*

JEAN

Oliver. Do you remember Mary from the coffee bar.

OLIVER

Oh yes. Hello, Mary. Gosh I met you about three years ago.

MARY

You've grown some since then.

PJILIP

She's got something to tell you.

MARY

It's about Bill Fagin. You must get away from him.

OLIVER

Why?

MARY

He's not to be trusted. My boyfriend Todd recorded with him once and he bribed a radio station to play the record. Then Todd never saw any money from it. I'm sorry, Oliver, but I think he is doing that to you. Your Dad says that your royalties have been getting smaller when your records sales have gone through the roof. I mean, that's not right!

OLIVER  
What? Payola!

MARY  
Yes, that's right. And that Seth is awful too.

PHILIP  
I never liked him.

MARY  
Oliver, I heard him say that if your Dad questions his books again, he'll kill both of you. He means it.

OLIVER  
Someone else tried to warn me. I just can't believe it. I don't believe a word of it. You are all just jealous of my success. Bill would never do me wrong. He's my friend. My cheques have got smaller because of expenses of all the tours, that's all.

*Oliver stomps out of the room in a bad temper. Exit Oliver.*

PHILIP  
Thank you for telling us this, Mary. I think it's time that we went to the police.

MARY  
That boy's in for a big let down.

**ACT TWO, SCENE 6**  
**Palace Hotel, Brighton, Sussex, by the Seaside**  
**Summer 1960**

*The 1960's have dawned and Rockin' Oliver is now a teenager with a beautiful girlfriend. A new dance craze has suddenly hit and rock 'n roll is beginning to change and take on new characteristics. It is moving away from its rockabilly roots, which Oliver discovered back in 1956. The Twist is a hot dance that everyone is doing and Rockin' Oliver thinks that it has the perfect name for his performances. "Rockin' Oliver does the Twist" is a great slogan that would keep him popular. Though, by now, there is very stiff competition in the music world, especially blowing down from the north from cities such as Liverpool. In the summer of 1960, the Brownlows spend a weekend in Brighton, on the south coast, while Oliver, now aged fourteen, performs at a beach twistin' party. Oliver has now bought a regular adult size Fender Stratocaster electric guitar, as his child size one, the one he had played since 1957, is now too small. Enter fifteen year old Oliver, thirteen year old Wesley, Artful Bopper, David, Twisters Group, Philip, Jean, Rose, fourteen year old Elizabeth, Bill Fagin, Seth Sykes, Announcer, Audience, Dancers, Crowd.*

ANNOUNCER (*coming out on the stage and into microphone*)  
Here he is with the new dance craze of the sixties, Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters!

*Rockin' Oliver comes out on to the stage to a huge cheer.*

OLIVER (*shouting into the microphone*)  
Let's twist!

*He sings and strums his guitar. The children and teenagers on the beach are all dancing the Twist as Rockin' Oliver sings.*

OLIVER (*singing into microphone and playing guitar*)

Come on, baby, let's do the twist.

Come on, baby, let's do the twist.

Take me by my little hand, And go like this.

Yeah twist, baby twist, Yeah, just like this,

Come on little miss, And do the twist.

Daddy is sleeping, And Mama aint around.

Daddy's just sleeping, And Mama aint around.

We're gonna twistin', twistin, twistin', Till we tear the house down.

Come on and twist, yeah baby twist,

Yeah, just like this, Come on little miss,

And do the twist. Yeah!

SAXOPHONE INSTRUMENTAL

Yeah! You should see my little sis,

You should see my little sis,

She really knows how to rock, She knows how to twist.

Come on and twist, yeah baby twist, Yeah, just like this,

Come on little miss, And do the twist. Yeah!

That's alright! Yeah! Twist all night! Twist!

*The group receives a great cheer at the end of the performance.*

*After the performance, a police detective inspector from Scotland Yard, accompanied by two uniformed policemen, is there.*

D.I. CLOUSTON

Mr. Bill Fagin and Mr. Seth Sykes?

BILL FAGIN

Yes

D.I. CLOUSTON (*he shows his badge*)

I'm Detective Inspector Jeremy Clouston, Scotland Yard. You are both under arrest for fraud and embezzlement and threatening the life of someone. Anything you say may be used against you in a court of law . You have the right to retain counsel. (*He handcuffs Bill and Seth*)

BILL FAGIN

Is was all Seth's fault. He kept the books

SETH

Shut up, Bill. We're both going down for this.

OLIVER

Wait a minute. What's going on here?

D.I. CLOUSTON

These two gentlemen, if I may use the term, have been stealing from business funds that belong to other people. They have been bribing radio stations and their records show non-existent trust funds, which they have spent on themselves lavishly. I'm sorry Oliver, but the most money was taken from you. They kept two sets of books. One was kept in the cupboard, which was what you saw, and the other was kept in a vault. The one in the vault was the real set of books which auditors saw. When things didn't add up, we were called in.

OLIVER

Oh my God!

PHILIP

People tried to warn you, son, but you wouldn't believe it.

OLIVER (*getting angry*)

Bill, how could you? I trusted you.

BILL FAGIN

That's business, Oliver. I did make you a star.

OLIVER

By crooked means.

D.I. CLOUSTON

Not entirely. He used payola to get you on to Radio Luxembourg initially, but you have been such a hit, that your success was your own doing since then. Bill and Seth have been milking your account since then. However, there's quite a bit left over which the courts have frozen and you will be getting it in due course (*he turns to Bill and Seth*) Come on you two, you'll get at least twenty years for this.

*Exit D.I. Clouston, Bill and Seth*

ARTFUL BOPPER

Bill, you bleedin' crook! I'll bet you took from me too. I'm sorry I ever introduced Oliver to you.

OLIVER

Yes, but it made me famous. I'll always be grateful for that.

ARTFUL BOPPER

Let's do a song tonight to honour Bill and Seth appropriately.

OLIVER

Yes, and I know just the one!

OLIVER AND ARTFUL BOPPER (*singing into microphone and playing guitars*)

GUITAR INTRODUCTION

The warden threw a party in the county jail  
The prison band was there and they began to wail  
The band was jumpin' and the joint began to swing  
You should've heard them knocked out jailbirds sing

Let's rock, everybody, let's rock  
Everybody in the whole cell block  
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

Spider Murphy played the tenor saxophone  
Little Joe was blowin' on the slide trombone  
The drummer boy from Illinois went crash, boom, bang  
The whole rhythm section was the Purple Gang

Let's rock, everybody, let's rock  
Everybody in the whole cell block  
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

#### GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

Number forty-seven said to number three  
Well you're the cutest jailbird I ever did see  
I sure would be delighted with your company  
Come on and do the Jailhouse Rock with me

Let's rock, everybody, let's rock  
Everybody in the whole cell block  
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

Sad sack was sittin' on a block of stone  
Way over in the comer weepin' all alone  
The warden said, Hey, buddy, don't you be no square  
If you can't find a partner use a wooden chair

Let's rock, everybody, let's rock  
Everybody in the whole cell block  
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

Shifty Henry said to Bugs, For Heaven's sake  
No one's lookin', now's our chance to make a break  
Bugsy turned to Shifty and he said, Nix nix  
I wanna stick around a while and get my kicks  
Let's rock, everybody, let's rock  
Everybody in the whole cell block  
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock  
Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock  
Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

*Exit Everyone.*

**THE END**



