

Make Do and Mend

A Play by Mark Atkinson

(additional material by Maria Stegenwalner)

Music by Jan Holdstock

There's a general cast of men, women and children, dressed in 1930/40s clothing appropriate to different scenes. The singing is mostly unison or in groups. 'I'll be leaving' has opportunities for solos, pairs and small group singing

Scene 1

(The stage is dark. Enter Collette. She is picked out by a spotlight. She is carrying and a large book – a diary. She is dressed for the beach. Arranged in a tableau of a picnic, are Mum, Dad and David, also dressed for the beach. Various characters set a 1940's beach scene, with bucket and spade, beach ball, ice creams, etc. A Stop Me and Buy One Man is onstage. Around the back, on stage blocks, in 1940s costume, grouped as families, are the chorus.

Collette: It is the summer of 1939. On the mainland and in Europe there is talk of war – but in Jersey our life continues as usual here on our lovely holiday island. My family is enjoying a Sunday afternoon at the beach

(The beach tableau now comes to life.)

My Mum's name is Mary. She is caring and hardworking, and only ever gets angry if you run muddy footprints through the kitchen. She used to be a nurse at the hospital with my Auntie Jean – she gave that up once she got married and had my brother – David. David's older than me, and he's full of mischief – I get in tons of trouble when we play together. He can be really bad tempered and grouchy, but he always has time for his sister. My Dad is called John. He's a mechanic, and very clever with his hands. And me? My name is Collette. I am eleven years old, and I would like to be a writer when I grow up. We all live here, on the beautiful island of Jersey – and this is our story.

SONG: FUN IN THE SUN

(At the end of the song the cast, apart from the family, go back to join the choir. The family remain in position.)

Collette: What a wonderful day! I'm going to write all about it in my diary!

David: You and that diary! You've always got your nose stuck in it. Come and play cricket.

Mum: Leave her alone, David, she'll come and play later. Go and buy us some ice-creams.

David: Ooh, good. Dad...? Can I have some money for ice-creams, please?

Father: Oh, I suppose so. Here's a shilling. Get four thrupenny cones.

(David goes to the Stop Me and Buy One Man.)

Mother: *(away from the children)* John, I'm worried about what the papers are saying. If there's a war in Europe with the Germans, will we get dragged into it again? I know it all seems a long way away, but Jersey is so much closer to France than England is.

Father: Oh Mother, don't worry so much. Look around you. Half the people on the beach have come over from England. You don't think they'd have come if there was any danger, do you? Anyway, why would the Germans bother with us? We don't have anything they want.

Mother: I know. You know what I'm like, though, I can't help wondering what might happen to us if there's another war.

SONG: WE'RE JUST AN ORDINARY FAMILY

Scene 2

Collette: A year has gone past, and what a year it has been. That carefree summer's day seems a long time ago – things have changed, and not for the better. In September 1939, Britain declared war on Germany, and at first it all seemed a long, long way away. But recently, the fighting has been getting closer to us. The Germans have been bombing northern France, and we can see smoke rising from the French coast. Everyone is very worried that we are next, and that the Germans are going to bomb us. The English government sent troops to set up defences and protect us. They started digging trenches and gun emplacements, but only three days after they arrived...

(Mother is sitting at the kitchen table, as Collette sits at the table and starts to write.

David and Father enter. David is very excited, Father is carrying a copy of the JEP.)

David: Mum! Collette! Have you heard the news? The British soldiers are leaving!

Mother: Leaving?! How can they be leaving, David? They've only just got here. They're not going to leave us with the Germans so close.

Father: It's true, dear, I'm afraid. It says it here: *(reads from headline of JEP)* 'For strategic reasons it has been found necessary to withdraw the armed forces from the Channel Islands.'

Mother: Why did they bother coming in the first place? Strategic reasons! What about us? What about the people of Jersey?

Father: Wait, Mother! Here is a message from the King himself. *(Continues reading)* 'I know that my people in the islands will look forward with the same confidence as I do, to the day when the resolute fortitude with which we face our present difficulties, will reap the reward of victory.'

Collette: What does that mean, Dad?

Father: The King is saying that there are some tough times coming, and we must all be brave, my love... brave and patient, until there is peace again. There's more here. It seems that everyone will be given the chance to leave the island if they want to. They're going to send ships to take anyone who wants to go to England.

David: Cor, let's go, Dad! I can join the army if I'm in England, and go and fight!

Father: Hold your horses, David – you are too young to fight.

David: Yeah, but Jack at school told me that when the Germans come here they'll cut off our fingers so that we can't fire a gun!

Mother: That's enough! You're frightening your sister! It's not that easy. We have lots to think about. Who will look after Auntie Maud? She's too old to go traipsing off to England, and besides, she'll never leave that house for the Germans to take over. If your father leaves, who will service the farm machinery for the harvest? We will decide together what we are going to do.

SONG: WE'RE JUST AN ORDINARY FAMILY – full song.

(The family act out a discussion during the song.)

Father: That's settled then, we shall stay. I wonder what the other families have decided.

(Knock on the door)

Collette: I'll go.

Mrs G: Hello, dear. Is your mother in? Oh, hello Mary. I wonder, could I ask you to take Glinda and Dorothy.

Mother: Oh, you're leaving, then.

Mrs G: Yes, Mary. Bob's sister lives in Yorkshire. She can put us all up, and we can help on the farm.

Father: Who are Glinda and Dorothy?

Mother: Chickens, John. And yes, we'll take them, Betty.

Collette: I can't believe you're going.

Millie: I can't believe you're staying. I can only take a few things with me, Mum said to give you my summer dresses, and I wondered if you'd like this doll – I can only take one.

Collette: Thanks, Millie – I don't know what it's going to be like without you.

Millie: I wish you were coming, too.

SONG: Leaving in the morning

(Choir stand in a long line, in a circle, as if queuing for the boat.

As each group sings their solo line, the group moves forward.

When they've sung, and reached their seats again they sit down until there's no-one left.

Mr and Mrs G and Millie are last and Collette waves them off)

Scene 3

(The family is at the table. Collette is not there)

David: Mum? Have you heard the rumours? They're saying the island is going to be bombed to bits. I wish we had evacuated when we had the chance.

Mother: David, just stop repeating such nonsense. The Germans haven't any reason to bomb us, now that the English soldiers have left. Don't start talking about this in front of Collette – you'll scare her to death.

Father: Yes, pay attention to your mother, David. It's bad enough waiting to see what those damned Jerries are going to do, without you making up wild stories about them.

David: Yes, but that's what Peter Harris said at school. His dad said that he saw two German planes flying over the Harbour yesterday.

Mother: I've never heard such rubbish. Why would the Germans be interested in lorry loads of potatoes? I was only saying to your father yesterday.....

(She is interrupted by the sound of planes and bombardment. David hides under the table.)

The sound stops, David comes out, Collette comes running in, excited and dishevelled.)

Mother: Oh, dear God, Collette! Are you all right? What happened? What was that noise? Are the Germans bombing?

Collette: I'm fine, Mum, I'm fine, but I was very frightened, and I've lost my bike!

Mother: Come and sit down. What happened?

Collette: Well, I was just riding down the road when I heard an enormous bang, and I was covered by dirty, black smoke. I was thrown off my bike and I hurt my knee. Everything was dark and all I could hear was the sound of machine guns. It was horrible! When the smoke cleared I could see bullet marks in the wall next to me. My legs felt all wobbly and my fingers were numb...

David: Huh! *(Coming out from under the table)* I wouldn't have been scared.

Father: Be quiet, David, and listen. Go on, Collette.

Collette: Well, I picked up my bike and I was going to ride back home as quick as I could, but Mum...! A bullet had gone through my back wheel. I had to leave my bike against the wall and run back. Oh Mum, I'm scared.

Father: *(Hugging Mother and Collette)* Don't worry, we'll be all right.

David: Will we?

(As the lights dim, a German officer enters and stands in a spotlight, with his arms folded.)

Scene 4

Collette: Well. If I thought I had a scare, it was nothing compared to my Auntie Jean. She's a nursing sister at the hospital and she was in charge of Casualty when the Germans finally landed at the harbour...

(Enter Auntie Jean – in a nurse's uniform and all-of-a-fluster)

Auntie Jean: I need a sit down, Mary. And a sherry, if you have some. I don't think I have ever shaken so much in my whole life.

Mother: Jean! What's going on?

Aunty Jean: I was tidying up the Casualty before my shift ended, and they just walked in. Bold as brass. With guns and everything. Six of them with the funny tin hats and four more with caps on.

David: What? Actual Germans?

Aunty Jean; Yes, young man. Actual Germans.

David: But what did they want with you?

Aunty Jean: I'm getting to that. (*Mum gives Aunty Jean a sherry – which she knocks back quickly and holds out the glass for a top up – Mary obliges.*) They had this young lad with them – can't have been more than 18 years old – in his uniform – shaking like a leaf. And then they started speaking at me in German and waving their hands around. I didn't know what they wanted and thought I was about to pass out with fright. Eventually, one of them tries some English, and we work out that the youth has a problem with his ears and they want syringing.

David: You had to help a Jerry? I'd have poked a hole in his ear!

Mother: Not helpful, David.

Aunty Jean: I can assure you that you would not have, David – not with armed men with their hands on their guns. They were convinced that I was going to hurt him, and I was convinced that they were going to hurt me! I syringed his ear, but I was shaking so hard I'm surprised I didn't give him brain damage.

Collette: Would they have shot you if you'd hurt him?

Aunty Jean: I have no idea, but I'm glad I didn't have to find that out. I think our lives are going to be very different for a long time.

Scene 5

(Enter Collette with her diary.)

Collette: The Germans have been in the island for 2 years now, and we are all beginning to get used to our lives under their rule. We have papers, identification cards and ration books and curfews. Having to mind what we say in front of other people. Nothing new in the shops. Threadbare clothes, worn out shoes. Gone are the happy-go-lucky days that we all knew before the war. Our lives now are one long round of drudgery and making do and mending.

SONG: MAKE DO AND MEND.

(The verses are acted out.)

Scene 6

(Collette centre stage)

Collette: It's really strange not being able to meet up with friends whenever you like. Lots of groups have been banned from meeting. Anything that the Germans think might be too patriotic and British. Dad can still go and help build the set for the variety show at the Opera House – which the Germans keep a close eye on – but they've banned

the Scouts and the Girl Guides! We're not giving up – girls can be just as sneaky as boys can. We're regular Nancy Drews – we're the undercover detectives of the town, we know who is in need and we help where we can. We hide our badges under our collars.

(Meets with Imogen and head upstage. Light focuses on Mrs Le Roux's house)

Mrs Le Roux Come on in, you two. The others are already here!

Imogen Hello Jenny, hello Jo-Jo.

J+J Hello!

Jenny How are you?

Imogen Fine thanks. What about you both.

Jo-Jo Full of news to share and ways that we can be helpful.

Jenny Have you seen Flo'?

Collette I think she was right behind us.

(Enter Flo and Sally)

Mrs Le Roux *(calling the meeting to order)* Girls! It's good to see you all safe and well. No-one saw you? *(They shake their heads. Jenny and Jo-Jo take out the flag from under Mrs Le Roux's seat cushion where it is neatly wrapped. They unwrap it and the girls stand to attention.)*

All: On my honour, I promise that I will do my best: to do my duty to God and the King; to help other people at all times; to obey the Guide Law. *(All sit in a semi-circle on the floor)*

Mrs Le Roux Right girls, what have you been able to find?

Sally *(Looking in her bag)* My mum has sent some socks for Mr Plant – who sees him?

Imogen Ooh! I do! *(Takes the socks)*

Florence I've made a doll for Bonnie – can you give that to her, Collette?

Collette *(taking doll)* Of course.

Jo-Jo We haven't had any luck with finding a cough mixture for Mrs Delacourt.

Jenny Mum suggested we mash up some snails and put them through a sieve – but I'm really not doing that.

Mrs Le Roux Well, thanks for trying. Have you heard of any other islanders in need of our help?

Jenny Well. Mrs Stevens has just had a baby, and although she does have some clothes, she's really short on anything she can use for nappies.

Imogen And my brother has gone through the soles of his shoes again, and we can't find any rubber for new soles.

Jo-Jo My dad says we all need to be careful around Mr and Mrs Speed. They've got loose lips, he says.

Sally What does that mean?

Florence It means they can't keep a secret and they'll dob you in to the Germans. Has anyone got ANY books I haven't read yet?

All *(exasperated)* No!

Mrs Le Roux Very well, everyone. Keep finding ways of being useful to people, and loyal to the King. And sad as it is to hear it, be careful what you say and who you trust. Not everyone is as faithful as we are. *(Leave in twos in different directions)*

Scene 7

Collette: It is very frightening to live under German rule. All the new rules and regulations. In the latest one, Herr Hitler has demanded that everyone who was born on the mainland is to be taken away to camps in Germany. They have all been told what they can pack and what they have to leave behind. They've only had a few days' notice. It's very worrying, because we don't know what their lives will be like in Germany and they will be seen as enemies of the German state.

Dad and his friend Dr Le Sueur went down to the harbour to see Mr and Mrs Jones and their two boys off. They were gone ages...

Mother: *(worried)* Where are they?

Mrs Le Sueur: They had better not have ended up on the boats themselves. It's been hours!

David: The boats have all left, Mum. We saw them from Mount Bingham.

Mother: You have not been hanging around with those boys again, have you?

David: Yes, I have – and it was brilliant. We stood on that hill and sang 'There'll Always Be An England' at the tops of our voices. The Jerries looked like they'd been sucking on lemons, but they let us sing.

Moher: But where is your father, then?

Father: *(ushering Mr Le Sueur and two boys into the house)* Come in, quickly!

Mrs Le Sueur: *(rushing over and hugging the boys)* Simon! Leo! How on earth are you still here. What's been going on?

Dr Le Sueur: Well, dear! They were all queuing, and they'd been waiting for what seemed like hours and the boys were getting a bit twitchy – as you would when you've been sat on a suitcase for an age – and the German soldiers were getting quite fed up with them. So, John suggested that we take them for a short walk to keep them entertained.

Father: They were only too happy for us to do that, so their parents said goodbye to them, and we went on a little walk. From St Helier to St Aubin and back.

David: That's not a little walk!

Dr Le Sueur: And by the time we got back – the boats had sailed!

Mother: Were the Germans furious?

Father: Not as much as you'd think. I think they'd forgotten about them, and I don't think they think they are much of a threat.

Mrs Le Sueur: Oh Anthony! I bet the poor Joneses were frantic with worry.

Dr Le Sueur: Not a bit of it, Pat. It was their suggestion. They'd rather they were safe here than facing the unknown in Germany.

Mother: At least they're safe with us.

Leo: What will happen to Mum and Dad?

Simon: We don't know, Leo. I just know that they wanted us to be safe and they wanted us to stay here.

Leo: Will we ever see them again?

Simon: Of course we will. They will write to us, and let us know that they are safe.

Dr Le Sueur: Well, boys, we have plenty of room with Callum away at the war, and plenty of toys to keep you occupied. Come on, young Leo, I know you're sad without your parents, but we will take good care of you. *(Dr+ Mrs Le Sueur, Leo and Simon leave).*

Father: *(smiling)* It's small victories, Mother! Small victories.

Scene 8

(The lights come up and David is at the table listening to a crystal radio set.

He is writing notes, and hides them in his school cap. Collette is playing with her doll.)

Father: David, stop playing with that thing and help your mum set the table. I should never have agreed to have it in the house. If anyone finds out about it you'll get us all into trouble.

David: Let me listen for another minute or two, Dad. I think I can get the 6 o'clock news.

(There is a knock at the door – the family freezes.

Father goes to the door and sees 3 German soldiers)

Father: Yes? What is it?

Officer: It has been brought to our attention that you have a radio in the house. You must know that this is against the law. You must come with us.

Mother: *(joining them)* What is it, Father?

Father: Don't be frightened, dear, these gentlemen are just making some enquiries ABOUT A RADIO WE ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE. It is obviously a mistake, of course, and we will soon clear it up. Go back inside and sit with the children. I won't be long.

(Mother returns to the children.

In the background we see David stuff the radio into the back of the doll.)

Father: Gentlemen, I don't know where you have got your information from, but I can assure you that we do not have a radio in this house. Now, we are just about to have our family meal, so if that is all...

Officer: *(brushing past)* No. I'm afraid that is not all. We will have to search the house to make sure that what you are telling us is true.

Good evening, madam. Good evening, children. Please don't be alarmed. We have been told that there is a radio on these premises. Your father tells us that we are mistaken, but even so we must search the house to make sure you have nothing to hide.

Mother: Radio? We wouldn't have a radio. Everyone knows it's against the law. My husband and I wouldn't do anything that might get us or our children into trouble.

Officer: I'm sure you wouldn't. But we must check.

Father: Go ahead, then. But please don't frighten the children.

(Collette sits, holding the doll as the soldiers search.)

Officer: So, little girl. What is your name?

Collette: Collette.

Officer: That is a nice name. And what is the name of your dolly? *(Collette hugs it tighter.)*

David: We call her Aunty – Aunty **Beeb**.

Officer: Aunty Beeb – that is an unusual name, is it not?

David: Collette's godmother is called Beatrice, we call her Beeb for short. She always tells us nice stories. Collette likes to lie in bed at night and when the planes are flying over, and she is frightened, she likes to pretend that Aunty **Beeb** is there telling her a story. Isn't that right, Coll?

Collette: Erm... yes.

Officer: Oh, you must not be afraid when you hear the planes, little girl. The German forces will keep you safe, and your dolly can tell you nice stories that will make you happy.

David: Yes, I'm sure she will.

(The soldiers return and shake their heads at the officer.)

Officer: Well, it looks like we were misinformed. I apologize for delaying your meal, we will detain you no longer.

(They leave. After they have gone, David bursts out laughing.)

Collette: *(Smacking him)* David! Don't you ever scare me like that again! Take your stupid radio out of my doll and go and hide it somewhere safe. I thought I was going to throw up.

David: *(still laughing)* All right, little sister. I thought you were really brave, Collette. *(He removes the radio)* Thank you Aunty Beeb, don't tell anyone our little secret, will you.

Mother: John, I don't know what we're going to do about that boy. He's getting to be very wild.

Father: Boys that age are always a bit wild, Mary. And what can you expect? He'd like to be out having a normal life, not living like we have to. Try not to worry too much, Mary. From what Auntie Beeb tells us, the war will soon be over.

Mother: But when, John? When will it end?

SONG: HOW MUCH LONGER TO GO

Scene 9

(Enter Collette with a diary.)

Collette: We have been occupied for nearly 5 years now. It is almost impossible to find enough to eat. We're quite lucky. My dad's brothers, George and Jim are farmers and they let us have the odd bit of food now and then, if it wasn't for him, I don't know how we would manage.

Mother: *(coming in with a nearly empty basket...)* There's nothing in the shops again, even with our ration books the butcher can't sell us meat if he doesn't have it.

Collette: Not cabbage soup again, then?

Mother: No. I have carrots and an onion as well.

David: Oh, great news.

(There is a knock at the door)

Mother: Tell me you haven't been painting victory signs again, David.

David: No, Mum! I promise.

(Auntie June and Uncle George enter)

Uncle George: What-ho, Mary!

C+D: Uncle George! Uncle Jim!

Mother: Oh, George, June! Thank goodness!

Uncle George: Can't stop, young 'uns. Got to get back before curfew. *(Quieter)* I've got a little something for your dinner. *(Checks about him and takes off hat and removes a small parcel which he hands to Mother.)* Mum's the word!

Mother: Is that..? Oh my word! Is that MEAT?

(Collette and David crowd round, excitedly)

How on earth have you got that? I thought the Germans had requisitioned the whole litter.

Uncle George: *(laughing quietly)* It's a funny old story, Mary! I still can't quite believe we got away with it. When we declared the litter and the Germans came and counted them, and I don't know what got into me, I just hid the little runt in the drain under the pen.

Uncle Jim: With all the snorting and squealing of the others, no-one could hear the little one underneath. We gave him the same number tag as one of the others, and made sure the litter was always split in different places when the Germans came to do a count, so they just thought they'd miscounted..

We had a close-run thing though, last week.

David: What happened?

Uncle George: Well, we'd been hiding him for about 6 months and he was good and fat, so we decided we needed to get it done, but - rotten luck - we'd not long finished the draining and washing down, and the Jerries drove up for a surprise inspection.

Collette: What did you do?

Uncle George: Well, Maman's bedroom is on the ground floor off the kitchen, and luckily Jim was working on one of our machines in the field and was able to signal us that trouble was heading our way. So, we all hefted up the pig and quickly carried him into Maman's room and put him in the bed. We put him under the blankets and put a frilly night cap on its head, just poking out over the covers.

Uncle Jim:: By the time I came in with the Jerries, they were all sitting around the kitchen table, like they hadn't a care in the world. The soldiers started their search, and just as they were going into Maman's room, George here starts making a big fuss about not disturbing his poor ailing Grandmother who had taken to her bed and was very sick and very ill tempered.

Uncle George: They tiptoed around her room, apologising for disturbing her, and were out of there like a shot. And then off they went...

David: Leaving you with the sleeping piggy.

Mother: You're lucky they didn't check everyone's papers. They'd have found out that dear old Maman died ten years ago.

I'm not complaining, though, I haven't had meat in weeks.

Uncle George: I don't need to tell you all to keep schtum? Careless talk costs lives and all that.

Uncle Jim: Come on, George. I feel a lot better about walking past those soldiers now that you don't have anything under your hat!

(Optional scene – George and Jim leave. Bernard enters with a bag of tins. Mother hides the meat.)

Bernard: Morning Mary, Collette, Davey! I've got a little problem you might be able to help me with – or rather – the undercover guides.

David: Well, this is a morning for intrigue, isn't it?

Mother: What's going on?

Bernard: I've just done a peculiar job for someone. I was asked to take a pile of logs in a wheelbarrow along to the Du Feu farm.

David: That's miles away!

Bernard: The thing is, the barrow tipped over on St Saviour's Hill, and the logs fell out. Turns out that I wasn't carrying just logs – there were lots of tins and bottles full of food.

David: The Black Market!

Bernard: I'm not all that happy about it, you know? I was doing someone a favour, and if I get caught, I'm the one who ends up in prison. So, I had an idea...

Collette: Yes?

Bernard: Your secret girl guide troop know everyone who is in desperate need. Do you think you might like to do some good deeds and hand out the food to people who desperately need it?

Collette: I'm sure we can – but it will take time to do it in secret. Won't the black-market people be cross that you've taken their goods?

Bernard: I've filled up the wheelbarrow with wood. They asked me to carry wood to the farm and that's what I shall do. They can hardly complain, can they?

(Blackout. Dad is sitting at the table, tinkering with something using a screwdriver. David comes in.)

David *(whispering loudly)* Dad! I've heard that Mr Cabot down the Peirson has acquired a cask of cider.

Dad *(very interested)* I say! Has he? Where did he get that from? The black market I expect.

David He's having a lock in – first come first served.

Dad *(jumping up and grabbing his hat)* Well, what are we waiting for?

(Both exit. The light comes up on the apron SL. There are picnic tables with men crammed on them, with their small pewter tankards. Father and David enter the space.)

Mr Cabot John! Last one in. Did anyone see you arrive?

Father I'm pretty sure they didn't.

Mr Cabot Take a seat! *(Father takes a seat, and David, temporarily forgotten, stands there awkwardly, and then slips over to another table to take a seat discreetly.)*

Sam I'm SO looking forward to this! I can't remember the last time I had a pint.

Mr Cabot Well, you're not getting a pint now.

Raymond I haven't had a beer or a cider since – ooh, must be Christmas 1940.

Pierre Come on then, Cabot! Crack the cask!

Mr Cabot *(comes over with a jug of cider, as the men talk he fills up each tankard.)*

Bert Phwoar! I've fancied a cider for years! *(takes a gulp).*

Dan Careful there, Bert. We haven't had anything alcoholic to drink for years – and like the rest of us you've probably not had much to eat today.

Bert I'm sure it'll be fine!

Ken *(whispering)* A toast, everyone. To freedom!

All *(clinking mugs together and saying – a bit too loud)* To freedom!

All *(laughing and giggling, and putting their fingers to their lips and then drink)* Shhhh!

David *(pulling a face)* I'm not sure I like cider all that much.

Father David! I thought you had gone home. Oh my God, don't tell your mother.

Mr Cabot Right, everyone, time to go. Quietly!

All Thanks, Cabot!

Pierre *(as everyone gets up to go their legs don't seem to be working properly)* Oooh! I think I'm a bit tiddly!

Raymond Oh no! My legs have turned to rubber! And the room is spinning. Perhaps we should stay a little longer?

Mr Cabot No you can't. It's almost curfew, so get yourselves home.

Bert Lead the way, Raymond!

The group struggle out – giggling and supporting each other. They make their way across the stage.)

Sam Watch out! It's a patrol!

Pierre I can take 'em! Let me at 'em!

Sam Shut up, you fool! You'll get us all arrested.

Father Quick everybody. Follow me. *(leads them, scurrying into the family house, where they stand breathless and giggling.)*

 Everyone sit down until they've gone.

(Father sits at the table with 3 others, David and the rest sit in a pile on the floor. Gradually the sniggering dies down and is replaced with light snoring. The lights go down, and gradually come up again to a cock crow. Mother comes in and surveys the sleeping, snoring men.)

Mother *(in a loud, stern voice)* And WHAT is going on here? *(sniffs at Father)* You've been DRINKING!?! *(all the men and David are now wide awake, and groaning softly, holding their heads. Mother picks up a broom and prods them all out. She doesn't see David)* Come on. Out! Of you go!

All *(general mumbling)* Sorry Mary! Yes, sorry. See you later John. *(Collette enters as they leave and sits at the table with her diary – very interested in what's going on.)*

Mother *(Noticing David, still curled up on the floor asleep)* You took David! To a lock in? Are totally insane?

Father Sorry, Mary. *(noticing Collette about to write in her diary)* Don't put that in your diary, love. No need to make a note of this, is there. *(Collette stares at him, raises her eyebrows and then starts to write.)*

Scene 10

Collette: But although things are bad for us, in many ways the Germans are having a worst time of it, although not many of them will admit it. Their supply routes have been cut off, so they are as hungry as the rest of us, and it is only a matter of time before the island is starved into surrender and we will be free again. If we live that long.

(Collette exits, as 2 German soldiers come to the front.)

Sol 1: How hungry I am!

Sol 2: I know what you mean, I'm so hungry I've even thought of eating my boots.

Sol 1: I'm afraid to tell you this, Franz, but the other day I almost ate a cat!

Sol2: You didn't!

Sol 1: I was walking down the road when I noticed a large, grey cat. It seemed better fed than me. Before I knew what I'd done, I sneaked up on it and stuffed it down the front of my uniform!

Sol 2: So, what happened then?

Sol 1: Well, I hadn't gone more than a few steps, when the cat's owner came charging out of the house waving a rolling pin at me! I let go of the cat, but before I could run off, the blasted thing fell down my trouser leg, ran out of the bottom of my trousers and straight back to its owner. So, all I had to show for my trouble were some scratches on my leg and a cut on my head from the rolling pin!

Sol2: *(Laughing)* I bet you legged it.

Sol1: Well, I was going to, of course. But then a strange thing happened. She calmed down quite quickly, and looked me up and down and said: 'Look, if you're so hungry, why don't you come inside and I'll see if I can't find you something more suitable to eat.'

Sol2: That's amazing!

Sol1: Yes, wasn't it? She had every reason to hate me, but she took pity on me all the same. She gave me some cabbage soup and a piece of bread that she had made. It wasn't much, but in a way it was the nicest meal I have ever eaten. And I **was** really glad I hadn't eaten the cat.

Sol2: I know what you mean. But Karl... is this what we have come to? Eating cats and any scraps we can beg? Perhaps the war will end soon, and we can go home.

Sol1: It's strange isn't it? Here we are, and here are the islanders, and although we are all very different, we all want the same thing – to live our lives in peace, away from this war.

SONG: FAR FROM HOME

Scene 11

(Enter David with Collette's Diary - SL)

David: Dear Diary, I have to write to tell you about my rotten little collaborator, sister. You'll never guess what she's gone and done – she's won a prize at school. *(Looks at the audience)* Good news, you think? Not when she's won it for speaking GERMAN.

Collette: *(Entering)* Give me my diary back, David!

David: What? Don't you think that when your great-great granddaughter reads your diary, she'll want to know that YOU, my sister, have bloomin' well cozied up with the Jerries?

Collette: It's not my fault, I can't help learning.

Mother: Come on, you two! We're going to be late for the prize giving presentation.

David: I'm not going!

Mother: *(Grabbing him by the ear)* Yes, you are. We've stuck together as a family so far, and we'll get through this, too.

(Centre Stage Right there is a bench set up and SR there is a Headteacher's desk.

Centre Stage Right there are chairs for the parents facing the bench.

The German Officer is seated with the Headteacher. The family members go to their respective seats – Collette with the prize winners, Mother, Father and David with the other families.)

Mrs Harris: Oh, I see Collette has won the prize for German. That'll be good, then, because she'll be able to get a job when she's older.

David: She won't ever have to speak German again when we batter 'em back to Krautland.

Peter H: On, come on, David. Do you think we're ever going to get rid of them?

Mother: Boys! This is not the time to discuss this – you'll get us all arrested.

Father: Hush. It's starting.

Headteacher: Welcome to our prize giving. We are delighted to introduce a new prize for excellence in speaking German.

(General mutters of discontent. As each prize winner is announced they go up and receive their award. There is polite applause. For Collette, Mother and Father applaud and Mrs Harris, and no-one else.)

Headteacher: Fred Le Brun wins the prize for Maths. Susie Le Cornu wins the prize for poetry. Helen Jouny wins the prize for Reading.

Officer: It gives me great pleasure to award the prize for German Speaking to Collette Le Sueur

Collette: Thank you. *(Goes back to seat, sheepishly.)*

David: I don't think I've ever been so embarrassed in my life!

Father: Well, I'm very proud of you. *(As everyone gets up to leave.)*

Collette: You always tell me to try my best at school!
Mother: Yes, but not at GERMAN, dear – what were you thinking?!
Father: Come on, let's go and have some food.
David: Not cabbage soup AGAIN!
Collette: We still have that piece of bread, don't we?

SCENE 12

(The family is at home. Enter Father. He is carrying a Red Cross parcel)

Father Look everybody! Look what I've got!

(Family gathers round)

Mother Is it true? Has the Vega arrived?

Collette: What's the Vega?

Father It's a Red Cross ship that the Germans have allowed to come to the island to deliver food and medicine for the people. Look what I've got, it's a Red Cross parcel addressed to us and it's full of FOOD!

(The parcel is unpacked.)

SONG: THE Raspberry Jam Calypso

*(Following the song, the family settle around the table to examine the food more closely. Amongst the other items they find a large packet which looks like tea leaves. Mother makes the tea, **but no one drinks it.** Before anyone drinks the tea, but after they have samples some of the food, making suitable comments, Mother discovers a letter.)*

Mother Listen to this everyone. It's a letter from your Aunty Doreen. *(She reads.)*

Dear all.

I hope this letter reaches you safely and that you are all well and looking after each other. I know I am not allowed to write much, or I might get you into trouble, but I wanted to explain about Uncle Harry.

You might remember, Mary, that Uncle Harry was my brother who left Jersey many years ago to live in America. We lost touch a long time ago, but it seems that he came back to England before the war started and lived up North.

When Uncle Harry died recently, his solicitor contacted me. Even though we hadn't been in touch for years, I wanted to do everything I could to make sure his last wishes were carried out. He wanted to be cremated and his ashes scattered on the Sand Dunes at St Ouen where he used to spend such a lot of his time. Well of course, with the war and everything I am not able to do anything about that, so I have taken a chance and sent his ashes to you, hoping that you will be able to do as Uncle Harry wished.

Mother Poor Uncle Harry, I remember him from when I was a girl. He was a jolly man, always laughing and full of fun.

Father I don't think I have seen his ashes, though, what do you think they look like?

David Well, if they are the remains of someone who has died, I should expect that they will be packed in a pot or something special, don't you?

(Everyone searches through the Red Cross parcel, but it is obvious that there is nothing there that looks like an urn or similar.)

Mother Well I can't understand it, there's no sign of them. The only thing I can think of is that an official has been through the parcel and removed them, but surely if they'd done that they would have put some sort of notice in the box so that we would know what had happened.

Father Well never mind. I expect we will find out what happened to poor Uncle Harry sooner or later, now what about that tea?

Mother Yes, the kettle has just boiled, I'll make it now.

(Mother is just about to pour the hot water into the teapot when...)

Collette Wait a minute, Mum! That's not tea leaves, that's.....

All Uncle Harry!!

Scene 13

(The scene is the Royal Square, although all this means is that the stage is bare. No particular scenery is required. Gradually the stage fills with people, including the family, except for Collette. When the scene is set, everyone freezes and Collette enters.)

Collette: The war is finally over. Last night David heard on his radio that the Allies' victory in Europe is complete. Hitler is dead, and the Germans here will surrender tomorrow. We are gathering here in the Royal Square to hear speeches from the Bailiff and the Prime Minister Mr. Churchill himself.

SONG: Liberation Day

(Following the song, the cast freeze and Collette comes forward)

Collette: The Occupation has ended. The Germans are gone, and we are free.. Although I won't seem different to you, believe it or not I am now 16 years old, and my ambition to be a writer has not changed.

David is 19 and he is determined to join the army, even though the war is over. There's a lot to be done to repair the damage of the last 6 years of war. He says that he wants to 'do his bit' to make sure that nothing like the Occupation of Jersey happens again. Mum says that he ought to try to catch up on some of the education he has missed before he goes gallivanting off, but Dad says that the army is a good place for learning, and it will 'make a man of him'.

Things are gradually returning to normal. People who evacuated are beginning to return to try to pick up the pieces of their lives, and already we are seeing the first tourists coming back. They are very interested in the German fortifications, and Dad says he thinks the bunkers and gun emplacements will become some of our biggest tourist attractions.

That idea seems very strange to me. I can't look at the bunkers and gun emplacements without a shiver running down my back. But you never know, he might be right, we'll see.

So that's it. Our story has ended. It was only a story about ordinary people doing ordinary things I know; but then after all wasn't that what the Occupation was? An extraordinary thing, that happened to ordinary people.

(Collette steps back to merge into the cast, for final sing through Liberation.)

THE END