

The Lament of Big Lil
The Ballad of Big Lil
or
Lillian's Lament

Act 1

Scene 1

Outside.

A grand building. Opulence that has seen better days. Two youngsters (A boy and a girl) loiter at the door. Scruffy and bored.

The audience gather outside.

Music can be heard through the windows. Popular music of the time mingled with laughing and loud chatting.

The audience waits as The Pram Race hurtles past. Excitement. Women with prams laughing and joking as they hurry by. Young kids following behind some being dragged by their arms to keep up, some sprinting ahead. Round the they go and disappear.

The two youngsters follow the on a small distance to watch the procession pass. They look on forlornly then turn run to the doors of the venue. Knock loudly, wait and then run away just as the doors open.

The Audience are admitted.

Scene 2

The Audience sit.

An evening set for a grander affair. Dinner tables set. Silver service. Empty and deserted. Dust gathered.

The sound of voices and laughter still play. It fades as...

The band play a version of Lonesome Cowboy by Lucky Luke plays. The sound of a ship at sea. Loud waves crashing. Landing gear winding. Shouting. It becomes loud, almost deafening. Radio signals breaking up.

'May Day!' 'May Day!'

BLACK OUT.

Scene 3

Lights up. The band plays. A dance in full swing. The Men are home the Three Day Millionaires. Dressed up to the nine's. Bell bottomed suits. Hair in perfect quiffs. Looking every inch the part. Swagger!

The women, equally as glamorous, clinging on arms.

Men up to the bar ordering big rounds. Sitting at the tables with the audience.

Man: Have you missed me?

Woman: Maybe....

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The sexual tension is palpable. He grabs her.

Woman: (Squeals with delight) Get off!

Another table.... A trawler man tells a tale of someone having their tooth extracted on board the ship. It's a gruesome tale.

Silence Spotlight on Big Lil (Although she shouldn't be immediately recognisable)

Big Lil: So home they return back from their watery frontier. The cowboy back from the merciless wet and wild west. Upto 3 weeks away battling the elements, fishing for their lives. Home for 3 days back to bairns and girlfriends and wives. We see them now living it large, life at full throttle high octane. Out and party, drink, drunk and sex.. Look kids daddy's home.

A Song...The Three Day Millionaires.

The Couples drink and dance and smooch
A fight breaks out.
Chairs smash.
Commotion.

Big Lil: So the fighting commences. Everyone's a John Wayne or a Johnny Cash. The last of the hunter gatherers. These are our men. Our men. Amen.

The lights dim and flicker. The men stop fighting. The sound of the sea swelling. Shouting. A radio signal faint and desperate. Lights back up.

Compere arrives on stage. Picks up a broken chair..

Compere: Bloody 'ell lads. We'll have nowt to sit on soon.

Cheers..

Compere: Next up and you don't bloody deserve her, you rum sods.. Is the Golden Girl with the Golden voice, Hessle Road's very own Yvonne Marie.

Man: Come on Yvonne, love! Up you get, give us a song!

The band strikes up.

The crowd call out and cheer. From one of the tables comes Yvonne. Early 30's, Blonde.

A disco ball spins. Spotlight on Yvonne.

Big Lil: Yvonne Blenkinsopp, 28 years young and already had her fair share of tragedy. Husband dead at 19 from Polio Encephalitis. Father, trawlerman, went down with his ship 4 years previous. Her Mam left to bring up 6 kids. Widowed and Three young kiddies of her own, Yvonne set her sights on being a club singer.

Yvonne Blenkinsop home during the day. Being Mum AND Dad. Get's Babysitter at night when all tucked up safe and sound and then Yvonne Marie does the rounds...Working Men's clubs and pubs. Singing her little broken heart out.

Yvonne sings. Tom Jones's "Help yourself..."

The song finishes and the dancers and punters clap. Someone in the audience is whistling loudly.

Big Lil: That's John... Yvonne's soon to be second betrothed.

John moves up to the front of the stage.

John: Can I take you out?

Yvonne: I don't think so.

John: And why ever not?

Yvonne: I'm working, can't you see?

John: I wasn't thinking right this minute.

Yvonne: I'm very busy.

John: Where you on after this?

Yvonne: Riders.

John: Right then, I'll see you there.(He winks and leaves)

Yvonne looks after him as the band starts up.

Big Lil: And he did...Persistant bugger! Took on Yvonne and the 3 kiddiwinks.
John the carpenter... Jesus!

Yvonne prepares for her next song.. "I Close My Eyes and Count to 10"- Dusty Springfield.

Sounds of a huge wave crashing.. The dancers start to disappear. Deafening. Creaking and breaking up of a ship. Shouting. High winds.

Yvonne tries to sing but she can't..Panic.

Yvonne: I couldn't bare it anymore. I couldn't sit by and see another ship go down. More

families destroyed. Our community being torn apart.