

*MARIA MARTEN*  
*the*  
*MURDER*  
*in the*  
*RED BARN*

*a New and Free Adaptation of the Traditional Melodrama*  
*by*  
*Christopher Denys*  
*with Music Composed and Arranged*  
*by*  
*Neil Rhoden*

## **MARIA MARTEN - THE MURDER IN THE RED BARN**

Along with ‘Sweeny Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street’ and the rather more respectable ‘East Lynn’ and ‘Lady Audley’s Secret’, ‘Maria Marten - the Murder in the Red Barn’ was one of the stalwart pieces of the Melodrama - a dramatic form which flourished in the British theatre from Jacobean times into the nineteen fifties and which is now alive and well in TV soap operas. After all, the return of Bobby to ‘Dallas’ some years ago after being dead for a whole series - his death having been ‘only a dream’ (and the ratings having dropped) - was a dramatic device which made those of the ‘old’ Melodrama seem positively naturalistic. But, of course, it was an idea which pleased the audience and the Melodrama was all about pleasing the audience. If they wanted virgins seduced by wicked squires, horrible murders, revolting Gypsies and numerous ghosts to part them from their pennies, then it was up to the performers to provide them - so they were just as driven by ‘viewing figures’ as are ‘East Enders’, ‘Coronation Street’, etc., etc.

I refer to ‘East Lynn’ and ‘Lady Audley’ as being respectable simply because they were actually written down - just like real plays. Most of the other stalwarts ‘just grewed’ - like Topsy in “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” (adaptations of which were also very popular as Melodrama). This ‘oral tradition’, akin to that of the folk song, lends a gritty reality to the Melodrama, despite its frequently outrageous plots, special effects and the tendency of the cast to burst into song. And ‘Maria Marten’ is certainly based on reality for, whereas nobody has ever been able to verify the existence of an actual Sweeny Todd, Maria Marten and William Corder were real people and the case was a sensation in its time.

William Corder actually murdered Maria Marten on 18 May, 1827 and buried her body in the Red Barn, Polestead, Suffolk. It must have been a lean time for news because the case became a national sensation and, as soon as the crime was discovered, fit-up companies (often called ‘portable theatres’) were thrilling audiences in the penny gaffs, barns and fairgrounds up and down the land with their individual versions of the story. By 1840, it had become a banker in the provincial and outer-London theatres, though it never quite made it into the posh houses of the West End – a theatre in Marylebone being as near as it got.

But this is not to say that there was a standard text of the play. In those days and in those companies of strollers, scripts were a rarity and it was traditional to take a story and ‘act’ it. Every actor knew a wide repertoire of speeches from a wide range of plays and, told what was to be achieved in a given scene (and how long it was to run), they would adapt, plagiarise, improvise and invent within their given characters. In the case of ‘Maria’, all the actors knew the sensational details, having read them in the newspapers, and each group of actors cobbled up its own version. Then, as actors moved from company to company, they took the better bits with them and gradually, certain additions became part of the traditional structure.

In the nineteenth century, Gypsies were obligatory in the Melodrama and in its near neighbour, opera. Even Verdi was obliged to include a troupe of dancing Gypsies in “La Traviata”, though they were quite extraneous to the plot. So Gypsies were added to “Maria Marten” and quickly became an essential part of the story until Ishmael, the King of the Gypsies, the ghost of his daughter Zella, and his avenging son Pharos Lee, became central characters. The dream, in which Mrs Marten ‘sees’ the murder, was part of the

story from the beginning and was reported as a ‘fact’ at the time and this opened the door for other occult phenomena and a plethora of ghostly visitations.

Eventually, of course, some versions were written down and I am particularly indebted to John Latimer who took the trouble to write down the version which was my starting point.

Carrying on the tradition of using the best bits, I’ve included moments which I remember vividly from the various productions of the piece I saw as a child and from having been in a production of it as a young actor in the nineteen-fifties. I’ve also thrown in Hawkshaw, the Detective, for good measure on the grounds that a policeman of some sort is required to assist Pharos in finding William Corder and Hawkshaw was the most famous detective in Melodrama, having been created by Tom Taylor in ‘The Ticket of Leave Man’ as the very first stage detective. He possibly, served as an inspiration for the later character of Sherlock Holmes.

### **Staging:**

In keeping with the tradition, the original production was staged in a ‘Barn Theatre’ format with cutout pieces sliding on from the wings to suggest different locations - along the lines illustrated at the end of this script. But, while the stage directions in this adaptation relate to that form of production, the piece can be presented in any number of ways depending on available resources. The sequence of scenes lends itself easily to alternating ‘front cloth’ and ‘full stage’ settings – though at least one gauze is needed for Mrs Marten’s dream.

### **Style:**

Melodrama demands a certain ‘large, full-blooded’ style of acting and a great deal of direct contact with the audience but it’s very important to avoid sending it up. There will be moments when the audience will laugh at the archaic style – even in some of the serious bits – but, hopefully, their laughter will be affectionate and a part of their participation. On a good night, they’ll hiss William Corder a great deal and laugh uproariously at the low-comedy antics of Tim but we found that you can’t depend on that because they’ll be following the story. We were slightly surprised – but immensely gratified – by the fact that our audiences accepted the style early on and really became deeply involved in the plot. After all, it’s just another convention and, once the convention is established, it’s no more odd than any other.

### **A Grisly Epilogue:**

Although Maria received a decent burial after being dug up from the Barn, the corpse of William Corder was seized by the Royal College of Surgeons for dissection and his skeleton was jointed and kept on display in the hospital foyer where some wag rigged up a mechanism so that the hand moved and pointed to the donation box whenever anybody came near. It remained there until 1949 and it wasn’t until 2004 – 176 years after his execution - that a descendant of his was able to reclaim the bones for cremation. When last heard of, his scalp was still in a museum in Bury St. Edmunds along with a book about the murder and the trial which had been bound by a surgeon with leather made from Corder’s skin.

**CHARACTERS:**

**MARIA MARTEN** (*The Heroine*)  
**MR. MARTEN** (*Maria and Annie's Father - a yeoman*)  
**MRS MARTEN** (*His wife*)  
**ANNIE MARTEN** (*Maria's sister*)  
**TIM** (*A Village lad - courting Annie*)  
**WILLIAM CORDER** (*The Villain*)  
**ISHMAEL LEE** (*The Gypsy King - subsequently a Ghost*)  
**ZELLA LEE** (*The Ghost of Ishmael's daughter*)  
**PHAROS LEE** (*A Gypsy - son of Ishmael*)  
**LUCY MAVOR** (*A wealthy spinster living in London*)  
**HENRY MAVOR** (*Lucy's Uncle*)  
**MARK** (*A Gypsy*)  
**AMOS** (*A Gypsy*)  
**HAWKSHAW** (*A Detective - usually in disguise*)  
**JEREMIAH** (*A Criminal*)  
**GYPSIES**  
**VILLAGERS**  
**INDIAN CHIEF**  
**SQUAW**  
**CRIMINALS**  
**OPIUM ADDICTS**  
**GAOLER**  
**HANGMAN**  
**PRIEST**

**Note:** A list of suggested doubles is included at the end of this script

**SCENES:****ACT ONE**

- Scene 1:** Polestead Village Green - outside Mr. Marten's Cottage  
**Scene 2:** The Woods  
**Scene 3:** The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London  
**Scene 4:** The Woods  
**Scene 5:** The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London  
**Scene 6:** The Woods, near the Gypsy Encampment  
**Scene 7:** A Poor Cottage  
**Scene 8:** The Woods  
**Scene 9:** A Secret Part of the Woods  
**Scene 10:** Squire Corder's Farmyard  
**Scene 11:** A Redskin Encampment, Colorado  
**Scene 12:** The Kitchen of Mr. Marten's Cottage  
**Scene 13:** The Woods  
**Scene 14:** The Old Red Barn

**ACT TWO:**

- Scene 1:** Mr. Marten's Kitchen  
**Scene 2:** The Old Red Barn  
**Scene 3:** A London Alleyway  
**Scene 4:** Mr. Marten's Kitchen  
**Scene 5:** A London Street  
**Scene 6:** An Opium Den  
**Scene 7:** The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London  
**Scene 8:** The Rooftops of London  
**Scene 9:** A London Street  
**Scene 10:** The Woods  
**Scene 11:** The Condemned Cell, Bury-St-Edmunds  
**Scene 12:** A Street, Bury-St-Edmunds  
**Scene 13:** The Scaffold

This version of “MARIA MARTEN - the MURDER in the RED BARN” was first produced New Vic Studio of the Theatre Royal, Bristol, on 19 November, 2003 with the following cast:

<i>MARIA MARTEN</i>	.	.	.	<i>JENNIFER BIDDALL</i>
<i>MR. MARTEN</i>	.	.	./	<i>ALEXANDER WOOLNOUGH</i>
<i>MRS MARTEN</i>	.	.	.	<i>DOROTHEA MYER-BENNETT</i>
<i>ANNIE MARTEN</i>	.	.	.	<i>HAYLEY DOHERTY</i>
<i>TIM</i>	.	.	.	<i>ALAN MORRISSEY</i>
<i>WILLIAM CORDER</i>	.	.	.	<i>NIALL MACGREGOR</i>
<i>TOM MARCHBANKS</i>	.	.	.	<i>ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>ISHMAEL LEE</i>	.	.	.	<i>BRUCE McNEAL</i>
<i>ZELLA LEE</i>	.	.	.	<i>ALIX DUNMORE</i>
<i>PHAROS LEE</i>	.	.	.	<i>STEVEN MILLER</i>
<i>PEELERS</i>	.	.	.	<i>IAN BONAR, ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>LUCY MAVOR</i>	.	.	.	<i>DOROTHEA MYER-BENNETT</i>
<i>HENRY MAVOR</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>MARK</i>	.	.	.	<i>ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>AMOS</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>REDSKIN CHIEF</i>	.	.	.	<i>IAN BONAR</i>
<i>SQUAW</i>	.	.	.	<i>HAYLEY DOHERTY</i>
<i>HAWKSHAW</i>	.	.	.	<i>IAN BONAR</i>
<i>EUNUCH</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>JEREMIAH</i>	.	.	.	<i>ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>GAOLER</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>BALLADMONGER</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>PRIEST</i>	.	.	.	<i>ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>VILLAGERS, GYPSIES, CITY FOLK, OPIUM ADDICTS, CROWD, etc.</i>	.	.	.	<i>Members of the ENSEMBLE</i>

*Directed by CHRISTOPHER DENYS*

*Musical Direction and Arrangements by NEIL RHODEN*

*Sets Designed by PENNY FITT and CHARLOTTE CRIDLAN*

*Costumes Designed by JANE STUART-BROWN*

**MARIA MARTEN****ACT ONE***(LXQ 1)**(LXQ 2)***MUSIC - "WE PLOUGH THE FIELDS AND SCATTER" (SQ 1 - Track 1)**

**ALL:** *(Offstage. Softly)* **WE PLOUGH THE FIELDS AND SCATTER  
THE GOOD SEED ON THE LAND,  
BUT IT IS FED AND WATERED  
BY GOD'S ALMIGHTY HAND:  
HE SENDS THE SNOW IN WINTER,  
THE WARMTH TO SWELL THE GRAIN,  
THE BREEZES AND THE SUNSHINE,  
AND SOFT REFRESHING RAIN:  
ALL GOOD THINGS AROUND US  
ARE SENT FROM HEAVEN ABOVE,  
THEN THANK THE LORD, O THANK THE LORD,  
FOR ALL HIS LOVE.**

*During which:*

**ACTOR:** *(Before the curtain)* All that you shall witness here,  
Enacted in this humble hall,  
Tis the true tale, as you shall hear,  
Of poor Maria Marten's fall.

**ACTOR:** And though we shock you to the core  
With vice and horror - murder, blood and gore,  
Seduction, ravishment, the ruin of the poor,  
And every terror true . .

**ACTRESS:** Our moral's clear. O, maids, withhold your trust!  
Lest, virgin treasure trodden in the dust,  
You too become the plaything of a villain's lust  
And learn to rue! *(LXQ 3)*

*The Curtains open revealing the exterior of the Martens' Cottage. The CAST enter as COUNTRYFOLK, carrying food and drink and take their places, singing:*

**WE THANK THE THEN, O FATHER,  
FOR ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND GOOD;  
THE SEED TIME AND THE HARVEST,  
OUR LIFE, OUR HEALTH, OUR FOOD.  
NO GIFTS HAVE WE TO OFFER  
FOR ALL THY LOVE IMPARTS,  
BUT THAT WHICH THOU DESIREST,  
OUR HUMBLE THANKFUL HEARTS  
ALL GOOD THINGS AROUND US  
ARE SENT FROM HEAVEN ABOVE,  
THEN THANK THE LORD, O THANK THE LORD,  
FOR ALL HIS LOVE.**

*(LXQ 4)***Scene 1: THE VILLAGE GREEN - OUTSIDE MR. MARTEN'S COTTAGE***Country Dance Music. (SQ 2)*

**MR. MARTEN:** Come friends and neighbours, come you all. We've little enough and humble fare it is, but what we've got we'll share and have a merry time of it. The harvest's gathered in, the barns are full and ere the breath of winter blows cold upon the heath, we'll make a merry harvest home.

**MARCHBANKS:** God bless you, Mr. Marten.

**MR. MARTEN:** Why that he has, sir, that he has. (*Embracing MRS MARTEN*) Blessed me with the best wife any man ever took to church . .

**MRS MARTEN:** Why get along with you . .

**MR. MARTEN:** (*Embracing ANNIE and MARIA*) And the fairest pair of daughters here, my dear Nan and my lovely Maria . .

**ANNIE:** Oh, Father . .

**MARIA:** Get off with you, Father, you make us blush.

**MRS MARTEN:** And there's honest Tim here that would be our son-in-law if only Annie'd get off of her high horse long enough to make an honest man of him.

**ANNIE:** Me? I'd sooner wed a tinker and travel the roads than be wife to such a fool.

**TIM:** (*Laughing*) She don't mean it. (*Uncertain*) Do you, Annie?

**ANNIE:** Don't I just? And how many times must I tell you, Tim Carter, that I am Anne - what is ladylike - not *Annie* - what is common.

**TIM:** Tis just her way to play the fine lady when we're in company. But when we're on our twosome tis a different tale.

**MARIA:** Oh, do tell us what happens then, Tim . .

**TIM:** Not I. For I was ever the soul of deception.

**ANNIE:** Discretion, fool!

**TIM:** Oh well . . distressin' then. Dang me! I never felt as happy as this since the day I was breeched.

**ANNIE:** Oh, Tim, why do thee talk so?

**TIM:** I only sayin' . .

**ANNIE:** Oh . . Shut thee mouth, fool!

**TIM:** Sorry, Annie . .

**ANNIE:** Anne!

**TIM:** I on'y meant to . .

**ANNIE:** Are you going to ask me to dance or are you not?

**TIM:** Oh. But I'm that clumsy. I can't seem to make my left foot know where my right foot's goin' . .

**ANNIE:** (*Seizing one of the Villagers and joining the dance*) Then I shall dance with Tom Marchbanks and be hanged to you.

**TIM:** (*Calling after her*) But, Annie!

**ANNIE:** Anne!

**TIM:** Oh, why can't I dance like they other fellows?



**MARIA:** Here, Tim. Let me help. I'll teach thee.

**TIM:** Will you so, Maria? Canst be bothered wi' such as I when all the fine lads is begging for thy hand?

**MARIA:** Then all the fine lads can wait their turn.

**TIM:** Oh, bless thee, Maria. Hey, see here, all. I be going to dance with Maria . .

**MARIA:** (*Showing him the steps*) Now follow me, Tim . .

*Villain Music. (SQ 3 - Track 2) (LXQ 5) Enter WILLIAM CORDER, D.L.*

**CORDER:** (*Aside to the AUDIENCE*) What right have bumpkins such as these to be so full of cheer? Ah, how I hate them all! And how I despise even more this wretched place where I must waste my time while waiting for my father to die.

**(LXQ 6)**

**MR. MARTEN:** Why, bless me, it's Mr. Corder! Mr. Corder, sir. I am glad to see you here to honour our homely festivities. I heard you were arrived from London some days ago. But this is a sad time for you, Mr. Corder with the poor squire, your father, so close to death. Pray accept our sympathy, sir.

**CORDER:** (*Convincingly sad*) I thank you, Mr. Marten, but . . as you say . . a sad time.

**MR. MARTEN:** (*Confidentially*) Mind, there's been ugly rumours in these parts. There's some saying that, once you inherit the estate, you mean to sell up and leave Polestead for ever.

**CORDER:** (*Aside*) Damnation! Rumour is already fleet of foot. (*To him*) Why, sir, I have no such intention. The estate has been in my family since - why, since my great great grandfather's time.

**MR. MARTEN:** Ah, I knew twas all lies, sir. But I'm pleased to be reassured by your good self. I'm sure you'll be as good and kind a landlord as your dear father's been these many years.

**CORDER:** Rest assured, Mr. Marten, I shall endeavour to be so. (*Aside*) Not I for ten thousand pounds. I have the farm insured for four times its value on the market. As soon as my wretched father breathes his last, I shall set a fire to consume it all, take my fortune and shake the mud of this county from my feet for ever. Yet the old man clings to life like a limpet to a rock. Ye gods! Will he *never* die? And, while I wait, I must suffer the company of these . . *peasants!*

*ANNIE has stopped dancing and is ogling him.*

**MR. MARTEN:** Will it please you to divert yourself from your sadness a while and join our merrymaking, sir?

**CORDER:** I thank you for your kindly welcome, sir.

*Music - Maria's Theme (SQ 4 - Track 3) takes over briefly from the dance music as we see MARIA dancing R.*

**CORDER:** (*Aside, seeing MARIA*) Egad, yon is the pretty wench that has haunted my thoughts since I have been in the country. What a purgatory is this place to me, who am accustomed to the pleasures and debaucheries of the city. Yet a man might while away many a tedious hour with such a wench as she. (*To Mr. Marten*) But tell me, Mr. Marten - who is that charming girl?

**MR. MARTEN:** Why, sir, you do me too much honour. She's my daughter, sir, grewed up fair since last you last saw her. Maria! Come hither, girl, and greet the Squire's son. This here is Master William Corder - the son of our landlord.

- MARIA:** (*Curtseying shyly*) Sir.
- CORDER:** Charmed to make your acquaintance, Miss Marten. May I claim your hand for the next dance?
- MARIA:** Excuse me sir, but I never dance with strangers.
- MR. MARTEN:** Stranger? Master Corder a stranger? Nay! 'Tis true he's lived in London many a year but, Maria, this young man will shortly be our Squire - *and* our landlord. Oh! Begging pardon, sir. To talk so of your poor father's death. He's fading fast, I hear.
- CORDER:** He's very weak and growing weaker by the hour. Yet he clings on, Mr. Marten. (*Aside, bitterly*) He clings on.
- MR. MARTEN:** The squire was ever a lusty man, sir, and as kind and generous a gentleman as ever drew breath.
- CORDER:** As you say, sir, as you say. (*Aside*) God rot him! (*To MARIA*) Now, Miss Maria - now that we have been introduced and I am no longer a stranger, surely I may claim a dance.
- MARIA:** I'm sorry, sir. But I am promised to dance with poor Tim and to teach him the steps. (*She curtseys and rejoins TIM R.*)
- MR. MARTEN:** You'll excuse her manners sir. She's but a country girl and knows not the civilities of your London ladies. But she's an industrious girl and as good as she is pretty.
- CORDER:** And pretty she is, sir. There's no disputing that. (*Aside*) Yet she'd sooner dance with a peasant ploughboy than with me. (*Slapping his riding crop against his boot*) But she shall learn her manners and pay well for her incivility.
- MRS MARTEN:** Here's more beef and pasties and puddings fresh from the oven. Where's that Tim got to? I never saw a boy with such an appetite.
- TIM:** (*Skipping*) I'm dancing, Mrs Marten. See? I'm dancing like a gentleman.
- MRS MARTEN:** I got more food here, Tim.
- TIM:** (*Stops immediately*) Oh well, that's a different matter. Pardon me, Maria but me stom jacks rumbling and a grumbling like an old hurdy-gurdy.
- MR. MARTEN:** Come, my friends, enjoy yourselves with jolly old English cheer. Roast beef and pudding and plenty of good beer.
- TIM:** Ecod, I'll punish the pudding and the beer.
- ANNIE:** Aye thou great unmannered fool - thou'd punish anything.
- TIM:** Aye. (*Drawing her aside*) And I'll punish thee if I catches thee ogling yon London chap.
- ANNIE:** Me look at him? Oooo, what a whopper!
- TIM:** Aye and I'll whop him if he winks at thee again. If thee wants a fine specimen o' manhood, cast thine eyes on me.
- ANNIE:** Fine specimen of a donkey.
- TIM:** Dost call me donkey?
- ANNIE:** A regular jackass.

**MR. MARTEN:** Mister Corder, can I prevail on you to eat with us? The fare is humble yet the welcome's great.

**CORDER:** I thank you, Mr. Marten, but I must return to the Grange. My present sadness for my father would cast a pall upon your festivities. I beg that you'll excuse me.

**MR. MARTEN:** Then good night to thee, Mister Corder. Say goodnight to the gentleman, Maria.

**MARIA:** Goodnight to you, sir. I shall pray for your father's health.

**CORDER:** I thank you for your prayers, Miss Maria. (*Kissing her hand*) I hope that I may be included in them.

**MARIA:** I cannot believe that you are in need of *my* prayers, sir.

**CORDER:** (*Aside*) Pretty and coy, and ripe as an apple. Yes. She *shall* be mine for I shall overcome her scruples.

*Villain Music. (SQ 5 - Track 4)*

**CORDER:** Though innocent, she has a lusty eye.  
I'll win her or I'll know the reason why.  
She'll be my slave and sing a different song.  
I'll have her - but I will not keep her long. (*Exits D.L.*)

**TIM:** Here, Maria, Annie, didst know that there are Gypsies camped in the wood? A whole tribe of 'em. So don't you gals go wandering in there to pick posies nor nothing lest you got I there to protect you.

**ANNIE:** You? A fine protection you'd be. You've not got the courage of a spring lamb.

**TIM:** I have so. Tomorrow is the day of Polestead Fair and I shall escort you there, Annie, and make sure that no Gypsy dare accost you on the way.

**ANNIE:** I'll not go to no fair unless Maria goes too.

**TIM:** Then I shall escort you both and see you safe.

**ANNIE:** Safe? If you saw a Gypsy there, you'd run off like a rabbit.

*Crash of thunder. (SQ 6)*

**MR. MARTEN:** Come in, dear friends, for the weather threatens. We'll carry on our merrymaking by the hearth. With harvest done we may lie in tomorrow so let us all be merry until late tonight.

*They all exit into the house by the doors R and L. (LXQ 7)*

**TIM:** (*Calling after them*) Don't you fear none, Annie. Nor you, Maria. I'm not afraid of no Gypsies. (*Backing R.*) No, not I. Why, if I was to meet a Gypsy in the wood . . .

*Gypsy music (SQ 7 - Track 5) ISHMAEL appears R.*

**TIM:** (*Turning to be confronted by ISHMAEL*) Ah! (*He runs off into the house L.*)

*The house is drawn off and the woodland gauze and the trees drawn on.*

**(LXQ 8)**

**Scene 2: THE WOOD**

**ISHMAEL:** Once more I am returned to that village where I spent my darkest hours. Here it was that, years gone by, we pitched our tents. Joy and contentment dwelt among us then when my daughter - Zella - was the sunshine of our tribe. **(LXQ 9)** *(The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears behind the gauze.)* But woe befell us. It was here - in this very wood - that her betrayer saw her, *(ZELLA runs to the arms of WILLIAM CORDER.)* desired her, seduced her from us and, wearying of her once her heart was won, *(CORDER embraces her then casts her from him. She languishes.)* cast her off to die of a broken heart. My dearest girl withered as a lovely flower upon the stem. She died of despair within these arms of mine - her last words breathing her seducer's name.

**ZELLA LEE:** William Corder! *(Dies)*

**ISHMAEL:** My son, Pharos, swore revenge *(PHAROS LEE appears. He attacks CORDER with knife raised.)* and swore his oath never to rest until his knife was buried deep in Corder's heart. *(CORDER summons PEELERS who move to arrest PHAROS.)* But the villain brought the law upon us and Pharos had to flee to distant land. *(PHAROS flees. The image fades.)* **(LXQ 10)** Our tribe was scattered across all the continents of the weary world. But now the hand of time has passed across my brow and I return. Corder will not know me now and revenge, which has festered all these years will burst upon the head of he that ruined my poor girl and drove my gallant son to exile.

*Villain Music (SQ 8 - Track 6) (LXQ 11) CORDER enters D.L.*

**ISHMAEL:** Ah! He comes. *(Withdrawing R.)* Let me stand aside and ponder how the first stroke of my vengeance now shall fall.

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* I learn that Miss Maria Marten and her sister will shortly pass this way to Polestead Fair. Here, under some pretence, I will accost them. I see that Gypsies have pitched their tents and caravans within the wood. Once, if I remember, one of their dark-eyed beauties was briefly my plaything. Psha! She is dead!

*Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 9 - Track 7)*

**CORDER:** Yet the superstitious peasants swear that her spirit often walks these pathways through the woods. Yet what have I to fear? There is not one of them to know me now. But soft - who have we here? A Gypsy by his dress. Ah, a plan flashes across my mind. *(Aloud)* Hark ye, Gypsy, do you want to earn a gold piece?

**ISHMAEL:** *(In the character of an old man)* Why yes, good gentleman. What is it you require? Shall the poor old Gypsy read the stars for you? And tell you of the future?

**CORDER:** No. I don't believe in your Gypsy nonsense. But I wish you to accost a young girl who takes my fancy.

**ISHMAEL:** *(Aside)* Ah another victim. *(To him)* What would the noble gentleman require me to say to this young lady?

**CORDER:** Speak to her of the future. Aye. Tell her of her fortune. Say there is a gentleman that loves her - the squire's son that she met at the harvest supper. Tell her to be not shy of him - that he means her honourable and that riches and happiness lie before her. Tell her . . . Oh, tell her any damnable thing that will win her to my purpose. For sure, I need not describe that purpose?

**ISHMAEL:** No, sir. Your purpose is clear enough.

**CORDER:** Here then. Take the gold and be about it.

**ISHMAEL:** I will do this, never fear.

**CORDER:** Do your work well and you will find me a liberal master. Ah, see, they are coming down the lane. Dont mistake now - the smaller of the two. *(He exits R.)*

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 10 - Track 8)*

**ISHMAEL:** *(Aside)* So! The wolf is abroad. Shall another innocent girl fall victim to his desires? What matter, she is not of our people and what mercy did the white race ever show to us? Do you not drive us from village to village? Have you not chained and imprisoned us without reason? I'll aid this William Corder and, in so doing, further my revenge. I'll lead him on - step by step, villainy by villainy - until he mounts the scaffold and feels the noose tighten about his neck. Aye! That will be a glorious revenge! *(Drawing aside R.)* But soft!

*Enter TIM, ANNIE and MARIA from L. Birdsong. (SQ 11) (LXQ 12)*

**ANNIE:** Oh, come on, Tim. How slow you walk.

**TIM:** It's the weight of money I've got in my pocket that keeps me back.

**MARIA:** Then I hope you'll buy us something nice at the fair.

**TIM:** Oh aye. I'll treat you both in the swing boats - them as goes up one side and comes down t'other, and I'll buy you a pennorth o' nuts to crack and sharpen your teeth with, and ye shall see all the shows. Why, there's the moving waxworks, the wild beasts, the seven legged calf and the fat woman.

**MARIA:** Will you treat us to all that?

**TIM:** I should think so too. I've got a power o' brass. *(Aside to the AUDIENCE)* I've got naught but a shillin' if the truth were known.

**ANNIE:** Come on, Tim. We shall be talking here till the show is over.

**ISHMAEL:** *(Stepping forward)* Stay, good people, have your fortune told.

**TIM:** *(Starting back)* Ah!

**ANNIE:** Go on then, Tim. To the fore now. Show how you'll protect us.

**TIM:** Aye. That I will. *(Aside)* He seems to be a frail old man and not too savage. *(To ISHMAEL)* Now then, mister Gypsy, I . . . I . . . I . . .

**ISHMAEL:** Nay, turn not pale at the sight of old Ishmael. A poor raggle-taggle but an honest seer who can tell you of your future.

**TIM:** Oh . . . Well, I don't know 'bout that . . . How much is it, old man?

**ISHMAEL:** Cross my palm with silver and I'll tell you all that the stars have in store. Cross my palm, young gentleman, young ladies. Cross my palm. A piece of silver for each future is all I ask.

**TIM:** *(Aside)* I only got my silver shilling. Oh my bob. Oh my bob. It's going all at once before I reach the fair. If only I could get away.

**ANNIE:** Do treat us, Tim. It won't cost much for me and Maria.

**TIM:** You two ask the old chap all about it. See what he's got to offer. *(Aside)* Now's my chance - I'll go and get my bob changed for four silver threepenny bits. *(Exits R.)*

**ANNIE:** Well, I should like to know what my future holds. And can you tell us all that?

**ISHMAEL:** I can. For nothing is hidden from old Ishmael's eyes.

**ANNIE:** Now then, Tim . . . Well bless me! He's gone. Look! There he goes into that ale house yonder. I'll have him out o' that for making a fool of me. I'll currycomb his hair for him. *(Exits R.)*

**MARIA:** *(Aside)* How foolish of my sister to run away and leave me with this sinister old man. *(Starting to follow)* I'll follow her and . . .

**ISHMAEL:** *(Blocking her way)* Stay, girl!

**MARIA:** Why stay at your bidding? What mean you, sir?

**ISHMAEL:** No harm, dear girl, but to speak your future good.

**MARIA:** I have no belief in your powers and, if I had. I am too poor to pay for your skill.

**ISHMAEL:** I seek no reward from you, Maria Marten, but will tell you gratis . .

**MARIA:** My name? How do you know my name?

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 12 - Track 9) (LXQ 13)*

**ISHMAEL:** I know many things *(taking her hand)* and your pretty palm will tell me more. Aye. See this line here? So short it is yet it tells me all. The star of your destiny shines out bright and clear. Already you have met the one who will be your fate. He will swear his love for you. He will promise to take you as his wife. He is rich and prosperous and *may* make you happy.

Listen and learn before it be too late.

Tis written upon the table of your fate -

Fortune and riches are for thee in store,

But your star is shadowed . . *(Horrified)* Ah! I read no more.

**MARIA:** Shadowed? What mean you?

**ISHMAEL:** Yet I must tell the truth while I draw breath.

But, in the end - there's misery - and death!

*(Retreating)* Listen and be warned ere it be too late,

At the old Red Barn shall you meet your fate.

*Thunder. (SQ 13) (LXQ 14) ISHMAEL vanishes R.*

**MARIA:** What? Gone? He has quite taken my breath away. But what did he say? That I'm loved by a fine gentleman? By his description, he means Squire Corder, our landlord's son. Why, he's a handsome man, there's no denying. But . . will he *really* declare his love . . for *me*? Oh how nice it would be to be a rich lady. But then, the Gypsy spoke of misery and . . *death!* Well, death comes to us all but misery is only caused by those who bring wretchedness upon themselves. I have been taught the lessons of virtue and piety. I think they will protect me from vice and keep my name and honour spotless.

*Enter TIM, driven on by ANNIE. (LXQ 15)*

**TIM:** What's quarrelling about?

**ANNIE:** Why, you're a nasty shabby fellow - to run away and leave me and Maria with that old Gypsy.

**TIM:** I went to get all my gold changed to silver.

**ANNIE:** Thee's got no gold - naught but a brass neck. Oh Maria, did you have your fortune told?

**MARIA:** What? Oh . . it was nothing . .

**ANNIE:** A funny kind of nothing to leave you looking so dreamy and enchanted . .

**TIM:** You looks like you'd seen a ghost . .

**MARIA:** Nonsense. I don't believe in such rubbish.

**TIM:** Nay, no more do I. That's why I wouldn't waste my bob - I mean my sovereign.

**ANNIE:** I don't believe you've got any money.

**TIM:** Well . . . tell truth, I've got a bob.

**ANNIE:** Only a *bob*? And thou told me thoudst got heaps of gold.

**TIM:** D'you think I bring all my money out at once to lose it?

**MARIA:** What are you going to buy us for a fairing, Tim?

**TIM:** Why, Maria, I will buy thee a monkey up a stick.

**ANNIE:** She don't need one, Tim - not while we got you.

**TIM:** Ah! Ye dinna say so.

**ANNIE:** What will you buy me?

**TIM:** I'll buy thee a cradle.

**ANNIE:** A cradle? What for?

**TIM:** Against we gets married - a cradle for to put my pretty son in it.

**ANNIE:** Your son? Pretty? Why you are as ugly as sin.

**TIM:** Yet you are pretty enough for the both of us, Annie. Any child of thine would be as pretty as thee.

**ANNIE:** (*Touched*) Oh, Tim . . . Thou bist the greatest fool in all England.

**TIM:** Then what are you sticking up to me for?

**ANNIE:** Cos I know ye are that *ugly* I can keep thee to myself for thy face would frighten away any other lass.

**TIM:** My mother said I was the prettiest duck in the flock.

**ANNIE:** That's why thee's grown up such an ugly goose.

**MARIA:** Don't quarrel. But, if we are going to the fair, let's start at once or go home.

**TIM:** Nay, we mun go to the fair for there's a public house upon the road and I mun treat you.

**ANNIE:** To what?

**TIM:** A quart of beer.

**ANNIE:** We don't drink beer.

**MARIA:** Never.

**TIM:** Why then you'll have a pleasure.

**ANNIE:** What pleasure?  
**TIM:** The pleasure of seeing me drink it.  
**ANNIE:** Get along with you . .

*ANNIE and TIM exit. Ghostly Music. (SQ 14 - Track 10)*

**MARIA:** This glimpse of the future - however fleeting,  
 Upsets me quite. How my heart is beating! (*Exit R.*)

**(LXQ 16)**

**ACTOR:** (*Entering L.*) Yet Maria's is not the only heart  
 To suffer the wound of William Corder's dart.  
 In London lives an heiress - rich in fame,  
 Who loves the villain by another name.  
 No simple yeoman's daughter, she -  
 But one born in the lap of gentility -  
 Heiress to a fortune of land and wealth  
 Whom Corder stalks with cruel stealth  
 To rob her of fortune and of honour  
 And work his evil spell upon her.  
 To steal her money - to betray her trust -  
 And trample her devotion in the dust.

*The Curtains open to reveal: (LXQ 17)*

**Scene 3: THE DRAWING ROOM of LUCY MAVOR'S HOUSE, LONDON**

*Enter LUCY from L., clutching a letter.*

**ACTOR:** She longs for him. Her heart's on fire.  
 In many ways, she's like Maria.

*MAVOR enters L. The ACTOR exits R.*

**MAVOR:** But, Lucy, my dear, you are pining for an illusion. It breaks my old heart to see you waste your young life thus. Why, to speak truth, I do not believe that this William . . *Messiter?* who so holds your heart in thrall, will *ever* return. Surely, if he bears an honourable affection for you, he would not leave you thus. To disappear and to leave you no word.

**LUCY:** But, Uncle, he was called away in haste. And, in leaving, wrote me this most ardent letter. I dare not show it to you for some of his sentiments would make me blush if read by another. But here, among his many protestations of love and esteem, I learn that he was *forced* to travel to the country on urgent business. His father is a great landowner there and has fallen ill. William has done what any son would do in such a case and hurried to be by his father's bedside. He fears the old gentleman may die.

**MAVOR:** Why then, in that event, I'll wager your precious William will stay in the country, comfortable in his inheritance, and you will never see him more. And I for one should not be sorry.

**LUCY:** How can you speak so, Uncle? He . . swears he loves me . .

**MAVOR:** Loves your money, more likely. You are a wealthy young woman, Lucy, and you must have a care for fear that any suitor who comes calling pursues you, not for yourself but for your fortune. What do you know of this man? This . . William Messiter?



**LUCY:** I know that he is wealthy in his own right. And, if his father should die, then he would inherit a fortune. In that event, he has already sworn to me that he would sell up all in Suffolk and return to London to seek my hand.

**MAVOR:** Lucy, I have seen more of the world than you, dear girl and I promised your poor father that I would protect you and care for your welfare. I am . . . *uneasy* . . . in this man's company. There's that about him which makes my blood run cold.

**LUCY:** Oh nonsense, dear Uncle. He is a most upright man - elegant and rich. He has no need of my wealth . . .

**MAVOR:** Some men there are who can never have wealth enough.

**LUCY:** You do him great wrong. Here, in this dear letter, he tells me that, all his life, he has sought a soulmate . . . and that *I* am she. He will, I know, bring me the comfort I have lacked since my poor parents perished.

**MAVOR:** But, Lucy, your wealth. That for sure is temptation to men of a certain sort. I beg you to have a care and to ponder the matter well before you leap to any swift and, perhaps disastrous decision. To speak the truth, although I know it hurts you, I pray that he is gone from your life for ever and that you may never hear from him again.

**LUCY:** You are wrong, Uncle. So very wrong. And your words distress me more than I can say. He *will* return to London and I *shall* marry him.

**MAVOR:** Yet, while you pine and waste your youth in waiting for him, who knows what mischief this William may not be up to with what country wench or other?

*Villain's Music. (SQ 15 - Track 11) (LXQ 18)*

**LUCY:** Uncle, you do not know him as, believe me, dear, I do.

*CORDER enters, D.L., looking furtively about him.*

**LUCY:** He is a man of honour and will be forever true!

*LUCY and MAVOR exit as the gauze curtains close and trees are tracked on.*

**(LXQ 19)**

#### **Scene 4: THE WOOD**

**CORDER:** (*Aside*) Soon they will be returning from the fair. I must contrive to find Miss Maria all alone. Then we shall see what effect the Gypsy's words have had upon her foolish young heart. (*Exits D.L.*)

*TIM and ANNIE enter R.*

**TIM:** Eh, Nan, that fat woman is the size of the old Red Barn up yonder on the heath.

**ANNIE:** So she is, Tim. That's the size you'll be and all, if you keep a'feeding your face so.

**TIM:** Well, I shan't be feeding my face at all till next I'm paid. For I got no money left now.

**ANNIE:** Nay you said you'd treat us.

**TIM:** So I did - to a quart o' beer and a pennorth o' nuts.

**ANNIE:** But then you drank the ale *and* ate the nuts. Hast no money left at all?

**TIM:** I lost some out of a hole in my pocket. I've only got three half pennies.

**ANNIE:** Never mind thy half pennies. Where's poor Maria?

**TIM:** She must've gone off homeward earlier.

**ANNIE:** I not seen her since you was gawping at that fellow with the two heads.

**TIM:** And I don't believe as he'd got two heads neither, for the one was stuffed with straw. Twas comin' out at the ears.

**ANNIE:** Well, come on. If we run we can catch her up.

*They exit L. Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 16 - Track 12) Night falls. (LXQ 20) The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears above – or behind the gauze.*

**ZELLA LEE:** Maria Marten . . . Oh beware, Maria Marten . . . Fall not to meet my fate . . .

*Enter MARIA.*

**MARIA:** Where am I? In the crush of folks, I was separated from my sister and though I have searched the fair, I cannot find her. And now night has fallen and I scarce can see the path. For sure this is a part of the forest I was never in before . . .

**ZELLA LEE:** Maria . . . Maria Marten . . .

**MARIA:** (*Shivers*) Who's there? Why . . . there's no-one. It seemed that someone called my name . . . And yet I heard nothing . . .

**ZELLA LEE:** See, here, Maria Marten. See - carved into the tree.  
There is a timely warning there for maidens such as thee . . .

**MARIA:** Again. Who's there? Where are you? The voice is in my mind and seems not that of any earthly creature . . .

*Thunder. (SQ 17)*

**MARIA:** Ah! A storm is coming. I must return home. Yet I fear that I have lost my way. I must seek shelter. (*She shelters by the tree L.*) Why, what is here? Carved into the trunk of this old tree . . . 'William and Zella' entwined within a heart. William? Can this be William Corder? And Zella? Who is Zella? Why, is not that the name of the dead Gypsy girl whose ghost, folks say, does haunt these woods?

**ZELLA LEE:** Hear me, Maria Marten, for the villain swift approaches.

**MARIA:** Who's there? Who are you?

*Villain's music. (SQ 18 - Track 13)*

**ZELLA LEE:** Hear me before it is too late, and you bear the world's reproaches! . . .

**MARIA:** I faint almost with fear!

*WILLIAM CORDER enters D.L.*

**MARIA:** Ah, the gentleman's coming.

**ZELLA LEE:** Ah then farewell. My warning is in vain . . .

*The GHOST disappears. (LXQ 21)*

**MARIA:** Tis he who asked me to dance with him. The very one the Gypsy spoke of. How my heart beats. I feel I want to fly his presence . . . and yet . . .

*Thunder (SQ 19) Lightning (LXQ 22)*

**MARIA:** Ah! Terror and some power I cannot fight keeps me rooted to this spot.

**CORDER:** Miss Marten? Miss Maria Marten, by all that's wonderful. *(Aside)* If the Gypsy has fulfilled his part, matters will stand easy for my wooing! *(To her)* Miss Marten, have you no-one to escort you through the storm and the dangers of these woods? *(Offering his arm)* Will you accept my humble services? My house is but a step away . . .

**MARIA:** Oh, sir, though I have known these woods since childhood, I find myself in a path I never trod before.

*Thunder (SQ 20) Lightning (LXQ 23)*

**MARIA:** Ah! How every thunder crack alarms me!

**CORDER:** Here, my dear. *(Putting his arm around her)* Stand close by me. I will protect you.

**MARIA:** If only I had not lost my way . . . So foolish . . .

**CORDER:** Then I must be your guide and see you to safety.

**MARIA:** But, sir, what will people say to see Maria Marten, the poor yeoman's daughter in company with the rich Mr. Corder?

**CORDER:** Why, they will say that William Corder has too much manhood in him to see a poor girl go unprotected in a scene of wild confusion.

*Thunder. Rain. (SQ 21)*

**MARIA:** Ah . . . The rain . . . My dress will be soaked through . . .

**CORDER:** *(Leading her towards the tree)* Then let us shelter here, beneath this tree. *(Taking off his coat)* Here, you shall have my coat to keep you dry. *(Putting it round her shoulders)* Let me cover you. Why, Maria, how your heart is beating. *(Aside)* But soft! I know this place, or seem to remember it.

*Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 22 - Track 14) (LXQ 24) The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears above.*

**ZELLA LEE:** Aye, William Corder, remember it well . . .

**CORDER:** *(to MARIA)* What's that you say?

**MARIA:** I did not speak . . . But see - here carved into the tree - your name . . .

**CORDER:** My name? *(Aside)* What? Why . . . Can this be the place where . . . ?

**ZELLA LEE:** Yes, William Corder. This is the place - this is the very place. Oh, remember me. Remember poor Zella Lee . . .

**CORDER:** Avaunt! *(Returning to MARIA)* Nay. That is not *my* name. I am not he who carved his name there. Some other William . . . Some peasant lad and his sweetheart.

*Lightning, Light fades on the Ghost (LXQ 25) Thunder (SQ 23)*

**MARIA:** Ah!

**CORDER:** *(Putting his arm around her)* Come. The manor is nearby. I shall take you to my house for shelter.

**MARIA:** *(Moving slightly away)* No, Mr. Corder, that would not be proper. But if you will aid me to find my sister, I shall be thankful. The fair was so boisterous that we were separated.

**CORDER:** Then we must take our chance of keeping dry beneath this tree and I'll tell you of the difference between these rural sports and the gay sights of London. *(Drawing her to him again)* Ah, the balls, the concerts, the theatres and joys that make the life of civilised folk worth living.

**MARIA:** Oh, how I should love to live in London.

**CORDER:** Who knows, I may take you there.

**MARIA:** Mr. Corder, sir . .

**CORDER:** With charms such as yours, you would be a jewel upon the arm of any gentleman in the town. *(Kissing her hand)* Upon mine, perhaps . . ?

*Lightning (LXQ 26) Thunder (SQ 24)*

**MARIA:** Ah!

**CORDER:** At least promise me that, if we fail to find your sister, you'll allow me to escort you home.

**MARIA:** I thank you. The road is somewhat lonely and . .

**CORDER:** And among these Gypsy vagrants you will find a protector. Nay. No refusal.

*Thunder. (SQ 25) (LXQ 27) Music - "THE GYPSY'S WARNING" (SQ 26 - Track 15) During the song, CORDER kneels and kisses MARIA's hand and then, rising, kisses her arm, her shoulders, her neck.*

**ZELLA LEE:** *(Sings)* DO NOT TRUST HIM, GENTLE LADY,  
THOUGH HIS VOICE BE LOW AND SWEET,  
HEED NOT HIM WHO KNEELS BEFORE THEE,  
GENTLY PLEADING AT THY FEET.  
NOW THY LIFE IS IN ITS MORNING,  
CLOUD NOT THIS THY HAPPY LOT,  
LISTEN TO THE GYPSY'S WARNING,  
GENTLE LADY, TRUST HIM NOT,  
LISTEN TO THE GYPSY'S WARNING,  
GENTLE LADY TRUST HIM NOT.

*Thunder (SQ 27) (LXQ 28)*

**CORDER:** See. The rain comes on more heavily and I will not allow you to be soaked as you must surely be on the long road to your home. My house is but a step away through the trees . .

**MARIA:** *(Confused)* But . .

**CORDER:** There I have a warm fire . .

**MARIA:** I really should not . .

*He kisses her fiercely on the lips. Ghostly Music. (SQ 28 - Track 16) The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears above. (LXQ 29)*

**MARIA:** Oh . . . sir . . .

**ZELLA LEE:** No, Maria . . . No!

**CORDER:** . . . and some brandy to calm your nerves and warm your spirits. *(He kisses her)*

**MARIA:** Oh, Mr. Corder . . .

**CORDER:** Come, Maria . . .

**ZELLA LEE:** Do not go, Maria . . . Flee, Maria. Flee for your honour's sake!

**MARIA:** But, sir . . .

*(He kisses her)*

**MARIA:** Oh . . . William . . . !

**ZELLA LEE:** Then despair, Maria Marten. You are doomed . . .

*Lightning (LXQ 30) Thunder (SQ 29)*

**MARIA:** Ah!

**CORDER:** Fear nothing, dear Maria. You shall be safe with me. And afterwards . . .

**MARIA:** Afterwards?

**CORDER:** When the weather clears, I shall see you safely to your door.

**MARIA:** I . . . I feel faint . . . You are most kind, Mr. Corder . . .

**CORDER:** *(Sweeping her up into his arms)* This way, Maria. This way. *(Aside)* And so is my first step gained. *(He carries her off D.L.)*

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 30 - Track 17)*

**ISHMAEL:** *(Appearing R.)* Aye. Your first step upon the ladder of crime. When you have reached the summit then my cup of vengeance will be filled. Ha ha!  
My plan succeeds beyond my wildest dreams.  
The girl is easy prey for Corder's evil schemes.

*Music - "THE GYPSY'S WARNING" (SQ 31 - Track 18) During the song, we see CORDER's seduction of MARIA through the gauze. (LXQ 31)*

**ZELLA LEE:**           **LADY, ONCE I LIV'D A MAIDEN,  
PURE AND BRIGHT AND, LIKE THEE, FAIR,  
BUT HE WOODED ME AND HE WON ME,  
FILLED MY GENTLE HEART WITH CARE.  
GENTLE LADY, DO NOT WONDER  
AT MY WORDS SO COLD AND WILD,  
          'NEATH THE GREEN ON WHICH YOU WANDER,  
          LIES THE GYPSY'S FALLEN CHILD.  
          'NEATH THE GREEN ON WHICH YOU WANDER,  
          LIES THE GYPSY'S FALLEN CHILD.**

*The lights behind the gauze fade as MARIA submits to CORDER's embraces. (LXQ 32) Music. MARIA's Theme. (SQ 32 - Track 19) During which:*

**ACTOR:** *(Entering R.)* Ah, you men, preening in your lusty pride,  
 Protect the weaker vessel at your side  
 From he who, with Tarquin's ravishing stride,  
 Seeks her undoin'.  
 For, like Maria, she's a fragile maid  
 Whose heart with honeyed words is easy swayed  
 So swift seduced, and swifter yet betrayed  
 To utter ruin.  
 Yet, oh how swift the villain's appetite  
 Is satisfied. Within a year, his lust takes flight.  
 And another maiden chaste and bright  
 He'll soon be wooin'.

*(LXQ 33) The gauze curtains open and the trees track off to reveal:*

**Scene 5: THE DRAWING ROOM of LUCY MAVOR'S HOUSE, LONDON**

*MAVOR is seated. LUCY rushes in, clutching a letter.*

**LUCY:** Uncle! See! A letter. A letter at last from my beloved William.

**MAVOR:** *(Rising)* Hah! I thought - I hoped - that we had heard the last of that man. It has been a whole year, Lucy, without a single word.

**LUCY:** He explains all, Uncle. He has been in a fit of business the whole time. Caring for his dying father, managing the estate and dealing with lawyers to secure the value of the property when his father passes away. He tells me here that it is but a matter of a few weeks now before his business in the country is completed and he will return.

**MAVOR:** But, Lucy, have a care, my dear. Let not the joy of his letter sway your heart without you challenge him for his past behaviour to you. Is this an honourable manner for a man to treat the woman whom he says he loves?

**LUCY:** He asks me, here in this letter, to be his wife.

**MAVOR:** And will you accept his proposal?

**LUCY:** Oh, Uncle, of course I shall. There is no other in my heart but he. I shall count the days until he returns to make me his wife.

*She exits L. as the gauze curtains close and the trees track on. (LXQ 34)*

**Scene 6: A WOOD NEAR THE GYPSY ENCAMPMENT.**

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 33 - Track 20) ISHMAEL appears R.*

**ISHMAEL:** A year has passed and Autumn comes again.  
 Now poor Maria knows the harlot's pain.  
 A child is born - the offspring of her shame,  
 And already Squire Corder wearies of the game.  
 Last night, he came to our tents to obtain  
 A deadly poison known as . . . Dragon's Bane.  
 The child, I hear, is ill. But can it be  
 He seeks this vile poison as a remedy?  
 I am to meet him here - and here I stand.  
 The hour of retribution is at hand!

*Villain's Music. (SQ 34 - Track 21) (LXQ 35) Enter CORDER D.L.*

- CORDER:** (*Going to him*) Have you procured the drug of which we spoke?
- ISHMAEL:** The deadly poison? Aye, tis here. (*Giving him the vial*)
- CORDER:** And can you answer for its effect?
- ISHMAEL:** Why, that I can. I have seen it slay both man and beast.
- CORDER:** You know for what purpose I require it?
- ISHMAEL:** You told me it was to destroy a favourite dog.
- CORDER:** Yes, there has been great complaint by the farmers about it savaging their flocks and I want its death to be sharp and sudden so it shall not suffer.
- ISHMAEL:** One drop of this will lay low twenty men. Its effect is swift and sudden as the lightning, leaving no trace behind of its deadly work.
- CORDER:** Tis well. (*Giving him a purse*) Here is the gold I promised thee. Now go. Let our paths from this moment be divided, and forget you ever looked upon my face. (*Giving him coins*) Nay, there is more gold yet to buy thy silence. Henceforth we are strangers.
- ISHMAEL:** Be it so. Farewell, kind generous sir, farewell (*Aside*) Now will I watch his every action. (*Drawing back U.R.*) I'll watch him close, I'll watch him close.

*Villain's Music. (SQ 35 - Track 22)*

- CORDER:** (*Aside*) This poison must I use tonight. Maria's child is ill. It must die for my safety's sake. Should my father, who lingers still and *will* not die, learn of it, he would drive me from his home and cut me from his will. The child shall die tonight and Maria shall be my accomplice. I shall bury it in the wood for an inquest might reveal that to the world which I would not have known. Maria may have scruples. If that be the case, then the child shall be my first victim and the mother shall fall my second. And then for my a'cursed father . . . (*He exits D.L.*)

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 36 - Track 23)*

- ISHMAEL:** (*Stepping forward*) Tis as I suspected. He takes the path towards the hovel where he has lodged Maria Marten to hide her shame. Now shall my vengeance triumph. Look down, the spirit of my heartbroken Zella, from thy home among the stars and steel thy father's heart to make the scaffold upon which thy betrayer dies thy monument.

*The trees track off and the gauze curtains open to reveal:*

**Scene 7: INTERIOR OF A POOR COTTAGE** (LXQ 36)

*MARIA kneels beside the cradle. MARIA's Theme. (SQ 37- Track 24)*

- MARIA:** Another day passes and yet he comes not. Oh, my child, my child, would that thy heartbroken mother and thyself could sink to sleep and peace forever. Twelve months ago this day, I was a happy village girl. Today what am I? A ruined woman scorned of all who know my shame. But William *shall* marry me. I have his promise. The door! Perhaps tis he.
- TIM:** (*Entering at the door L.*) No tis me.
- ANNIE:** And tis me too.
- MARIA:** (*Embracing her*) Anne, my sister.
- TIM:** Yes. And Tim - thy brother-in-law that is to be.

- ANNIE:** Shut up! *(To MARIA)* I was going by and called in to see thee.
- TIM:** Yes and I called in to see the baby.
- ANNIE:** Get off - what's thee want with a baby?
- TIM:** Why to get my hand in to be sure.
- MARIA:** Nan, I hope you have kept my secret. So far, all think of the child as one that I haver taken in to nurse. You have told no-one different?
- ANNIE:** No, I have told no-one but Tim.
- TIM:** And I've told no-one but brother Bob and my sixteen cousins.
- ANNIE:** Oh thou great fool! But, Maria, Mother and Father be coming soon so I thought I'd warn thee to be ready for em.
- MARIA:** No, no. Don't let them see me in my shame. My Mother's grey hair will seem to speak reproaches and tell of her past virtuous life, now disgraced by my misdeed. And my Father - I should die beneath his stern gaze.
- ANNIE:** Come, come, cheer up, Maria. I've broke the news to our parents and, though they cried at first, Mother said you were still her child, though fallen in sin through a villain's means.
- TIM:** *(Starting back and pointing at the cradle)* Ah! Ah! Here be a sight. This kid's opening his mouth and he's not got no teeth!
- ANNIE:** Get along. Little uns like that ain't got no teeth.
- TIM:** Then how do they eat their steak and onions? And oh! It's head is as bald as a duck's egg. Run, Nan and borrow my grandfather's wig.
- ANNIE:** Get along. He don't want no wig.
- TIM:** But I tell thee, it's a bald yedded un. Now it's opening its mouth. Gi' it the knob o' the poker to suck.
- ANNIE:** Don't want to make the babby as great a fool as thee. Thy mother used to give thee the wooden bed post to suck on and thee's been wooden-headed ever since.
- (A knock at the door L.)*
- ANNIE:** That's the old folks. Come, Tim. We'll out the back way.
- TIM:** I want to stop and nurse the baby.
- ANNIE:** Nonsense. You'll only drop it to see if it'll bounce.
- TIM:** I never saw such a funny sort of a little baby before. It ain't got no teeth, it cannot talk and it's bald headed. But it's just like William Corder, I can tell it by its nose.
- They Exit at the door R.*
- MARIA:** My Father and Mother coming! Oh, how I dread the meeting. Heart, be firm. They come.

*Music - MARIA's theme, (SQ 38 - Track 25) playing throughout the scene. Enter MR. MARTEN and MRS MARTEN at the door L.*



**MARIA:** Father! Mother! Your unhappy child implores forgiveness.

**MRS MARTEN:** Unhappy girl. A Mother's heart is more indulgent than the World's, but there is yet one more to be appeased - thy Father.

**MR. MARTEN:** What your miseries are I well can guess. What a Father's suffering is I know too well. Oh, how I doted on thee daughter. And yet you sacrificed me for a villain. Your ingratitude has bleached my head and broken my heart.

**MARIA:** No more, for mercy's sake, oh, no more!

**MR. MARTEN:** As I gaze on thee, I think of thy infant days when first thy little steps began, when laughing, with extended arms, you ran towards me and I trembled lest thy feet should fail. You escaped those and a thousand other dangers but now you fall - fall never to arise.

**MRS MARTEN:** But our child is repentant. She faints with shame and grief. Do but speak a word of comfort to her and soothe her anguish.

**MR. MARTEN:** Did I not rear her in domestic tenderness,  
Train her in the paths of virtue?  
Did I not press her to this doting heart,  
And in my foolish pride proclaim my child  
A paragon of earth?  
And did she not blast  
All my fond hopes and, clinging to a villain,  
Leave me in my storm of grief? Oh, I feel that I  
Could curse . .

**MARIA:** No, no, your vengeance cannot make you wild  
And deaf to the agony of a despairing child!  
O, hear me, Father. Do not scorn my pleas!  
(*Kneeling to him*) Thy fallen daughter begs thee on her knees.

**MRS MARTEN:** Dear husband, do not aggravate the dear girl's misery. She is repentant. She is the shorn lamb. Temper the storm to her affliction but do not add another wound to a heart already lacerated.

**MARIA:** Bless you, Mother. Bless you for these words.

**MR. MARTEN:** Arise, Maria, (*Raising her up*) I forgive thee. We are all sinners and should be merciful in our judgement to each other.  
Thy father's home thy shelter be -  
Thy Father's arms shall welcome thee.

*They embrace.*

**MRS MARTEN:** Come, child, return to your home at once.

**MARIA:** I cannot. I am awaiting the arrival of William.

**MR. MARTEN:** (*Breaking from her*) What? Wilt thou cleave still to that villain who has thus deceived and betrayed thee.

**MARIA:** Nay, he has sworn to marry me a thousand times. I hold his written promise. It is only for family reasons our union has been delayed. He may be here at any moment.

**MRS MARTEN:** Come then, Marten . .

**MR. MARTEN:** Nay but . .

**MRS MARTEN:** We will leave her now. Let us hope for the best. Have patience.

**MR. MARTEN:** Hope? I am  
The scathed tree of the heath, cleft in twain.  
The bolt that struck my branches off has left me nought but pain.

*They Exit at the door L.*

**MARIA:** My father's forgiveness has lightened my heart. Oh that William would fulfil his promise. Happiness would then be mine. Ah, tis he!

*Villain's Music. (SQ 39 - Track 26)*

**CORDER:** *(Entering at the door R.)* Dear Maria. How is the child?

**MARIA:** Ill - very ill. I fear he is not long for this world, and if you do not make me an honourable woman, would that I could share his fate.

**CORDER:** Have I not sworn by every sacred tie, you shall be my wife? My Father hovers o'er the grave. When he is dead, I'll make you mine at once and our child shall be a bond of happiness to our union.

**MARIA:** Dear William, I do believe you. But why have you not brought the Doctor as I requested?

**CORDER:** Today he could not attend. He will call tomorrow. I showed him your note and he mixed this small bottle. *(Giving her the vial)* He said for the present it would remove all pain.

**MARIA:** Thanks, dear William, I will administer it at once.

**CORDER:** Do so, Maria.

**MARIA:** *(At the cradle - giving the poison)* The little one seems soothed already. Oh, William, my Father and Mother have been here almost broken hearted at my shame.

**CORDER:** Fear not, dear girl, all will yet be well.

*The child screams. (SQ 40)*

**CORDER:** But see - the child.

**MARIA:** Ah! What ails him? He chokes! He is convulsed! Ah! He is dead! My child, my child! My little child!

*Dramatic Chord. (SQ 41 - Track 27)*

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* Dead! Then I am safe.

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 42 - Track 28) ISHMAEL appears R.*

**ISHMAEL:** No! Lost eternally in the sight of Heaven. Another step on the ladder of crime.

*MARIA screams. The gauze curtain draws on and the trees track in. (LXQ 37)*

## **Sc.8: THE WOOD**

*Enter MARK and AMOS R. leading a band of Gypsies.*

**MARK:** Yea, my brothers, This is a dreadful plight we're in. We have been driven from the common by the officers of the law, acting for this William Corder. Shall we submit to this like sheep?

**ALL:** Nay.

**MARK:** Shall we not rather have vengeance full and deep?

**ALL:** Vengeance! Aye! Vengeance!

**AMOS:** Fear not - but strike the blow surely, and with a firm hand. They heeded not the cries of our wives and children. Why then should we spare his life? This night, Corder's eyes shall be closed in the sleep of death.

**ALL:** Aye, vengeance, vengeance.

**ISHMAEL:** *(Stepping forward)* Hold, children! Whither go ye?

**MARK:** For vengeance. This William Corder has set the Police upon us - has hunted us like wild beasts from the land his good father allowed to us to pitch our tents. And, for resistance to the law, many of our tribe lie in the jail. Only we few escaped to wreak our vengeance. Now Corder's life shall answer for it.

**ISHMAEL:** Hold! Hold! I say this must not be.

**AMOS:** What mean you?

*Villain's Music. (SQ 43 - Track 29) Enter CORDER D.L.*

**ISHMAEL:** Vengeance on Corder belongs to me!

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* Ah! My name. These rascally Gypsies. I will overhear them.

**ISHMAEL:** All the wrongs that you bewail are but as pygmies to the wrong that Corder did to me. He robbed me of my dearest child - my Zella - and drove her brother as a wanderer o'er the sea. For these deeds I'll make him an outcast - strip him of his fortune and let him suffer the pangs of despised beggary as do we. I'll drag him to the scaffold's foot, then with my vengeful eyes glaring into his and my cry of bitter mockery ringing in his ears, I'll force him to mount up - step by step - till I place the rope about his neck. This will be my revenge - a long and torturing one - yours would be too quick - too painless.

**MARK:** But our brothers cry out for vengeance from their prison cells. Shall they cry in vain?

**ISHMAEL:** Not so. He has stacks of wheat and hay - give them - nay barns, stables - aye, the farmhouse too. Give all - to the flames.

**ALL:** Aye!

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* They would do my work for me. They will burn the farm and my father within it. So, all's one. So be it. I have but to bury the child and I shall have only Maria to be dealt with. *(Exit D.L.)*

**ISHMAEL:** My children, I will reveal a secret that will put the rope around his neck. But nay. Not yet. Away. I will not tell you my secret until your work of desolation is complete. Then come to me - the Father of your tribe - and I will give you the proof that shall drag that William Corder to a murderer's doom.

**AMOS:** Aye, friends. 'Tis a glorious plan. Before we strike our tents, the light to guide us on the road shall be the blazing embers of Corder's home. Vengeance!

**ALL:** Vengeance . . . !

*They exit L.*

**ISHMAEL:** Ha ha! Vengeance has come at last after years of watching and waiting. I'll follow and see how my trusty dogs mark down my game. *(Exit L.)*

*(LXQ 38)*

**Scene 9: A SECRET PART OF THE WOOD.**

*CORDER and MARIA enter furtively. MARIA carries the baby. CORDER scratches a hole in the ground.*

**ZELLA LEE:** *(Sings softly throughout the scene)* "**THE BURIAL OF THE LINNET**" *(SQ 44)*

**FOUND IN THE GARDEN - DEAD IN HIS BEAUTY  
AH! THAT A LINNET SHOULD DIE IN THE SPRING!  
BURY HIM GENTLY, IN PITIFUL DUTY,  
MUFFLE THE DINNER BELL, SOLEMNLY RING.**

**FAREWELL, SWEET SINGER! DEAD IN THY BEAUTY,  
SILENT THROUGH SUMMER, THE OTHER BIRDS SING,  
BURY HIM GENTLY, IN PITIFUL DUTY,  
MUFFLE THE DINNER BELL, MOURNFULLY RING.**

**MARIA:** Oh, William, William, this is a fearful deed.

**CORDER:** Yet must it be done for both our safeties.

**MARIA:** My poor baby to be buried like a dog. No prayers above his little head. Far from the shadow of the church. To leave him here within this wood - tis terrible.

**CORDER:** Tis for the best, believe me. An inquest might tell more than we should like the world to know. Here. Give the child to me.

**MARIA:** What? *(Holding back)* Then the child has not come by its sudden death by fair means?

**CORDER:** *(Snatching the child and thrusting it into the grave)* How should I know if a mistake has been made? It lies with the doctor - not myself.

**MARIA:** Oh, what horrible suspicions cross my mind!

**CORDER:** Then let suspicion die. For a magistrate's enquiry would harm you more than myself. Remember the penalty for concealment of a birth.

**MARIA:** I am in your power and have no will of my own. But it is hard for my little one to be here.

**CORDER:** Nonsense. The child will sleep as peaceful here as in a Churchyard. *(Marking the ground with his heel)* See, I have marked the spot so that, at eventide, you may strew his grave with flowers.

**MARIA:** Oh, take me. Take me quickly from this fearful spot.

**CORDER:** Come then. How you tremble. Fear nothing, girl! No eye beholds us.

*They Exit. Gypsy Music. (SQ 45 - Track 30) ISHMAEL appears.*

**ISHMAEL:** Ah, yes! The eye of Ishmael, the Gypsy.

*(LXQ 39)*

**Scene 10: CORDER'S FARM YARD.**

*The GYPSIES enter R. with flaming torches.*

**MARK:** This way, brothers. The servants are drinking in the village. Corder is from home. Now tis our time. But, should he return, we'll hurl him into the blazing fire. Remember - dead men tell no tales. This way. This way.

**ISHMAEL:** Brave boys there at their work. Soon all will be a heap of ruin. Ha ha.

*The farm bursts into flame and burns - crackle of flames. (SQ 46) (LXQ 40)*

**ISHMAEL:** Ah yes. See how the flames destroy all that is Corder's fortune. Now shall he know the sting of poverty. Now shall he trudge the lanes and beg for his daily bread.

*Villain's Music. (SQ 47 - Track 31) CORDER enters D.L.*

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* They little know that they do the work I would have done myself. True, I would have waited for my father's death but, if he is now to be burned alive in his bed, what of that?

**ISHMAEL:** But where can Corder be?

**CORDER:** Here, old traitor dog. Villain, would you betray me?

**ISHMAEL:** Aye. I would drive thee a beggar from thy home.

**CORDER:** Ha! At that threat I scoff. The farm's worth more to me destroyed than you can know of. I am rich. No beggar, I.

**ISHMAEL:** But yet your life is in my power. Know who you have dealt with in your villainies. I am the father of that poor girl whose heart you so basely betrayed - the father of the lad you drove into exile. I swore revenge. It is at hand. I have dogged you step by step. I saw you poison Maria's child and bury it in the woods. I will lead the officers there and then your life shall be forfeit.

**CORDER:** *(Drawing a pistol)* So is yours, old traitor. *(Shoots him)* So perishes the only witness to my crime. *(Exits L.)*

**MARK:** *(Rushing in)* That shot!

**AMOS:** *(Following)* What is it?

**MARK:** Ah! See! *(Kneeling to cradle ISHMAEL's head)* Our father bleeds. Who has done this?

*Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 48 - Track 32)*

**ISHMAEL:** Twas . . . Twas William Corder laid me low . . . I am dying. Seek out my son. The burden of vengeance now belongs to him. Swear by the mystic relics of our tribe. Tell him to relentlessly pursue the path of vengeance until his sister's death . . . and mine may be avenged.

**ALL:** We swear.

**ISHMAEL:** Tis well, tis well. My eyes grow dim. My blood is chilled.

*The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears above. (LXQ 41)*

**ISHMAEL:** And, see - the spirit of my Zella calls me to my home among the stars.

**AMOS:** But this secret that you know of Corder. You must reveal it . . . ere you die.

**ISHMAEL:** Corder is . . . Corder . . . He is a . . . a . . . *(He dies)*

*Music. Intro to Dirge. (SQ 49 - Track 33)*

**MARK:** The spirit is struggling to break free from this earthly prison. The stars have gone out and the moon has veiled her face. Lift up your voices. Let every face look steadily to the west.

**ALL:** *(Sing)*     **LET THE DIRGE BE SUNG  
AND THE BELL BE RUNG  
AND THE TORCH BURN RED  
O’ER THE DEAD ONE’S HEAD  
TILL THE SPIRIT IS FREE  
AND THE FLESH IS DEAD.**

*They lift ISHMAEL’s body and bear him off D.L. as they sing:*

**TROUBLED SPIRIT, PASS AWAY  
FROM YOUR PRISON HOUSE OF CLAY,  
EVERY DOOR IS OPEN WIDE,  
NIGHT IS AT THE TURN OF TIDE.  
PASS AWAY.  
PASS AWAY.**

*(LXQ 42)*

**Scene 11:     A REDSKIN ENCAMPMENT**

*A campfire. Tom-toms. (SQ 50) PHAROS LEE sits with the CHIEF and his SQUAW, smoking the pipe of peace. PHAROS cries out and starts to his feet.*

**PHAROS LEE:** Ah! What mysterious pain stabs at my heart? What can this mean? It is as if I felt my Father’s death across the mighty ocean that separates us. My Father dead? Just when I have found my fortune. My Father dead and vengeance to be mine? I have the wealth now to pursue that monster, Corder. A seam of pure gold which I struck here in this barren wasteland. I have wandered weary miles, I have fought with savage tribesmen, I have survived when many men have perished. And all for naught if my Father is no more.

*Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 51 - Track 34)*

**ISHMAEL:** *(Off)* Pharos Lee . . .

**PHAROS LEE:** What’s this? It seems that, from far across the ocean, I hear my father’s voice call to me.

*ISHMAEL appears above - now a ghost. (LXQ 43)*

**ISHMAEL:** Pharos Lee, Pharos Lee. Bring vengeance upon the head of William Corder.

**PHAROS LEE:** Of William Corder? Is the blackguard still unpunished?

**ISHMAEL:** He has killed me, Pharos. William Corder has foully murdered your poor Father.

**PHAROS LEE:** I shall heed you, father. Now I have gold. All the wealth a man could desire. If I cannot share it with you, Father, I shall use it to avenge your death and my sister’s ruin. I sheathe my knife, for this time it shall be the law which brings the villain to justice and the gallows.

*Link Music. (SQ 52 - Track 35) (LXQ 44) The trees track off and the curtains open to reveal:*

**Scene 12: THE KITCHEN OF MR. MARTEN'S COTTAGE**

*MARIA sits by the fire. CORDER rushes in at the door L., carrying a bundle of clothes.*

**CORDER:** Maria, I am come to tell you that the death of my father has removed the only obstacle to our union.

**MARIA:** *(Rising to him)* Your Father dead?

**CORDER:** I will tell all later. We can be married at once. The ceremony will be performed in London.

**MARIA:** *(Afraid)* London! Why there?

**CORDER:** Do not question me now. Business of great importance calls me away this very night. You must be my companion. I wish you to put on this suit of male attire and meet me tonight - at the old Red Barn.

**MARIA:** No, no. Not there. Even in childhood when I played about it, its shadows cast a chill upon me. And did not the Gypsy that I met at Polestead fair warn me that, in the Red Barn I should meet my fate?

**CORDER:** And will not that prophecy be fulfilled? For from the old Red Barn, we start out on our road to love and happiness.

**MARIA:** But - to leave in dead of night and in male attire. Why this mystery?

**CORDER:** I have told you. I have great matters in hand. You must trust me and do this or I must leave for London without you.

**MARIA:** *(Taking the clothes from him)* I consent. *(Going)* I'll send my parents to you and tonight I'll meet you in the old Red Barn.

*Villain Music. (SQ 53 - Track 36)*

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* She consents, one point gained, curse the girl. She binds me down. Now I have my fortune from this place, I must be free to marry Lucy Mavor and secure yet greater wealth. Maria, when you consented to meet me - in the old Red Barn - you sealed your doom.

*MRS MARTEN enters R.*

**MRS MARTEN:** Ah, William, is this true? Maria tells me you are about to keep your promise.

**CORDER:** Tis true, Mrs Marten.

**MRS MARTEN:** I'm glad to hear it. And her poor Father will rejoice for the girl has too long borne disgrace in her native place. When will the marriage take place?

**CORDER:** As early as possible. For tonight we both depart for London.

**MRS MARTEN:** London?

**CORDER:** Yes. For - family reasons known to ourselves. Our marriage must take place there.

**MRS MARTEN:** Why, William, can you not be married here?

Here she has been pointed at in shame.

Here should the stain be taken from her name.

Why can't you be married at our village church?

**CORDER:** I am sorry that this cannot be. Urgent business in London requires my immediate attention. And so - farewell. (*Making for the door L.*)

**MRS MARTEN:** Farewell, William. God bless you. And, since I can't dance at your wedding, perhaps I'll dance at the christening..

**CORDER:** (*Startled*) Christening?

**MRS MARTEN:** For sure, you'll have the child a christening once you are wed.

**CORDER:** Ah yes - (*fearfully*) the child.

**MRS MARTEN:** Where is the little dear? I long to kiss him farewell.

**CORDER:** I . . . I have engaged a nursemaid to care for him upon the journey. He is with her. There is no time to fetch them . . .

**MRS MARTEN:** I'll not detain you longer for I see you are impatient to depart.

*MARIA enters R.*

**MRS MARTEN:** (*Kissing MARIA*) Let us hear from you upon your safe arrival in London. Pray, I beg you, be kind to my Maria. She has suffered much for you. I now entrust her to your care. And, as you deal with her, may Heaven . . . deal with you.

**CORDER:** Amen. (*Aside*) Heaven? Ha! What have I to do with Heaven? The deed I contemplate will close the gates of Heaven forever against me.

Hence, remorse and every thought that's good.

The storm that lust began must end in blood. (*He exits D.L.*)

**MARIA:** (*Calling after*) God bless thee, William. I will not fail thee.

**CORDER:** (*Distant, sinister*) Nor I thee!

*MR. MARTEN enters at the door R. in haste.*

**MR. MARTEN:** Wife! Maria! Here's such a dreadful thing. Squire Corder's farm is burnt to the ground and the old squire with it. There are Peelers all over the countryside in pursuit of the Gypsies who carried out the deed. And where is William? He cannot be found. It may be that he too died in the fire.

**MRS MARTEN:** No. William is safe. He and Maria are setting out for London this evening. The fire and this great loss must be the business he talked of and to which he must attend.

**MR. MARTEN:** To London? Our girl going to London?

**MARIA:** We are to be married there, Father, as soon as we arrive.

**MR. MARTEN:** Well, I am glad to hear that at least. It seems that I was wrong and that William Corder is an honourable man after all.

*They exit R.*

*Ghostly Villain's Music. (SQ 54 - Track 37) The gauze curtains close and the trees track on. (LXQ 45)*

### **Scene 13: THE WOOD**

**CORDER:** (*Entering D.L.*) The sun is set and now the darkness falls  
To hide my evil deed. The screech owl calls  
And ghosts flit frightened through the ruined halls



And pity's sped.  
 Being so deep in blood, I must not stay  
 But journey on my murderous way  
 The child buried, my father burned in his bed  
 And, by break of day, Maria shall be . . . dead!  
 Ah, I have forgotten to bring a pick axe or a spade. Fool. Should I return, my victim will escape.

*Enter TIM R. with a pick axe and a spade.*

**TIM:** I'm nearly busted. I've had such a blow out of cold pudding. Now old Mr. Marten says I must go and dig a bit of his garden. Oh. Hallo, Master Corder.

**CORDER:** It seems you know me.

**TIM:** I ought to, brother-in-law.

**CORDER:** What do you mean, brother-in-law?

**TIM:** I knows all about it.

**CORDER:** Then you know more than I.

**TIM:** I knows, brother-in-law, thee'st goin' to marry Maria and I'm going to marry Nan. So us'll be in the family line.

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* What? I a relation of this bumpkin? No! I'm more determined than ever to strike Maria's shackles from me.

**TIM:** *(Looking out at the audience)* What's mumblin' about. I know you think you're not as good lookin' as I.

**CORDER:** Can you lend me a spade and I'll pay you for it?

**TIM:** What's want a spade for, brother-in-law? Art goin' to bury summit?

**CORDER:** *(Seizing and shaking him)* What's that you say?

**TIM:** Ecod, you be as fierce as a rat without a tail.

**CORDER:** No. *(Calming down)* No, a friend of mine wants me to take a young tree to plant on his estate and I want a spade to dig it up with.

**TIM:** How much will you give I for the loan of pick and spade?

**CORDER:** How much do you earn a day?

**TIM:** Eighteen pence and they finds me in puddin'.

**CORDER:** Then I'll give you two shillings for the loan of them.

**TIM:** Two shillin'?

**CORDER:** Can you change a five pound note?

**TIM:** Who are yer gettin' at? I never even seed one in my life.

**CORDER:** Then can you change a sovereign?

**TIM:** Aye, if you will wait until I goes to the public house and gets a drink with it.

**CORDER:** No, no, I cannot wait. Here's a shilling - and three pence in coppers. I'll give you the rest when next we meet.

**TIM:** Then you will owe I . . . erm . . . *ninepence*, don't forget. Here's the pick and spade.

**CORDER:** (*Taking them*) I'll leave them outside the door of the Red Barn so you can get them when you want them. (*Exits D. L.*)

**TIM:** Alright. (*Calling after*) Don't forget, you owe I *ninepence*. That's one and thripence more for my own stocking.

*Enter ANNIE R. and MARIA dressed as a man. They embrace.*

**TIM:** (*Amazed*) Hallo, what's that? Dang my buttons if there beant a dandy chap kissing my Nan. I'll punch his head like a pickled cabbage.

**MARIA:** Do you think anyone will recognise me as I cross the field, Annie?

**ANNIE:** Not a bit of it. You make such a jolly nice little man I could fall in love with you myself.

**MARIA:** Tell mother I will write as soon as I arrive in London. Farewell, dear sister. William will be waiting. One kiss before we part.

**TIM:** (*Angry. To MARIA*) Aye, do it again. Do it again. Her likes it.

**MARIA:** Who is this booby? (*Aside to ANNIE*) It's Tim, isn't it?

**ANNIE:** Yes. He don't know you. And he's jealous. Let's have a bit of fun. He's such a coward.

**TIM:** (*Prodding MARIA's shoulder with his finger*) Now then, Mister Whipper-Snapper. What, what are you doing with that young gal?

**MARIA:** (*Doing the same to him*) What's that to do with you, Mister Chawbacon?

**TIM:** Mind I don't chaw *thy* bacon. (*To ANNIE*) And, as for you, you shame faced hussy . . .

**ANNIE:** Call me a hussy? How dare you? I never saw this chap afore in my life.

**TIM:** Oh! What a whopper!

**MARIA:** How dare you address a young lady like that? If you speak - nay, *look* at her again - I'll thrash you within an inch of your life.

**TIM:** (*Sparring*) Come on then. Come on.

**MARIA:** (*Running behind ANNIE*) Oh, I say, Anne, the fellow will kill me.

**ANNIE:** Don't be afraid. He's too big a coward. (*To TIM*) You touch this young man and I'll tear your eyes out.

**TIM:** Thee go home or I'll tell thy mother. (*To MARIA*) Come on, now. Come on!

**MARIA:** I shan't take my coat off to a scarecrow like you. But beware. I'm a dab hand at singlesticks, am in constant practice at the pistol gallery and have had the gloves on with Tom Sayers, who confessed I was a better boxer than he was.

**TIM:** (*Aside. Scared*) Dang it - this chap might hurt me.

**ANNIE:** I told you he was a coward.

**MARIA:** *(Squares)* Come on Sir, come on!

**TIM:** *(Backing away)* Go and hit one thee own size.

**MARIA:** You're a coward, sir. Farewell, sweet one. Kiss. *(They embrace)*

**TIM:** If you kiss her again, I'll . .

**MARIA:** What, Sir?

**TIM:** Nothing.

**MARIA:** Goodbye, sweet girl, and if that bumpkin annoys you, I'll come from London and with my pistol shoot him through and through like a cullendar. Another kiss. *(They embrace)*

**TIM:** Aye. Do it again.

*They do. Exit MARIA R.*

**TIM:** Come back and kiss her again.

*She does and then exits R.*

**ANNIE:** He's gone. *(Teasing)* Oh, Tim, isn't he a nice little man?

**TIM:** *(Sinking down. Tearfully)* Go on, false perfidious one, kissing a chap before my face and after keeping I afraid going to Lunnon and seducing me with your cold puddin'.

**ANNIE:** Now, Tim dear.

**TIM:** Dear? I ain't cost thee naught. Go away. *(He begins to cry)*

**ANNIE:** *(Kneeling to him)* Don't cry, Tim.

**TIM:** I ain't cryin'. I'se pullin' faces cos I didn't smash that chap.

**ANNIE:** Suppose I told you all about it.

**TIM:** I don't want to know anymore. I seen enough.

**ANNIE:** Well, that wasn't a man at all.

**TIM:** Ah? Who were it then?

**ANNIE:** Why, my sister Maria.

**TIM:** Were it? He he he. *(Getting up)* I knowed it were her all the time.

**ANNIE:** *(Getting up and hitting him)* Oh, you great big story!

**TIM:** Do you think if I'd hadn't known it, I wouldn't smashed her?

**ANNIE:** Now, when are we going to get married?

**TIM:** I'll put the bungs up at once and go to the blacksmith and buy a ring.

**ANNIE:** It must be gimlet gold, like mother's, you know.

**TIM:** Wi' a great big carbunkle as big as my fist. But only fancy Maria in them things em bobs. Ecod, it beats cock-fighting.

*They exit R. hand in hand.*

*Villain's Music. (SQ 55 - Track 38) The gauze curtains open and the trees track off to reveal:*

**Scene 14: INSIDE THE RED BARN (LXQ 46)**

*CORDER stands by the freshly-dug grave. He leans the spade against the wall and mops his brow.*

**CORDER:** All is complete. I now await my victim. Will she come? Oh yes. A woman is fool enough to do anything for the man she loves. Hark, tis her footstep!  
She comes in good heart, with hope and good cheer.  
Little does she know that death is so near. *(He draws back U.L.)*

*Enter MARIA, fearfully, at the door R.*

**MARIA:** William? Not here. Where can he be? What ails me? A weight is at my heart as if it told some evil. And this old barn - how like a vault it looks. Fear steals upon me. I tremble in every limb. I will return to my home at once.

**CORDER:** *(Stepping forward)* Stay, Maria!

**MARIA:** Oh, William. I am so glad you are here. You don't know how frightened I have been.

**CORDER:** Did any one see you cross the fields?

**MARIA:** Not a soul - I remembered your instructions.

**CORDER:** That's good. Now, Maria, do you remember a few days ago threatening to betray me about the child to Constable Ayers?

**MARIA:** A girlish threat made in the heat of temper, because you refused to do justice to one you had wronged so greatly. Do not speak of that now. Let us leave this place.

**CORDER:** *(Gripping her wrist)* Not yet, Maria. Do you think my life is to be held at the mercy of a silly girl? *(Dragging her to the grave)* No. Look what I have made here.

**MARIA:** A pit? A trench? Ah! A grave! Oh, William, what means this?

**CORDER:** You are a clog upon my actions, Maria - a chain that keeps me from reaching my ambition's height. *(Drawing a knife)* So you must die.

**MARIA:** But nay, not by your hand! Not by the hand that I have clasped in love and faithfulness. Oh! Pity, William. What do you mean to do?

*Music. Act One Finale. (SQ 56 - Track 39) (Trio from "FAUST" by C. Gounod.) (LXQ 47)*

**CORDER:** **TO KILL YOU!**  
**DESTROY YOU!**  
**AND TO BURY YOU HERE**  
*(Seizing her)* **NO, YOU SHALL NOT TAKE FLIGHT!**  
**FOR YOU MUST DIE TONIGHT!**

**MARIA:** **THIS MY GRAVE?**  
**SURE, YOU RAVE!**



**ERE I SUFFER DISGRACE . .**

**MARIA:** *(Sinking into the grave)* **MY SPIRIT LONGS, WITH THEE, TO REST!**

**CORDER:** **BEFORE THE DAWN, I MUST HASTE AWAY.**

**MARIA & ANGELS:** **O PARDON, HEAVEN GRANT I/SHE IMPLORE/S THEE**

**CORDER:** **NO REMORSE!  
SWIFTLY TO HORSE!**

**MARIA & ANGELS:** **FOR SOON I/SHE SHALL APPEAR BEFORE THEE!**

*MARIA disappears into the grave.*

**CORDER:** **FIRST TAKE A MOMENT TO COVER THE GRAVE  
WELL.**

**MARIA & ANGELS:** **HOLY ANGELS, IN HEAVEN BLEST,**

*(LXQ 49)*

*MARIA's soul (gauze - or a projection onto a smoke curtain) flies gracefully out of the grave and slowly up to Heaven during:*

**MARIA & ANGELS:** **MY/HER SPIRIT LONGS WITH THEE TO REST.**

**CORDER:** *(Turning, seeing the ANGELS and MARIA's soul)* **CURSE MY EYES!  
DOES SHE ARISE?  
SHALL SHE FIND PARADISE?  
AH THEN MY SOUL SHALL BE DAMNED - TO HELL!**

*He collapses D.L. as MARIA's soul is received by the ANGELS.*

*Curtain Music (SQ 57 - Track 40) (LXQ 50)*

**CURTAIN - END OF PART ONE.**

*(LXQ 51)*

**ACT TWO:** (LXQ 52)*Music. Intro Act Two. (SQ 58 - Track 41)***Scene 1: MR. MARTEN'S KITCHEN** (LXQ 53)*The back wall is the U.S. gauze.**Mrs MARTEN is seated in her rocking chair. TIM and ANNIE sit on the floor before the fire. MR. MARTEN leans against the door, smoking his pipe.***MRS MARTEN:** Hey ho, how strange it is. Day after day passes and no tidings of Maria.**ANNIE:** Ah but Maria wasn't never a great hand at letter-writing, Mother. And, for sure, her London life must be full of distractions. And she's the baby yet to care for.**MRS MARTEN:** Baby? *(Rising)* The blessed little soul must be walking now and I not there to see his first tottery steps. It is now above a twelve month since she left our home and only two letters have we received.**MR. MARTEN:** Aye. But the two. And mind, the first of those was from William saying she was so much taken up with London pleasures she hadn't got no time to write.**MRS MARTEN:** And the second in such strange writing - not at all like hers - saying she had a gathered hand and could scarce hold the pen. Ah me, I don't feel at all satisfied.**ANNIE:** *(Rising and going to her)* Never fear, Mother, you shall hear from her in due course.**MRS MARTEN:** Dear, dear, how sleepy I am. *(Returning to her chair)* I'll just take forty winks in my chair here.**MR. MARTEN:** *(Drawing ANNIE and TIM aside)* Though I would not say this for your mother to hear, for fear of adding to her agitation, but I am as concerned for our Maria as is she. 'Tis not like Maria to keep us so long without word.**TIM:** Ooooh, and that London is a savage place, I hear, where many evils bide.**ANNIE:** Sssh! Hush thy clamour. See. Mother's peaceful at last and has dropped to sleep.**MR. MARTEN:** Aye, come on, Tim. It's back to work for thee and me.*MR. MARTEN and TIM exit at the door R.***ANNIE:** *(As they tiptoe out)* Sssshh! *(She exits at the door L.)**Ghostly Gypsy Dream Music. (SQ 59 - Track 42) (LXQ 54)**As MRS MARTEN sleeps, the COTTAGE fades away, revealing the RED BARN through the gauze. ISHMAEL and ZELLA LEE appear and show her the murder. (LXQ 55) She sees WILLIAM digging the grave. She sees MARIA enter and WILLIAM waiting for her - how she fights for her life - how CORDER drags MARIA to the open grave. He is about to fire the pistol when MRS MARTEN wakes with a scream. The vision vanishes.) (LXQ 56)***MRS MARTEN:** Oh, my poor heart. How it palpitates. This is the third time I've dreamt that terrible dream within a week. Oh, Marten! Marten!*Mr. MARTEN and TIM rush in R. ANNIE from L.*

- MR. MARTEN:** What's the matter, Dame?
- ANNIE:** Have you dropped summit on your toes, Mother?
- MRS MARTEN:** Oh, Marten, I've had such a terrible dream!
- MR. MARTEN:** Just what I thought - been dreaming again.
- MRS MARTEN:** Something terrible has happened to our Maria. For this third time I've dreamt I seen her murdered by William Corder. I could see clear where it was and all. It was in the old Red Barn.
- MR. MARTEN:** Nonsense, woman! Tis foolishness. Dreams are not to be believed.
- TIM:** Of course not. I allus dream if I do lie flat on me back. And 't would make you blush scarlet if I told you *what* I dreams of, Annie.
- ANNIE:** And I always dream of thee, Tim, when I been eating summit as doesn't agree with me and I got an upset stomach.
- MRS MARTEN:** I must be satisfied as to the fate of our child. Whatever you say, the dream must mean *something*. And always there's that old Gypsy - the one that was murdered in the wood . .
- TIM:** What? The one that told Maria's fortune?
- MRS MARTEN:** Aye, he. He's always there, a'pointing and a'pointing - showing me what was done to poor Maria. All ghostly it is - the way they move and shimmer . .
- TIM:** (*Frightened*) Oh, my Lord!
- MRS MARTEN:** How William Corder would have stabbed her and strangled her but she fought like a tiger for her life. But then he takes his pistol and . . and he . .
- TIM:** Oh my goodness save us!
- MRS MARTEN:** Go, Marten, summon the neighbours. Get lights and search the Barn at once. What? D'you hesitate? Nay then, I'll go myself.
- MR. MARTEN:** Nay, wife, stay. Compose thyself. I'll go and search - if only to allay thy fears. Tim will go with me.
- TIM:** What? Me go ghost hunting? Oh dear no.
- MR. MARTEN:** Come on. There's nothing to hurt you.
- TIM:** I dunno about that. If some young Hob-goblin should bite my nose off, that would be a great loss to my beauty.
- ANNIE:** Go along, you great cowardy-custard, and look for our poor Maria. Or I won't marry thee. Not never.
- TIM:** What? Does she mean she *shall* marry me, Master Marten, if I *do* go?
- MR. MARTEN:** If she likes thee, tis up to her, Tim. I'll give my consent sure enough. You're an honest lad, for all you're soft i' the head.
- TIM:** Oh, *thankyou*, Mr. Marten. Then I'll go and get my pitchfork and a stable lantern. For we need the light to scare the ghosts away.
- ANNIE:** Ghosts!



Possible Doubles Act I

Actor	1:Green	2:Woods	3:Lucy	4:Woods	5:Lucy	6:W/Gypsy	7:Cottage	8:Woods	9:Secret	10:Farmyard	11:Redskin	12:Kitchen	13:Woods	14:Red Barn
Actor A:	Villager		Peeler	Actor	Actor	Gypsy		Gypsy		Gypsy	Chief			
Actor B:	Villager		Mavor		Mavor			Amos		Amos				
Actor C:	Villager		Peeler		Footman	Gypsy		Mark		Mark				
Actor D:	Corder	Corder		Corder		Corder	Corder	Corder	Corder	Corder		Corder	Corder	Corder
Actor E:	Villager	Ishmael		Ishmael		Ishmael		Ishmael	Ishmael	Ishmael	Ishmael			
Actor F:	Villager	Pharos			Footman			Gypsy		Gypsy		Pharos		
Actor G:	Tim	Tim		Tim		Gypsy?	Tim	Gypsy		Gypsy			Tim	
Actor H:	Mr. Marten					Gypsy?	Mr. M.			Gypsy		Mr. M.		
Actress A:	Maria	Maria		Maria			Maria		Maria			Maria	Maria	Maria
Actress B:	Annie	Annie		Annie			Annie	Gypsy?		Gypsy	Squaw		Annie	Angel
Actress C:	Villager	Zella		Zella					Zella	Zella				Zella
Actress D:	Mrs Marten						Mrs M.			Gypsy		Mrs M.		Angel
Actress E:	Villager		Lucy		Lucy	Gypsy		Gypsy			Squaw			Angel

Possible Doubles Act II

Actor	1:Kitchen	2:Red Barn	3:Alleyway	4:Kitchen	5:Street	6:Opium Den	7:Lucy	8:Rooftops	9:Street	10:Woods	11:Cell	12:Street	13:Scaffold
Actor A:			Hawkshaw		Hawk	Hawk	Hawk	Hawk	Hawk				Hawk
Actor B:			Rich Man	Vill		Eunuch	Footman				Gaoler	Balladeer	Balladeer
Actor C:			Rich Man	Vill		Jeremiah			Peeler				Priest
Actor D:							Corder	Corder	Corder		Corder		Corder
Actor E:	Ishmael		Rich Man	Ishmael		Addict		Ishmael			Ishmael (Priest)		Ishmael/Hangman
Actor F:			Pharos		Pharos	Pharos	Pharos	Pharos	Pharos				Pharos
Actor G:	Tim	Tim	Rich Man	Tim		Addict				Tim		Tim	Tim
Actor H:	Mr. M.	Mr. M.	Rich Man	Mr. M.		Addict					Mr. M.	Mr. M.	Mr. M.
Actress A:	Maria			Maria							Maria		Maria
Actress B:	Annie	Annie		Annie		Addict				Annie		Annie	Annie
Actress C:	Zella		Flowergirl	Zella		Addict					Zella		Zella
Actress D:	Mrs M.			Mrs M.								Mrs M.	Mrs M.
Actress E:			Rich Lady	Vill.		Addict	Lucy					Lucy	Lucy

**MARIA MARTEN – Props and Furniture**

**ACT ONE**

**Scene 1: Polestead Village Green - outside Mr. Marten's Cottage**

Rustic table – to be set and struck by cast  
 Baskets of fruit and baskets of loaves for VILLAGERS  
 Tankards and Jugs of Ale for VILLAGERS  
 Riding crop for CORDER  
 Tray of Pasties and Sausages set Off L for MRS MARTEN

**Scene 2: The Woods**

Knife for PHAROS LEE  
 Coins for CORDER  
 Silver shilling (10p piece) for TIM

**Scene 3: The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London**

Letter for LUCY

**Scene 4: The Woods**

Three half pennies for TIM

**Scene 5: The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London**

Letter for LUCY

**Scene 6: The Woods, near the Gypsy Encampment**

Vial of poison for ISHMAEL  
 Purse for CORDER  
 Gold coins for CORDER

**Scene 7: A Poor Cottage**

Cradle with Baby  
 Vial for CORDER

**Scene 8: The Woods**

Knives and swords for GYPSIES

**Scene 9: A Secret Part of the Woods**

Baby for MARIA

**Scene 10: Squire Corder's Farmyard**

Flaming Torches for GYPSIES

**Scene 11: A Redskin Encampment, Colorado**

Knife for PHAROS LEE

**Scene 12: The Kitchen of Mr. Marten's Cottage**

Rocking Chair  
 Stool  
 Bundle of clothes set off L. for CORDER

**Scene 13: The Woods**

Pick Axe and Spade for TIM  
 Five pound note, a sovereign, a shilling and three pennies for CORDER

**Scene 14: The Old Red Barn**

Knife for CORDER

Pistol for CORDER

**ACT TWO:**

**Scene 1: Mr. Marten's Kitchen**

Rocking chair

Stool

Spade for CORDER

Pistol for CORDER

**Scene 2: The Old Red Barn**

Pickaxe and spade U.L.

Lantern for TIM

Hair ribbon in grave trap

White sheet set off L. for ANNIE

**Scene 3: A London Alleyway**

Basket of Flowers for FLOWER SELLER with loose bunches to sell

Coins for RICH PEOPLE to buy flowers

Knife for HAWKSHAW

**Scene 4 Mr. Marten's Kitchen**

Rocking chair

Stool

**Scene 6: An Opium Den**

Knife for EUNUCH

Opium pipes for ADDICTS

**Scene 7: The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London**

Small table R.C.

Chair

Pen and inkstand on table R.C.

Document on table R.C.

Small table U.L.

Tray with decanter of wine and two glasses on table U.L.

Bell pull L.

Vial of poison for CORDER

CORDER'S coat and hat set off R. for LUCY

Two pistols in the pockets of CORDER'S coat

Whip for HAWKSHAW

**Scene 11: The Condemned Cell, Bury-St-Edmunds**

Stool

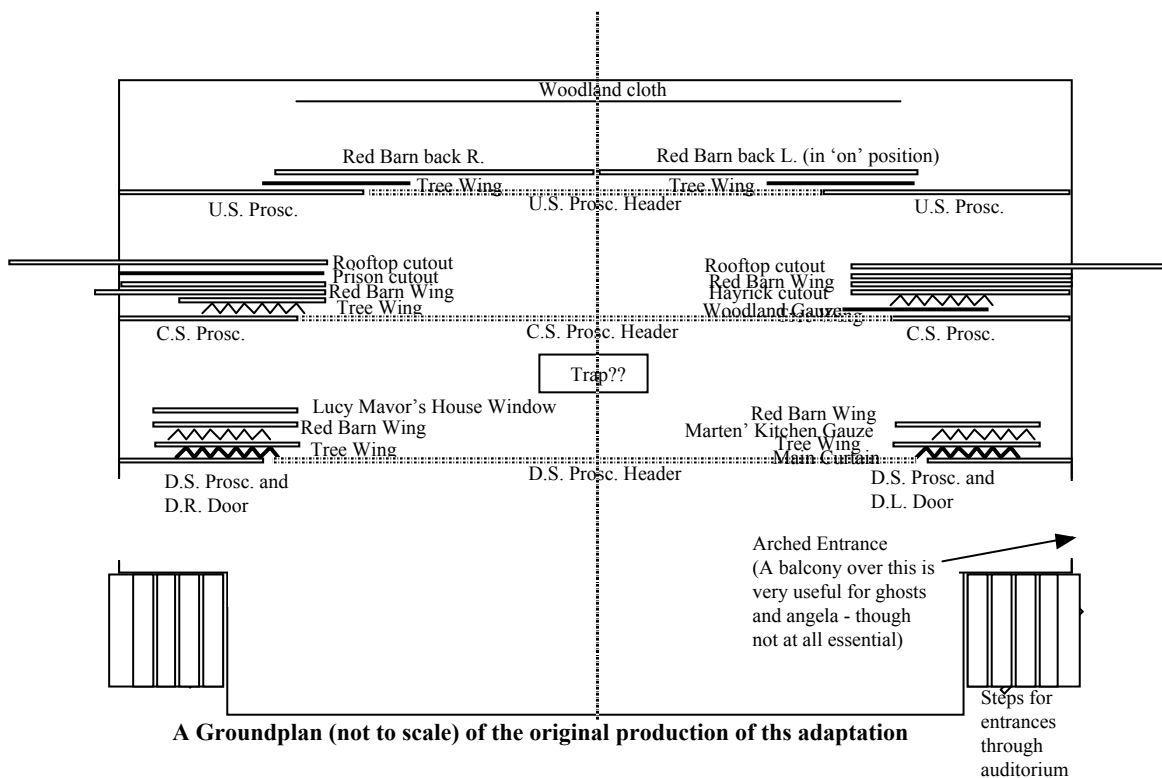
Manacles for CORDER

Bible for ISHMAEL as the Priest

**Scene 12: A Street, Bury-St-Edmunds**

Copies of Ballads for BALLADMONGER

Bible for PRIEST



Roofscape for the Puppet Chase

**Suggested Lighting Plot: Note: ‘Walkway’ refers to the auditorium floor in front of the stage.**

**ACT ONE:**

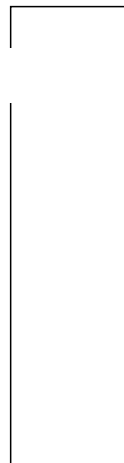
<b><u>Page</u></b>	<b><u>Cue</u></b>	<b><u>Detail</u></b>
7		PRESET
7	1	FADE PRESET AND HOUSE
7	2	Light Stage Area only
7	3	X to very leafy in walkway, losing stage other than for leafies
7	4	X to full leafy golden evening - stage and walkway and Floor R.
9	5	Villain Light DL - Check the rest to halfish
9	6	State of LX3 + villain Light DL
11	7	Fade over 15 secs to deep evening
11	8	X to Leafy night
12	9	Add Tableau lights behind gauze
12	10	X to state of LX8
12	11	Add Villain Cross Light
13	12	X to nice leafy day in the forest
14	13	X to sinister - concentrate C
14	14	D.B.O and UP for disappearance of Ishmael
14	15	X to state of LX12
16	16	X to state of LX2
16	17	X to warm daylight interior - backlight through window?
17	18	X to Villain Light DL
17	19	X to state of LX12
18	20	Fade to state of LX13 + ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
19	21	Lightning + lose ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony
19	22	Lightning
19	23	Lightning
19	24	Add ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
19	25	Lightning + lose ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
20	26	Lightning
20	27	Lightning + ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
20	28	Lose ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
20	29	Add ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
21	30	Lightning
21	31	X to State of LX9 + ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
21	32	X to State of LX2
22	33	X to State of LX17
22	34	X to single spot DC
22	35	X to state of LX11
23	36	X to interior of Hovel – early evening
26	37	X to state of LX8
28	38	X to state of LX13 + ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
28	39	X to State of LX13
29	40	Add Flame FX
29	41	Add ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
30	42	X to tight area C. for Redskin Camp
30	43	Add Ghostlight on Balcony L. for ISHMAEL

30	44	Warm interior – the Marten’s Kitchen - evening
32	45	X to State of LX8
36	46	X to the Red Barn – night - sinister
36	47	Add colour for Musical Finale
37	48	Add HEAVEN light
38	49	Adjust for flight of Maria’s soul
38	50	Fade to D.B.O.

51 RETURN TO HOUSE AND PRESET

**ACT TWO:**

<b><u>Page</u></b>	<b><u>Cue</u></b>	<b><u>Detail</u></b>
	52	FADE HOUSE AND PRESET TO B.O.
39	53	Cosy evening interior - cottage kitchen - family round the fireside
39	54	X to spot on Mrs Marten - lights up behind gauze on Zella and Ishmael
39	55	Add cross lights for Maria and Corder behind gauze
39	56	Snap to state of LX53
41	57	X to lights downstage Red Barn - Tim with lantern
42	58	Add LC
42	59	Add grave area
43	60	Snap B.O.
43	61	London street - night - street lamps, forestage and walkway (if there is a followspot available, it could follow the Flower Seller for the song)
44	62	The same but sinister - lose walkway
46	63	X to state of LX53
47	64	Reduce to very warm on mourners
47	65	Add cross light behind gauze (ought to look very pretty)
47	66	X to walkway and street lamps - London - sinister night
48	67	X to Opium Den - lanterns, smoke, not a lot of light (fiery red? dim green?) some on stage - lose walkway
48	68	Add stage area - still sinister
49	69	Lose opium den
49	70	X to interior - Lucy’s house - night
54	71	Snap B.O.
54	72	X to light for puppets for rooftop chase
54	73	Add ghost light balcony L.
54	74	Snap X to walkway night
55	75	X to state of LX12
55	76	Might colour it up a bit for the song??
56	77	X to Prison Cell - Corder LC to DC + atmos
56	78	Add ghostly ripple for ghost RC
57	79	Snap return to state of LX77 + door L and more DL
57	80	X to very ghostly round trap area
58	81	Add flames up through trap
58	82	Snap return to state of LX91
58	83	X to walkway - day (Again the follow might be useful for “Ballad of Sam Hall”)
59	84	Add sinister on stage as gallows is constructed (or revealed?)
60	85	All turns sinister and colourful for execution - including walkway and scaffold
60	86	Snap to ghostly for ghosts of Ishmael, Maria and Zella
60	87	Snap B.O. as rope swings
60	88	Call lighting
61	89	Fade to B.O. end of “Goodnight” song.
	90	RESTORE HOUSELIGHTS & PRESET



Photographs by Graham Burke



*MARIA MARTEN*  
*the*  
*MURDER*  
*in the*  
*RED BARN*

*a New and Free Adaptation of the Traditional Melodrama*  
*by*  
*Christopher Denys*  
*with Music Composed and Arranged*  
*by*  
*Neil Rhoden*

## MARIA MARTEN - THE MURDER IN THE RED BARN

Along with ‘Sweeny Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street’ and the rather more respectable ‘East Lynn’ and ‘Lady Audley’s Secret’, ‘Maria Marten - the Murder in the Red Barn’ was one of the stalwart pieces of the Melodrama - a dramatic form which flourished in the British theatre from Jacobean times into the nineteen fifties and which is now alive and well in TV soap operas. After all, the return of Bobby to ‘Dallas’ some years ago after being dead for a whole series - his death having been ‘only a dream’ (and the ratings having dropped) - was a dramatic device which made those of the ‘old’ Melodrama seem positively naturalistic. But, of course, it was an idea which pleased the audience and the Melodrama was all about pleasing the audience. If they wanted virgins seduced by wicked squires, horrible murders, revolting Gypsies and numerous ghosts to part them from their pennies, then it was up to the performers to provide them - so they were just as driven by ‘viewing figures’ as are ‘East Enders’, ‘Coronation Street’, etc., etc.

I refer to ‘East Lynn’ and ‘Lady Audley’ as being respectable simply because they were actually written down - just like real plays. Most of the other stalwarts ‘just grewed’ - like Topsy in “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” (adaptations of which were also very popular as Melodrama). This ‘oral tradition’, akin to that of the folk song, lends a gritty reality to the Melodrama, despite its frequently outrageous plots, special effects and the tendency of the cast to burst into song. And ‘Maria Marten’ is certainly based on reality for, whereas nobody has ever been able to verify the existence of an actual Sweeny Todd, Maria Marten and William Corder were real people and the case was a sensation in its time.

William Corder actually murdered Maria Marten on 18 May, 1827 and buried her body in the Red Barn, Polestead, Suffolk. It must have been a lean time for news because the case became a national sensation and, as soon as the crime was discovered, fit-up companies (often called ‘portable theatres’) were thrilling audiences in the penny gaffs, barns and fairgrounds up and down the land with their individual versions of the story. By 1840, it had become a banker in the provincial and outer-London theatres, though it never quite made it into the posh houses of the West End – a theatre in Marylebone being as near as it got.

But this is not to say that there was a standard text of the play. In those days and in those companies of strollers, scripts were a rarity and it was traditional to take a story and ‘act’ it. Every actor knew a wide repertoire of speeches from a wide range of plays and, told what was to be achieved in a given scene (and how long it was to run), they would adapt, plagiarise, improvise and invent within their given characters. In the case of ‘Maria’, all the actors knew the sensational details, having read them in the newspapers, and each group of actors cobbled up its own version. Then, as actors moved from company to company, they took the better bits with them and gradually, certain additions became part of the traditional structure.

In the nineteenth century, Gypsies were obligatory in the Melodrama and in its near neighbour, opera. Even Verdi was obliged to include a troupe of dancing Gypsies in “La Traviata”, though they were quite extraneous to the plot. So Gypsies were added to “Maria Marten” and quickly became an essential part of the story until Ishmael, the King of the Gypsies, the ghost of his daughter Zella, and his avenging son Pharos Lee, became central characters. The dream, in which Mrs Marten ‘sees’ the murder, was part of the

story from the beginning and was reported as a ‘fact’ at the time and this opened the door for other occult phenomena and a plethora of ghostly visitations.

Eventually, of course, some versions were written down and I am particularly indebted to John Latimer who took the trouble to write down the version which was my starting point.

Carrying on the tradition of using the best bits, I’ve included moments which I remember vividly from the various productions of the piece I saw as a child and from having been in a production of it as a young actor in the nineteen-fifties. I’ve also thrown in Hawkshaw, the Detective, for good measure on the grounds that a policeman of some sort is required to assist Pharos in finding William Corder and Hawkshaw was the most famous detective in Melodrama, having been created by Tom Taylor in ‘The Ticket of Leave Man’ as the very first stage detective. He possibly, served as an inspiration for the later character of Sherlock Holmes.

### **Staging:**

In keeping with the tradition, the original production was staged in a ‘Barn Theatre’ format with cutout pieces sliding on from the wings to suggest different locations - along the lines illustrated at the end of this script. But, while the stage directions in this adaptation relate to that form of production, the piece can be presented in any number of ways depending on available resources. The sequence of scenes lends itself easily to alternating ‘front cloth’ and ‘full stage’ settings – though at least one gauze is needed for Mrs Marten’s dream.

### **Style:**

Melodrama demands a certain ‘large, full-blooded’ style of acting and a great deal of direct contact with the audience but it’s very important to avoid sending it up. There will be moments when the audience will laugh at the archaic style – even in some of the serious bits – but, hopefully, their laughter will be affectionate and a part of their participation. On a good night, they’ll hiss William Corder a great deal and laugh uproariously at the low-comedy antics of Tim but we found that you can’t depend on that because they’ll be following the story. We were slightly surprised – but immensely gratified – by the fact that our audiences accepted the style early on and really became deeply involved in the plot. After all, it’s just another convention and, once the convention is established, it’s no more odd than any other.

### **A Grisly Epilogue:**

Although Maria received a decent burial after being dug up from the Barn, the corpse of William Corder was seized by the Royal College of Surgeons for dissection and his skeleton was jointed and kept on display in the hospital foyer where some wag rigged up a mechanism so that the hand moved and pointed to the donation box whenever anybody came near. It remained there until 1949 and it wasn’t until 2004 – 176 years after his execution - that a descendant of his was able to reclaim the bones for cremation. When last heard of, his scalp was still in a museum in Bury St. Edmunds along with a book about the murder and the trial which had been bound by a surgeon with leather made from Corder’s skin.

**CHARACTERS:**

**MARIA MARTEN** (*The Heroine*)  
**MR. MARTEN** (*Maria and Annie's Father - a yeoman*)  
**MRS MARTEN** (*His wife*)  
**ANNIE MARTEN** (*Maria's sister*)  
**TIM** (*A Village lad - courting Annie*)  
**WILLIAM CORDER** (*The Villain*)  
**ISHMAEL LEE** (*The Gypsy King - subsequently a Ghost*)  
**ZELLA LEE** (*The Ghost of Ishmael's daughter*)  
**PHAROS LEE** (*A Gypsy - son of Ishmael*)  
**LUCY MAVOR** (*A wealthy spinster living in London*)  
**HENRY MAVOR** (*Lucy's Uncle*)  
**MARK** (*A Gypsy*)  
**AMOS** (*A Gypsy*)  
**HAWKSHAW** (*A Detective - usually in disguise*)  
**JEREMIAH** (*A Criminal*)  
**GYPSIES**  
**VILLAGERS**  
**INDIAN CHIEF**  
**SQUAW**  
**CRIMINALS**  
**OPIUM ADDICTS**  
**GAOLER**  
**HANGMAN**  
**PRIEST**

**Note: A list of suggested doubles is included at the end of this script**

**SCENES:****ACT ONE**

<b><u>Scene 1:</u></b>	<b>Polestead Village Green - outside Mr. Marten's Cottage</b>
<b><u>Scene 2:</u></b>	<b>The Woods</b>
<b><u>Scene 3:</u></b>	<b>The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London</b>
<b><u>Scene 4:</u></b>	<b>The Woods</b>
<b><u>Scene 5:</u></b>	<b>The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London</b>
<b><u>Scene 6:</u></b>	<b>The Woods, near the Gypsy Encampment</b>
<b><u>Scene 7:</u></b>	<b>A Poor Cottage</b>
<b><u>Scene 8:</u></b>	<b>The Woods</b>
<b><u>Scene 9:</u></b>	<b>A Secret Part of the Woods</b>
<b><u>Scene 10:</u></b>	<b>Squire Corder's Farmyard</b>
<b><u>Scene 11:</u></b>	<b>A Redskin Encampment, Colorado</b>
<b><u>Scene 12:</u></b>	<b>The Kitchen of Mr. Marten's Cottage</b>
<b><u>Scene 13:</u></b>	<b>The Woods</b>
<b><u>Scene 14:</u></b>	<b>The Old Red Barn</b>

**ACT TWO:**

<b><u>Scene 1:</u></b>	<b>Mr. Marten's Kitchen</b>
<b><u>Scene 2:</u></b>	<b>The Old Red Barn</b>
<b><u>Scene 3:</u></b>	<b>A London Alleyway</b>
<b><u>Scene 4:</u></b>	<b>Mr. Marten's Kitchen</b>
<b><u>Scene 5:</u></b>	<b>A London Street</b>
<b><u>Scene 6:</u></b>	<b>An Opium Den</b>
<b><u>Scene 7:</u></b>	<b>The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London</b>
<b><u>Scene 8:</u></b>	<b>The Rooftops of London</b>
<b><u>Scene 9:</u></b>	<b>A London Street</b>
<b><u>Scene 10:</u></b>	<b>The Woods</b>
<b><u>Scene 11:</u></b>	<b>The Condemned Cell, Bury-St-Edmunds</b>
<b><u>Scene 12:</u></b>	<b>A Street, Bury-St-Edmunds</b>
<b><u>Scene 13:</u></b>	<b>The Scaffold</b>

This version of “MARIA MARTEN - the MURDER in the RED BARN” was first produced New Vic Studio of the Theatre Royal, Bristol, on 19 November, 2003 with the following cast:

<i>MARIA MARTEN</i>	.	.	.	<i>JENNIFER BIDDALL</i>
<i>MR. MARTEN</i>	.	.	./	<i>ALEXANDER WOOLNOUGH</i>
<i>MRS MARTEN</i>	.	.	.	<i>DOROTHEA MYER-BENNETT</i>
<i>ANNIE MARTEN</i>	.	.	.	<i>HAYLEY DOHERTY</i>
<i>TIM</i>	.	.	.	<i>ALAN MORRISSEY</i>
<i>WILLIAM CORDER</i>	.	.	.	<i>NIALL MACGREGOR</i>
<i>TOM MARCHBANKS</i>	.	.	.	<i>ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>ISHMAEL LEE</i>	.	.	.	<i>BRUCE McNEAL</i>
<i>ZELLA LEE</i>	.	.	.	<i>ALIX DUNMORE</i>
<i>PHAROS LEE</i>	.	.	.	<i>STEVEN MILLER</i>
<i>PEELERS</i>	.	.	.	<i>IAN BONAR, ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>LUCY MAVOR</i>	.	.	.	<i>DOROTHEA MYER-BENNETT</i>
<i>HENRY MAVOR</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>MARK</i>	.	.	.	<i>ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>AMOS</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>REDSKIN CHIEF</i>	.	.	.	<i>IAN BONAR</i>
<i>SQUAW</i>	.	.	.	<i>HAYLEY DOHERTY</i>
<i>HAWKSHAW</i>	.	.	.	<i>IAN BONAR</i>
<i>EUNUCH</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>JEREMIAH</i>	.	.	.	<i>ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>GAOLER</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>BALLADMONGER</i>	.	.	.	<i>JOHN-JAMES CAWOOD</i>
<i>PRIEST</i>	.	.	.	<i>ANDRE GOTTSALK</i>
<i>VILLAGERS, GYPSIES, CITY FOLK, OPIUM ADDICTS, CROWD, etc.</i>	.	.	.	<i>Members of the ENSEMBLE</i>

*Directed by CHRISTOPHER DENYS*

*Musical Direction and Arrangements by NEIL RHODEN*

*Sets Designed by PENNY FITT and CHARLOTTE CRIDLAN*

*Costumes Designed by JANE STUART-BROWN*

**MARIA MARTEN****ACT ONE***(LXQ 1)**(LXQ 2)***MUSIC - "WE PLOUGH THE FIELDS AND SCATTER" (SQ 1 - Track 1)**

**ALL:** *(Offstage. Softly)* **WE PLOUGH THE FIELDS AND SCATTER  
THE GOOD SEED ON THE LAND,  
BUT IT IS FED AND WATERED  
BY GOD'S ALMIGHTY HAND:  
HE SENDS THE SNOW IN WINTER,  
THE WARMTH TO SWELL THE GRAIN,  
THE BREEZES AND THE SUNSHINE,  
AND SOFT REFRESHING RAIN:  
ALL GOOD THINGS AROUND US  
ARE SENT FROM HEAVEN ABOVE,  
THEN THANK THE LORD, O THANK THE LORD,  
FOR ALL HIS LOVE.**

*During which:*

**ACTOR:** *(Before the curtain)* All that you shall witness here,  
Enacted in this humble hall,  
Tis the true tale, as you shall hear,  
Of poor Maria Marten's fall.

**ACTOR:** And though we shock you to the core  
With vice and horror - murder, blood and gore,  
Seduction, ravishment, the ruin of the poor,  
And every terror true . .

**ACTRESS:** Our moral's clear. O, maids, withhold your trust!  
Lest, virgin treasure trodden in the dust,  
You too become the plaything of a villain's lust  
And learn to rue! *(LXQ 3)*

*The Curtains open revealing the exterior of the Martens' Cottage. The CAST enter as COUNTRYFOLK, carrying food and drink and take their places, singing:*

**WE THANK THE THEN, O FATHER,  
FOR ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND GOOD;  
THE SEED TIME AND THE HARVEST,  
OUR LIFE, OUR HEALTH, OUR FOOD.  
NO GIFTS HAVE WE TO OFFER  
FOR ALL THY LOVE IMPARTS,  
BUT THAT WHICH THOU DESIREST,  
OUR HUMBLE THANKFUL HEARTS  
ALL GOOD THINGS AROUND US  
ARE SENT FROM HEAVEN ABOVE,  
THEN THANK THE LORD, O THANK THE LORD,  
FOR ALL HIS LOVE.**

*(LXQ 4)***Scene 1: THE VILLAGE GREEN - OUTSIDE MR. MARTEN'S COTTAGE***Country Dance Music. (SQ 2)*

**MR. MARTEN:** Come friends and neighbours, come you all. We've little enough and humble fare it is, but what we've got we'll share and have a merry time of it. The harvest's gathered in, the barns are full and ere the breath of winter blows cold upon the heath, we'll make a merry harvest home.

**MARCHBANKS:** God bless you, Mr. Marten.

- MR. MARTEN:** Why that he has, sir, that he has. (*Embracing MRS MARTEN*) Blessed me with the best wife any man ever took to church . .
- MRS MARTEN:** Why get along with you . .
- MR. MARTEN:** (*Embracing ANNIE and MARIA*) And the fairest pair of daughters here, my dear Nan and my lovely Maria . .
- ANNIE:** Oh, Father . .
- MARIA:** Get off with you, Father, you make us blush.
- MRS MARTEN:** And there's honest Tim here that would be our son-in-law if only Annie'd get off of her high horse long enough to make an honest man of him.
- ANNIE:** Me? I'd sooner wed a tinker and travel the roads than be wife to such a fool.
- TIM:** (*Laughing*) She don't mean it. (*Uncertain*) Do you, Annie?
- ANNIE:** Don't I just? And how many times must I tell you, Tim Carter, that I am Anne - what is ladylike - not *Annie* - what is common.
- TIM:** Tis just her way to play the fine lady when we're in company. But when we're on our twosome tis a different tale.
- MARIA:** Oh, do tell us what happens then, Tim . .
- TIM:** Not I. For I was ever the soul of deception.
- ANNIE:** Discretion, fool!
- TIM:** Oh well . . distressin' then. Dang me! I never felt as happy as this since the day I was breeched.
- ANNIE:** Oh, Tim, why do thee talk so?
- TIM:** I only sayin' . .
- ANNIE:** Oh . . Shut thee mouth, fool!
- TIM:** Sorry, Annie . .
- ANNIE:** Anne!
- TIM:** I on'y meant to . .
- ANNIE:** Are you going to ask me to dance or are you not?
- TIM:** Oh. But I'm that clumsy. I can't seem to make my left foot know where my right foot's goin' . .
- ANNIE:** (*Seizing one of the Villagers and joining the dance*) Then I shall dance with Tom Marchbanks and be hanged to you.
- TIM:** (*Calling after her*) But, Annie!
- ANNIE:** Anne!
- TIM:** Oh, why can't I dance like they other fellows?



**MARIA:** Here, Tim. Let me help. I'll teach thee.

**TIM:** Will you so, Maria? Canst be bothered wi' such as I when all the fine lads is begging for thy hand?

**MARIA:** Then all the fine lads can wait their turn.

**TIM:** Oh, bless thee, Maria. Hey, see here, all. I be going to dance with Maria . .

**MARIA:** (*Showing him the steps*) Now follow me, Tim . .

*Villain Music. (SQ 3 - Track 2) (LXQ 5) Enter WILLIAM CORDER, D.L.*

**CORDER:** (*Aside to the AUDIENCE*) What right have bumpkins such as these to be so full of cheer? Ah, how I hate them all! And how I despise even more this wretched place where I must waste my time while waiting for my father to die.

**(LXQ 6)**

**MR. MARTEN:** Why, bless me, it's Mr. Corder! Mr. Corder, sir. I am glad to see you here to honour our homely festivities. I heard you were arrived from London some days ago. But this is a sad time for you, Mr. Corder with the poor squire, your father, so close to death. Pray accept our sympathy, sir.

**CORDER:** (*Convincingly sad*) I thank you, Mr. Marten, but . . as you say . . a sad time.

**MR. MARTEN:** (*Confidentially*) Mind, there's been ugly rumours in these parts. There's some saying that, once you inherit the estate, you mean to sell up and leave Polestead for ever.

**CORDER:** (*Aside*) Damnation! Rumour is already fleet of foot. (*To him*) Why, sir, I have no such intention. The estate has been in my family since - why, since my great great grandfather's time.

**MR. MARTEN:** Ah, I knew twas all lies, sir. But I'm pleased to be reassured by your good self. I'm sure you'll be as good and kind a landlord as your dear father's been these many years.

**CORDER:** Rest assured, Mr. Marten, I shall endeavour to be so. (*Aside*) Not I for ten thousand pounds. I have the farm insured for four times its value on the market. As soon as my wretched father breathes his last, I shall set a fire to consume it all, take my fortune and shake the mud of this county from my feet for ever. Yet the old man clings to life like a limpet to a rock. Ye gods! Will he *never* die? And, while I wait, I must suffer the company of these . . *peasants!*

*ANNIE has stopped dancing and is ogling him.*

**MR. MARTEN:** Will it please you to divert yourself from your sadness a while and join our merrymaking, sir?

**CORDER:** I thank you for your kindly welcome, sir.

*Music - Maria's Theme (SQ 4 - Track 3) takes over briefly from the dance music as we see MARIA dancing R.*

**CORDER:** (*Aside, seeing MARIA*) Egad, yon is the pretty wench that has haunted my thoughts since I have been in the country. What a purgatory is this place to me, who am accustomed to the pleasures and debaucheries of the city. Yet a man might while away many a tedious hour with such a wench as she. (*To Mr. Marten*) But tell me, Mr. Marten - who is that charming girl?

**MR. MARTEN:** Why, sir, you do me too much honour. She's my daughter, sir, grewed up fair since last you last saw her. Maria! Come hither, girl, and greet the Squire's son. This here is Master William Corder - the son of our landlord.

- MARIA:** (*Curtseying shyly*) Sir.
- CORDER:** Charmed to make your acquaintance, Miss Marten. May I claim your hand for the next dance?
- MARIA:** Excuse me sir, but I never dance with strangers.
- MR. MARTEN:** Stranger? Master Corder a stranger? Nay! 'Tis true he's lived in London many a year but, Maria, this young man will shortly be our Squire - *and* our landlord. Oh! Begging pardon, sir. To talk so of your poor father's death. He's fading fast, I hear.
- CORDER:** He's very weak and growing weaker by the hour. Yet he clings on, Mr. Marten. (*Aside, bitterly*) He clings on.
- MR. MARTEN:** The squire was ever a lusty man, sir, and as kind and generous a gentleman as ever drew breath.
- CORDER:** As you say, sir, as you say. (*Aside*) God rot him! (*To MARIA*) Now, Miss Maria - now that we have been introduced and I am no longer a stranger, surely I may claim a dance.
- MARIA:** I'm sorry, sir. But I am promised to dance with poor Tim and to teach him the steps. (*She curtseys and rejoins TIM R.*)
- MR. MARTEN:** You'll excuse her manners sir. She's but a country girl and knows not the civilities of your London ladies. But she's an industrious girl and as good as she is pretty.
- CORDER:** And pretty she is, sir. There's no disputing that. (*Aside*) Yet she'd sooner dance with a peasant ploughboy than with me. (*Slapping his riding crop against his boot*) But she shall learn her manners and pay well for her incivility.
- MRS MARTEN:** Here's more beef and pasties and puddings fresh from the oven. Where's that Tim got to? I never saw a boy with such an appetite.
- TIM:** (*Skipping*) I'm dancing, Mrs Marten. See? I'm dancing like a gentleman.
- MRS MARTEN:** I got more food here, Tim.
- TIM:** (*Stops immediately*) Oh well, that's a different matter. Pardon me, Maria but me stom jacks rumbling and a grumbling like an old hurdy-gurdy.
- MR. MARTEN:** Come, my friends, enjoy yourselves with jolly old English cheer. Roast beef and pudding and plenty of good beer.
- TIM:** Ecod, I'll punish the pudding and the beer.
- ANNIE:** Aye thou great unmannered fool - thou'd punish anything.
- TIM:** Aye. (*Drawing her aside*) And I'll punish thee if I catches thee ogling yon London chap.
- ANNIE:** Me look at him? Oooo, what a whopper!
- TIM:** Aye and I'll whop him if he winks at thee again. If thee wants a fine specimen o' manhood, cast thine eyes on me.
- ANNIE:** Fine specimen of a donkey.
- TIM:** Dost call me donkey?
- ANNIE:** A regular jackass.

- MR. MARTEN:** Mister Corder, can I prevail on you to eat with us? The fare is humble yet the welcome's great.
- CORDER:** I thank you, Mr. Marten, but I must return to the Grange. My present sadness for my father would cast a pall upon your festivities. I beg that you'll excuse me.
- MR. MARTEN:** Then good night to thee, Mister Corder. Say goodnight to the gentleman, Maria.
- MARIA:** Goodnight to you, sir. I shall pray for your father's health.
- CORDER:** I thank you for your prayers, Miss Maria. (*Kissing her hand*) I hope that I may be included in them.
- MARIA:** I cannot believe that you are in need of *my* prayers, sir.
- CORDER:** (*Aside*) Pretty and coy, and ripe as an apple. Yes. She *shall* be mine for I shall overcome her scruples.

*Villain Music. (SQ 5 - Track 4)*

- CORDER:** Though innocent, she has a lusty eye.  
I'll win her or I'll know the reason why.  
She'll be my slave and sing a different song.  
I'll have her - but I will not keep her long. (*Exits D.L.*)
- TIM:** Here, Maria, Annie, didst know that there are Gypsies camped in the wood? A whole tribe of 'em. So don't you gals go wandering in there to pick posies nor nothing lest you got I there to protect you.
- ANNIE:** You? A fine protection you'd be. You've not got the courage of a spring lamb.
- TIM:** I have so. Tomorrow is the day of Polestead Fair and I shall escort you there, Annie, and make sure that no Gypsy dare accost you on the way.
- ANNIE:** I'll not go to no fair unless Maria goes too.
- TIM:** Then I shall escort you both and see you safe.
- ANNIE:** Safe? If you saw a Gypsy there, you'd run off like a rabbit.

*Crash of thunder. (SQ 6)*

- MR. MARTEN:** Come in, dear friends, for the weather threatens. We'll carry on our merrymaking by the hearth. With harvest done we may lie in tomorrow so let us all be merry until late tonight.

*They all exit into the house by the doors R and L. (LXQ 7)*

- TIM:** (*Calling after them*) Don't you fear none, Annie. Nor you, Maria. I'm not afraid of no Gypsies. (*Backing R.*) No, not I. Why, if I was to meet a Gypsy in the wood . . .

*Gypsy music (SQ 7 - Track 5) ISHMAEL appears R.*

- TIM:** (*Turning to be confronted by ISHMAEL*) Ah! (*He runs off into the house L.*)

*The house is drawn off and the woodland gauze and the trees drawn on.*

**(LXQ 8)**

## **Scene 2: THE WOOD**

**ISHMAEL:** Once more I am returned to that village where I spent my darkest hours. Here it was that, years gone by, we pitched our tents. Joy and contentment dwelt among us then when my daughter - Zella - was the sunshine of our tribe. **(LXQ 9)** *(The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears behind the gauze.)* But woe befell us. It was here - in this very wood - that her betrayer saw her, *(ZELLA runs to the arms of WILLIAM CORDER.)* desired her, seduced her from us and, wearying of her once her heart was won, *(CORDER embraces her then casts her from him. She languishes.)* cast her off to die of a broken heart. My dearest girl withered as a lovely flower upon the stem. She died of despair within these arms of mine - her last words breathing her seducer's name.

**ZELLA LEE:** William Corder! *(Dies)*

**ISHMAEL:** My son, Pharos, swore revenge *(PHAROS LEE appears. He attacks CORDER with knife raised.)* and swore his oath never to rest until his knife was buried deep in Corder's heart. *(CORDER summons PEELERS who move to arrest PHAROS.)* But the villain brought the law upon us and Pharos had to flee to distant land. *(PHAROS flees. The image fades.)* **(LXQ 10)** Our tribe was scattered across all the continents of the weary world. But now the hand of time has passed across my brow and I return. Corder will not know me now and revenge, which has festered all these years will burst upon the head of he that ruined my poor girl and drove my gallant son to exile.

*Villain Music (SQ 8 - Track 6) (LXQ 11) CORDER enters D.L.*

**ISHMAEL:** Ah! He comes. *(Withdrawing R.)* Let me stand aside and ponder how the first stroke of my vengeance now shall fall.

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* I learn that Miss Maria Marten and her sister will shortly pass this way to Polestead Fair. Here, under some pretence, I will accost them. I see that Gypsies have pitched their tents and caravans within the wood. Once, if I remember, one of their dark-eyed beauties was briefly my plaything. Psha! She is dead!

*Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 9 - Track 7)*

**CORDER:** Yet the superstitious peasants swear that her spirit often walks these pathways through the woods. Yet what have I to fear? There is not one of them to know me now. But soft - who have we here? A Gypsy by his dress. Ah, a plan flashes across my mind. *(Aloud)* Hark ye, Gypsy, do you want to earn a gold piece?

**ISHMAEL:** *(In the character of an old man)* Why yes, good gentleman. What is it you require? Shall the poor old Gypsy read the stars for you? And tell you of the future?

**CORDER:** No. I don't believe in your Gypsy nonsense. But I wish you to accost a young girl who takes my fancy.

**ISHMAEL:** *(Aside)* Ah another victim. *(To him)* What would the noble gentleman require me to say to this young lady?

**CORDER:** Speak to her of the future. Aye. Tell her of her fortune. Say there is a gentleman that loves her - the squire's son that she met at the harvest supper. Tell her to be not shy of him - that he means her honourable and that riches and happiness lie before her. Tell her . . . Oh, tell her any damnable thing that will win her to my purpose. For sure, I need not describe that purpose?

**ISHMAEL:** No, sir. Your purpose is clear enough.

**CORDER:** Here then. Take the gold and be about it.

**ISHMAEL:** I will do this, never fear.

**CORDER:** Do your work well and you will find me a liberal master. Ah, see, they are coming down the lane. Don't mistake now - the smaller of the two. *(He exits R.)*

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 10 - Track 8)*

**ISHMAEL:** *(Aside)* So! The wolf is abroad. Shall another innocent girl fall victim to his desires? What matter, she is not of our people and what mercy did the white race ever show to us? Do you not drive us from village to village? Have you not chained and imprisoned us without reason? I'll aid this William Corder and, in so doing, further my revenge. I'll lead him on - step by step, villainy by villainy - until he mounts the scaffold and feels the noose tighten about his neck. Aye! That will be a glorious revenge! *(Drawing aside R.)* But soft!

*Enter TIM, ANNIE and MARIA from L. Birdsong. (SQ 11) (LXQ 12)*

**ANNIE:** Oh, come on, Tim. How slow you walk.

**TIM:** It's the weight of money I've got in my pocket that keeps me back.

**MARIA:** Then I hope you'll buy us something nice at the fair.

**TIM:** Oh aye. I'll treat you both in the swing boats - them as goes up one side and comes down t'other, and I'll buy you a pennorth o' nuts to crack and sharpen your teeth with, and ye shall see all the shows. Why, there's the moving waxworks, the wild beasts, the seven legged calf and the fat woman.

**MARIA:** Will you treat us to all that?

**TIM:** I should think so too. I've got a power o' brass. *(Aside to the AUDIENCE)* I've got naught but a shillin' if the truth were known.

**ANNIE:** Come on, Tim. We shall be talking here till the show is over.

**ISHMAEL:** *(Stepping forward)* Stay, good people, have your fortune told.

**TIM:** *(Starting back)* Ah!

**ANNIE:** Go on then, Tim. To the fore now. Show how you'll protect us.

**TIM:** Aye. That I will. *(Aside)* He seems to be a frail old man and not too savage. *(To ISHMAEL)* Now then, mister Gypsy, I . . . I . . . I . . .

**ISHMAEL:** Nay, turn not pale at the sight of old Ishmael. A poor raggle-taggle but an honest seer who can tell you of your future.

**TIM:** Oh . . . Well, I don't know 'bout that . . . How much is it, old man?

**ISHMAEL:** Cross my palm with silver and I'll tell you all that the stars have in store. Cross my palm, young gentleman, young ladies. Cross my palm. A piece of silver for each future is all I ask.

**TIM:** *(Aside)* I only got my silver shilling. Oh my bob. Oh my bob. It's going all at once before I reach the fair. If only I could get away.

**ANNIE:** Do treat us, Tim. It won't cost much for me and Maria.

**TIM:** You two ask the old chap all about it. See what he's got to offer. *(Aside)* Now's my chance - I'll go and get my bob changed for four silver threepenny bits. *(Exits R.)*

**ANNIE:** Well, I should like to know what my future holds. And can you tell us all that?

**ISHMAEL:** I can. For nothing is hidden from old Ishmael's eyes.

**ANNIE:** Now then, Tim . . . Well bless me! He's gone. Look! There he goes into that ale house yonder. I'll have him out o' that for making a fool of me. I'll currycomb his hair for him. *(Exits R.)*

**MARIA:** (*Aside*) How foolish of my sister to run away and leave me with this sinister old man. (*Starting to follow*) I'll follow her and . . .

**ISHMAEL:** (*Blocking her way*) Stay, girl!

**MARIA:** Why stay at your bidding? What mean you, sir?

**ISHMAEL:** No harm, dear girl, but to speak your future good.

**MARIA:** I have no belief in your powers and, if I had. I am too poor to pay for your skill.

**ISHMAEL:** I seek no reward from you, Maria Marten, but will tell you gratis . .

**MARIA:** My name? How do you know my name?

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 12 - Track 9) (LXQ 13)*

**ISHMAEL:** I know many things (*taking her hand*) and your pretty palm will tell me more. Aye. See this line here? So short it is yet it tells me all. The star of your destiny shines out bright and clear. Already you have met the one who will be your fate. He will swear his love for you. He will promise to take you as his wife. He is rich and prosperous and *may* make you happy.

Listen and learn before it be too late.

Tis written upon the table of your fate -

Fortune and riches are for thee in store,

But your star is shadowed . . (*Horried*) Ah! I read no more.

**MARIA:** Shadowed? What mean you?

**ISHMAEL:** Yet I must tell the truth while I draw breath.

But, in the end - there's misery - and death!

(*Retreating*) Listen and be warned ere it be too late,

At the old Red Barn shall you meet your fate.

*Thunder. (SQ 13) (LXQ 14) ISHMAEL vanishes R.*

**MARIA:** What? Gone? He has quite taken my breath away. But what did he say? That I'm loved by a fine gentleman? By his description, he means Squire Corder, our landlord's son. Why, he's a handsome man, there's no denying. But . . will he *really* declare his love . . for *me*? Oh how nice it would be to be a rich lady. But then, the Gypsy spoke of misery and . . *death*! Well, death comes to us all but misery is only caused by those who bring wretchedness upon themselves. I have been taught the lessons of virtue and piety. I think they will protect me from vice and keep my name and honour spotless.

*Enter TIM, driven on by ANNIE. (LXQ 15)*

**TIM:** What's quarrelling about?

**ANNIE:** Why, you're a nasty shabby fellow - to run away and leave me and Maria with that old Gypsy.

**TIM:** I went to get all my gold changed to silver.

**ANNIE:** Thee's got no gold - naught but a brass neck. Oh Maria, did you have your fortune told?

**MARIA:** What? Oh . . it was nothing . .

**ANNIE:** A funny kind of nothing to leave you looking so dreamy and enchanted . .

**TIM:** You looks like you'd seen a ghost . .

**MARIA:** Nonsense. I don't believe in such rubbish.

**TIM:** Nay, no more do I. That's why I wouldn't waste my bob - I mean my sovereign.

**ANNIE:** I don't believe you've got any money.

**TIM:** Well . . . tell truth, I've got a bob.

**ANNIE:** Only a *bob*? And thou told me thoudst got heaps of gold.

**TIM:** D'you think I bring all my money out at once to lose it?

**MARIA:** What are you going to buy us for a fairing, Tim?

**TIM:** Why, Maria, I will buy thee a monkey up a stick.

**ANNIE:** She don't need one, Tim - not while we got you.

**TIM:** Ah! Ye dinna say so.

**ANNIE:** What will you buy me?

**TIM:** I'll buy thee a cradle.

**ANNIE:** A cradle? What for?

**TIM:** Against we gets married - a cradle for to put my pretty son in it.

**ANNIE:** Your son? Pretty? Why you are as ugly as sin.

**TIM:** Yet you are pretty enough for the both of us, Annie. Any child of thine would be as pretty as thee.

**ANNIE:** (*Touched*) Oh, Tim . . . Thou bist the greatest fool in all England.

**TIM:** Then what are you sticking up to me for?

**ANNIE:** Cos I know ye are that *ugly* I can keep thee to myself for thy face would frighten away any other lass.

**TIM:** My mother said I was the prettiest duck in the flock.

**ANNIE:** That's why thee's grown up such an ugly goose.

**MARIA:** Don't quarrel. But, if we are going to the fair, let's start at once or go home.

**TIM:** Nay, we mun go to the fair for there's a public house upon the road and I mun treat you.

**ANNIE:** To what?

**TIM:** A quart of beer.

**ANNIE:** We don't drink beer.

**MARIA:** Never.

**TIM:** Why then you'll have a pleasure.

**ANNIE:** What pleasure?  
**TIM:** The pleasure of seeing me drink it.  
**ANNIE:** Get along with you . .

*ANNIE and TIM exit. Ghostly Music. (SQ 14 - Track 10)*

**MARIA:** This glimpse of the future - however fleeting,  
 Upsets me quite. How my heart is beating! (*Exit R.*)

**(LXQ 16)**

**ACTOR:** (*Entering L.*) Yet Maria's is not the only heart  
 To suffer the wound of William Corder's dart.  
 In London lives an heiress - rich in fame,  
 Who loves the villain by another name.  
 No simple yeoman's daughter, she -  
 But one born in the lap of gentility -  
 Heiress to a fortune of land and wealth  
 Whom Corder stalks with cruel stealth  
 To rob her of fortune and of honour  
 And work his evil spell upon her.  
 To steal her money - to betray her trust -  
 And trample her devotion in the dust.

*The Curtains open to reveal: (LXQ 17)*

### **Scene 3: THE DRAWING ROOM of LUCY MAVOR'S HOUSE, LONDON**

*Enter LUCY from L., clutching a letter.*

**ACTOR:** She longs for him. Her heart's on fire.  
 In many ways, she's like Maria.

*MAVOR enters L. The ACTOR exits R.*

**MAVOR:** But, Lucy, my dear, you are pining for an illusion. It breaks my old heart to see you waste your young life thus. Why, to speak truth, I do not believe that this William . . *Messiter?* who so holds your heart in thrall, will *ever* return. Surely, if he bears an honourable affection for you, he would not leave you thus. To disappear and to leave you no word.

**LUCY:** But, Uncle, he was called away in haste. And, in leaving, wrote me this most ardent letter. I dare not show it to you for some of his sentiments would make me blush if read by another. But here, among his many protestations of love and esteem, I learn that he was *forced* to travel to the country on urgent business. His father is a great landowner there and has fallen ill. William has done what any son would do in such a case and hurried to be by his father's bedside. He fears the old gentleman may die.

**MAVOR:** Why then, in that event, I'll wager your precious William will stay in the country, comfortable in his inheritance, and you will never see him more. And I for one should not be sorry.

**LUCY:** How can you speak so, Uncle? He . . swears he loves me . .

**MAVOR:** Loves your money, more likely. You are a wealthy young woman, Lucy, and you must have a care for fear that any suitor who comes calling pursues you, not for yourself but for your fortune. What do you know of this man? This . . William Messiter?



**LUCY:** I know that he is wealthy in his own right. And, if his father should die, then he would inherit a fortune. In that event, he has already sworn to me that he would sell up all in Suffolk and return to London to seek my hand.

**MAVOR:** Lucy, I have seen more of the world than you, dear girl and I promised your poor father that I would protect you and care for your welfare. I am . . . *uneasy* . . . in this man's company. There's that about him which makes my blood run cold.

**LUCY:** Oh nonsense, dear Uncle. He is a most upright man - elegant and rich. He has no need of my wealth . . .

**MAVOR:** Some men there are who can never have wealth enough.

**LUCY:** You do him great wrong. Here, in this dear letter, he tells me that, all his life, he has sought a soulmate . . . and that *I* am she. He will, I know, bring me the comfort I have lacked since my poor parents perished.

**MAVOR:** But, Lucy, your wealth. That for sure is temptation to men of a certain sort. I beg you to have a care and to ponder the matter well before you leap to any swift and, perhaps disastrous decision. To speak the truth, although I know it hurts you, I pray that he is gone from your life for ever and that you may never hear from him again.

**LUCY:** You are wrong, Uncle. So very wrong. And your words distress me more than I can say. He *will* return to London and I *shall* marry him.

**MAVOR:** Yet, while you pine and waste your youth in waiting for him, who knows what mischief this William may not be up to with what country wench or other?

*Villain's Music. (SQ 15 - Track 11) (LXQ 18)*

**LUCY:** Uncle, you do not know him as, believe me, dear, I do.

*CORDER enters, D.L., looking furtively about him.*

**LUCY:** He is a man of honour and will be forever true!

*LUCY and MAVOR exit as the gauze curtains close and trees are tracked on.*

**(LXQ 19)**

#### **Scene 4: THE WOOD**

**CORDER:** (*Aside*) Soon they will be returning from the fair. I must contrive to find Miss Maria all alone. Then we shall see what effect the Gypsy's words have had upon her foolish young heart. (*Exits D.L.*)

*TIM and ANNIE enter R.*

**TIM:** Eh, Nan, that fat woman is the size of the old Red Barn up yonder on the heath.

**ANNIE:** So she is, Tim. That's the size you'll be and all, if you keep a'feeding your face so.

**TIM:** Well, I shan't be feeding my face at all till next I'm paid. For I got no money left now.

**ANNIE:** Nay you said you'd treat us.

**TIM:** So I did - to a quart o' beer and a pennorth o' nuts.

**ANNIE:** But then you drank the ale *and* ate the nuts. Hast no money left at all?

**TIM:** I lost some out of a hole in my pocket. I've only got three half pennies.

**ANNIE:** Never mind thy half pennies. Where's poor Maria?

**TIM:** She must've gone off homeward earlier.

**ANNIE:** I not seen her since you was gawping at that fellow with the two heads.

**TIM:** And I don't believe as he'd got two heads neither, for the one was stuffed with straw. T'was comin' out at the ears.

**ANNIE:** Well, come on. If we run we can catch her up.

*They exit L. Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 16 - Track 12) Night falls. (LXQ 20) The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears above – or behind the gauze.*

**ZELLA LEE:** Maria Marten . . . Oh beware, Maria Marten . . . Fall not to meet my fate . . .

*Enter MARIA.*

**MARIA:** Where am I? In the crush of folks, I was separated from my sister and though I have searched the fair, I cannot find her. And now night has fallen and I scarce can see the path. For sure this is a part of the forest I was never in before . . .

**ZELLA LEE:** Maria . . . Maria Marten . . .

**MARIA:** (*Shivers*) Who's there? Why . . . there's no-one. It seemed that someone called my name . . . And yet I heard nothing . . .

**ZELLA LEE:** See, here, Maria Marten. See - carved into the tree.  
There is a timely warning there for maidens such as thee . . .

**MARIA:** Again. Who's there? Where are you? The voice is in my mind and seems not that of any earthly creature . . .

*Thunder. (SQ 17)*

**MARIA:** Ah! A storm is coming. I must return home. Yet I fear that I have lost my way. I must seek shelter. (*She shelters by the tree L.*) Why, what is here? Carved into the trunk of this old tree . . . 'William and Zella' entwined within a heart. William? Can this be William Corder? And Zella? Who is Zella? Why, is not that the name of the dead Gypsy girl whose ghost, folks say, does haunt these woods?

**ZELLA LEE:** Hear me, Maria Marten, for the villain swift approaches.

**MARIA:** Who's there? Who are you?

*Villain's music. (SQ 18 - Track 13)*

**ZELLA LEE:** Hear me before it is too late, and you bear the world's reproaches! . . .

**MARIA:** I faint almost with fear!

*WILLIAM CORDER enters D.L.*

**MARIA:** Ah, the gentleman's coming.

**ZELLA LEE:** Ah then farewell. My warning is in vain . . .

*The GHOST disappears. (LXQ 21)*

**MARIA:** Tis he who asked me to dance with him. The very one the Gypsy spoke of. How my heart beats. I feel I want to fly his presence . . and yet . .

*Thunder (SQ 19) Lightning (LXQ 22)*

**MARIA:** Ah! Terror and some power I cannot fight keeps me rooted to this spot.

**CORDER:** Miss Marten? Miss Maria Marten, by all that's wonderful. *(Aside)* If the Gypsy has fulfilled his part, matters will stand easy for my wooing! *(To her)* Miss Marten, have you no-one to escort you through the storm and the dangers of these woods? *(Offering his arm)* Will you accept my humble services? My house is but a step away . .

**MARIA:** Oh, sir, though I have known these woods since childhood, I find myself in a path I never trod before.

*Thunder (SQ 20) Lightning (LXQ 23)*

**MARIA:** Ah! How every thunder crack alarms me!

**CORDER:** Here, my dear. *(Putting his arm around her)* Stand close by me. I will protect you.

**MARIA:** If only I had not lost my way . . So foolish . .

**CORDER:** Then I must be your guide and see you to safety.

**MARIA:** But, sir, what will people say to see Maria Marten, the poor yeoman's daughter in company with the rich Mr. Corder?

**CORDER:** Why, they will say that William Corder has too much manhood in him to see a poor girl go unprotected in a scene of wild confusion.

*Thunder. Rain. (SQ 21)*

**MARIA:** Ah . . The rain . . My dress will be soaked through . .

**CORDER:** *(Leading her towards the tree)* Then let us shelter here, beneath this tree. *(Taking off his coat)* Here, you shall have my coat to keep you dry. *(Putting it round her shoulders)* Let me cover you. Why, Maria, how your heart is beating. *(Aside)* But soft! I know this place, or seem to remember it.

*Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 22 - Track 14) (LXQ 24) The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears above.*

**ZELLA LEE:** Aye, William Corder, remember it well . .

**CORDER:** *(to MARIA)* What's that you say?

**MARIA:** I did not speak . . But see - here carved into the tree - your name . .

**CORDER:** My name? *(Aside)* What? Why . . Can this be the place where . . ?

**ZELLA LEE:** Yes, William Corder. This is the place - this is the very place. Oh, remember me. Remember poor Zella Lee . .

**CORDER:** Avaunt! *(Returning to MARIA)* Nay. That is not *my* name. I am not he who carved his name there. Some other William . . Some peasant lad and his sweetheart.

*Lightning, Light fades on the Ghost (LXQ 25) Thunder (SQ 23)*

**MARIA:** Ah!

**CORDER:** *(Putting his arm around her)* Come. The manor is nearby. I shall take you to my house for shelter.

**MARIA:** *(Moving slightly away)* No, Mr. Corder, that would not be proper. But if you will aid me to find my sister, I shall be thankful. The fair was so boisterous that we were separated.

**CORDER:** Then we must take our chance of keeping dry beneath this tree and I'll tell you of the difference between these rural sports and the gay sights of London. *(Drawing her to him again)* Ah, the balls, the concerts, the theatres and joys that make the life of civilised folk worth living.

**MARIA:** Oh, how I should love to live in London.

**CORDER:** Who knows, I may take you there.

**MARIA:** Mr. Corder, sir . .

**CORDER:** With charms such as yours, you would be a jewel upon the arm of any gentleman in the town. *(Kissing her hand)* Upon mine, perhaps . . ?

*Lightning (LXQ 26) Thunder (SQ 24)*

**MARIA:** Ah!

**CORDER:** At least promise me that, if we fail to find your sister, you'll allow me to escort you home.

**MARIA:** I thank you. The road is somewhat lonely and . .

**CORDER:** And among these Gypsy vagrants you will find a protector. Nay. No refusal.

*Thunder. (SQ 25) (LXQ 27) Music - "THE GYPSY'S WARNING" (SQ 26 - Track 15) During the song, CORDER kneels and kisses MARIA's hand and then, rising, kisses her arm, her shoulders, her neck.*

**ZELLA LEE:** *(Sings)* DO NOT TRUST HIM, GENTLE LADY,  
THOUGH HIS VOICE BE LOW AND SWEET,  
HEED NOT HIM WHO KNEELS BEFORE THEE,  
GENTLY PLEADING AT THY FEET.  
NOW THY LIFE IS IN ITS MORNING,  
CLOUD NOT THIS THY HAPPY LOT,  
LISTEN TO THE GYPSY'S WARNING,  
GENTLE LADY, TRUST HIM NOT,  
LISTEN TO THE GYPSY'S WARNING,  
GENTLE LADY TRUST HIM NOT.

*Thunder (SQ 27) (LXQ 28)*

**CORDER:** See. The rain comes on more heavily and I will not allow you to be soaked as you must surely be on the long road to your home. My house is but a step away through the trees . .

**MARIA:** *(Confused)* But . .

**CORDER:** There I have a warm fire . .

**MARIA:** I really should not . .

*He kisses her fiercely on the lips. Ghostly Music. (SQ 28 - Track 16) The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears above. (LXQ 29)*

**MARIA:** Oh . . . sir . . .

**ZELLA LEE:** No, Maria . . . No!

**CORDER:** . . . and some brandy to calm your nerves and warm your spirits. *(He kisses her)*

**MARIA:** Oh, Mr. Corder . . .

**CORDER:** Come, Maria . . .

**ZELLA LEE:** Do not go, Maria . . . Flee, Maria. Flee for your honour's sake!

**MARIA:** But, sir . . .

*(He kisses her)*

**MARIA:** Oh . . . William . . . !

**ZELLA LEE:** Then despair, Maria Marten. You are doomed . . .

*Lightning (LXQ 30) Thunder (SQ 29)*

**MARIA:** Ah!

**CORDER:** Fear nothing, dear Maria. You shall be safe with me. And afterwards . . .

**MARIA:** Afterwards?

**CORDER:** When the weather clears, I shall see you safely to your door.

**MARIA:** I . . . I feel faint . . . You are most kind, Mr. Corder . . .

**CORDER:** *(Sweeping her up into his arms)* This way, Maria. This way. *(Aside)* And so is my first step gained. *(He carries her off D.L.)*

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 30 - Track 17)*

**ISHMAEL:** *(Appearing R.)* Aye. Your first step upon the ladder of crime. When you have reached the summit then my cup of vengeance will be filled. Ha ha!  
My plan succeeds beyond my wildest dreams.  
The girl is easy prey for Corder's evil schemes.

*Music - "THE GYPSY'S WARNING" (SQ 31 - Track 18) During the song, we see CORDER's seduction of MARIA through the gauze. (LXQ 31)*

**ZELLA LEE:**           **LADY, ONCE I LIV'D A MAIDEN,  
PURE AND BRIGHT AND, LIKE THEE, FAIR,  
BUT HE WOODED ME AND HE WON ME,  
FILLED MY GENTLE HEART WITH CARE.  
GENTLE LADY, DO NOT WONDER  
AT MY WORDS SO COLD AND WILD,  
          'NEATH THE GREEN ON WHICH YOU WANDER,  
          LIES THE GYPSY'S FALLEN CHILD.  
          'NEATH THE GREEN ON WHICH YOU WANDER,  
          LIES THE GYPSY'S FALLEN CHILD.**

*The lights behind the gauze fade as MARIA submits to CORDER's embraces.  
(LXQ 32) Music. MARIA's Theme. (SQ 32 - Track 19) During which:*

**ACTOR:** *(Entering R.)* Ah, you men, preening in your lusty pride,  
Protect the weaker vessel at your side  
From he who, with Tarquin's ravishing stride,  
Seeks her undoin'.  
For, like Maria, she's a fragile maid  
Whose heart with honeyed words is easy swayed  
So swift seduced, and swifter yet betrayed  
To utter ruin.  
Yet, oh how swift the villain's appetite  
Is satisfied. Within a year, his lust takes flight.  
And another maiden chaste and bright  
He'll soon be wooin'.

*(LXQ 33) The gauze curtains open and the trees track off to reveal:*

**Scene 5: THE DRAWING ROOM of LUCY MAVOR'S HOUSE, LONDON**

*MAVOR is seated. LUCY rushes in, clutching a letter.*

**LUCY:** Uncle! See! A letter. A letter at last from my beloved William.

**MAVOR:** *(Rising)* Hah! I thought - I hoped - that we had heard the last of that man. It has been a whole year, Lucy, without a single word.

**LUCY:** He explains all, Uncle. He has been in a fit of business the whole time. Caring for his dying father, managing the estate and dealing with lawyers to secure the value of the property when his father passes away. He tells me here that it is but a matter of a few weeks now before his business in the country is completed and he will return.

**MAVOR:** But, Lucy, have a care, my dear. Let not the joy of his letter sway your heart without you challenge him for his past behaviour to you. Is this an honourable manner for a man to treat the woman whom he says he loves?

**LUCY:** He asks me, here in this letter, to be his wife.

**MAVOR:** And will you accept his proposal?

**LUCY:** Oh, Uncle, of course I shall. There is no other in my heart but he. I shall count the days until he returns to make me his wife.

*She exits L. as the gauze curtains close and the trees track on. (LXQ 34)*

**Scene 6: A WOOD NEAR THE GYPSY ENCAMPMENT.**

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 33 - Track 20) ISHMAEL appears R.*

**ISHMAEL:** A year has passed and Autumn comes again.  
Now poor Maria knows the harlot's pain.  
A child is born - the offspring of her shame,  
And already Squire Corder wearies of the game.  
Last night, he came to our tents to obtain  
A deadly poison known as . . . Dragon's Bane.  
The child, I hear, is ill. But can it be  
He seeks this vile poison as a remedy?  
I am to meet him here - and here I stand.  
The hour of retribution is at hand!

*Villain's Music. (SQ 34 - Track 21) (LXQ 35) Enter CORDER D.L.*

- CORDER:** *(Going to him)* Have you procured the drug of which we spoke?
- ISHMAEL:** The deadly poison? Aye, tis here. *(Giving him the vial)*
- CORDER:** And can you answer for its effect?
- ISHMAEL:** Why, that I can. I have seen it slay both man and beast.
- CORDER:** You know for what purpose I require it?
- ISHMAEL:** You told me it was to destroy a favourite dog.
- CORDER:** Yes, there has been great complaint by the farmers about it savaging their flocks and I want its death to be sharp and sudden so it shall not suffer.
- ISHMAEL:** One drop of this will lay low twenty men. Its effect is swift and sudden as the lightning, leaving no trace behind of its deadly work.
- CORDER:** Tis well. *(Giving him a purse)* Here is the gold I promised thee. Now go. Let our paths from this moment be divided, and forget you ever looked upon my face. *(Giving him coins)* Nay, there is more gold yet to buy thy silence. Henceforth we are strangers.
- ISHMAEL:** Be it so. Farewell, kind generous sir, farewell *(Aside)* Now will I watch his every action. *(Drawing back U.R.)* I'll watch him close, I'll watch him close.

*Villain's Music. (SQ 35 - Track 22)*

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* This poison must I use tonight. Maria's child is ill. It must die for my safety's sake. Should my father, who lingers still and *will* not die, learn of it, he would drive me from his home and cut me from his will. The child shall die tonight and Maria shall be my accomplice. I shall bury it in the wood for an inquest might reveal that to the world which I would not have known. Maria may have scruples. If that be the case, then the child shall be my first victim and the mother shall fall my second. And then for my a'cursed father . . . *(He exits D.L.)*

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 36 - Track 23)*

**ISHMAEL:** *(Stepping forward)* Tis as I suspected. He takes the path towards the hovel where he has lodged Maria Marten to hide her shame. Now shall my vengeance triumph. Look down, the spirit of my heartbroken Zella, from thy home among the stars and steel thy father's heart to make the scaffold upon which thy betrayer dies thy monument.

*The trees track off and the gauze curtains open to reveal:*

**Scene 7: INTERIOR OF A POOR COTTAGE** *(LXQ 36)*

*MARIA kneels beside the cradle. MARIA's Theme. (SQ 37- Track 24)*

- MARIA:** Another day passes and yet he comes not. Oh, my child, my child, would that thy heartbroken mother and thyself could sink to sleep and peace forever. Twelve months ago this day, I was a happy village girl. Today what am I? A ruined woman scorned of all who know my shame. But William *shall* marry me. I have his promise. The door! Perhaps tis he.
- TIM:** *(Entering at the door L.)* No tis me.
- ANNIE:** And tis me too.
- MARIA:** *(Embracing her)* Anne, my sister.
- TIM:** Yes. And Tim - thy brother-in-law that is to be.

- ANNIE:** Shut up! *(To MARIA)* I was going by and called in to see thee.
- TIM:** Yes and I called in to see the baby.
- ANNIE:** Get off - what's thee want with a baby?
- TIM:** Why to get my hand in to be sure.
- MARIA:** Nan, I hope you have kept my secret. So far, all think of the child as one that I haver taken in to nurse. You have told no-one different?
- ANNIE:** No, I have told no-one but Tim.
- TIM:** And I've told no-one but brother Bob and my sixteen cousins.
- ANNIE:** Oh thou great fool! But, Maria, Mother and Father be coming soon so I thought I'd warn thee to be ready for em.
- MARIA:** No, no. Don't let them see me in my shame. My Mother's grey hair will seem to speak reproaches and tell of her past virtuous life, now disgraced by my misdeed. And my Father - I should die beneath his stern gaze.
- ANNIE:** Come, come, cheer up, Maria. I've broke the news to our parents and, though they cried at first, Mother said you were still her child, though fallen in sin through a villain's means.
- TIM:** *(Starting back and pointing at the cradle)* Ah! Ah! Here be a sight. This kid's opening his mouth and he's not got no teeth!
- ANNIE:** Get along. Little uns like that ain't got no teeth.
- TIM:** Then how do they eat their steak and onions? And oh! It's head is as bald as a duck's egg. Run, Nan and borrow my grandfather's wig.
- ANNIE:** Get along. He don't want no wig.
- TIM:** But I tell thee, it's a bald yedded un. Now it's opening its mouth. Gi' it the knob o' the poker to suck.
- ANNIE:** Don't want to make the babby as great a fool as thee. Thy mother used to give thee the wooden bed post to suck on and thee's been wooden-headed ever since.
- (A knock at the door L.)*
- ANNIE:** That's the old folks. Come, Tim. We'll out the back way.
- TIM:** I want to stop and nurse the baby.
- ANNIE:** Nonsense. You'll only drop it to see if it'll bounce.
- TIM:** I never saw such a funny sort of a little baby before. It ain't got no teeth, it cannot talk and it's bald headed. But it's just like William Corder, I can tell it by its nose.
- They Exit at the door R.*
- MARIA:** My Father and Mother coming! Oh, how I dread the meeting. Heart, be firm. They come.

*Music - MARIA's theme, (SQ 38 - Track 25) playing throughout the scene. Enter MR. MARTEN and MRS MARTEN at the door L.*



**MARIA:** Father! Mother! Your unhappy child implores forgiveness.

**MRS MARTEN:** Unhappy girl. A Mother's heart is more indulgent than the World's, but there is yet one more to be appeased - thy Father.

**MR. MARTEN:** What your miseries are I well can guess. What a Father's suffering is I know too well. Oh, how I doted on thee daughter. And yet you sacrificed me for a villain. Your ingratitude has bleached my head and broken my heart.

**MARIA:** No more, for mercy's sake, oh, no more!

**MR. MARTEN:** As I gaze on thee, I think of thy infant days when first thy little steps began, when laughing, with extended arms, you ran towards me and I trembled lest thy feet should fail. You escaped those and a thousand other dangers but now you fall - fall never to arise.

**MRS MARTEN:** But our child is repentant. She faints with shame and grief. Do but speak a word of comfort to her and soothe her anguish.

**MR. MARTEN:** Did I not rear her in domestic tenderness,  
Train her in the paths of virtue?  
Did I not press her to this doting heart,  
And in my foolish pride proclaim my child  
A paragon of earth?  
And did she not blast  
All my fond hopes and, clinging to a villain,  
Leave me in my storm of grief? Oh, I feel that I  
Could curse . .

**MARIA:** No, no, your vengeance cannot make you wild  
And deaf to the agony of a despairing child!  
O, hear me, Father. Do not scorn my pleas!  
(*Kneeling to him*) Thy fallen daughter begs thee on her knees.

**MRS MARTEN:** Dear husband, do not aggravate the dear girl's misery. She is repentant. She is the shorn lamb. Temper the storm to her affliction but do not add another wound to a heart already lacerated.

**MARIA:** Bless you, Mother. Bless you for these words.

**MR. MARTEN:** Arise, Maria, (*Raising her up*) I forgive thee. We are all sinners and should be merciful in our judgement to each other.  
Thy father's home thy shelter be -  
Thy Father's arms shall welcome thee.

*They embrace.*

**MRS MARTEN:** Come, child, return to your home at once.

**MARIA:** I cannot. I am awaiting the arrival of William.

**MR. MARTEN:** (*Breaking from her*) What? Wilt thou cleave still to that villain who has thus deceived and betrayed thee.

**MARIA:** Nay, he has sworn to marry me a thousand times. I hold his written promise. It is only for family reasons our union has been delayed. He may be here at any moment.

**MRS MARTEN:** Come then, Marten . .

**MR. MARTEN:** Nay but . .

**MRS MARTEN:** We will leave her now. Let us hope for the best. Have patience.

**MR. MARTEN:** Hope? I am  
The scathed tree of the heath, cleft in twain.  
The bolt that struck my branches off has left me nought but pain.

*They Exit at the door L.*

**MARIA:** My father's forgiveness has lightened my heart. Oh that William would fulfil his promise. Happiness would then be mine. Ah, tis he!

*Villain's Music. (SQ 39 - Track 26)*

**CORDER:** *(Entering at the door R.)* Dear Maria. How is the child?

**MARIA:** Ill - very ill. I fear he is not long for this world, and if you do not make me an honourable woman, would that I could share his fate.

**CORDER:** Have I not sworn by every sacred tie, you shall be my wife? My Father hovers o'er the grave. When he is dead, I'll make you mine at once and our child shall be a bond of happiness to our union.

**MARIA:** Dear William, I do believe you. But why have you not brought the Doctor as I requested?

**CORDER:** Today he could not attend. He will call tomorrow. I showed him your note and he mixed this small bottle. *(Giving her the vial)* He said for the present it would remove all pain.

**MARIA:** Thanks, dear William, I will administer it at once.

**CORDER:** Do so, Maria.

**MARIA:** *(At the cradle - giving the poison)* The little one seems soothed already. Oh, William, my Father and Mother have been here almost broken hearted at my shame.

**CORDER:** Fear not, dear girl, all will yet be well.

*The child screams. (SQ 40)*

**CORDER:** But see - the child.

**MARIA:** Ah! What ails him? He chokes! He is convulsed! Ah! He is dead! My child, my child! My little child!

*Dramatic Chord. (SQ 41 - Track 27)*

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* Dead! Then I am safe.

*Gypsy Music. (SQ 42 - Track 28) ISHMAEL appears R.*

**ISHMAEL:** No! Lost eternally in the sight of Heaven. Another step on the ladder of crime.

*MARIA screams. The gauze curtain draws on and the trees track in. (LXQ 37)*

## **Sc.8: THE WOOD**

*Enter MARK and AMOS R. leading a band of Gypsies.*

**MARK:** Yea, my brothers, This is a dreadful plight we're in. We have been driven from the common by the officers of the law, acting for this William Corder. Shall we submit to this like sheep?

- ALL:** Nay.
- MARK:** Shall we not rather have vengeance full and deep?
- ALL:** Vengeance! Aye! Vengeance!
- AMOS:** Fear not - but strike the blow surely, and with a firm hand. They heeded not the cries of our wives and children. Why then should we spare his life? This night, Corder's eyes shall be closed in the sleep of death.
- ALL:** Aye, vengeance, vengeance.
- ISHMAEL:** *(Stepping forward)* Hold, children! Whither go ye?
- MARK:** For vengeance. This William Corder has set the Police upon us - has hunted us like wild beasts from the land his good father allowed to us to pitch our tents. And, for resistance to the law, many of our tribe lie in the jail. Only we few escaped to wreak our vengeance. Now Corder's life shall answer for it.
- ISHMAEL:** Hold! Hold! I say this must not be.
- AMOS:** What mean you?
- Villain's Music. (SQ 43 - Track 29) Enter CORDER D.L.*
- ISHMAEL:** Vengeance on Corder belongs to me!
- CORDER:** *(Aside)* Ah! My name. These rascally Gypsies. I will overhear them.
- ISHMAEL:** All the wrongs that you bewail are but as pygmies to the wrong that Corder did to me. He robbed me of my dearest child - my Zella - and drove her brother as a wanderer o'er the sea. For these deeds I'll make him an outcast - strip him of his fortune and let him suffer the pangs of despised beggary as do we. I'll drag him to the scaffold's foot, then with my vengeful eyes glaring into his and my cry of bitter mockery ringing in his ears, I'll force him to mount up - step by step - till I place the rope about his neck. This will be my revenge - a long and torturing one - yours would be too quick - too painless.
- MARK:** But our brothers cry out for vengeance from their prison cells. Shall they cry in vain?
- ISHMAEL:** Not so. He has stacks of wheat and hay - give them - nay barns, stables - aye, the farmhouse too. Give all - to the flames.
- ALL:** Aye!
- CORDER:** *(Aside)* They would do my work for me. They will burn the farm and my father within it. So, all's one. So be it. I have but to bury the child and I shall have only Maria to be dealt with. *(Exit D.L.)*
- ISHMAEL:** My children, I will reveal a secret that will put the rope around his neck. But nay. Not yet. Away. I will not tell you my secret until your work of desolation is complete. Then come to me - the Father of your tribe - and I will give you the proof that shall drag that William Corder to a murderer's doom.
- AMOS:** Aye, friends. 'Tis a glorious plan. Before we strike our tents, the light to guide us on the road shall be the blazing embers of Corder's home. Vengeance!
- ALL:** Vengeance . . . !

*They exit L.*

**ISHMAEL:** Ha ha! Vengeance has come at last after years of watching and waiting. I'll follow and see how my trusty dogs mark down my game. (*Exit L.*)

*(LXQ 38)*

**Scene 9: A SECRET PART OF THE WOOD.**

*CORDER and MARIA enter furtively. MARIA carries the baby. CORDER scratches a hole in the ground.*

**ZELLA LEE:** (*Sings softly throughout the scene*) "**THE BURIAL OF THE LINNET**" (*SQ 44*)

**FOUND IN THE GARDEN - DEAD IN HIS BEAUTY  
AH! THAT A LINNET SHOULD DIE IN THE SPRING!  
BURY HIM GENTLY, IN PITIFUL DUTY,  
MUFFLE THE DINNER BELL, SOLEMNLY RING.**

**FAREWELL, SWEET SINGER! DEAD IN THY BEAUTY,  
SILENT THROUGH SUMMER, THE OTHER BIRDS SING,  
BURY HIM GENTLY, IN PITIFUL DUTY,  
MUFFLE THE DINNER BELL, MOURNFULLY RING.**

**MARIA:** Oh, William, William, this is a fearful deed.

**CORDER:** Yet must it be done for both our safeties.

**MARIA:** My poor baby to be buried like a dog. No prayers above his little head. Far from the shadow of the church. To leave him here within this wood - tis terrible.

**CORDER:** Tis for the best, believe me. An inquest might tell more than we should like the world to know. Here. Give the child to me.

**MARIA:** What? (*Holding back*) Then the child has not come by its sudden death by fair means?

**CORDER:** (*Snatching the child and thrusting it into the grave*) How should I know if a mistake has been made? It lies with the doctor - not myself.

**MARIA:** Oh, what horrible suspicions cross my mind!

**CORDER:** Then let suspicion die. For a magistrate's enquiry would harm you more than myself. Remember the penalty for concealment of a birth.

**MARIA:** I am in your power and have no will of my own. But it is hard for my little one to be here.

**CORDER:** Nonsense. The child will sleep as peaceful here as in a Churchyard. (*Marking the ground with his heel*) See, I have marked the spot so that, at eventide, you may strew his grave with flowers.

**MARIA:** Oh, take me. Take me quickly from this fearful spot.

**CORDER:** Come then. How you tremble. Fear nothing, girl! No eye beholds us.

*They Exit. Gypsy Music. (SQ 45 - Track 30) ISHMAEL appears.*

**ISHMAEL:** Ah, yes! The eye of Ishmael, the Gypsy.

*(LXQ 39)*

**Scene 10: CORDER'S FARM YARD.**

*The GYPSIES enter R. with flaming torches.*

**MARK:** This way, brothers. The servants are drinking in the village. Corder is from home. Now tis our time. But, should he return, we'll hurl him into the blazing fire. Remember - dead men tell no tales. This way. This way.

**ISHMAEL:** Brave boys there at their work. Soon all will be a heap of ruin. Ha ha.

*The farm bursts into flame and burns - crackle of flames. (SQ 46) (LXQ 40)*

**ISHMAEL:** Ah yes. See how the flames destroy all that is Corder's fortune. Now shall he know the sting of poverty. Now shall he trudge the lanes and beg for his daily bread.

*Villain's Music. (SQ 47 - Track 31) CORDER enters D.L.*

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* They little know that they do the work I would have done myself. True, I would have waited for my father's death but, if he is now to be burned alive in his bed, what of that?

**ISHMAEL:** But where can Corder be?

**CORDER:** Here, old traitor dog. Villain, would you betray me?

**ISHMAEL:** Aye. I would drive thee a beggar from thy home.

**CORDER:** Ha! At that threat I scoff. The farm's worth more to me destroyed than you can know of. I am rich. No beggar, I.

**ISHMAEL:** But yet your life is in my power. Know who you have dealt with in your villainies. I am the father of that poor girl whose heart you so basely betrayed - the father of the lad you drove into exile. I swore revenge. It is at hand. I have dogged you step by step. I saw you poison Maria's child and bury it in the woods. I will lead the officers there and then your life shall be forfeit.

**CORDER:** *(Drawing a pistol)* So is yours, old traitor. *(Shoots him)* So perishes the only witness to my crime. *(Exits L.)*

**MARK:** *(Rushing in)* That shot!

**AMOS:** *(Following)* What is it?

**MARK:** Ah! See! *(Kneeling to cradle ISHMAEL's head)* Our father bleeds. Who has done this?

*Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 48 - Track 32)*

**ISHMAEL:** Twas . . . Twas William Corder laid me low . . . I am dying. Seek out my son. The burden of vengeance now belongs to him. Swear by the mystic relics of our tribe. Tell him to relentlessly pursue the path of vengeance until his sister's death . . . and mine may be avenged.

**ALL:** We swear.

**ISHMAEL:** Tis well, tis well. My eyes grow dim. My blood is chilled.

*The GHOST of ZELLA LEE appears above. (LXQ 41)*

**ISHMAEL:** And, see - the spirit of my Zella calls me to my home among the stars.

**AMOS:** But this secret that you know of Corder. You must reveal it . . . ere you die.

**ISHMAEL:** Corder is . . . Corder . . . He is a . . . a . . . *(He dies)*

*Music. Intro to Dirge. (SQ 49 - Track 33)*

**MARK:** The spirit is struggling to break free from this earthly prison. The stars have gone out and the moon has veiled her face. Lift up your voices. Let every face look steadily to the west.

**ALL:** *(Sing)* **LET THE DIRGE BE SUNG  
AND THE BELL BE RUNG  
AND THE TORCH BURN RED  
O'ER THE DEAD ONE'S HEAD  
TILL THE SPIRIT IS FREE  
AND THE FLESH IS DEAD.**

*They lift ISHMAEL's body and bear him off D.L. as they sing:*

**TROUBLED SPIRIT, PASS AWAY  
FROM YOUR PRISON HOUSE OF CLAY,  
EVERY DOOR IS OPEN WIDE,  
NIGHT IS AT THE TURN OF TIDE.  
PASS AWAY.  
PASS AWAY.**

*(LXQ 42)*

**Scene 11: A REDSKIN ENCAMPMENT**

*A campfire. Tom-toms. (SQ 50) PHAROS LEE sits with the CHIEF and his SQUAW, smoking the pipe of peace. PHAROS cries out and starts to his feet.*

**PHAROS LEE:** Ah! What mysterious pain stabs at my heart? What can this mean? It is as if I felt my Father's death across the mighty ocean that separates us. My Father dead? Just when I have found my fortune. My Father dead and vengeance to be mine? I have the wealth now to pursue that monster, Corder. A seam of pure gold which I struck here in this barren wasteland. I have wandered weary miles, I have fought with savage tribesmen, I have survived when many men have perished. And all for naught if my Father is no more.

*Ghostly Gypsy Music. (SQ 51 - Track 34)*

**ISHMAEL:** *(Off)* Pharos Lee . . .

**PHAROS LEE:** What's this? It seems that, from far across the ocean, I hear my father's voice call to me.

*ISHMAEL appears above - now a ghost. (LXQ 43)*

**ISHMAEL:** Pharos Lee, Pharos Lee. Bring vengeance upon the head of William Corder.

**PHAROS LEE:** Of William Corder? Is the blackguard still unpunished?

**ISHMAEL:** He has killed me, Pharos. William Corder has foully murdered your poor Father.

**PHAROS LEE:** I shall heed you, father. Now I have gold. All the wealth a man could desire. If I cannot share it with you, Father, I shall use it to avenge your death and my sister's ruin. I sheathe my knife, for this time it shall be the law which brings the villain to justice and the gallows.

*Link Music. (SQ 52 - Track 35) (LXQ 44) The trees track off and the curtains open to reveal:*

**Scene 12: THE KITCHEN OF MR. MARTEN'S COTTAGE**

*MARIA sits by the fire. CORDER rushes in at the door L., carrying a bundle of clothes.*

**CORDER:** Maria, I am come to tell you that the death of my father has removed the only obstacle to our union.

**MARIA:** *(Rising to him)* Your Father dead?

**CORDER:** I will tell all later. We can be married at once. The ceremony will be performed in London.

**MARIA:** *(Afraid)* London! Why there?

**CORDER:** Do not question me now. Business of great importance calls me away this very night. You must be my companion. I wish you to put on this suit of male attire and meet me tonight - at the old Red Barn.

**MARIA:** No, no. Not there. Even in childhood when I played about it, its shadows cast a chill upon me. And did not the Gypsy that I met at Polestead fair warn me that, in the Red Barn I should meet my fate?

**CORDER:** And will not that prophecy be fulfilled? For from the old Red Barn, we start out on our road to love and happiness.

**MARIA:** But - to leave in dead of night and in male attire. Why this mystery?

**CORDER:** I have told you. I have great matters in hand. You must trust me and do this or I must leave for London without you.

**MARIA:** *(Taking the clothes from him)* I consent. *(Going)* I'll send my parents to you and tonight I'll meet you in the old Red Barn.

*Villain Music. (SQ 53 - Track 36)*

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* She consents, one point gained, curse the girl. She binds me down. Now I have my fortune from this place, I must be free to marry Lucy Mavor and secure yet greater wealth. Maria, when you consented to meet me - in the old Red Barn - you sealed your doom.

*MRS MARTEN enters R.*

**MRS MARTEN:** Ah, William, is this true? Maria tells me you are about to keep your promise.

**CORDER:** Tis true, Mrs Marten.

**MRS MARTEN:** I'm glad to hear it. And her poor Father will rejoice for the girl has too long borne disgrace in her native place. When will the marriage take place?

**CORDER:** As early as possible. For tonight we both depart for London.

**MRS MARTEN:** London?

**CORDER:** Yes. For - family reasons known to ourselves. Our marriage must take place there.

**MRS MARTEN:** Why, William, can you not be married here?

Here she has been pointed at in shame.

Here should the stain be taken from her name.

Why can't you be married at our village church?

**CORDER:** I am sorry that this cannot be. Urgent business in London requires my immediate attention. And so - farewell. (*Making for the door L.*)

**MRS MARTEN:** Farewell, William. God bless you. And, since I can't dance at your wedding, perhaps I'll dance at the christening..

**CORDER:** (*Startled*) Christening?

**MRS MARTEN:** For sure, you'll have the child a christening once you are wed.

**CORDER:** Ah yes - (*fearfully*) the child.

**MRS MARTEN:** Where is the little dear? I long to kiss him farewell.

**CORDER:** I . . I have engaged a nursemaid to care for him upon the journey. He is with her. There is no time to fetch them . .

**MRS MARTEN:** I'll not detain you longer for I see you are impatient to depart.

*MARIA enters R.*

**MRS MARTEN:** (*Kissing MARIA*) Let us hear from you upon your safe arrival in London. Pray, I beg you, be kind to my Maria. She has suffered much for you. I now entrust her to your care. And, as you deal with her, may Heaven . . deal with you.

**CORDER:** Amen. (*Aside*) Heaven? Ha! What have I to do with Heaven? The deed I contemplate will close the gates of Heaven forever against me.

Hence, remorse and every thought that's good.

The storm that lust began must end in blood. (*He exits D.L.*)

**MARIA:** (*Calling after*) God bless thee, William. I will not fail thee.

**CORDER:** (*Distant, sinister*) Nor I thee!

*MR. MARTEN enters at the door R. in haste.*

**MR. MARTEN:** Wife! Maria! Here's such a dreadful thing. Squire Corder's farm is burnt to the ground and the old squire with it. There are Peelers all over the countryside in pursuit of the Gypsies who carried out the deed. And where is William? He cannot be found. It may be that he too died in the fire.

**MRS MARTEN:** No. William is safe. He and Maria are setting out for London this evening. The fire and this great loss must be the business he talked of and to which he must attend.

**MR. MARTEN:** To London? Our girl going to London?

**MARIA:** We are to be married there, Father, as soon as we arrive.

**MR. MARTEN:** Well, I am glad to hear that at least. It seems that I was wrong and that William Corder is an honourable man after all.

*They exit R.*

*Ghostly Villain's Music. (SQ 54 - Track 37) The gauze curtains close and the trees track on. (LXQ 45)*

### **Scene 13: THE WOOD**

**CORDER:** (*Entering D.L.*) The sun is set and now the darkness falls  
To hide my evil deed. The screech owl calls  
And ghosts flit frightened through the ruined halls



And pity's sped.  
 Being so deep in blood, I must not stay  
 But journey on my murderous way  
 The child buried, my father burned in his bed  
 And, by break of day, Maria shall be . . . dead!  
 Ah, I have forgotten to bring a pick axe or a spade. Fool. Should I return, my victim will escape.

*Enter TIM R. with a pick axe and a spade.*

**TIM:** I'm nearly busted. I've had such a blow out of cold pudding. Now old Mr. Marten says I must go and dig a bit of his garden. Oh. Hallo, Master Corder.

**CORDER:** It seems you know me.

**TIM:** I ought to, brother-in-law.

**CORDER:** What do you mean, brother-in-law?

**TIM:** I knows all about it.

**CORDER:** Then you know more than I.

**TIM:** I knows, brother-in-law, thee'st goin' to marry Maria and I'm going to marry Nan. So us'll be in the family line.

**CORDER:** *(Aside)* What? I a relation of this bumpkin? No! I'm more determined than ever to strike Maria's shackles from me.

**TIM:** *(Looking out at the audience)* What's mumblin' about. I know you think you're not as good lookin' as I.

**CORDER:** Can you lend me a spade and I'll pay you for it?

**TIM:** What's want a spade for, brother-in-law? Art goin' to bury summit?

**CORDER:** *(Seizing and shaking him)* What's that you say?

**TIM:** Ecod, you be as fierce as a rat without a tail.

**CORDER:** No. *(Calming down)* No, a friend of mine wants me to take a young tree to plant on his estate and I want a spade to dig it up with.

**TIM:** How much will you give I for the loan of pick and spade?

**CORDER:** How much do you earn a day?

**TIM:** Eighteen pence and they finds me in puddin'.

**CORDER:** Then I'll give you two shillings for the loan of them.

**TIM:** Two shillin'?

**CORDER:** Can you change a five pound note?

**TIM:** Who are yer gettin' at? I never even seed one in my life.

**CORDER:** Then can you change a sovereign?

**TIM:** Aye, if you will wait until I goes to the public house and gets a drink with it.

**CORDER:** No, no, I cannot wait. Here's a shilling - and three pence in coppers. I'll give you the rest when next we meet.

**TIM:** Then you will owe I . . . erm . . . *ninepence*, don't forget. Here's the pick and spade.

**CORDER:** (*Taking them*) I'll leave them outside the door of the Red Barn so you can get them when you want them. (*Exits D. L.*)

**TIM:** Alright. (*Calling after*) Don't forget, you owe I *ninepence*. That's one and thripence more for my own stocking.

*Enter ANNIE R. and MARIA dressed as a man. They embrace.*

**TIM:** (*Amazed*) Hallo, what's that? Dang my buttons if there beant a dandy chap kissing my Nan. I'll punch his head like a pickled cabbage.

**MARIA:** Do you think anyone will recognise me as I cross the field, Annie?

**ANNIE:** Not a bit of it. You make such a jolly nice little man I could fall in love with you myself.

**MARIA:** Tell mother I will write as soon as I arrive in London. Farewell, dear sister. William will be waiting. One kiss before we part.

**TIM:** (*Angry. To MARIA*) Aye, do it again. Do it again. Her likes it.

**MARIA:** Who is this booby? (*Aside to ANNIE*) It's Tim, isn't it?

**ANNIE:** Yes. He don't know you. And he's jealous. Let's have a bit of fun. He's such a coward.

**TIM:** (*Prodding MARIA's shoulder with his finger*) Now then, Mister Whipper-Snapper. What, what are you doing with that young gal?

**MARIA:** (*Doing the same to him*) What's that to do with you, Mister Chawbacon?

**TIM:** Mind I don't chaw *thy* bacon. (*To ANNIE*) And, as for you, you shame faced hussy . . .

**ANNIE:** Call me a hussy? How dare you? I never saw this chap afore in my life.

**TIM:** Oh! What a whopper!

**MARIA:** How dare you address a young lady like that? If you speak - nay, *look* at her again - I'll thrash you within an inch of your life.

**TIM:** (*Sparring*) Come on then. Come on.

**MARIA:** (*Running behind ANNIE*) Oh, I say, Anne, the fellow will kill me.

**ANNIE:** Don't be afraid. He's too big a coward. (*To TIM*) You touch this young man and I'll tear your eyes out.

**TIM:** Thee go home or I'll tell thy mother. (*To MARIA*) Come on, now. Come on!

**MARIA:** I shan't take my coat off to a scarecrow like you. But beware. I'm a dab hand at singlesticks, am in constant practice at the pistol gallery and have had the gloves on with Tom Sayers, who confessed I was a better boxer than he was.

**TIM:** (*Aside. Scared*) Dang it - this chap might hurt me.

**ANNIE:** I told you he was a coward.

**MARIA:** *(Squares)* Come on Sir, come on!

**TIM:** *(Backing away)* Go and hit one thee own size.

**MARIA:** You're a coward, sir. Farewell, sweet one. Kiss. *(They embrace)*

**TIM:** If you kiss her again, I'll . .

**MARIA:** What, Sir?

**TIM:** Nothing.

**MARIA:** Goodbye, sweet girl, and if that bumpkin annoys you, I'll come from London and with my pistol shoot him through and through like a cullendar. Another kiss. *(They embrace)*

**TIM:** Aye. Do it again.

*They do. Exit MARIA R.*

**TIM:** Come back and kiss her again.

*She does and then exits R.*

**ANNIE:** He's gone. *(Teasing)* Oh, Tim, isn't he a nice little man?

**TIM:** *(Sinking down. Tearfully)* Go on, false perfidious one, kissing a chap before my face and after keeping I afraid going to Lunnon and seducing me with your cold puddin'.

**ANNIE:** Now, Tim dear.

**TIM:** Dear? I ain't cost thee naught. Go away. *(He begins to cry)*

**ANNIE:** *(Kneeling to him)* Don't cry, Tim.

**TIM:** I ain't cryin'. I'se pullin' faces cos I didn't smash that chap.

**ANNIE:** Suppose I told you all about it.

**TIM:** I don't want to know anymore. I seen enough.

**ANNIE:** Well, that wasn't a man at all.

**TIM:** Ah? Who were it then?

**ANNIE:** Why, my sister Maria.

**TIM:** Were it? He he he. *(Getting up)* I knowed it were her all the time.

**ANNIE:** *(Getting up and hitting him)* Oh, you great big story!

**TIM:** Do you think if I'd hadn't known it, I wouldn't smashed her?

**ANNIE:** Now, when are we going to get married?

**TIM:** I'll put the bungs up at once and go to the blacksmith and buy a ring.

**ANNIE:** It must be gimlet gold, like mother's, you know.

**TIM:** Wi' a great big carbunkle as big as my fist. But only fancy Maria in them things em bobs. Ecod, it beats cock-fighting.

*They exit R. hand in hand.*

*Villain's Music. (SQ 55 - Track 38) The gauze curtains open and the trees track off to reveal:*

**Scene 14: INSIDE THE RED BARN (LXQ 46)**

*CORDER stands by the freshly-dug grave. He leans the spade against the wall and mops his brow.*

**CORDER:** All is complete. I now await my victim. Will she come? Oh yes. A woman is fool enough to do anything for the man she loves. Hark, tis her footstep!  
She comes in good heart, with hope and good cheer.  
Little does she know that death is so near. *(He draws back U.L.)*

*Enter MARIA, fearfully, at the door R.*

**MARIA:** William? Not here. Where can he be? What ails me? A weight is at my heart as if it told some evil. And this old barn - how like a vault it looks. Fear steals upon me. I tremble in every limb. I will return to my home at once.

**CORDER:** *(Stepping forward)* Stay, Maria!

**MARIA:** Oh, William. I am so glad you are here. You don't know how frightened I have been.

**CORDER:** Did any one see you cross the fields?

**MARIA:** Not a soul - I remembered your instructions.

**CORDER:** That's good. Now, Maria, do you remember a few days ago threatening to betray me about the child to Constable Ayers?

**MARIA:** A girlish threat made in the heat of temper, because you refused to do justice to one you had wronged so greatly. Do not speak of that now. Let us leave this place.

**CORDER:** *(Gripping her wrist)* Not yet, Maria. Do you think my life is to be held at the mercy of a silly girl? *(Dragging her to the grave)* No. Look what I have made here.

**MARIA:** A pit? A trench? Ah! A grave! Oh, William, what means this?

**CORDER:** You are a clog upon my actions, Maria - a chain that keeps me from reaching my ambition's height. *(Drawing a knife)* So you must die.

**MARIA:** But nay, not by your hand! Not by the hand that I have clasped in love and faithfulness. Oh! Pity, William. What do you mean to do?

*Music. Act One Finale. (SQ 56 - Track 39) (Trio from "FAUST" by C. Gounod.) (LXQ 47)*

**CORDER:** **TO KILL YOU!**  
**DESTROY YOU!**  
**AND TO BURY YOU HERE**  
*(Seizing her)* **NO, YOU SHALL NOT TAKE FLIGHT!**  
**FOR YOU MUST DIE TONIGHT!**

**MARIA:** **THIS MY GRAVE?**  
**SURE, YOU RAVE!**

**YOU ARE ILL, WILL YOU BETRAY ME?  
AND WITH COLD HEART SEEK NOW TO SLAY ME?  
I AM YOUR WIFE!  
YOUR WORDS CUT ME LIKE A KNIFE!** *(She twists the knife from his hand)*

**CORDER:**                   **YOU MUST DIE - I COMMAND** *(Seizing her by the throat)*

**MARIA:**                   *(Struggling)* **BUT WHY? STAY YOUR HAND!**

**CORDER:**                   **I'LL NO LONGER STAY. YOU MUST DIE ERE THE DAY,  
FOR I FEAR YOU'LL BETRAY.  
SO - NO DELAY.  
TIS TIME NOW TO KNEEL AND PRAY!**

**MARIA:**                   **AH, NAY,  
MY LOVE, RECALL  
I SAY -  
LOVE CONQUERS ALL!**

*She struggles and breaks free, imploring mercy.*

**I WHO LOVE THEE MORE THAN MY LIFE  
HAVE EVER BEEN THY FAITHFUL WIFE.  
BY HEAVEN, SET IN GLORY ABOVE ME,  
I SWEAR THAT I WILL ALWAYS LOVE THEE  
I WHO LOVE THEE MORE THAN MY LIFE  
WILL EVER BE THY FAITHFUL WIFE.**

**CORDER:**                   *(Drawing his pistol)* **CEASE NOW YOUR TEARS,  
YOU MUST DIE!**

**MARIA:**                   **I WHO LOVE THEE MORE THAN MY LIFE  
WILL EVER BE THY FAITHFUL WIFE.**

**CORDER:**                   *(Shoots her)* **DEATH IS NIGH!**

**MARIA:**                   *(Falling)* **O, SAVE ME - ERE I PERISH FOR EVER!**

**CORDER:**                   **I AM SAFE NOW!**

**MARIA:**                   **O, SAVE ME - ERE I PERISH FOR EVER!**

**CORDER:**                   **TIME TO TAKE FLIGHT  
INTO THE NIGHT**

**MARIA:**                   **MAY BLESSED ANGELS BEAR MY SOUL TO HEAVEN.**

*(LXQ 48)*

*Clouds fly in and slide on. ANGELS appear resplendent in Heaven above R. and L. with the Ghost of ZELLA LEE.*

**CORDER:**                   **AND THE DAY DAWNS**

**MARIA:**                   *(Appealing to the Angels)* **HOLY ANGELS, IN HEAVEN BLESSED -**

**CORDER:**                   **I MUST RACE  
FROM THIS PLACE**

**ERE I SUFFER DISGRACE . .**

**MARIA:** *(Sinking into the grave)* **MY SPIRIT LONGS, WITH THEE, TO REST!**

**CORDER:** **BEFORE THE DAWN, I MUST HASTE AWAY.**

**MARIA & ANGELS:** **O PARDON, HEAVEN GRANT I/SHE IMPLORE/S THEE**

**CORDER:** **NO REMORSE!  
SWIFTLY TO HORSE!**

**MARIA & ANGELS:** **FOR SOON I/SHE SHALL APPEAR BEFORE THEE!**

*MARIA disappears into the grave.*

**CORDER:** **FIRST TAKE A MOMENT TO COVER THE GRAVE  
WELL.**

**MARIA & ANGELS:** **HOLY ANGELS, IN HEAVEN BLEST,**

*(LXQ 49)*

*MARIA's soul (gauze - or a projection onto a smoke curtain) flies gracefully out of the grave and slowly up to Heaven during:*

**MARIA & ANGELS:** **MY/HER SPIRIT LONGS WITH THEE TO REST.**

**CORDER:** *(Turning, seeing the ANGELS and MARIA's soul)* **CURSE MY EYES!  
DOES SHE ARISE?  
SHALL SHE FIND PARADISE?  
AH THEN MY SOUL SHALL BE DAMNED - TO HELL!**

*He collapses D.L. as MARIA's soul is received by the ANGELS.*

*Curtain Music (SQ 57 - Track 40) (LXQ 50)*

**CURTAIN - END OF PART ONE.**

*(LXQ 51)*

**ACT TWO:** (LXQ 52)*Music. Intro Act Two. (SQ 58 - Track 41)***Scene 1: MR. MARTEN'S KITCHEN** (LXQ 53)*The back wall is the U.S. gauze.**Mrs MARTEN is seated in her rocking chair. TIM and ANNIE sit on the floor before the fire. MR. MARTEN leans against the door, smoking his pipe.***MRS MARTEN:** Hey ho, how strange it is. Day after day passes and no tidings of Maria.**ANNIE:** Ah but Maria wasn't never a great hand at letter-writing, Mother. And, for sure, her London life must be full of distractions. And she's the baby yet to care for.**MRS MARTEN:** Baby? *(Rising)* The blessed little soul must be walking now and I not there to see his first tottery steps. It is now above a twelve month since she left our home and only two letters have we received.**MR. MARTEN:** Aye. But the two. And mind, the first of those was from William saying she was so much taken up with London pleasures she hadn't got no time to write.**MRS MARTEN:** And the second in such strange writing - not at all like hers - saying she had a gathered hand and could scarce hold the pen. Ah me, I don't feel at all satisfied.**ANNIE:** *(Rising and going to her)* Never fear, Mother, you shall hear from her in due course.**MRS MARTEN:** Dear, dear, how sleepy I am. *(Returning to her chair)* I'll just take forty winks in my chair here.**MR. MARTEN:** *(Drawing ANNIE and TIM aside)* Though I would not say this for your mother to hear, for fear of adding to her agitation, but I am as concerned for our Maria as is she. Tis not like Maria to keep us so long without word.**TIM:** Ooooh, and that London is a savage place, I hear, where many evils bide.**ANNIE:** Sssh! Hush thy clamour. See. Mother's peaceful at last and has dropped to sleep.**MR. MARTEN:** Aye, come on, Tim. It's back to work for thee and me.*MR. MARTEN and TIM exit at the door R.***ANNIE:** *(As they tiptoe out)* Sssshh! *(She exits at the door L.)**Ghostly Gypsy Dream Music. (SQ 59 - Track 42) (LXQ 54)**As MRS MARTEN sleeps, the COTTAGE fades away, revealing the RED BARN through the gauze. ISHMAEL and ZELLA LEE appear and show her the murder. (LXQ 55) She sees WILLIAM digging the grave. She sees MARIA enter and WILLIAM waiting for her - how she fights for her life - how CORDER drags MARIA to the open grave. He is about to fire the pistol when MRS MARTEN wakes with a scream. The vision vanishes.) (LXQ 56)***MRS MARTEN:** Oh, my poor heart. How it palpitates. This is the third time I've dreamt that terrible dream within a week. Oh, Marten! Marten!*Mr. MARTEN and TIM rush in R. ANNIE from L.*

- MR. MARTEN:** What's the matter, Dame?
- ANNIE:** Have you dropped summit on your toes, Mother?
- MRS MARTEN:** Oh, Marten, I've had such a terrible dream!
- MR. MARTEN:** Just what I thought - been dreaming again.
- MRS MARTEN:** Something terrible has happened to our Maria. For this third time I've dreamt I seen her murdered by William Corder. I could see clear where it was and all. It was in the old Red Barn.
- MR. MARTEN:** Nonsense, woman! Tis foolishness. Dreams are not to be believed.
- TIM:** Of course not. I allus dream if I do lie flat on me back. And 't would make you blush scarlet if I told you *what* I dreams of, Annie.
- ANNIE:** And I always dream of thee, Tim, when I been eating summit as doesn't agree with me and I got an upset stomach.
- MRS MARTEN:** I must be satisfied as to the fate of our child. Whatever you say, the dream must mean *something*. And always there's that old Gypsy - the one that was murdered in the wood . .
- TIM:** What? The one that told Maria's fortune?
- MRS MARTEN:** Aye, he. He's always there, a'pointing and a'pointing - showing me what was done to poor Maria. All ghostly it is - the way they move and shimmer . .
- TIM:** (*Frightened*) Oh, my Lord!
- MRS MARTEN:** How William Corder would have stabbed her and strangled her but she fought like a tiger for her life. But then he takes his pistol and . . and he . .
- TIM:** Oh my goodness save us!
- MRS MARTEN:** Go, Marten, summon the neighbours. Get lights and search the Barn at once. What? D'you hesitate? Nay then, I'll go myself.
- MR. MARTEN:** Nay, wife, stay. Compose thyself. I'll go and search - if only to allay thy fears. Tim will go with me.
- TIM:** What? Me go ghost hunting? Oh dear no.
- MR. MARTEN:** Come on. There's nothing to hurt you.
- TIM:** I dunno about that. If some young Hob-goblin should bite my nose off, that would be a great loss to my beauty.
- ANNIE:** Go along, you great cowardy-custard, and look for our poor Maria. Or I won't marry thee. Not never.
- TIM:** What? Does she mean she *shall* marry me, Master Marten, if I *do* go?
- MR. MARTEN:** If she likes thee, tis up to her, Tim. I'll give my consent sure enough. You're an honest lad, for all you're soft i' the head.
- TIM:** Oh, *thankyou*, Mr. Marten. Then I'll go and get my pitchfork and a stable lantern. For we need the light to scare the ghosts away.
- ANNIE:** Ghosts!



- MR. MARTEN:** Go, Dame, and lay thee down and let Annie get thee summat warm.
- ANNIE:** Yes, I'll go and brew thee a cup o' green tea, Mother. That'll settle thy nerves for thee.
- MRS MARTEN:** Oh, Husband, hasten - hasten! For I feel I cannot rest until this mystery is resolved. *(Exit at the door L.)*
- MR. MARTEN:** Make haste, Tim, and follow me. *(Exits at the door R.)*
- TIM:** Goodbye, Nan, I be going.
- ANNIE:** Well, go on then . .
- TIM:** I say, Nan, mightn't you . . ?
- ANNIE:** Mightn't I what, you gurt fool?
- TIM:** Give I a cherry mumble.
- ANNIE:** A what?
- TIM:** A knock-chops.
- ANNIE:** Go on or I'll knock thy chops.
- TIM:** I mean a cuss.
- ANNIE:** Oh, damn you to hell and back! How's that for a cuss?
- TIM:** I mean a kiss!
- ANNIE:** Well? Can't you take it, Timmy, dear?
- TIM:** He he he.
- MR. MARTEN:** *(Calling from outside)* Tim! Tim?
- TIM:** I'm coming, Master Marten . . *(He is just about to kiss ANNIE when MR. MARTEN comes in and takes him off by the ear).* Hold on! Leave a lad alone! Goodbye, Nan. I'm going to dig up the murder and I haven't had my kiss! *(Exit R.)*
- ANNIE:** Oh, what a fool he is. I'll have such a lark when Mother goes to sleep. I'll get a sheet off my bed and run across the fields and, when I gets to the barn, I'll frighten Tim out of his wits. *(She runs off L.)*

*Sinister Music. (SQ 60 - Track 43)*  
*The gauze draws off and the barn flats track on. (LXQ 57)*

## **Scene 2: THE RED BARN**

*MR. MARTEN enters with TIM cowering behind him with a lantern.*

- TIM:** Don't you run away now, Master Marten. I baeant frightened.
- MR. MARTEN:** This old Barn has not been used for years.
- TIM:** Yes it has, Master Marten. Two or three days after Maria went away with Master Corder, I come for my pick and spade what he borrowed . .

- MR. MARTEN:** What? William Corder borrowed a pick and spade of thee?
- TIM:** Aye. And he still owes I ninepence.
- MR. MARTEN:** Why didn't you tell us this before?
- TIM:** I thought nothin' of it - 'cept it was my best spade. I come looking for it - and my pick - but they had been putting loads of straw in the third bay and buried 'em.
- MR. MARTEN:** But the straw has been removed again. *(LXQ 58)*
- TIM:** Aye, Corder's man must've took it away. But I asked the gaffer and he said he knew nothing about my tools. Ah! Look there, Master Marten! Tis a ghost!
- MR. MARTEN:** A what, Tim?
- TIM:** Nay. Only a rat.
- MR. MARTEN:** Hold the light over here, Tim.
- TIM:** Alright, Master Marten.
- MR. MARTEN:** *(Finding them)* What's this? Is this your pick and a spade. *(LXQ 59)*
- TIM:** Why, them's mine. I can swear to 'em. I'm right glad to have 'em back again.
- MR. MARTEN:** Ah! But what's this? There's a woman's hair upon the spade - stuck to it - and stains - like blood!
- TIM:** Then it baint my spade Master Marten. If it is, I don't want it back for I want no truck with blood.
- MR. MARTEN:** *(Digging)* Oh, Tim . . . I fear, Tim, I fear.
- TIM:** Oh, I fear too, Master Marten. You'll not sneak off and leave me to the ghosts, will you?
- MR. MARTEN:** Hold the light here and steady, Tim. Something tells me that my wife's dream may be true.
- TIM:** Oh look here, Master . . . *(He finds Corder's pistol in the grave)* Tis a young pup of a gun.
- MR. MARTEN:** What's that? Let me see. A pistol! With a name engraved upon it - William Corder. Search, Tim, search! I fear we are about to discover a terrible crime. See! The ground has been moved here. Oh, dig, Tim, dig!
- TIM:** *(Digging)* I will. But . . . don't leave me, Master Marten . . . You won't leave me, will you?
- MR. MARTEN:** What's this? *(He lifts Maria's hair-ribbon from the grave)* A ribbon? Ah no! Tis Maria's! Maria's hair ribbon. Many a time have I seen her wear it.
- TIM:** You're right. I seen her wear it too. But why would she leave it buried here?
- MR. MARTEN:** Dig, Tim, dig.
- TIM:** *(Digging)* I will. I will. Only don't leave me Master Marten.

*They discover the body. Dramatic Chord. (SQ 61 - Track 44)*

**TIM:** Ah!

**MR. MARTEN:** Ah no! (*Kneeling beside the grave*) What dreadful sight assails my eyes?

**TIM:** Tis a . . . a skellington!

**MR. MARTEN:** Tis my poor girl! My Maria!

**TIM:** Why, tis . . . Murder!

**MR. MARTEN:** Ah, too true it is - my child - my poor dear Maria. Basely murdered by that beast in human form, William Corder. Oh my poor poor child! My poor child! How shall we ever bear this loss? How shall we ever cease lamenting our poor dear daughter? But justice now shall take the place of tears. Yet where shall the villain be found? He is fled and none knows whither. (*Rising*) Justice upon him, I say! Justice!

For, if justice in England be not dead,  
This deed shall fall on William Corder's head!

**TIM:** (*Clinging on to him*) Don't leave me, Master Marten. I'll take care on yer.  
And, if justice in England be of use,  
This deed shall cook William Corder's goose.

**MR. MARTEN:** (*Moving towards the door*) I must go fetch help. And a bier to bear my daughter's body to the church for decent burial. (*Exits R.*)

**TIM:** (*Looking down into the grave*) Poor Maria. Her that was so beautiful. To become a grinning skellington. Poor Maria. I say . . . ? (*Realising he is alone*) Master Marten? What? Gone and left me with the ghosts and ghostesses? Master Marten!

*Enter ANNIE L. with sheet over her head. TIM yells and falls into the grave.*

*Crashing Chord. (SQ 62 - Track 45)*

**ANNIE:** (*Removing the sheet*) Oh, Tim! What a fool you are! (*She sees the body*)  
Maria! (*She screams*)

*The main curtains close. LXQ 60)*

*Music. "WON'T YOU BUY MY PRETTY FLOWERS?" (SQ 63 - Track 46) The Curtain closes (LXQ 61)*

### **Scene 3: A LONDON ALLEYWAY**

*A STREET FLOWER SELLER enters R. and sings while RICH PEOPLE pass unheeding. A BEGGAR lies asleep in the gutter D.R.*

**FLOWER SELLER:                    UNDERNEATH THE GASLIGHT'S GLITTER  
STANDS A LITTLE FRAGILE GIRL,  
HEEDLESS OF THE NIGHT WINDS BITTER,  
AS THEY ROUND ABOUT ME WHIRL.  
WHILE THE RICH FOLKS PASS UNHEEDING  
IN THE EV'NING'S WANING HOURS,  
STILL I CRY WITH TEARFUL PLEADING,  
WON'T YOU BUY MY PRETTY FLOWERS?  
   THERE ARE MANY, SAD AND WEARY,  
   IN THIS PLEASANT LAND OF OURS,  
   CRYING EV'RY NIGHT SO DREARY,  
   WON'T YOU BUY MY PRETTY FLOWERS?**

**NOT A LOVING WORD TO CHEER ME**

**FROM THE PASSERS BY IS HEARD  
NOT A FRIEND TO LINGER NEAR ME,  
WITH MY HEART BY PITY STIRRED;  
HOMEWARD GOES THE TIDE OF FASHION,  
SEEKING PLEASURE'S PLEASANT BOWERS;  
NONE TO HEAR WITH SAD COMPASSION,  
WON'T YOU BUY MY PRETTY FLOWERS?**

**ALL:**                   *(Offstage)* **THERE ARE MANY, SAD AND WEARY,  
IN THIS PLEASANT LAND OF OURS,  
CRYING EV'RY NIGHT SO DREARY,  
WON'T YOU BUY MY PRETTY FLOWERS?**

*PHAROS LEE enters D.L. and gives money to the FLOWER SELLER. (LXQ 62)*

**FLOWER SELLER:**    Oh, thankyou, sir. God bless you, sir.

**PHAROS LEE:**        I hope he might. And I hope *you* might be of help to me too. I seek a certain Mr. Hawkshaw

**FLOWER SELLER:**    Mr. Hawkshaw? Do you mean Mr. Hawkshaw, the detective, sir?

**PHAROS LEE:**        The very same. He sent me word that he would meet me at the corner yonder. But I have been all about the neighbourhood and can find no man to answer his description.

**FLOWER SELLER:**    Ah, I never knew any that *could* describe Mr. Hawkshaw, sir. He has as many faces and disguises as there are days in the year. *(Going)* Good night, sir. And God bless you . . . *(Exits L.)*

**PHAROS LEE:**        Then it seems that I must continue my search without his help. But where to begin? *(Approaching the BEGGAR)* You there . . .

**HAWKSHAW:**         I, sir?

**PHAROS LEE:**        Can you tell me . . .

**HAWKSHAW:**         *(Seizing him and drawing a knife)* Ah!

**PHAROS LEE:**        *(Struggling)* What's this . . . ?

**HAWKSHAW:**         Give me thy purse or I'll cut thy throat. Give it me, I say. Give it to old Joe.

**PHAROS LEE:**        I'll give thee nothing . . . !

**HAWKSHAW:**         *(A hand pokes out from the bundle of rags)* Why then, at least give me your hand.

**PHAROS LEE:**        What's this?

**HAWKSHAW:**         It's Mr. Lee, isn't it? Mr. Pharos Lee.

**PHAROS LEE:**        It is. But you are . . . ?

**HAWKSHAW:**         *(Throwing off his disguise)* I, sir, am Hawkshaw - the detective - at your service.

**PHAROS LEE:**        *(Shaking his hand)* You have an unusual way of keeping appointments, Mr. Hawkshaw -

**HAWKSHAW:**         Mine is altogether an unusual profession, Mr. Lee.

**PHAROS LEE:**        If you really *are* Mr. Hawkshaw. Forgive my suspicious thought but I know very little about you.

- HAWKSHAW:** Ah but I know a great deal about you, sir.
- PHAROS LEE:** We never met before. You know nothing of me.
- HAWKSHAW:** I know that you have been abroad and that, when you left these shores, you were forced to work your passage - and not on one of these new-fangled steamers, neither. You served before the mast, sir.
- PHAROS LEE:** I . .
- HAWKSHAW:** You visited Spain on your journey before heading west for the Americas where you lived among the Redskins.
- PHAROS LEE:** But how can you . . ?
- HAWKSHAW:** But then you struck gold - a rich seam by the look of it. You made your fortune and returned to these shores as a first class passenger.
- PHAROS LEE:** But, Mr. Hawkshaw, sir . . . You amaze me . . . How do you know all this?
- HAWKSHAW:** Because, my dear sir, I am Hawkshaw, the detective.
- PHAROS LEE:** But . .
- HAWKSHAW:** When we shook hands I felt the sort of calluses that can only be acquired by one who works aloft in the rigging and hauls upon the sheets. Your shoes are of Spanish leather in a style which is made nowhere but in Castille. Your belt is of wampum, of a pattern peculiar to those tribes of the Iroquois Redskins whose hunting grounds are in the badlands of the middle west. And the gold nugget upon your cravat pin tells me the nature of your quest and of your good fortune. And, finally, how else would such a wealthy man return home but as a first class passenger?
- PHAROS LEE:** If you can tell all this from but a single glance, then doubtless you know why I am here then?
- HAWKSHAW:** No. That you must tell me. There are limits - even to *my* genius. Though I know it has to do with a dear one - a woman - who is sadly no more and whom you wish to avenge.
- PHAROS LEE:** But . .
- HAWKSHAW:** Unless I am much mistaken, sir, you carry a lock of her hair in the locket which you wear upon your watch chain.
- PHAROS LEE:** You amaze me, sir.
- HAWKSHAW:** These are but the skills of my trade, sir, just as exploration and prospecting and survival in savage places are the skills of yours. Now tell me in detail why you require my assistance.
- PHAROS LEE:** I seek the capture, trial and condemnation of one William Corder. He it was who seduced my sister and abandoned her, leaving her to die of a broken heart.
- HAWKSHAW:** The law has little to say on the matter of broken hearts, Mr. Lee. The law will hang a man that steals a sheep but will say nothing to one who leaves a poor woman pining to death for his cruelty. There must be some act of violence performed.
- PHAROS LEE:** He murdered my father in cold blood. He poisoned his own child, borne to him by a village girl.
- HAWKSHAW:** There is proof of these crimes?

## END OF SAMPLE SCRIPT

Possible Doubles Act I

Actor	1:Green	2:Woods	3:Lucy	4:Woods	5:Lucy	6:W/Gypsy	7:Cottage	8:Woods	9:Secret	10:Farmyard	11:Redskin	12:Kitchen	13:Woods	14:Red Barn
Actor A:	Villager		Peeler	Actor	Actor	Gypsy		Gypsy		Gypsy		Chief		
Actor B:	Villager		Mavor		Mavor			Amos		Amos				
Actor C:	Villager		Peeler		Footman	Gypsy		Mark		Mark				
Actor D:	Corder	Corder		Corder		Corder	Corder	Corder	Corder	Corder		Corder	Corder	Corder
Actor E:	Villager	Ishmael		Ishmael		Ishmael		Ishmael	Ishmael	Ishmael		Ishmael		
Actor F:	Villager	Pharos		Footman				Gypsy		Gypsy		Pharos		
Actor G:	Tim	Tim		Tim		Gypsy?	Tim	Gypsy		Gypsy				Tim
Actor H:	Mr. Marten					Gypsy?	Mr. M.			Gypsy		Mr. M.		
Actress A:	Maria	Maria		Maria			Maria		Maria			Maria	Maria	Maria
Actress B:	Annie	Annie		Annie			Annie	Gypsy?		Gypsy		Squaw		Annie
Actress C:	Villager	Zella		Zella					Zella	Zella				Zella
Actress D:	Mrs Marten						Mrs M.			Gypsy		Mrs M.		Angel
Actress E:	Villager		Lucy		Lucy	Gypsy		Gypsy				Squaw		Angel

Possible Doubles Act II

Actor	1:Kitchen	2:Red Barn	3:Alleyway	4:Kitchen	5:Street	6:Opium Den	7:Lucy	8:Rooftops	9:Street	10:Woods	11:Cell	12:Street	13:Scaffold
Actor A:			Hawkshaw		Hawk	Hawk	Hawk	Hawk	Hawk				Hawk
Actor B:			Rich Man	Vill		Eunuch	Footman				Gaoler	Balladeer	Balladeer
Actor C:			Rich Man	Vill		Jeremiah				Peeler			Priest
Actor D:							Corder	Corder	Corder		Corder		Corder
Actor E:	Ishmael		Rich Man	Ishmael		Addict		Ishmael			Ishmael (Priest)		Ishmael/Hangman
Actor F:			Pharos		Pharos	Pharos	Pharos	Pharos	Pharos				Pharos
Actor G:	Tim	Tim	Rich Man	Tim		Addict				Tim		Tim	Tim
Actor H:	Mr. M.	Mr. M.	Rich Man	Mr. M.		Addict					Mr. M.	Mr. M.	Mr. M.
Actress A:	Maria			Maria							Maria		Maria
Actress B:	Annie	Annie		Annie		Addict				Annie		Annie	Annie
Actress C:	Zella		Flowergirl	Zella		Addict					Zella		Zella
Actress D:	Mrs M.			Mrs M.								Mrs M.	Mrs M.
Actress E:			Rich Lady	Vill.		Addict	Lucy					Lucy	Lucy

**MARIA MARTEN – Props and Furniture**

**ACT ONE**

**Scene 1: Polestead Village Green - outside Mr. Marten's Cottage**

Rustic table – to be set and struck by cast  
 Baskets of fruit and baskets of loaves for VILLAGERS  
 Tankards and Jugs of Ale for VILLAGERS  
 Riding crop for CORDER  
 Tray of Pasties and Sausages set Off L for MRS MARTEN

**Scene 2: The Woods**

Knife for PHAROS LEE  
 Coins for CORDER  
 Silver shilling (10p piece) for TIM

**Scene 3: The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London**

Letter for LUCY

**Scene 4: The Woods**

Three half pennies for TIM

**Scene 5: The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London**

Letter for LUCY

**Scene 6: The Woods, near the Gypsy Encampment**

Vial of poison for ISHMAEL  
 Purse for CORDER  
 Gold coins for CORDER

**Scene 7: A Poor Cottage**

Cradle with Baby  
 Vial for CORDER

**Scene 8: The Woods**

Knives and swords for GYPSIES

**Scene 9: A Secret Part of the Woods**

Baby for MARIA

**Scene 10: Squire Corder's Farmyard**

Flaming Torches for GYPSIES

**Scene 11: A Redskin Encampment, Colorado**

Knife for PHAROS LEE

**Scene 12: The Kitchen of Mr. Marten's Cottage**

Rocking Chair  
 Stool  
 Bundle of clothes set off L. for CORDER

**Scene 13: The Woods**

Pick Axe and Spade for TIM  
 Five pound note, a sovereign, a shilling and three pennies for CORDER

**Scene 14: The Old Red Barn**

Knife for CORDER  
Pistol for CORDER

**ACT TWO:**

**Scene 1: Mr. Marten's Kitchen**

Rocking chair  
Stool  
Spade for CORDER  
Pistol for CORDER

**Scene 2: The Old Red Barn**

Pickaxe and spade U.L.  
Lantern for TIM  
Hair ribbon in grave trap  
White sheet set off L. for ANNIE

**Scene 3: A London Alleyway**

Basket of Flowers for FLOWER SELLER with loose bunches to sell  
Coins for RICH PEOPLE to buy flowers  
Knife for HAWKSHAW

**Scene 4 Mr. Marten's Kitchen**

Rocking chair  
Stool

**Scene 6: An Opium Den**

Knife for EUNUCH  
Opium pipes for ADDICTS

**Scene 7: The Drawing Room of Lucy Mavor's House, London**

Small table R.C.  
Chair  
Pen and inkstand on table R.C.  
Document on table R.C.  
Small table U.L.  
Tray with decanter of wine and two glasses on table U.L.  
Bell pull L.  
Vial of poison for CORDER  
CORDER'S coat and hat set off R. for LUCY  
Two pistols in the pockets of CORDER'S coat  
Whip for HAWKSHAW

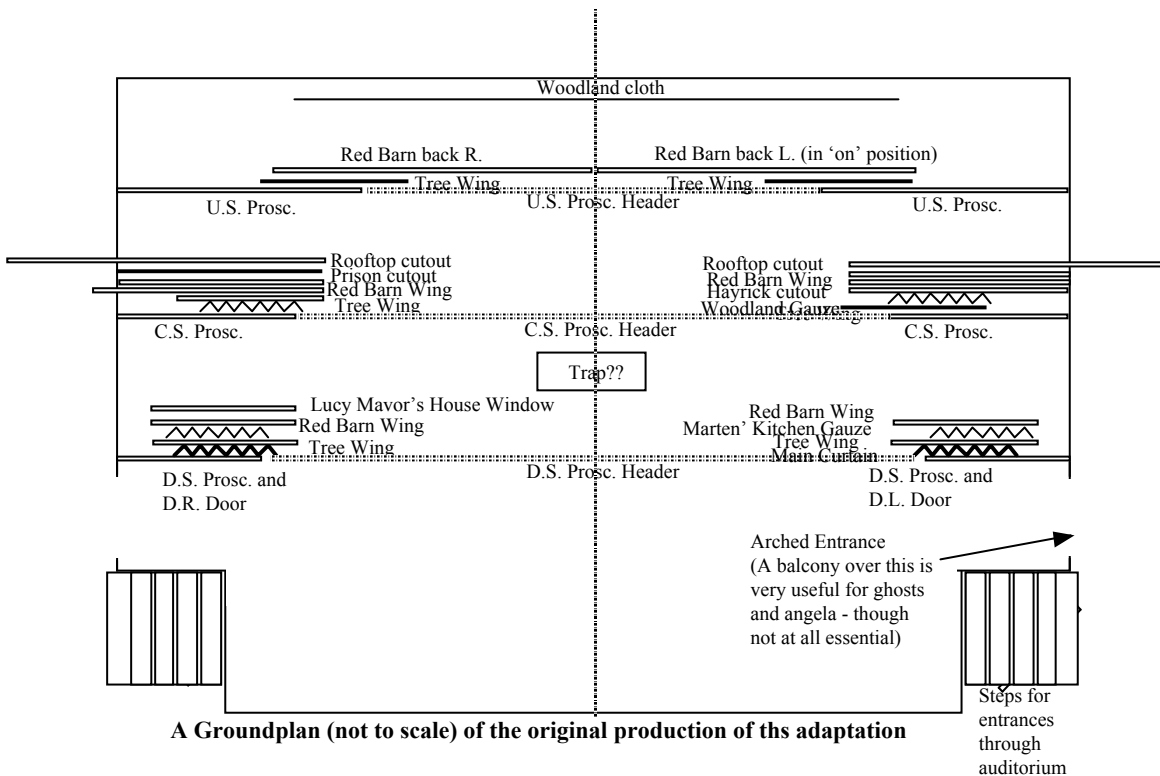
**Scene 11: The Condemned Cell, Bury-St-Edmunds**

Stool  
Manacles for CORDER  
Bible for ISHMAEL as the Priest

**Scene 12: A Street, Bury-St-Edmunds**

Copies of Ballads for BALLADMONGER  
Bible for PRIEST







Roofscape for the Puppet Chase

**Suggested Lighting Plot: Note: ‘Walkway’ refers to the auditorium floor in front of the stage.**

**ACT ONE:**

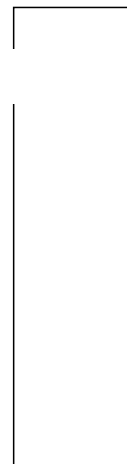
<b><u>Page</u></b>	<b><u>Cue</u></b>	<b><u>Detail</u></b>
7		PRESET
7	1	FADE PRESET AND HOUSE
7	2	Light Stage Area only
7	3	X to very leafy in walkway, losing stage other than for leafies
7	4	X to full leafy golden evening - stage and walkway and Floor R.
9	5	Villain Light DL - Check the rest to halffish
9	6	State of LX3 + villain Light DL
11	7	Fade over 15 secs to deep evening
11	8	X to Leafy night
12	9	Add Tableau lights behind gauze
12	10	X to state of LX8
12	11	Add Villain Cross Light
13	12	X to nice leafy day in the forest
14	13	X to sinister - concentrate C
14	14	D.B.O and UP for disappearance of Ishmael
14	15	X to state of LX12
16	16	X to state of LX2
16	17	X to warm daylight interior - backlight through window?
17	18	X to Villain Light DL
17	19	X to state of LX12
18	20	Fade to state of LX13 + ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
19	21	Lightning + lose ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony
19	22	Lightning

19	23	Lightning
19	24	Add ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
19	25	Lightning + lose ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
20	26	Lightning
20	27	Lightning + ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
20	28	Lose ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
20	29	Add ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
21	30	Lightning
21	31	X to State of LX9 + ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
21	32	X to State of LX2
22	33	X to State of LX17
22	34	X to single spot DC
22	35	X to state of LX11
23	36	X to interior of Hovel – early evening
26	37	X to state of LX8
28	38	X to state of LX13 + ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
28	39	X to State of LX13
29	40	Add Flame FX
29	41	Add ZELLA Ghostlight on Balcony L.
30	42	X to tight area C. for Redskin Camp
30	43	Add Ghostlight on Balcony L. for ISHMAEL
30	44	Warm interior – the Marten’s Kitchen - evening
32	45	X to State of LX8
36	46	X to the Red Barn – night - sinister
36	47	Add colour for Musical Finale
37	48	Add HEAVEN light
38	49	Adjust for flight of Maria’s soul
38	50	Fade to D.B.O.
	51	RETURN TO HOUSE AND PRESET

**ACT TWO:**

<b><u>Page</u></b>	<b><u>Cue</u></b>	<b><u>Detail</u></b>
	52	FADE HOUSE AND PRESET TO B.O.
39	53	Cosy evening interior - cottage kitchen - family round the fireside
39	54	X to spot on Mrs Marten - lights up behind gauze on Zella and Ishmael
39	55	Add cross lights for Maria and Corder behind gauze
39	56	Snap to state of LX53
41	57	X to lights downstage Red Barn - Tim with lantern
42	58	Add LC
42	59	Add grave area
43	60	Snap B.O.
43	61	London street - night - street lamps, forestage and walkway (if there <i>is</i> a followspot available, it could follow the Flower Seller for the song)
44	62	The same but sinister - lose walkway
46	63	X to state of LX53
47	64	Reduce to very warm on mourners
47	65	Add cross light behind gauze (ought to look very pretty)
47	66	X to walkway and street lamps - London - sinister night
48	67	X to Opium Den - lanterns, smoke, not a lot of light (fiery red? dim green?) some on stage - lose walkway
48	68	Add stage area - still sinister
49	69	Lose opium den
49	70	X to interior - Lucy’s house - night
54	71	Snap B.O.
54	72	X to light for puppets for rooftop chase
54	73	Add ghost light balcony L.

54	74	Snap X to walkway night
55	75	X to state of LX12
55	76	Might colour it up a bit for the song??
56	77	X to Prison Cell - Corder LC to DC + atmos
56	78	Add ghostly ripple for ghost RC
57	79	Snap return to state of LX77 + door L and more DL
57	80	X to very ghostly round trap area
58	81	Add flames up through trap
58	82	Snap return to state of LX91
58	83	X to walkway - day (Again the follow might be useful for "Ballad of Sam Hall")
59	84	Add sinister on stage as gallows is constructed (or revealed?)
60	85	All turns sinister and colourful for execution - including walkway and scaffold
60	86	Snap to ghostly for ghosts of Ishmael, Maria and Zella
60	87	Snap B.O. as rope swings
60	88	Call lighting
61	89	Fade to B.O. end of "Goodnight" song.
	90	RESTORE HOUSELIGHTS & PRESET



Photographs by Graham Burke