

WIMBORNE COMMUNITY THEATRE



VOYAGES SCRIPT Kingston Lacy House 1996

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COMMUNITY GROUP CAST (Scenes 1 – 4)

Characters in order of appearance:

The Chorus: Sammy Boyle, Moira Clark, Dawn Goodwin, Gwyneth Harrison, Rachel Harrison, Tuppy Hill, Gill Horitz, Daniel Horitz, Jan Keen, Jonathan Kelly, Daniel Parker, Suzannah Newham, Adrian Williams

Elder Viola	Mary Farmer (Mon/Wed/Fri) / Jean Garside (Tues/Thurs/Sat)
Younger Viola	Nikki Gowans (Mon/Wed/Fri) / Natalie Gascoigne (Tues/Thurs/Sat)
Ellen (Laundry Maid)	Tracey Nicholls
Julia (Laundry Maid)	Melanie Browne
Winnie (Nursery Maid)	Amy Hart
Nurse Stanley	Rachel Newman
Bessie (New Nursery Maid)	Sarah Pearce
Miss Tidmarsh (Governess)	Chris Dowdle
Ralph (Mrs Bankes' son)	Ben Dowdle
Daphne (Mrs Bankes' daughter)	Jessica Bilington
Mrs Jenks (The Head Cook)	Marion Harvey
Susan (Kitchen Maid)	Vicky Vilanou
Lizzie (Kitchen Maid)	Sharon Muiruri
Mary (Kitchen Maid)	Laura Welch
Mr Cooper (The Butler)	Alec Sutton
Mr Hill (The Head Gardener)	Jeff Hart
Crandon (The Under Butler)	Alec Sutton
Edward Dukes (Assistant Gardener)	Oliver Keen
Snell (Assistant Gardener)	James Hankins
Mrs Henrietta Bankes	Barbara Hart
Mrs Baker	Sammy Boyle / Gwyneth Harrison (Fri)
Alice Maud Baker	Rachel Hickson (Mon/Wed/Fri) / Maria Cotham (Tues/Thurs/Sat)



VOYAGES

Scene 1

The Journey Begins

On the Grass Circle by the Stable Clock

The Chorus is at the round flower bed and beckons the audience in from the stable yard. One finds the stone in the middle of the flower bed. They begin to play a game, throwing the stone from one to another. As each throws the stone, they shout a name of one of the characters from the play. All repeat. The last name spoken is Viola Bankes. On this all take up positions round the flower bed.

Chorus: Come into the circle
 Zodiac of stories
 Round as the stable clock
 And listen to the sounds
 Across the lawns
 And through the woods
 Of a park
 Laid like a green cloak
 Over the centuries
 Over paths once travelled
 Over words spoken
 And unspoken
 Over trinkets of stone and bone.

Beneath the surface a pulse still beats
Echoes trapped in stone and leaf
Louder now the ancient song
You must go on and on and on.

Half way through the opening Chorus speech, the Elder Viola enters as if for the first time since her childhood. She looks around a bit yearningly; a bit sadly.

The circle's starting to turn back
The circle's starting to turn back
To Kingston Lacy
In 1905.
The journey begins from this courtyard
A path through re-remembered lives.

All turn and point at the Elder Viola.

Look , look!

How Viola walks back
To the edge of her childhood
Sees herself
The daughter
Who would have been a son
This girl must curtsey
For a King
She is the one about whom
There is something to tell

From the courtyard, the voice of the child Viola is heard calling, running alone down the yard. She turns about and goes off the same way she came.

Young Viola: Alice, Alice, where are you, Alice?

Elder Viola follows her up to the end and off. She too calls, imitating the child's voice.

Elder Viola: Alice, Alice, where are you, Alice?

Chorus (*moves the audience on*):

Follow, follow!
In the shadow of this stone-grey house
In the shadow of this stone-grey house.

Chorus moves audience to the Laundry Courtyard.



Scene 2
Preparations
In the Courtyard

The Servants are seen at work in work routine mime. As they work they mouth some of "The Kingston Lacy Rules of Good Servants". Bells punctuate each round of duties, precipitating a half turn onto the next.

They work faster and faster. As the audience finishes entering the space, the Servants form two rows.

Viola runs up the length of the yard, calling Alice, Alice, Alice.

Cooper (*rings bell*): Good morning, everybody.

All: Good morning, Mr Cooper.

Cooper: The day has dawned
The time is nigh
Our chance for glory
Now shines bright

I tell you with joy
That His Majesty
Shall be arriving at
Kingston Lacy for tea!

So cast away sorrow
And with clear eye see
You are honoured to work
For the great Bankes' family!

Ours is not to question
But humbly to serve
If sacrifice is needed
It is what they deserve!

The Servants form an oval in groups. Work routine mime. Moving round circle adding words drawn from Cooper's speech. Bell rings.

Cooper (*consulting his watch*): Now the hour has come for Majesty
Bring forth the fruits of your industry!

All Servants move away or exit into new positions ready for next sequence.

Winnie vainly searches for Master Ralph in silence. Then stops alone in the centre, clearly distressed. The Laundry Maids, Julia and Ellen, come out from the Laundry to shake out a white tablecloth.

Julia: What's wrong, Winnie? We're all supposed to be happy today.

Ellen: King's coming to visit you – remember?

Julia: Better put your best ball gown on, Winnie!

Winnie: I just can't stop thinking about her! It's like I can hear her still ...

Julia: Best forget, Winnie, like Mr Cooper says.

Winnie: But she was my friend!

Nanny Stanley enters noisily with Bessie, the new Nursery Maid, who stares up at the great house. Nurse Stanley is calling for Winnie.

Nanny: Winnie! Winnie!

Ellen: Winnie, quick, it's Nurse Stanley!

The Maids hurriedly exit back into the Laundry.

Nanny: So there you are – gossiping, I suppose. *(to Bessie)* Don't just stand there gawping – comb her hair! *(Bessie begins combing Viola's hair)* As for you, Winnie, you're just pathetic! I sent you to fetch Master Ralph. Where is he?

Winnie *(crying)*: I couldn't find him, Nurse Stanley!

Nanny: Useless, lazy fool! I shall have to tell Mrs Bankes. And don't think you'll ever get another post when you've lost this one! *(to Bessie)* That's not how you comb hair! *(She takes the comb and drags it harshly through Viola's hair)*

Viola: Ow! That hurts! You're pulling my hair!

Nanny: Quiet! Or you'll not be taking tea today! King or no King! *(to Bessie)* There – now do you see how it's done?

Bessie: Mmm ... Yes, Nurse Stanley. *(She takes over)*

Nanny: I'll have to find Master Ralph myself. *(to Winnie)* You clean her shoes! *(She storms off at the house end)*

Bessie: Now, please sit still, Miss. Easy does it. *(as if to a pony)* Whoa there!

Viola: I'm not a pony, you know! I want Alice to comb my hair. She's got softer hands than you. Where is she?

Pause. Winnie cries.

Viola: Why won't anyone tell me! *(Viola runs off to garden end)*

From the house end Nurse Stanley reappears with Miss Tidmarsh, Ralph and Daphne.

Nanny: What's this! What's this? Why did you let her run off?

Bessie: She just upped and went ...

Miss Tidmarsh: I'm sure she'll return soon, Nurse Stanley. I can manage now ...

Nanny: Thinks she's Lady Muck, that one! No, you'd best leave her to me!

Miss Tidmarsh: But I have to make her practise her curtsy with her brother and sister ...Mrs Bankes' orders ...

Nanny: Oh, I'll make sure she practises bending down, don't you worry, Miss Tidmarsh. *(to Bessie and Winnie)* Shoes! *(as she leaves)* Miss Viola! Just you wait! *(She exits at garden end)*

During next sequence Winnie and Bessie clean the children's shoes and brush their clothes.

Ralph: Where's Viola gone?

Miss Tidmarsh *(moving quickly over and taking centre stage, facing house)* Never mind, Master Ralph, ... we'll practise bowing and curtsying, shall we? *(to Servants)* Bench, girls! *(They fetch the bench)* Jump up on this. *(Ralph daydreams)* That's lovely. Well done, Miss Daphne. Er ... Master Ralph, ready, steady and down, two, three and up, two, three! Very good! Just once more. Down, two, three and up, two, three! Very good indeed! Now, let's just practise addressing His Majesty.

Daphne: I feel frightfully nervous about speaking to the King, Miss Tidmarsh.

Miss Tidmarsh: There's no need, dear. You have a lovely voice.

Daphne: But what if I stammer? Aren't you nervous, Ralph?

Ralph: Why should I be nervous? Mama has told me I am the bestest in the whole wide world! I am Squire of Kingston Lacy...Bishop of the Purbeck Fleet ... no ... I am Admiral of the Wimborne Minster ... well ... I am much better than any King for certain!

Daphne: Oh, Ralph! You are silly sometimes!

Miss Tidmarsh: It might not be proper to boast too much, Master Ralph!

Ralph: Be quiet, both of you! You're only a girl, Daphne. You and Viola don't really count. Mama says.

Daphne: Is that true, Miss Tidmarsh?

Miss Tidmarsh: I do believe it is time for us to go around to the front of the house now.

Daphne: But Viola has not returned yet.

Miss Tidmarsh: She will be here soon, dear.

Ralph: I expect Nanny Stanley is spanking her again.

Miss Tidmarsh: Now then Master Ralph! Come along! And you, Winnie and Bessie!

They exit with the two Nursery Maids as Ellen and Julia reappear carrying a table with the cloth on it. They are singing "I know I'm only a servant girl". Viola runs on.

Viola: Ellen! Julia! have you seen her?

Ellen: Seen who, Miss Viola? *(They are disturbed and smooth out the cloth urgently).*

Viola: Alice. Alice Maud Baker. Where is she?

Julia: Don't know, Miss.

Ellen: Sorry, Miss.

Viola: But I need her to help me prepare for the King.

Pause. Mrs Jenks appears with food.

Mrs Jenks: Ellen! Julia! Ready for you now!

Julia: Sorry, Miss.

Ellen: We have to go now, Miss ...

Julia: To help carry the King's tea ...

They run off to the kitchen. Viola dashes off in a different direction.

Viola: Where are you, Alice?

Mrs Jenks enters from the kitchen with a boar's head in aspic, followed by Lizzie with ptarmigan decorated with feathers, Mary, with a lobster salad. They move up the courtyard towards the house. Ellen and Julia bring up the rear with cold meats and exotic puddings.

Mrs Jenks: Heads up, everyone. Lizzie, after me. Then you, Mary. Let's have a last look.
They process to the right – garden way – then arc towards the house.

Susan (*appearing with a saucepan and calling from the kitchen*): Mrs Jenks! Mrs Jenks! (*All stop*)
The arrowroot sauce for the pudding is still all lumpy!

Mrs Jenks: Just you keep stirring, dearie. It'll soon be all lovely and smooth as Master Ralph's cheeks, you'll see!

Susan: But it won't come to the boil, Mrs Jenks.

Mrs Jenks: That's because you've taken it off the stove, Susan. Now, go back in and keep stirring away. Now put the food on the table carefully, girls. Let's have a last look.

Lizzie: Oh dear! Mrs Jenks, my feathers've flopped!

Mrs Jenks: That'll never do!

Lizzie: It was Mary who stuck them in, Mrs Jenks! Shall I go and fetch some more gelatine?

Mrs Jenks: No. (*She adjusts the feathers*) I can manage as it is ... There! That's it! ...

Lizzie: Oh, you're so clever, Mrs Jenks!

Mrs Jenks: Just practice, dearie! Know all the tricks, me!

Susan (*appearing again but without the saucepan*): Sauce is boiling over, Mrs Jenks!

Mrs Jenks: Well, just lift it off, Susan, and blow on it like I've shown you how!

Susan: Yes, Mrs Jenks! (*Freezes*)

Mrs Jenks: Off you go then! That Susan! Don't know what's up with her!

Lizzie: She's upset about ... you know ... what happened, Mrs Jenks ...

Mrs Jenks: We must put that behind us. Like Mr Cooper said (*Mary starts shaking*) And what's wrong with you, Mary?

Mary: Just fancy! I'm holding the very lobster that His Majesty will be eating this very afternoon! I feel so nervous!

Mrs Jenks: Well, how do you suppose Mrs Bankes is feeling?

Mary: She never gets nervous, does she, Mrs Jenks?

Lizzie: No, silly, she's much too refined a lady

Mrs Jenks: Too refined to let it show, dear!

Mr Cooper enters.

Mr Cooper: Oh, I declare! What an Elysian vision, Mrs Jenks!

Mrs Jenks: Oh, Mr Cooper – you are too too kind!

Cooper: Pas de tout, ma chere Madame Jenks! Once again you have magiced a superb fest truly fit for a King! May I say, you are the crème de la crème des chefs de Dorset!

Mrs Jenks: Oh, Mr Cooper! There you go again!

Cooper: I only speak the truth, Jinky!

Mrs Jenks: Put it down to all those years working with Monsieur Albert aboard the Cunard line, Mr Cooper.

Susan appears with a lavish pudding.

Susan: I've done it, Mrs Jenks!

Mrs Jenks: Tres bien, Susan. Good girl. Find your place in the line! Come along now! The King will be here soon. Let's make Mrs Bankes proud of us, shall we?

All Kitchen Staff exit down steps to the front of the house.

Cooper: Ever the perfectionist!

Cooper turns and sees Crandon appearing with Hill and Dukes at the garden end. They are deep in conversation, carrying a trug basket and large bunches of flowers.

Cooper: Ah, Mr Crandon! Congratulations! I see you have persuaded Mr Hill to part with his prize blooms.

Crandon: We were just deliberating on what bunch to choose for the hall, Mr Cooper.

Mr Hill: I was thinking this soft blue plumbago'd do well enough.

Cooper: Wrong shade of blue for a King, don't you think, Mr Crandon?

Crandon: You are right as usual, Mr Cooper.

Cooper: Well, I shall trust your judgement, gentlemen. I must find Mr Lodder, the estate agent.

Cooper exits to house end.

Edward (*holding up trug with bunch of flowers*): Stocks are nicely scented, Mr Hill.

Mr Hill: Whom asked you, boy? I'll put you in the blooming stocks if you don't watch your step! *(to Crandon)* What about some of the lavender from the kitchen parterre? Lovely and sweet-smelling, it is!

Crandon: Bit common or garden, don't you think?

Mr Hill: Ma'am is exceedingly fond of lavender.

Crandon: I think not for a royal visit.

Mr Hill: Well, then ... *(to Edward Dukes)* Trim some of those stocks.

Edward Dukes: Certainly, Mr Hill. *(He trims flowers with a knife)*

Mr Hill: Carefully now! Got to watch these lads like a hawk, Mr Crandon. Airs and graces, most of them – dying to take my place! Aren't you, Dukes?

Edward Dukes: Oh, no, Mr Hill!

Crandon: I declare, you are irreplaceable, Mr Hill! Ah! Look!

Snell runs on from the house end with the cedar of Lebanon.

Snell: Here it is, Mr Hill! The cedar of Lebanon for the King to plant!

Mr Hill: Careful with that, Snell! Haven't I told you to carry it like it was your own mother.

Snell: My mother's dead, Mr Hill.

Mr Hill: And you'll be joining her if you don't watch your step, Snell.

Snell: I potted it up carefully – just like you ordered, Mr Hill.

Crandon: Oh, I say! What a fine specimen!

Mr Hill: Just a moment. Look!

Snell: What, Mr Hill?

Mr Hill: Don't you see, man?

Snell: No, Mr Hill.

Mr Hill: You blind? Look at that blooming lateral!

Snell: Lateral?

Edward Dukes: Shoot sticking out the side, Snelly.

Mr Hill: You keep out of this, Dukes! Have you finished the flox yet?

Edward Dukes: Stocks, Mr Hill. With respect, you asked for stocks.

Mr Hill: Don't you answer me back, you cheeky young puppy! See what I have to put up with, Mr Crandon? *(to Snell)* Where's the shears?

Snell: Er ...in the shed, Mr Hill?

Mr Hill: You gurt dollop! What d'you leave them there for? I wish I'd my twelve bore on me!

Snell: What, so as to shoot the shoot off, Mr Hill?

Hill: No, you daft lummox, so I could blast your dozy head off!

Snell: I think I'm glad you haven't brought your twelve bore, Mr Hill, sir!

Mr Hill: Lucky I've got my pruning knife, eh, Snell?

Snell: I'm sorry, Mr Hill, honest, please!

Crandon *(intervening, concerned)*: Mr Hill ... surely you wouldn't ...?

Mr Hill: Not worth the bother, Mr Crandon. *(Cuts a small piece of tree off)* There!

Edward Dukes: That's perfect, Mr Hill!

Mr Hill: When I want your opinion, Dukes, I'll ask for it! There now! Snell, pick it up like it was your own ... *(Pause)* and take it round to show Mrs Bankes.

Snell: Yes, sir, Mr Hill. *(He starts to run)*

Mr Hill: Don't run, idiot!

Enter Viola and nearly bumps into Snell. She speaks to him first.

Viola: Have you seen Alice, Snell? My nursery maid?

Awkward pause.

Snell: Alice ... But, Miss Viola, poor Alice ... well, she's ...

Mr Hill quickly approaches and completely changes his tone for speaking to Viola.

Mr Hill: Well, now, Miss Viola, you shouldn't be looking so sad on a day like today. *(to Snell)* You fool! Don't stand there, shaking like one of Mrs Jenks' jellies, Snell! Go and find Mrs Bankes!

(to Viola) You never know, Miss Viola, His Majesty may want to inspect that lovely flower bed of yours. Miss Viola's been working very hard on her patch, Mr Crandon!

Crandon: Oh? How interesting!

Nurse Stanley arrives, angry.

Nanny: So here's where the brat's been hiding! Really, Mr Hill, you ought to know better! She's supposed to be practising her curtsey – and here she is clod-hopping with the gardeners!

Mr Hill: Mustn't be too hard on her, Nanny Stanley. She's only a child. And it is a special day for her.

Edward Dukes (*aside*): Wish he was as nice to us!

Nanny: Nonsense! It's Master Ralph the King wants to see, not this girl! And don't you start telling me my job, you ...yokel!

Mr Hill: I beg your pardon!

Crandon (*defusing row*): Perhaps we should take the flowers for Ma'am's inspection now, Mr Hill?

Nanny (*grabbing Viola and exiting*): I'll teach you to run from me, girl!

Mr Hill (*watching as Nurse Stanley exits with Viola*): I don't know what Ma'am sees in that one.

Edward Dukes: If you'd had your twelve bore, eh, Mr Hill?

Mr Hill: What's that, Dukes?

Edward Dukes: You'd have blasted her from here to ...

Mr Hill: I'll blast you if you don't shut that big gob of yours!

He raises his arm to Dukes.

Cooper appears escorting Mrs Bankes and the children.

Crandon: Look, I do believe it is time for Ma'am to address us all.

Mrs Bankes and the family enter at house end. Servants appear from all sides and make lines on either side.

Cooper (*ringing bell*): Into lines, please, staff, two lines.

The steps and dais are set for the Bankes family at the house end. All the Servants move to form two lines across the courtyard – men in one line and women on the other side. Pecking order observed. Meanwhile Crandon and Mr Hill tender flowers to Mrs Bankes.

Cooper: Ma'am, the staff await your final instructions.

Mrs Bankes: Thank you, Cooper. Good morning, staff.

All: Good morning, Ma'am. *(All bow or curtsey)*

Mrs Bankes: I am sure I have no need to inform you of the very special significance of this illustrious day in the history of Kingston Lacy. *(slight pause)* The streets of Wimborne, I am told, are already lined with townsfolk and villagers alike – all eagerly awaiting to glimpse His Majesty as he travels from Cichel House to our more ancient estate. *(very imperious)* Now is our opportunity to shine. His Majesty will honour us all by viewing the many treasures of Kingston Lacy – the paintings, the furnishings, the tapestries, the trophies and the greatest treasure of all, my son Ralph. I know you are as delighted as I am that he is now fully restored to better health, thanks to the ministrations of Nurse Stanley.

A few mutterings can be heard from the Staff. Mr Cooper takes a step towards them and they fall quiet.

Mrs Bankes *(laughing)*: Isn't he a delight! This will be an unforgettable day for Ralph, having tea with His Majesty ... and, if Nurse Stanley decides Ralph is strong enough, why then he may help His majesty plant the Cedar of Lebanon tree on the South Lawn, as is our tradition on the occasion of a royal visit to Kingston Lacy. It is such a shame that my dear husband cannot be with us today to share in the celebrations.

Viola *(interrupting)*: Mother, why hasn't our father come home to meet the King?

Pause. Servants react quietly.

Is he still in India collecting cowrie shells like you said? Why, he's been there such a long time. He must surely have enough by now.

Embarrassed silence.

Nanny: Hold your tongue, Miss Viola!

Viola: But I want to know, Mother! People keep disappearing here – first Father and now Alice!

Nurse Stanley steps forward and takes hold of Viola, pulling her down..

Mrs Bankes: How often must I tell you, Viola, not to ask stupid and unnecessary questions? I do hope you are not going to shame us all today in front of His Majesty! Why can't you be a good girl and keep quiet, like your sister, Daphne? She never asks silly questions. Learn to control your emotions, child!

There is a sudden interruption. Mrs Baker, Alice's mother, enters from the stable end in a state of agitation. She clutches Alice's box.

Mrs Baker: It's not here! It's gone! I've searched all through it! Where is it? Her special stone! her grandmother gave it to her. I must have it back. What have you done to it?

Viola: Who is that, Mama?

Mrs Bankes: Quiet, Viola! Who is this woman, Cooper?

Cooper: I regret she is unknown to me too, Ma'am. Perhaps one of the invited guests entering through the wrong gate?

Mrs Bankes: I rather doubt it, Cooper – by the look of her clothes.

Mrs Baker: Why? Why? Just tell me why.

Crandon: If you'll pardon, Ma'am – I believe she is Mrs Baker, Mr Cooper. *(Pause)* The mother of the maid who ...

Cooper: Aah, of course, Mrs Baker.

Crandon: We returned the girl's belongings to her only this morning.

Mrs Baker: I never wanted her to come here in the first place.

Mrs Bankes: Yes, yes! Most unfortunate. But she cannot stay here now, Cooper. The children!

Mrs Baker: She were too young, much too young!

Nanny: Come on, you three! *(She marches the children off to the front of the house)*

Viola: But I want to hear ...

Nanny: Time to practise that curtsy, I think! Miss Tidmarsh!

Miss Tidmarsh *(following almost reluctantly)* Yes. come along, children. I wonder if His Majesty is here yet?

Nurse Stanley, Miss Tidmarsh, Viola, Ralph and Daphne exit to the front of the house.

Mrs Baker *(approaching Mrs Bankes):* You are to blame! You could've done something! For my poor poor little girl!

Mrs Bankes: That is unfair! *(to Cooper)* Am I to listen to this in front of my own servants?

Cooper: I can assure you, Mrs Baker – there was nothing anybody could have done.

Mrs Baker: I don't believe it! *(pointing at Mrs Bankes)* She never cared!

Crandon: Remember your place, Mrs Baker!

Cooper: Your daughter was honoured to be in service to the Bankes family.

Mrs Baker (*rounding on the servants*): Why didn't any of you say anything? You must have seen her suffering? Felt her pain!

Cooper: She kept her dignity, Mrs Baker. Please remember yours and leave! (*easing her away with Crandon and Mr Hill*)

Mrs Baker: Keeping quiet, eh? Doing your duty! She wrote me a letter. The vicar read it to me and she said you were her friends! To go like that! (*she weeps*)

Crandon: Why don't you come and see His Majesty arrive? Keep your mind off things.

Mr Hill: That's the way! Don't want to upset Ma'am, today of all days!

Mrs Baker appears to go quiet and be led off to the garden exit. Suddenly she turns and shouts.

Mrs Baker: Undiagnosed appendicitis, the doctor said. Dignity, eh? Honour? All our lives we've kept our mouths shut and our heads bowed to them! But not any more! From this day ... I'll turn my back!

She wrestles free and leaves alone, proud. The Chorus visibly make a big exit for her. The Male Servants step back.

Cooper (*hurrying over to Mrs Bankes*): Most unfortunate, Ma'am, I deeply regret ... May I escort you to the front of the house?

Cooper and Mrs Bankes exit. Ad lib – Mrs Bankes indignant, Cooper conciliatory.

A moment of strange silence follows. The Chorus intervene. Sounds and Music. They move the Servants into a circle around the Elder Viola. The picture must be a little stylised.

Cooper (*returning*): His Majesty has arrived! To your positions immediately!

All reform formal ranks and exit round to the front of the house.

The Chorus beckons to the audience to follow.



Scene 3
Curtsey for the King
In Front of the House

The Chorus leads the audience over to the edge of the grass to stand facing the house. Music is playing all the time. The Bankes family is standing in a line on the plinth of stone framed in the archway. All the servants are lined up on either side, carrying food. A tree as necessary. Finally Nurse Stanley comes walking across with Viola, who has been clearly 'disciplined'. The music stops.

Nurse Stanley: There, Ma'am. Let's hope Miss Viola behaves herself properly now.
 (Viola takes her place. SILENCE)

The Chorus steps forward to get the audience's attention. They position themselves facing the audience, but not masking the Bankes family if possible.

Chorus: The family stiffened with formality
 When His Majesty turned up for tea
 The servants in two lines of anxiety
 When His Majesty turned up for tea.

Servants: Hoorah! Hooray! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
 Hoorah! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
 Hoorah! Hooray! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
 Hoorah! Hip! Hip! Hooray!

Chorus: *(referring to the food)*
 There was ptarmigan, widgeon, fresh sturgeon and teal,
 Cutlets of turkey and bouchees of veal
 A lobster from Studland was pulled from the sea
 When His Majesty turned up for tea.

Servants: Hoorah! Hooray! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
 Hoorah! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
 Hoorah! Hooray! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
 Hoorah! Hip! Hip! Hooray!

Chorus: The clock on the stables was chiming two, three
 When His Majesty turned up for tea.
 Processional music for Royalty
 When His Majesty turned up for tea.

Servants: Hoorah! Hooray! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
Hoorah! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
Hoorah! Hooray! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
Hoorah! Hip! Hip! Hooray!

The Royal Party arrives by horse and carriage. Five members of the Chorus represent the Royal Party. Trumpets play as they walk ceremoniously over tarmac. Other Chorus members move aside. The five Chorus members introduce the character. They form a tableau.

Chorus 1 & 2: Baron Rothschild appeared (pause) and the Countess of Crewe.

Chorus 3 & 4 (together): Lord and Lady Allington too.

Chorus 5: But the one they really wanted to see
Was King Edward VII – that's me!

Cooper: Three cheers for His majesty!

All: Hoorah! Hoorah! Hoorah!

The five come to life as the Royal Party and process around waving to the audience, servants, etc. Cheers, bows and curtseys from all. Trumpeters play again. The five move over to greet the Bankes family. As they arrive at the plinth, the music stops.

Mrs Bankes: Welcome to Kingston Lacy, sire.
May I present our dear young squire?
My young son, Ralph, my pride and joy.
You must admit he's a strapping boy! (Ralph bows)

Servants: Hoorah! Hooray! Hip! Hip! Hooray!
Hoorah! Hoorah! Hooray!

Mrs Bankes: And these are my daughters, Daphne and Viola –
Try and manage a little smile, dears
Don't forget your curtseys - down!
(Daphne gets it right; Viola fluffs it)
Oh dear, Viola, you're such a clown!

Servants: Dear, oh dear, she's such a clown
Miss Viola's let us down.
Dear, oh dear, she's such a clown
Miss Viola's let us down.
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Clown!
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Down!
(Freeze)

Viola climbs back on the plinth, embarrassed.

Mrs Bankes (*back into more realistic style*): Would Your Majesty care to take a turn about the gardens before taking tea?

King: Delighted, delighted, charming, charming.

Cooper: Into lines, staff!

Music plays again as Royal Party processes around again to cheering servants. After Royal Party has left up the steps back to the courtyard, the Servants form lines and march after them. Only Viola is left standing alone. The Elder Viola appears and takes her hand. The remaining Chorus members reappear mysteriously, moving up to Viola. They bring her to the centre, whispering

Chorus: Viola...Vi-o-la...Vi-o-la...

Chorus: Listen
Listen
Listen
Listen to the voices
Listen
Listen
The voices in the trees (Repeat whispering Vi-o-la)

Listen
To the murmur
Of the rustling leaves
Listen
Listen
To the breath
Of the gentle breeze (Repeat whispering Vi-o-la)

Listen
Listen
Listen
Listen to the voices
The voices in the trees

Alice (*calling from off stage*): Viola! Viola!

Viola: I can hear...Alice... Alice singing... (*moves away*)

Chorus (*to audience*): Follow the child,
Follow the child
As she moves
As she moves
Towards the trees
Towards the trees.

The Chorus leads the audience off to the trees.



Scene 4

Under the Horse Chestnut Tree

Alice sings her song. As she sings, she works on a monument, pegging things to the structures made by the environmental sculptors. These are her personal possessions, e.g. a diary, a photograph, a sewing box, some dried flowers and finally her bonnet and apron. She also has a tin box. The song starts sadly but grows stronger and stronger towards its end.

Alice (*singing*):

I know I'm only a servant girl
And I'm not ashamed to say
I belong to the ranks of those that toil
For a living day by day.
With willing feet I press along
In the path that I must tread
Proud that I have the strength and skill
To earn my daily bread.

I belong to the lower class.
That's the phrase we often meet
And there's some who sneer at a servant girl
As they pass her in the street.
They star at her in proud disdain
And their lips in scorn will curl,
And sometimes we can hear them say
"She's only a servant girl."

Only a servant girl, thank God,
With willing hands and heart,
I am able to earn my daily bread
And in life's battle take part.
You could offer me no title
I would be more proud to own
And I stand as high in the sight of God
As the Queen upon her throne.

Ye gentle folk who pride yourselves
Upon your wealth and birth
And look with scorn on those who have
Nought else but honest worth,
Your gentle birth we laugh to scorn,
For we hold it as our creed
That none are gentle save the one

That does a gentle deed.

Viola approaches Alice.

Viola (*quite angrily*): Alice Maud Baker! So there you are! Hiding under the trees, indeed. Whatever would Nanny say? I have been looking for you everywhere!
(*Alice carries on singing*)
I am talking to you, Alice. I needed you to brush my hair. Nanny always pulls it with her hard hands. As hard as claws. As eagle's claws. Tugging and tearing, tugging and tearing. And nobody would tell me where you were. Just like nobody tells me when father is coming home from India. They all keep secrets from me. Where were you, Alice Maud Baker?
(*Alice hums*)
I'm jolly cross. Everyone's being beastly to me. No one takes any notice of me. It is so unfair. All I hear is Master Ralph, Master Ralph! When Ralph was born all the bells in Wimborne Minster were rung and the whole world cried with joy. Ralph's the youngest of the three of us but he is the most important. Why? He is just like a King!

Alice finishes her song.

Alice: There, that's it. All gone, all gone... (*She looks at Viola*) Has the King come to Kingston Lacy today, Miss Viola?

Viola: Why, of course! How silly you are, Alice! Everyone has come to see him. (*Pause. Viola moves closer.*) I'm going to tell you a secret; promise not to tell a soul.

Alice: I promise.

Viola: The King's an old meanie! Do you know what he did? He laughed at me. I had to do my horrid stupid clumsy curtsey and the King laughed. Then the others laughed too. (*Pause*) I hate being a girl. I hate it, I hate it, I hate it! I wish I was a boy so I could be like Ralph. I could be Bishop of Wimborne, Admiral of the Fleet and heir to Kingston Lacy...I could even be the King and make people bow and curtsey to me.

Alice (*smiling*): Poor Miss Viola.

Viola: Don't laugh at me, Alice Maud Baker. Or...I'll call Nurse Stanley and order her to dismiss you.

Alice: Oh, it's too late for that now, Miss Viola.

Viola: And just what is that supposed to mean?

Alice: It means what it means, Miss Viola.

Viola: You're talking in silly riddles, Alice!

(*Pause. Alice finishes monument, sings again. Viola notices the ancient stone hanging.*)

- Viola: What is that thing hanging there?
- Alice: Something my grandmother found in the earth. Something very old. Something she gave me. For good luck.
- Viola: Where did she find it?
- Alice: That is a secret, Miss Viola.
- Viola: Tell me! *(Pause, then softer)* Please! I shan't tell. I am very good at keeping secrets.
- Alice *(unwilling)*: Miss Viola, I....
- Viola: Now you're being unfair to me too, Alice. I told you my secret...about the King...why can't you share yours with me?
- Alice *(Pause)*: Very well, Miss Viola. *(They move closer together and sit on the raised area.)* Do you remember me telling you once that my grandmother used to work at Kingston Lacy when she was young...before she was married.
- Viola: Yes. She worked in the kitchen.
- Alice: One day she was sent on an errand to fetch some fruit from the glass houses near Home Farm. But because she hadn't been working long at Kingston Lacy, she took the wrong path and found herself in the middle of the avenue of tall cedar trees. Just as she was about to turn back, she tripped over something in the ground.
- Viola: What was it?
- Alice: This stone. Buried in a huge mole hill. My grandmother scraped away the earth and found it had a hole in the middle. *(Points to stone.)* See.
- Viola: The stone was in the pile of earth?
- Alice: Yes. My grandmother cleaned it up and later on she showed it to some of the other servants in the kitchen. Now the cook, who knew about these things, said the stone was very, very old - a Celtic stone belonging to one of the tribes who lived around Badbury Rings.
- Viola: Perhaps it belonged to a warrior.
- Alice: Wise men and women have often used stones for healing, Miss. My grandmother used to lay the stone on my forehead if I had a fever. I remember how cool it felt, how soothing. And I remember how she told me stories.
- Viola: Like you do for me, Alice, when I feel ill?
- Alice: Yes, Miss, to ease the pain.

Viola: Why haven't you shown me the stone before, Alice?

Alice: I used to wear it round my neck when I was younger. But I had to take it off when I started work at Kingston Lacy. Nanny's rules. The funny thing is, my stomach pains began soon after that time.

The Chorus approaches. They move Alice towards the exit from the trees. Neither she nor Viola notices them.

Alice: I must leave now, Miss Viola.

Viola: Where are you going?

Alice: On a long journey.

Viola: Have you been given permission? *(Alice doesn't reply)*
(cross) Alice!
(softer) Please, Alice Maud Baker. Tell me where you are going.

Alice: I can't tell you that, Miss. But it's a journey we must all make one day.

Viola: Can I come with you?

(The Chorus shakes their heads.)

Alice: No, but you can set me on the path.

Viola: And please tell me more stories...about the stone...you know more, don't you, Alice? I can tell. You do.

Alice: I'll make a bargain with you, Miss. We'll walk together up the hill and I'll tell you two stories of the stone. But then we must part. Do you agree?

Viola: Yes.

Alice stands. The Chorus plays some music.

Alice: In the year 56 BC a tribe of Celtic people lived in these parts, close to their hillfort at Badbury. They called themselves the Durotriges, which means The Dwellers by the Sea. One evening they met together on a hill close by to celebrate their summer festival. The Festival of Lughnasa.

They move away towards the hill. The Chorus speaks, beckoning the audience to follow.

Chorus: Listen, travellers,
What happens to people long gone
If we cannot find a moment
One quiet evening

In which to remember?
Let's follow Alice's voyage
Away from the cold Carrara marble
Through this cool canopy of chestnut
And up over the cedar hill.

Vi-o-la
Vi-o-la
O
Listen
Listen
Listen to the stories
Listen
Listen
To the stories in the stone.

Look for the thumb print
Of a Celtic King
Look
Look
Look for the wisdom
Of the hollow ring.
Look
Look
Look for the stories
The stories in the stone.

Follow the child
Follow the child
As she moves
As she moves
Towards the cedar trees
Shaking their long green hair
In the breeze, in the breeze.



Scene 5

Lughnasa: a Celtic Festival

Half Way up the Cedar Avenue

performed by children from Ferndown First School (Durotriges) and Pamphill First School (Veneti)

OUTLINE OF SCENE

The Durotriges arrive first on the hill, playing their sticks as drums and singing their anthem.

Maeve and the Durotriges prepare for the Festival of Lughnasa. They recall the Battle with the Great Giant Lu and re-enact it.

Manus, Finn and Efa arrive from selling goods at the market. They tell the story of the Veneti, a poor tribe they took pity on. The Durotriges are angry that they have given the Veneti one of their best blankets in exchange for an old cracked pot but agree to listen to their story.

The Veneti arrive and tell their legend. They are seafaring people, once powerful and strong. They were helped by the Goddess of the Wind but one day their ships were wrecked and they had to leave their homes. Now they are poor and destitute.

The Durotriges question them and decide whether to believe them or not. They are convinced they are telling the truth when they find that the Veneti have a magical stone like theirs.

Maeve tells the Durotriges' story of the Lord Lu who spat precious stones from a volcano. The Sun God gave them their stone to protect them. Realising they share the same legend, they agree to help the Veneti. All offer help in different forms. They use the precious stone to heal the Veneti.

The Durotriges take the Veneti back to their hillfort at Badbury. They process off singing "Precious Stone".

Viola jumps up to try and see where they have gone. She stands and goes to the centre of the arena.

- Viola: They're on their way to Badbury. Miss Tidmarsh told us about their battle with the Romans. Was that the end of them?
- Alice: When the skylarks warned them that the Romans would come they dug the banks at Badbury even steeper and were fearsome with their sling stones. Down went the Romans into the chalk.
- Viola: Once I saw a Roman soldier wandering along the white ditches as though he was looking for something.

Alice: His life, no doubt. He'd be looking for his lost life. And did Miss Tidmarsh teach you about the Earth Goddess? How she changed herself into a crow to watch over the battlefields like a piercing black eye?

Viola: Not English goddesses! Only about Demeter and Pandora. Did the Earth Goddess help the Durotriges?

Alice: They believed in her, so Grandmother said, and when they died they were tucked up cosy in pure white hummocks so she could watch over them.

Viola: Why didn't my storybooks tell me these things?

Alice: You haven't looked in the right books yet. And then a new story was born in the East about a King of Kings and the Celtic spirits slid under the surface of the earth with the stones. *(she bangs the earth and picks up two twigs, holds them into a cross and leaps up with it)* Sometimes when people hear about Celtic ways they get the wrong end of the stick.

Viola: Which end? Which stick? Alice, you and your riddles.

Alice: Look, Viola, see the raven, there over the hill? See how it whirls and wheels. Soon I'll fly with her over Badbury Hill.

Viola is frightened and runs to be close to her. She puts her hand over her mouth and clasps her.

Viola: Tell me another story, Alice. Don't stop. Where did the stone go? Where did it fall?

Alice: Not far from here. Come, Viola, I'll tell you how getting hold of the wrong end of the stick is a recipe for suffering. I'll tell you about Alicia Payntere who lived over there by the river in Cowgrove with her seven children. In twelve hundred and thirty two.

They move off together.

Alice: Let's go closer to the place. Sing with me.

The Chorus approaches and moves the audience on, repeatedly singing:

Chorus: Viola, Veneti, Alice, Alicia
Over and over, sound echoing louder
Day after day.
Yesterday, today, tomorrow and tomorrow
A lineage of names from these descend
Alice, Alicia, Viola, Veneti.

Over and over
Over and over
Day after day
Day after day



Scene 6

The Mystery of Alicia Payntere 1236

At the Medieval Manor Court: Nursery Wood

performed by Students from Carter Community School and Choices for Adults

OUTLINE OF SCENE

Villagers sing and dance and mock the Lords and Ladies of the village.

SONG: Sing rosemary, sage and solomon seal
Snakeskin and feverfew.

Alicia Payntere arrives and talks about her difficult life as a widow.

A child is brought to Alicia for healing.

The villagers start to gossip about Alicia's powers. They bring another child for healing. Alicia calls on Nature to heal her.

She then offers to heal Ricardo Abbott of his headaches. She carries out a healing ritual of chanting and charms.

The Constable and other officials arrive with Agnesse Abbot, accusing Alicia of witchcraft. Agnesse Abbott describes how Alicia cursed her and her cows.

Alicia tries to defend herself describing how Agnesse drove her from her house when she went to ask for milk to feed her children. There are hints of earlier intimacy between Alicia and Ricardo.

The Constable accuses Alicia of turning the villagers to witchcraft.

Alicia denies this, saying she is hated for being a strong woman and for being different from most.

The Constable calls on the Tithing Man, Ricardo Abbott, to do his duty and take Alicia into custody for being a witch.

Ricardo reluctantly accuses Alicia and announces she will be taken to the Moot Court to be tried for witchcraft.

Alice asks what happened at the Moot Court.

Ricardo announces the sentence of the Court : burning. In the distance Alicia can be seen surrounded by the villagers, burning at the stake – flames represented by cloths.

Alice tells Viola they must soon part and leads the audience towards the Lime Walk.



Scene 7
The Last Voyage
In the Lime Walk

At the crossroads at the beginning of the Lime Walk, the Chorus harmonizes as the audience approaches.

Viola: Oh, Alice! *(she hugs Alice warmly)* Thank you for the stories.

The Chorus begins to move Alice away.

Viola: Are you going now?

Alice: Yes. It's time for me to go on. And it's time for you to go back.

Viola: Why? No one's missed me.

Alice: Yes, they have. They're looking for you. Winnie and the others.

Viola: How do you know?

Alice: They're worried. They want you to come home.

Viola: Really?

Alice: Yes, Viola. Really! Now I have a present for you. *(she puts the stone around Viola's neck)* May it give you comfort, strength and wisdom.

Viola: Thank you, Alice. Are you sure you...

Alice: I don't need it any more. *(Pause)* Remember me sometimes.

Viola moves away to the Lime Walk, looking back at Alice.

Alice forms a tableau at the end of the Lime Walk.

The Chorus leads the audience to the Lime Walk with Viola.

Enter the Lime Walk. All stop. The Chorus points the audience and Viola to the left where Alice is forming a tableau. The audience then follows Viola up the Lime Walk with half the Chorus at the front leading and half the Chorus at the rear. The cast lines the Lime Walk and turns and sings as the audience passes.

All (*singing*):
Precious stone
Precious stone
Helping, healing
Helping, healing
Soothing stone.

Crush the roots,
Mix the herbs,
Make her well
Tonight.
(*Repeat verse*)

Precious stone
Precious stone
Helping, healing
Helping, healing
Soothing stone.

Rock of old
Use your powers
Make her well
Tonight.
(*Repeat verse*)

Precious stone
Precious stone
Helping, healing
Helping, healing
Soothing stone.



Scene 8

The Sun Dial

On the South Lawn at the Rear of the House

The audience follows the Chorus through the gate at the end of the Lime Walk and stops around the Sun Dial.

Voices of the servants and Daphne are heard and they are seen running across the lawn.

Servant 1: Miss Viola, Miss Viola!

Daphne: There you are, Viola, we've been looking for you everywhere. Mama has been frightfully worried about you.

Servant 2: Are you all right. Miss Viola? We were worried.

Viola: Yes, I'm all right.

Servant 1: Where've you been, Miss Viola?

Viola: The strangest thing – it was like a journey....a voyage...

Servant 2 (*interrupting*): And who gave you that stone?

Viola: Well, (*pause*) I found it under the horse chestnut tree.

Servant 1: Oh, Miss, what you'll get up to next!

Elder Viola (*stepping forward*): It was after the horse chestnut tree that I began my journey out of Kingston lacy.

Servant 2: Now come on – or you'll miss all that lovely tea!

They all skip off over the lawn towards the house, holding Viola's hand, and turn into the marquee.

Elder Viola (*circling the Sun Dial*): You were right, Alice. I did leave soon afterwards. But I kept the stone very safe and warm in the Kingston Lacy earth. Soon I must prepare for my next voyage when I hope we shall all meet again.

Two members of the Chorus take her hands and skip off. Others leads the audience to the marquee,
singing: Sing rosemary, sage and solomon seal

Snakeskin and feverfew.



Scene 9
Full Circle
Inside the Marquee

All the players are assembled inside the marquee in a large circle. All chant as the audience enters. This is repeated until the audience is assembled and the chant rises to a crescendo at the end.

All (*chanting*): Come into the circle.
 Come into the circle.
 Come into the circle.

Chorus: Zodiac of stories
 Round as the stable clock
 And listen to the sounds
 Across the lawns
 And through the woods
 Of a park
 Laid like a green cloak
 Over the centuries
 Over paths once travelled
 Over words spoken
 And unspoken
 Over trinkets of stone and bone.

All: Beneath the surface a pulse still beats
 Echoes trapped in stone and leaf
 Louder now the ancient song
 You must go on and on and on.
 You must go on and on and on.
 You must go on and on and on.

All bow.

END