

# Monkey Baa

Teacher Resource  
Materials

# Thursday's Child

*By Sonya Hartnett*

*Adapted for the stage by Monkey Baa  
Theatre for Young People*

**Learning experiences  
for  
Year 7-10 students**

## Vision

To be recognised nationally and internationally as a leader in the creation of meaningful and innovative theatre for young people, and to engage young audiences through the telling of Australian stories that entertain, inspire and encourage a greater understanding of the world and their place in it.

# Monkey Baa

## Theatre for Young People Ltd

**Monkey Baa** was established in 1997 by three actors, [Tim McGarry](#), [Sandra Eldridge](#) and [Eva Di Cesare](#) and is based in Sydney. The company enjoys a national reputation for writing and producing quality theatre based on Australian novels and picture books for young people. The creative rationale for all of our work is to use acclaimed Australian literature as a platform for creating theatrical scripts – a formula we have tried and tested and are now well recognised as excelling in.

Monkey Baa's objectives are:

- To write and create high quality new Australian works for young audiences nationally and internationally.
- To develop and present quality theatre workshop programs accessible to all young people.
- To develop creative partnerships with other arts organisations.
- To achieve a financially stable organisation through diversified income streams – government (federal, state, local), corporate, philanthropic and self-generated.
- To develop and maintain a robust organisation led by highly skilled artists and administrators.

Monkey Baa has written, produced and toured Tim Winton's **The Bugalugs Bum Thief**, Gillian Rubinstein's **The Fairy's Wings**, Morris Gleitzman's **Worry Warts**, Andrew Daddo's **Sprung!** Stephen Michael King's **Milli, Jack and the Dancing Cat**, Susanne Gervay's **I Am Jack** and Jackie French's **Hitler's Daughter**.

The script for **Hitler's Daughter** was subsequently published by Currency Press whilst the theatre production received the **2007 Helpmann Award for Best Children's Presentation**.

In 2009 Monkey Baa will tour Sonya Hartnett's **Thursday's Child** to 40 theatres nationally and will remount Susanne Gervay's **I Am Jack**.

In 2010 the company will premiere Margaret Wild and Ron Brookes incredible fable **FOX** and will remount their highly successful production of **Hitler's Daughter**.

For more information about Monkey Baa please visit the company's website  
[www.monkeybaa.com.au](http://www.monkeybaa.com.au)

*Monkey Baa isn't just about putting good books on stage. It shows kids how ideas and characters can be translated from one art form into another, keeping the essence of the book but refining it. It's an adventure of the mind and spirit. It makes kids think as well as feel.*

**JACKIE FRENCH**

# **Thursday's Child**

## **A novel by Sonya Hartnett**

### **Adapted for stage by Monkey Baa**

**Thursday's Child** is Tin, born on a Thursday and, like the old nursery rhyme 'has far to go.' A strange and lonely child who digs, his wanderings take him underneath the earth into the subterranean tunnels that he's pre-destined to roam. Told by Tin's sister, Harper Flute, it is a story of a family's struggle on their desolate farm during the great depression.

There is death, crop failure, community and family disputes. Tin is an ever present but mystical essence in their lives. Harper narrates her family's struggle to survive on the hot and impoverished land and as life on the surface grows harsher, her little brother escapes ever deeper into a dark, subterranean world.

The play explores the spirit of hard struggle with change, cruel misfortune and the idea that life is a pre-determined fall from a great height. *Thursday's Child* is a poignant and intriguing story, ending in great hope.

## **Teacher Resources Materials**

Monkey Baa has developed a set of teacher resource materials to support attendance at this wonderful production. The teacher notes include both pre and post performance activities and are designed to prepare students, engage and extend their thinking in regard to the performance.

The teachers' notes target students in Years 7-10. Learning experiences focus primarily on engaging students in the theatrical production and story via curriculum areas of History, English and the Creative Arts (drama). An integrated approach to the use of theatre and drama in the classroom is encouraged along with an art form approach to drama as a way of appreciating and responding to the performance.

The key themes addressed include:

- Historical links – Children in the Depression, Country versus City living, poverty
- Family relationships – siblings, parents
- Value and acceptance of individual difference
- Exploring place of self and personal emotions (memory, fear, survival, guilt, hope)
- Destiny

In addition, the notes will emphasise a consideration of the story via the perspective of a variety of characters rather than only Harper who provides the focus in the novel/play.

These materials are designed to be 'teacher-friendly', guiding you through step by step learning experiences. While all activities provide specific detail, minor adaptations should be made depending on the specific cohort, and expectation for 'product' and depth of discussion. In addition, suggested classroom management strategies for doing drama in the classroom have been included to assist with the implementation of the creative arts activities in this resource kit.

# Classroom Management Suggestions for Drama

Drama, along with other areas of the creative arts, can be used to support learning through integration with a variety of key learning areas. These opportunities provide students the opportunity to explore ideas and issues in a meaningful and realistic manner. Drama, in particular, has been considered to assist with the development of self esteem, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and in the development of focus and team building through fun activities.

Incorporating drama in school classrooms presents a number of challenges for teachers, but reap rewards for all involved when attempted. The following suggestions are designed to provide some food for thought in relation to doing drama in the classroom and are intended as a guideline only.

When doing drama in the classroom:

- **ensure a clear work space is available for the drama activity.** If desks can not be moved in the classroom, try to use the hall or a contained outside open area.
- **talk to the students about the creation of a ‘safe space’.** In this space students don’t laugh at each other, but support and encourage (forming a circle at the beginning and end of a session or sitting with eyes closed are simple ways to focus students for a drama session)
- **incorporate a reflection session at the end of every drama activity.** This allows the students to consider what has been done and take more meaning away from the activity than it just being fun (which it will be!)
- **be firm with the students.** If a student does not follow instructions, they should be removed from the activity. This will allow the other students to see that you as the teacher are assisting in maintaining the safe space for them to work.
- **always begin every drama session with a warm-up.** This could include a focus activity, drama game or pure physical warm-up. There are good books and websites available with suggestions of warm-up activities and drama games.
- **don’t be afraid to participate in the activities yourself.** The students like to see you as the teacher taking a role in an activity. This can also allow you to help any improvisations or role plays flow and move forward more easily. (Dorothy Heathcote’s work on Mantle of the Expert and Teacher in Role discusses this in more detail).

If possible, conduct a ‘risk assessment’ with your class before embarking on any physical work. As a class it would be good to discuss the personal, group, physical, and psychological risks inherent in the working space. Together, the class could devise the measures that would help to minimize these risks. This collaboration would help the students to realise that physical work can actually be dangerous, and encourage them to take responsibility for themselves, the group, and the space in which they are working.

## TEACHER RESOURCE ACTIVITIES for 'Thursday's Child'

These activities are suggestions only and teachers are strongly encouraged to adapt or alter them to suit the needs of their schools and individual classrooms. The activities outlined below are primarily designed for Year 7-10 students.

All activities are suitable for use with students in Years 7-10 however teachers are advised to adapt according to the subject area they are working within. Expectation of 'product' and depth of discussion would be higher with the older students.

### Pre Performance

#### *Introduction to 'Thursday's Child'*

<b>Topic/Theme</b>	<b>Learning Experiences</b>	<b>Curriculum Area</b>
Introduction to 'Thursday's Child'	<p><i>If students <b>have not</b> read the novel</i></p> <p>1. Discuss the title 'Thursday's Child'. Brainstorm what students believe the production may be about. Compile a list of ideas to be used later for comparison post-performance.</p> <p>2. Provide basic information to students regarding the era in which the novel is set (Great Depression). This could also be done via the students and the internet.</p>	Drama (Theatre)
	<p><i>If students <b>have</b> read the novel</i></p> <p>1. Discuss with students the key elements of the story they believe would be important for including in a theatre production of the novel.</p> <p>2. Consider expectations e.g. how much of the novel could be portrayed, what special effects may be necessary etc</p>	English
	<p><i>For both groups</i></p> <p>3. Students to work in small groups and compile a description of what they think life may have been like for children in the Great Depression in comparison to life for a young girl today. (This can be referred back to later).</p> <p>4. The descriptions can be compiled into a book or displayed as preferred.</p>	History

### ***Introduction to Performance***

<b><i>Topic/Theme</i></b>	<b><i>Learning Experiences</i></b>	<b><i>Curriculum Area</i></b>
Introduction to performance	1. Elicit from students their past experiences of theatre performances. Discuss expectations in relation to being an audience member in this style of professional performance.	Drama (Theatre)
	2. Brainstorm with students the differences between drama they would do in their classroom and the 'drama' that is viewed as theatre performance. Also consider the difference to what they think theatre performance is versus the television they may watch at home	
	3. Discuss the link between theatre and storytelling – that live theatre provides another medium for telling a story. Brainstorm other ways that stories can be told (books, radio, television, face to face etc)	

### **Post Performance**

#### ***Evaluation & Response***

<b><i>Topic/Theme</i></b>	<b><i>Learning Experiences</i></b>	<b><i>Curriculum Area</i></b>
Evaluation & Response	1. Students discuss response to the performance considering themes, issues and personal impact	Drama (Theatre)  English
	2. Students to write a review of the performance with language and structure appropriate to publishing in a newspaper. It would be important to discuss the style of writing appropriate for newspapers, provide students with some examples of theatre reviews as a model for their work.	
	3. Publish the written reviews. Consider placing best reviews in the school newsletter or submitting them to the local paper. Students could also submit their reviews on the Monkey Baa website ( <a href="http://www.monkeybaa.com.au">www.monkeybaa.com.au</a> ) in the 'Your Say' section.	
Physical response to performance	1. Establish a 'safe space' where the following activities will take place. Ensure all students understand importance of respecting all interpretations by their colleagues during these activities.	Drama
	2. Conduct physical warm-up with students. ( <i>Refer 'Classroom Management Strategies'</i> )	
	3. Ask students to move freely around allocated space. When teacher calls out the name of a character or event, students are to freeze in a position they feel embodies that character or event for them. NB <i>This could be depict an emotional response or a physical manifestation</i>	

### ***Theatre Design/Technical Elements***

<b><i>Topic/Theme</i></b>	<b><i>Learning Experiences</i></b>	<b><i>Curriculum Area</i></b>
Theatre Design	1. Discuss with students the set used for the performance of 'Thursday's Child'. Consider scene changes (transitions), use of specialised equipment, lighting and props. Brainstorm a list of ideas regarding important aspects of set design e.g. Realistic space for actors to work in, appropriate design for storyline, suitable for space available.	Drama (Theatre)
	2. Students to select a favourite scene from the performance. They need to consider any special or unusual effects required for that scene – encouraging the students to select a 'difficult' scenario would make for a rich experience e.g. Tin being buried beside the river. Students are to design a set and write details of the technical requirements to allow the action to progress smoothly for the selected scene. (Encourage students to create their own and not reproduce the set from the production).	
	3. Students to make a model (using an open box as the theatre) for their designed set. Students should explain their design to the class justifying their choices and describing how they have overcome technical issues within the selected scene (this can be a small group activity or whole class).	

### ***Thematic Exploration***

<b><i>Topic/Theme</i></b>	<b><i>Learning Experiences</i></b>	<b><i>Curriculum Area</i></b>
Thematic Exploration	<p>1. Form class into groups, and ask each group to discuss and report on what they view as the key themes within 'Thursday's Child'. Groups to report back to the class. Aim to elicit the key themes of: <i>exploration of the Great Depression (county versus city living, poverty), family relationships, value and acceptance of individuality, personal emotions and experiences i.e. understanding of destiny, memory, hope, fear, guilt and the need for survival.</i></p> <p>2. As a class record and discuss each of these themes in relation to the play (it may help to use a large sheet of paper to write brainstormed ideas on for each theme - these can be referred to later).</p> <p>3. Ask students to reflect on these themes and how they may be played out in their lives and society in general today.</p>	<p>English</p> <p>Drama</p> <p>History</p>

## Characterisation

Topic/Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Character Development	<p>1. Students to be allocated a character from the play (important to ensure all characters are included).</p> <p>2. Students are to design and make a mask that they feel represents the character they have been given. Consideration should be given to choice of colour and line as well as decoration for each mask. Students to be encouraged to plan their mask as a design before constructing the original.</p> <p>3. Students to physically explore the way the mask they created may move. Consideration should be given to the age of the character and their mood. Once students are confident with their character, they should start to respond while moving around to the other masked characters in which they come into contact. e.g. <i>Harper, Tin, Mam, Da, Audrey, Devon, Mr Cable etc</i></p> <p>4. To extend the students, they can be asked to recreate and perform their favourite scenes in mime using the masked characters.</p>	Drama (Theatre)  NB Visual Arts element
Character-based Novel Exploration	<p>1. The novel and play are written from Harper's perspective. It is important for students to be able to connect with the storyline, emotions and relationships from a variety of perspectives. Students are to draw on the character for which they created the mask for this activity.</p> <p>2. Students to consider a critical event in the play – this may be a general event impacting on a number of characters, or specific to the masked character they created.</p> <p>3. Students are to consider Harper's evaluation and discussion of this incident (if any) and develop a character monologue based on their own characters perspective on the incident. It is important to explain to the students they will be 'stepping out' of the scene as a moment frozen in time and that the monologue was the internal thoughts, emotions and perceptions of the selected character.</p> <p><b>Adaptation/Suggestion</b> – If you did not wish for students to develop and perform a monologue, they could express their character's perspective via a letter to an imaginary friend or relative or as a personal diary entry.</p> <p><i>If completing the monologue option...</i></p> <p>4. Students are to practice and perform their character monologue expressing their perspective on the event with the audience. (Students should be encouraged to record their monologue down as an English activity).</p>	English  Drama

## Characterisation – Scene recreation

Topic/Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Scene re-creation	<p><i>Students to work in small groups for this activity</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students to select a scene from the play (See Attachments A-C)</li> <li>2. In small groups students to consider the scene focusing on the key character relationships, plot, importance to play as whole, relationships evident within the scene and the emotions the characters exhibit. The most important aspect for students to consider is which character’s perspective is being represented.</li> </ol> <p><i>NB Depending on time, space and teacher intent, students could work on staging and performing their scene for the class (this is not critical to the activity, but would allow students a deeper understanding of the scene they are working with).</i></p>	English  Drama
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Students are to consider the other characters in the scene and select one to work with.</li> <li>4. In their groups, students are to re-recreate the scene from the perspective of their selected character. It will be important to focus on the relationship the newly central character has with the others in the scene – what does the altering of focus mean for the general storyline in the scene, the emphasis displayed and the existing or supposed relationships.</li> <li>5. Students to be encouraged to perform or discuss their newly altered scenes and what it meant for their understanding of the character and the plot.</li> <li>6. Teacher to lead a reflective discussion of how a change in perspective can alter perception of events and relationships. If time allows, reflecting on the impact this has in their own lives would be beneficial.</li> </ol>	

## Thematic Exploration – Exploring personal emotions

Topic/Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Exploring personal emotions (memory, fear, survival, guilt, hope) plus understanding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focus the discussion on the exploration of personal emotions, namely <i>memory, fear, survival, guilt and hope</i> plus an consideration of what ‘destiny’ means.</li> <li>2. Allow the students to form into small groups to continue their discussion. These groups are to also select one of the emotions or a consideration of destiny for the next part of the activity.</li> <li>3. To engage students physically with the emotions, students should find their own space in the room and do a physical action from the play (such as digging, hanging washing, building the house etc). They should then allow an emotion to affect the whole body as they complete that action. Explore how this then affects the way that they do the action. Explore then covering up or masking the emotion. Explore revealing the emotion with only one part of the body.</li> </ol>	English  Drama

<p>destiny</p>	<p>4. Students to select a scene within the play that they believe encapsulates an example of their selected emotion. If necessary, reference to the section within the novel that links to the scene of the play may also help to provide more detail for the students.</p> <p>5. Students are to write a detailed synopsis of the scene ensuring all characters are included. It would help for the remainder of the activity if the synopsis was well spaced on a page with each incident or 'action' placed on a new line. Once this is done, students should write beside the various characters the related emotions being experienced. Focus should be given to which of the characters are experiencing the key selected emotion and what other emotions work in with that. Questions to assist with student investigation could include: What other emotions are reacting with your selected one? What does this mean for the relationships between the characters? Are they the emotions you would expect from those characters?</p> <hr/> <p><i>NB The following activity is listed as requiring students to act out the scene in either mime or speech. If you did not feel your students would respond well to this, a discussion of the impact changing the emotions in the scene would have on the story and characters could be substituted. In addition, the students could conduct the activity without performing for their classmates, with a reflective discussion used to elicit what they discovered.</i></p> <p>6. Students are to re-create their selected scene in two different ways. Firstly, recreating the scene using the listed emotions (these are the ones expected for the storyline). Secondly, students should re-create the scene using altered the emotions. As a group they should rewrite the synopsis and select which emotions should be substituted. <i>(Students should be encouraged to use their own interpretation of the scene and characters and not copy what they witnessed at the performance.)</i>  <i>NB Drawing on opposing emotions can usually create interesting discussion material</i></p> <p>7. If desired, students can perform their two scenes for the class. The class should be encouraged to work out the key emotion being focused upon and how was this altered. Discussion considering the impact on the audience, impact on the characters and on the story should be encouraged.</p>	
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### Thematic Exploration – Reflection and Memory

<b>Topic/Theme</b>	<b>Learning Experiences</b>	<b>Curriculum Area</b>
Personal reflection on emotions	<p>1. Students should be asked to reflect individually the discussed emotion they personally resonate with. These reflections can take any form (dependent on resources available, time and teacher emphasis).</p> <p>2. Discuss with students their options for representing their reflection e.g. poem, story, script, visual representation, music, movement, multi-media etc</p> <p>3. Emphasise the importance of 'individual' response and reflection. Students should also be encourage to draw (where appropriate) on their personal lives and experiences to enhance their reflection.</p> <p><i>NB These reflections could remain personal or be displayed/performed at the teacher and student discretion.</i></p>	English Drama
Memory	<p>4. Students to explore what memory means to them and how it is represented for them? How else can we articulate a memory? Does our body remember things? Encourage students to articulate one such memory through a physical movement.</p> <p>5. Students to recall a moment in the play that remains vivid to them. Working individually, students should recreate it creatively using techniques such as movement, text, improvisation, dance, a picture etc Students are to explore this moment, recollecting in their chosen form and expanding on the moment.</p> <p><i>NB This is a creative exercise and does not need to reflect the same outcome as in the play.</i></p>	

### Movement Representation/Exploration – Valuing and respect for Individual Difference

<b>Topic/Theme</b>	<b>Learning Experiences</b>	<b>Curriculum Area</b>
Movement & Sound Representations	<p><i>NB These topic may evoke mixed emotions in the students. It is important to create and maintain a safe and supportive environment to ensure ALL students can express and explore their own reactions on this topic.</i></p> <p>1. Students to work in small groups and discuss what they believe 'individuality' refers to. <i>NB It is important to emphasise that the group does not need to form consensus, that each member of the group may have their own perspective on what the term refers to.</i></p> <p>2. Group should compile a chart listing all the words/terms they collectively feel embodies their understanding of 'individuality'. A subsequent whole class discussion will allow these charts to be shared and discussed among the larger class group.</p>	English Drama NB Music elements

	<p>3. Students to each select a colour they believe encapsulates 'individuality' for them. For some, individuality may be a positive and important aspect of life, for others scary.</p> <p>4. Students are to work in their own space in the room and to explore their colour for individuality. To begin this activity, it would be beneficial to have all the student sit quietly with their eyes closed and visualise their colour and the way it might move. On a predetermined cue, students are to begin to move in their own space representing their understanding of individuality as a colour.</p>	
	<p>5. Students are to reform into their original groups and discuss their chosen colours and movement styles. In particular, focus should be given to how these different interpretations of individuality relate. Are they embracing and accepting? Are they fearful? Are they wishing for 'community' or happy to be alone.</p> <p>6. Groups are to work together to create a series of three frozen tableaux images to represent their various interpretations of individuality.</p>	
	<p>7. Students to develop a soundscape to accompany their frozen images. This soundscape could include scripted voice as well as sound effects (e.g. including their initial charted thoughts as a chant). A variety of percussion instruments could also be used (if available). Students should be encourage to be exploratory with their use of sound including body percussion and the adaptation of everyday items. Each piece should be recorded (where possible) and be no more than 5-10 seconds long. The aim is for the sounds to bring the frozen image alive for those looking at it. <i>NB The soundscape should go for approximately 5-10 seconds and include an introduction, building to a climax and resolution.</i></p>	
	<p>8. In their groups, students to 'perform' their frozen images (tableaux) for the class.</p> <p>9. At the conclusion of all performances, students should reflect on the differences between interpretations and what this means generally for performance.</p>	

### Thematic Era exploration – Great Depression

**NB** Teachers need to be aware that aspects of the topics that could be identified in this activity need to be handled with sensitivity due to their complex and confronting nature.

<b>Topic/Theme</b>	<b>Learning Experiences</b>	<b>Curriculum Area</b>
Era exploration – Great Depression	<p>1. Discuss the era in which 'Thursday's Child' is set. Link back to pre-performance activities (if completed) and check if initial ideas were correct.</p> <p>2. Elicit the key 'events' and 'issues' mentioned within the play from the Great Depression – <i>poverty, employment, role of children, country versus city living, alcohol abuse (if considered appropriate for the school and student age)</i></p>	<p>History</p> <p>English</p>

	<p>3. Students to work in groups. They are to allocate/select one of the identified areas as a focus. At all times, emphasis should be on these 'events' or 'issues' as a historical occurrence with consideration of what this means for our knowledge of the world today.</p> <p>4. Students to conduct introductory research on their selected area using print materials and technology (internet)</p>	NB Technology elements
	<p>5. Students to collate their information into either a PowerPoint presentation or booklet. Each group should plan a short presentation on their topic area for the rest of the class.</p> <p>6. Booklets/Presentations can then be collated for future reference by the class.</p>	
Era – Contrast with today	<p>7. Students could work either as a whole class or in small groups to discuss the information on the Great Depression era presented.</p> <p>8. Focus the discussion on the influence it has on the atmosphere and style of the play. In addition, focus student attention on how the story might play out in today's society. Are the issues still the same? How do they differ? Might we see similar family and societal struggles?</p>	

### Thematic Exploration - Family Relationships

<b>Topic/Theme</b>	<b>Learning Experiences</b>	<b>Curriculum Area</b>
Family Relationships – Siblings, parents	<p>1. Students to discuss their response to this performance. (Draw on Post-performance evaluation activities to assist e.g. expectations versus reality of the performance, emotional response, history versus fantasy'.)</p> <p>2. Elicit from students the family relationships explicit in the play. Who is connected and is their relationship considered positive, supportive, nurturing etc?</p> <p>3. Ask students to work in pairs to plot the key relationships and how they change (or do not change) over the course of the story.</p>	English  Drama
	<p><i>Each student to do the following activities based on the relationship that inspires/intrigues them.</i></p> <p>4. Students to individually brainstorm what it is about their chosen family relationship that inspires them. This can be done through a journal entry, poem or letter to a friend (ensure students use the appropriate genre when writing).</p> <p>5. Students to be placed in small groups representing (where possible) a variety of the family relationships in the play. Students are to share their work with the group.</p> <p>6. In their groups, students to consider their own relationships. Do any of their relationships inspire them and what characterises these? What emotional response do they have to positive and/or family relationships? How might they feel with the relationships represented in the play for the various characters? Would they wish to, or try to change these relationships and what might that mean for their relationship with other family members.</p> <p>7. The teacher should facilitate a whole class discussion to draw the ideas raised within the small groups together.</p>	

# ATTACHMENT A

## SCENE TWELVE

Spring

Harper (*Narrating*)

Things seemed good to me. There were endless rabbits for eating, Devon had his Champion, and the heifers made it through winter. The world you live in when you're nine is different from the world that other people live within. My home was my empire and the only place that mattered. So I couldn't understand why Mam and Da seemed so concerned when news came through from the city that the stock market had collapsed.

*SFX: A barely audible rumbling begins. The sound is from deep below the earth.*

I didn't understand that something was coming like a tidal wave around the earth and that we had no hope of out running it. Nor did I know that the only shelter we had to protect us from the worst of it, was what we owned that night, and nothing more.

*SFX: Rumbling continues.*

*Devon appears with Audrey, who is carrying a pile of books. Harper joins them; they are on their way to school. Mam is at the washing line with Caffy.*

*SFX: A sudden huge creaking noise.*

*Da rushes out of the shanty.*

*SFX Creaking, a slamming of pressed kerosene tins and corrugated iron, a noise as if someone has taken a hacksaw to the sky.*

*The shanty collapses in on itself.*

*Da begins to yell and smack his fist into his forehead. He falls to his knees.*

Mam           Where is he? Lord, Court, where is he?

Da (*Shouting*) Tin, where are you?

Harper       Tin, where are you?

Mam         Tin!

*Tin appears framed by the broken shanty.*

Da           Tin! Damn it. Look at what you've done?

Mam         Court, you'll frighten him. Come out Tin, it's treacherous.

Da           Get here! You plurry well get here Tin and see what you've done! You've dug an ants nest down there, there's no earth left. You've caved our house into the ground.

Audrey       Da, don't, don't say that, be pleased Da...

Harper            Tin...

*Tin stands still, staring furiously at Da. Tin begins to retreat. He crouches to go back underground.*

Mam            Tin it's dangerous. Please come out, just for today?

Da            My God...

Mam            If you won't come out then go far away. Go away from the shanty, to where you will be safe.

Da            Oh, my God. What next? What next?

*Tin has disappeared underground by now.*

Mam            Tin, Tin, listen- go far away-

*Da is moaning, kneeling upon the ground.*

Mam (*To Da*) There's no point taking on, what's done is done.

Da            Merciful Mary. Mother of God.

Harper        It doesn't matter, Da. It's all right now. We'll build a new house, a better house, you'll see...

Da            This is what it is. I am an educated man and my house is in the ground.

Mam            Devon, run for Mr Murphy. We'll need his help.

Da            No! It's my house. I'll fix it myself.

Mam            It's our house Court. It belongs to me and the children. Devon, go.

Harper        Da. (*Pulling at Da's arms, he tries to shake her off*) Da, stand up.

Da            Damn it, Damn, damn, damn...

Mam            Harper, come away.

Harper        Don't say that Da, please don't worry.

Mam            Harper! Devon, I told you to go!

Harper        We can fix the shanty Da, we can fix it today- see Da, the chimney is good, the chimney didn't fall, it-

*Da slaps Harper's face and she hits the ground.*

Mam            Don't you do that! Don't you hit that child. Don't you take your miseries out on a child. You're a coward, you are, taking on like an infant. Do you think you're the only one living this life? You aren't. The children and I didn't ask for this. Get to your feet. You disgust me. That house needs rebuilding and you're going to start it today.

Da (*Still on his knees*) With what? How do you intend to fix it Thora?

Mam Go to the mill and buy timber!

Da Buy it with what?

Mam You've spent it all haven't you? Every penny of your father's money.

Harper Don't fight please, Mammy.

*Audrey rocks the wailing Caffy*

Da Money's meant for spending, the heifers, the well holes being sunk-

Harper Dadda...

Mam You are such a fool.

Da Oh, it's foolish to look to the future is it?

Mam The future? Three mangy cows, is that our future? God help us Court, that's all I can say!

Da I pray he hears you, because those cows are all we've got now.

Harper Stop it, stop it, stop fighting.

Da I was trying to do my best, Thora. I was only trying my best.

Mam I'm taking the children to Rose Murphy's and they won't be coming home until there's a decent home for them to come to. You find the means to right this mess. Taking on like a baby, you revolt me. Come. We're going. Harper!

Harper Da, Da. I want to stay with Da. I want to stay...

Mam (*To Devon*) Get your sister, we're going!

*Devon picks up Harper and they all exit leaving Da alone.*

## ATTACHMENT B

### SCENE THIRTEEN

#### Mrs Murphy's house.

*SFX: A ticking clock.*

Harper           Life was tedious at the Murphy's. They were slightly well to do. Da said Mrs must have come from money because Mr surely didn't.

*Evening. Mrs Murphy comes out in her night dress, holding blankets to make up the couch*

Mrs Murphy    Bedtime Harper.

*A candle is lit, Harper hops into bed and Mrs Murphy exits.*

Harper(*whispers*) One of the few things that broke the monotony of those slow drifting days was spying on Mr and Mrs Murphy and the piddling chair.

*Mr and Mrs Murphy enter carrying the piddling chair.*

Harper (*Creeping out of bed to spy*)

They used the chair when they needed to go at night, saving them from picking their way to the outhouse with a candle.

*Mrs Murphy lifts her nightie and sits on the chair. She taps her foot, waiting for a wee. Mr Murphy also in a nightie stands next to the chair with newspaper strips, ready to hand them to his wife.*

Mrs Murphy    That man doesn't deserve your help. The rudeness. Who does Court Flute think he is?

Mr Murphy     It was the grog he had in him Rosie. You can't take offence when it's the drink speaking and not the man.

Mrs Murphy    So nothing's been done.

Mr Murphy     There's plenty willing to chip in, love. It's Flute who's the problem. He sits on his rump mouldering. I've never seen a man take a set back so hard. He's never without his flask of scoot- he was well into it when I got there this morning.

Mrs Murphy    Drink's brought many a family to ruin. Something has to be done.

*She finally has a long satisfying wee, Mr Murphy hands her paper.*

Mr Murphy     Aye, but Flute's refusing to trade the cattle for bits and pieces and you can't build a house from thin air.

Mrs Murphy    Maybe they should go underground like the youngster.

*They both laugh.*

*They lift the chair, exiting but stop as Mrs Murphy has to have another little wee.*

Mr Murphy I'll have his mind changed eventually but I want to get them housed before the bottle gets the best of him.

Mrs Murphy I don't mind having them here. It's companionship. But they can't stay forever. Those children have appetites.

*SFX: A small satisfying wee.*

Ahhhhhh.

*They exit with the piddling chair. Harper returns slowly to bed and blows out the candle.*

# ATTACHMENT C

## SCENE TWENTY TWO

Harper (*Narrating*)

Mrs Murphy had said – The angels turned their faces from our family those last few years. She said it began when Tin started digging. Maybe Tin only started digging because he knew the angels were about to turn away. I missed Tin and looked for him wherever I was. I had not seen him for months. Tin, I thought had chosen the wisest way to live his life. I wished he had taken me with him.

Devon Harper.

*Harper quickly turns the lamp down.*

Devon It's me, you can leave the light on. (*he turns it back up.*)

Harper Devy, where have you been?

Devon Round and about. I saw Tin.

Harper Did you? How is he?

Devon He's a savage. He nearly didn't stop, though he knew it was me. He bares his teeth like an animal does when it's cornered. He's just a wild thing now.

Devon What are you reading about?

Harper The sea. Have you ever seen the ocean Devy?

Devon No

Harper I'd like to see it one day.

Devon Maybe you will Harper Flute. Maybe you will. (*He goes to leave.*)  
Leave the light on if you want. It's a big room to be alone inside.

Harper I'm not afraid. And I've got you Devy. You'd never leave me.

Devon It's good that you're brave. You shouldn't let yourself be frightened Harper. People who let themselves be frightened, they're defeated before they've even tried. Being cowardly never changed anything. It's being brave that makes the difference. (*He strokes her face and exits.*)

Harper (*Narrating*) The next morning Devon was gone. He left in the dead of night. He'd sold Champion and left money for Mam in the hope that Audrey would no longer have to work for Mr Cable. Someone somewhere would employ him and give him a wage he could depend upon.

Harper (*Calling out*) Devy! Devy!