

Burnby in Bloom

Written by Jules Risingham
Produced by Thunk-It Theatre CIC
Performed by Thunk-It Youth Theatre

A Note on the Text:

This play is inspired by the real history of Burnby Hall Gardens, and we'd like to say a big thank you to the Gardens and their Heritage Volunteers for helping us share their wonderful story of how the gardens came to be.

The people in this play are based on real people who once lived, worked, and dreamed right here in Pocklington. That makes our job very special: we get to bring their voices back to life. It also means we have a responsibility - to play them with care, kindness, and respect.

As you explore the story, have fun, be creative, and enjoy the adventure. But also remember: the past is part of who we are today, and it's up to us to look after it by telling these stories in the best way we can.

Characters:

5-8s - The Frogs:

Hopping around, and telling the tales of Burnby Hall Gardens through songs, rhymes and dances. All through the eyes of the creatures that live there!

8-11s - The Discoverers:

When the Discoverers find a trove of mysterious objects, they embark on a mission to discover the forgotten histories of Pocklington.

- *Blakeley* - Bold and curious, Blakeley is always the first to climb trees, peek into hidden corners, and ask "what if?"
- *Connie* - Gentle and thoughtful, Connie notices the little things others miss and often acts as the group's quiet problem-solver.
- *Nelly* - Spirited and mischievous, Nelly loves a prank and keeps the group laughing, though sometimes gets them into trouble.
- *Greta* - Precise and determined, Greta approaches every discovery like a mini-scientist, taking careful notes of everything.
- *Tommy* - Loyal and steady, Tommy is the glue of the group, often holding everyone together when chaos erupts.
- *Freida* - Fearless and adventurous, Freida dives headfirst into any challenge, inspiring others to take risks.
- *Scout* - Observant and agile, Scout is always scouting ahead, spotting hidden paths, and warning the group of surprises.
- *Penny* - Imaginative and dreamy, Penny spins stories about every leaf, stone, and puddle, making every discovery magical.
- *Jessie* - Energetic and talkative, Jessie turns every outing into an adventure, encouraging everyone to join in with enthusiasm.
- *Wren* - Quiet and keen-eyed, Wren often notices small details that lead the group to unexpected discoveries.
- *Spencer* - Clever and inventive, Spencer loves tinkering and making small contraptions out of whatever the group finds.
- *Dakota* - Thoughtful and introspective, Dakota reflects deeply on events and sometimes surprises everyone with sudden insights.
- *Willow* - Thoughtful and clever, Willow usually has a look of deep thought on their face.

- *Marley* - Playful and energetic, Marley is full of ideas and never afraid to take a wild guess about what something might be.
- *Indigo* - Dreamy and artistic, Indigo loves to sketch their discoveries, helping the group imagine stories behind each find.
- *Linden* - Calm and steady, Linden has a knack for solving disagreements and reminding the group to slow down and think.

11+ - The Ancients:

A talented drama group, who bring the history of each object to life, and play the characters that are seen throughout Burnby Hall Garden's history.

- *Conrad* - Wise and grounded, Conrad has a calm authority and a habit of sharing insights with subtle humor.
- *River* - Fluid and adaptable, River moves through situations with grace, often guiding others with quiet influence.
- *Vesper* - Mysterious and reflective, Vesper seems to see connections others miss and often speaks in thoughtful riddles.
- *Ash* - Strong and resilient, Ash faces challenges head-on and protects the group with loyalty and courage.
- *Sutton* - Analytical and discerning, Sutton notices patterns and can solve complex problems, often keeping the group on track.
- *Quinn* - Calm and thoughtful, Quinn often notices details that others overlook, quietly guiding the group.
- *Morgan* - Adventurous and fearless, Morgan dives into challenges headfirst, inspiring courage in others.
- *Casey* - Clever and inventive, Casey enjoys solving puzzles and creating small contraptions from found objects.
- *Jordan* - Loyal and steady, Jordan keeps the group grounded and supports friends through chaos or disagreement.
- *Avery* - Imaginative and whimsical, Avery spins stories around every discovery, making ordinary things magical.
- *Taylor* - Observant and quick, Taylor is always scanning the environment and spotting opportunities or obstacles first.
- *Ellis* - Dedicated and passionate, Ellis takes drama club VERY seriously, often trying out different acting techniques.
- *Jett* - Free-spirited and playful, Jett brings humor and energy to the group, often lightening tense moments.
- *Coll* - Energetic and endlessly curious, Coll loves exploring new places and asking questions that make people think.
- *Kenny* - Cool and unbothered, Kenny is always chilled out.

SCENE ONE - The Discovery

The Steamer Trunk sits centre stage, lit dimly.

The FROGS enter, dancing around the Trunk.

FROGS: Plop! Ker-splash!
Belly flop crash!
Wiggle your toes - and tickle your nose!
Hop to the left, hop to the right!
Something's wobbling out of sight!
Wiggly, jiggly, froggy knees -
Bring that trunk up, oh pretty please!
Croakity Croak, bubble and bump,
Bring up the trunk with a great... big... THUMP!

The FROGS stand around the trunk - now in a bright light, grinning proudly. They scatter quickly as they notice BLAKELEY enter.

Blakeley spots the trunk and runs straight over to it. Blakeley attempts a loud whistle, but it comes out as a quiet squeal. Blakeley rolls their eyes.

BLAKELEY: WHISTLE...! WHISTLE...!

Some DISCOVERERS pop their heads out from side stage.

CONNIE: What?

BLAKELEY: I found something!

NELLY: You're supposed to whistle when you find something...

TOMMY: Technically they did...

GRETA: Not everyone can whistle, although with practice...

FREIDA: So, what did you find!?

BLAKELEY: Come Look!

The DISCOVERERS run on and crowd around the trunk with wonder.

GRETA: The others have to see this!

They nod and then all attempt to whistle but fail. They look at each other.

ALL: WHISTLE!

The other DISCOVERERS pop their heads out.

SCOUT: What?

TOMMY: We found something!

PENNY: You're supposed to whistle if you find something.

BLAKELEY: We're not going through this again...

NELLY: Just, come look!

The DISCOVERERS gather around the trunk.

PENNY: Whoa!

JESSIE: Cool!

CONNIE: I know.

SCOUT: Wow... What is it?

WREN: It's a trunk.

WILLOW: Like a tree?

SPENCER: Like an old suitcase. It must've been at the bottom of the lake.

DAKOTA: A suitcase? But, where are the wheels?

FREIDA: And where is the zip? Wouldn't everything just fall out?

The DISCOVERERS consider for a moment but shrug.

BLAKELEY: What if it's treasure!? We could be rich!

TOMMY: Do they tax treasure?

BLAKELEY sighs.

BLAKELEY: They tax everything.

JESSIE: Let's open it!

GRETA: Normally I would discourage opening a strange trunk when we don't know its contents, but for the purpose of the plot we might as well.

The DISCOVERERS nod and reach down, slowly pulling open the trunk, a bright light seems to appear from it.

The DISCOVERERS look at the contents, shock on their faces, before their faces drop.

DAKOTA: Oh.

SCOUT: It's full of rubbish...

WREN: Kept the water out pretty well though...

CONNIE frowns, grabbing something from the case.

CONNIE: It's not rubbish!

CONNIE stands, holding a luggage tag.

CONNIE: Look! 'The Property of Percy and Katharine Stewart.'

The DISCOVERERS look unimpressed.

JESSIE: Cool.

NELLY: So, it's the rubbish of Percy and Katharine Stewart?

WREN looks into the trunk.

WREN: No, Connie's right... I think this box is full of memories... and memories certainly aren't rubbish.

JESSIE: Preach!

SPENCER: It's a time capsule...

PENNY: Like - A TIME MACHINE!? Oh my goodness, we could do anything
- dibs on seeing dinosaurs!

GRETA: It's not a time machine, Pen...

PENNY frowns.

PENNY: I just wanted to know if dinosaurs had feathers or not...

CONNIE: It's a time capsule. Like a box of special objects...

BLAKELEY: They don't look special...

TOMMY: To us, maybe...

JESSIE: This is exciting, like a mystery!

CONNIE peers at the tag.

CONNIE: 1906... Did they have WiFi then?

FREIDA: I don't know... We need some people who can help work this mystery out...

BLAKELEY: We need to call in the experts.

NELLY: Scientists?

GRETA: Historians?

SCOUT: Superheroes?

PENNY: Ghost Whisperers?

FREIDA: No! It's obvious who we need...

JESSIE: Yeah, who do we know that are *really* dramatic and *really* old?

ALL: Oh... The Ancients...

The DISCOVERERS run off with purpose.

SCENE TWO - Calling for Backup

The FROGS hop onto stage.

FROG: Humans say rubbish!

FROG: Frogs say treasure!

The FROGS each hold up a random object and turn it into something other than it is - A boot becomes a drinking glass, a bottlecap becomes a shiny crown etc.

FROGS: Boots and bottles, buttons and string
Humans see nothing, but to Frogs it's King!

The FROGS chuckle and dash off stage.

The ANCIENTS enter in darkness, standing in grand poses with serious faces.

CONRAD: You called?

ASH: We answer...

VESPER: Objects have voices... If you listen...

MORGAN: *(Echoing)* Listen... listen...

RIVER: A hundred years ago...

MORGAN: *(Echoing)* Ago... Ago...

SUTTON: Deep in the depths of... deep East Riding...

MORGAN: *(Echoing)* Riding...

CASEY: There was a person who was a... A.... Ugh - LINE!

The room brightens, revealing a group in rehearsals.

MORGAN: *(Echoing)* Line... Line... Oh, you mean - right, I'm with you.

ELLIS: Come on, Team! How many times have we run this now? We have to get this right.

MORGAN: Yeah, Casey - why can't you remember your lines?

The ANCIENTS look to Casey.

CASEY: Well, I'm not just echoing like *some* people.

The ANCIENTS look to MORGAN.

ELLIS: Morgan is adding much needed atmosphere to the piece.

MORGAN nods proudly. The ANCIENTS nod.

ELLIS: And Casey is adding a... je ne sais quoi.

CASEY: Je ne sais what?

The DISCOVERERS enter confidently.

FREIDA: And here they are, the Ancients...

TAYLOR: We're teenagers...

FREIDA: Yeah...?

JETT: Freida! What are you doing here!? What have you broken now?

FREIDA: We've not broken anything... Yet...

ELLIS: This is a *closed* rehearsal! Creatives only...

JETT: Yes, closed. Meaning, leave. And I'll be telling Dad you've been breaking stuff again.

FREIDA sticks their tongue out at JETT, which JETT returns.

BLAKELEY: We've not broken anything! In fact, quite the opposite.

CASEY: ...You've made something?

BLAKELEY: Okay, not quite opposite.

TOMMY: We've *found* something!

ELLIS: Did no one hear me when I said closed rehearsal?

CONNIE: It's a box of treasure from the past!

ELLIS: I must be invisible...

SPENCER: We think it belonged to the Stewarts.

COLL: Like, *those* Stewarts? The ones who founded Burnby Hall Gardens?

VESPER: What, you know them?

COLL: Of them. They're long gone now.

ELLIS: This is simply ridiculous!

JESSIE: We thought you could bring their story to life for us.

ELLIS halts in their tracks.

ELLIS: Like... A play? Verbatim?

JESSIE: Uhh... Yeah!

ELLIS smiles and claps their hands.

ELLIS: Right then, no time to waste. When there is a play to be made, a

play we shall make! Right, characters! Who do we have?

COLL: Uh - Well, there's Percy Stewart - he was kinda a wannabee gentleman who became super posh.

ELLIS: The hero of the story, excellent.

COLL: There was Percy's wife, Katharine, she was actually -

ELLIS: The love interest! So dramatic - I love it!

COLL: And, they had a housekeeper I think - Edith... Edith Tibbott!

ELLIS: A maid! Drama, class divides, murder! How brilliant!

COLL: I don't think there was any murd...

ELLIS: Right then, who shall we cast...

ALL: I want to be Percy!

ELLIS takes a breath.

ELLIS: We'll have to take turns being Percy. Multirolling! What a great Skill! Everyone, Places!

The ANCIENTS run around, grabbing pieces of costume and throwing them on.

They mime panicked words, and gesture at each other to help move pieces of the set.

The DISCOVERERS stand in the middle, taking in the chaos. They all smile.

JESSIE: This is going to be fun.

SCENE THREE - The Luggage Tag

TAYLOR: Let's start with this!

TAYLOR grabs the luggage tag and passes it down the line. The ANCIENTS turn deadly serious.

RIVER: A tag...

VESPER: A key...

MORGAN: A story...

JORDAN: Some paper on a string with writing on it.

ALL: JORDAN!

JORDAN: Fine... A scrap that unlocks a world to explore.

ELLIS: Nice.

KENNY: Meet Percy and Katharine Stewart...

The stage becomes a train.

BLAKELEY: Whoa, it's happening... like, right now.

WILLOW: Is it magic?

SCOUT: Or just really good theatre?

PERCY and KATHARINE sit on the train looking out on the world, happily.

PERCY: Darling, I don't want us to be dull or dreadfully boring... We should travel the world!

KATHARINE goes to reply but the scene changes, leaving Katharine looking annoyed.

KENNY: But before we understand the middle, we must understand the Beginning.

PENNY: Long ago, when dinosaurs walked the Earth...!

BLAKELEY: Not that beginning, Pen...

KENNY: We are going back to the very day that Percy and Katharine first met...

SCENE FOUR - Horseriding

A DISCOVERER pulls out a riding crop. FREIDA grabs it, and wields it like a sword.

FREIDA: Ooo - a sword!

SPENCER: That's not a sword.

DAKOTA: Looks like one!

FREIDA passes the riding crop to the ANCIENTS.

KENNY: Percy and Katharine met on a hunt...

The stage becomes a forest with items from the room, with Katharine and Percy riding side by side on 'horses' made out of chairs. The other ANCIENTS make the sound of hooves clattering.

PERCY gallops confidently

PERCY: *(suavely)* Oh - hello...

COLL holds up their hands.

COLL: FREEZE, freeze...

ELLIS: We're in the middle of a scene!

TAYLOR: But we want the scene to be right, go on, Coll.

COLL: It's just that - by all accounts Percy was pretty terrible on a horse. Katharine was the horse nut... She mostly rode horses with a name that started with D - Derwent, Dolphin, Druid, Dandy, Dragon...

QUINN: Dragon?

AVERY: Maybe she played D&D...

ELLIS: Fine, we will go for historically accurate if you insist. You - make Percy more...

ELLIS does a ridiculous hand gesture.

ELLIS: Got it? Good. Go!

The ANCIENTS resume their forest scene. PERCY now looking uncomfortable on the horse, KATHARINE confident.

PERCY: Oh - hello.

KATHARINE: Hello...

PERCY: You're awfully good.

KATHARINE: Mm, and you're terribly bad... Do you have a license?

PERCY: Hah! I'm surprised I've not seen you on the hunt before.

KATHARINE: This must be your first time on a horse judging by the way you ride...

PERCY: Never could afford lessons.

KATHARINE looks surprised, before extending her hand to him.

KATHARINE: I'm Katharine. Bridges. Well, Priestman again now... Dead Husband... Sorry, you didn't need to know that.

KATHARINE smiles, PERCY smiles back.

PERCY: Stewart. Percy, Stewart. Sorry - first name Percy, second name Stewart. I'd shake your hand but... I don't think I can risk letting go of the reins...

KATHARINE: Must be hard to have two first names.

PERCY: Not as hard as having to change your last name every time you marry, I suppose.

KATHARINE smiles proudly to herself. She spots something in the distance.

KATHARINE: GROUSE AHEAD!

PERCY: You're wonderful...

KATHARINE: What?

PERCY: Nothing! Grouse! The grouse are wonderful!

KATHARINE: You're odd... I like it.

KATHARINE dashes off at top speed, PERCY tries to catch up. The forest disperses.

The DISCOVERERS appear.

PENNY: Awww! They were so cute... in an old timey kind of way.

NELLY: So, wait - Percy was broke and Katharine was the rich one?

GRETA: I thought women weren't allowed to be rich back then...

SPENCER: Or vote for that matter!

WILLOW: She must've inherited it!

CONNIE: Must've been a lot of money...

ELLIS and COLL appear, deep in thought. Jotting down notes.

ELLIS: I get it now! Katharine was a sheltered lady of wealth and Comfort! Not just a simple love interest - what brilliant dimension!

COLL: Um, I don't think she was really like that -

ELLIS: I have to write this down! Oo this is EXCELLENT!

ELLIS marches off. COLL looks after them, perplexed.

SCENE FIVE - The Relish Bottle

The FROGS hop onto stage with serious faces, they become a news crew, holding imaginary boom mics and cameras.

FROG: Welcome to Frogcast News! I'm your host - Sir Croaks A Lot. Now, over to Kermit's Cousin Keith for the weather.

FROG: Thanks Croaks, I'm here in Pocklington where today's weather is RAIN.

FROGS: Rain! Rain! Rain!

FROG: Tomorrow's weather?

FROG: RAIN.

FROG: The day after that?

FROGS: Even more rain!

FROG: But seriously, without rain? No lakes.

FROG: Without lakes? No frogs.

FROG: Without frogs? No story.

FROGS: You're welcome, humans!

The FROGS leap off.

The DISCOVERERS open the trunk and bring out a relish bottle.

JESSIE: Wow, juice!

NELLY: Ew, lakey frog juice!?

SPENCER examines the bottle closely.

SPENCER: Not juice... Sauce.

PENNY: Treasure sauce!? What if it's hundred year old Ketchup!?

SCOUT: Don't you'll make me hungry.

The ANCIENTS appear, as if summoned by the sauce.

CONRAD: A bottle of...

ANCIENTS: Yorkshire Relish!

DISCOVERERS: Re-lish?

JESSIE: Like, sandwich relish?

CONRAD: More than that, you hold a taste of history!

RIVER: Long before the Stewarts, the house belonged to William Powell -

a solicitor of Powell and Young, now known as Harrowells.

GRETA: Solicitors, got it.

ASH: In 1866, William Powell built a magnificent home, called... The Elms.

WREN: The Elms? I thought this play was about Burnby Hall.

SUTTON: It became Burnby Hall later, the Stewart's changed the name.

BLAKELEY: Houses can change names? Like how I could suddenly be called... Kevin?

NELLY: You'd make a great Kevin.

VESPER: William Powell left the house to his nephew... Also called William Powell...

PENNY: Confusing.

CONRAD: Nephew William Powell was a chemist, and he helped to make...

DISCOVERERS: Yorkshire Relish!

RIVER: He worked with a group of Quakers and together they built a sauce empire!

TOMMY: He worked with a group of porridge?

DAKOTA: Quaker, like the religion... But also porridge, yes.

TOMMY: Ohhhh!

SUTTON: By 1874, it was the largest sauce factory in the world!

NELLY: A sauce factory!?! Bigger than the moon?

SUTTON: Not even close.

BLAKELEY: So before the Stewarts, there was Powell, and Powell, and sauce.

CONNIE: From The Elms... to Burnby Hall. Relish the past.

The DISCOVERERS nod and place the bottle carefully away.

The FROGS hop on! The others don't notice them.

FROGS: Relish river, Relish sea!
Sauce for you and sauce for me!
Biggest factory, don't you know!
Relish helped Burnby grow!

The FROGS hop off, happily ribbeting as they do.

SCENE SIX - Toy Cars

WILLOW brings a toy car out of the trunk.

WILLOW: Wow! I have some like these at home! They're just like my -

DAKOTA: - trademark infringement! What? I don't want us to get sued.

WILLOW: I was going to say - just like my.... Warm, toasty, spinny things...

WREN: They're just toy cars.

FREIDA: They had cars in 1900!?

PENNY: Cars but no WiFi? How did they use Sat Nav?

JETT: Sat Nav would've come in handy for our Percy...

KENNY: He got into his fair share of trouble with cars.

The DISCOVERERS hold up the car as a full sized 'car' appears behind them. The Ancients make the car move, one stands in front of the car, furiously fanning a gust of wind towards the drivers.

KATHARINE sits unhappily in the passenger seat, PERCY sits driving, a huge grin on his face.

The car looks and sounds like it's going insanely fast.

Coll pauses the scene.

COLL: They were probably going about 20 miles an hour...

ANCIENTS: Oh....

The car slows down, the fanning Ancient changes their tactic to blowing a gentle breeze.

PERCY: Ah, isn't it wonderful, Kate!?

KATHARINE: Completely...

PERCY: A steam car, how brilliant!?

KATHARINE: So brilliant...

PERCY: Couldn't you just spend your whole life in one of these?

KATHARINE: I feel as though I already do...

TAYLOR: Katharine's clear delight at the prospect of the steam car was quickly changed when, moments later, Percy crashed the car on Sutton Bank-

JORDAN: I KNEW it would be Sutton Bank!

TAYLOR: - causing Katharine to spend three weeks in hospital, she vowed to never go in one of Percy's death traps again.

ELLIS: And did she?

COLL: Probably, I mean - look at how happy they made Percy...

PERCY grins at the road ahead, KATHARINE smiles at him. The car disappears.

SCENE SEVEN - Sick Bag

SCOUT looks a bit queasy.

GRETA: Don't tell me you -

SCOUT: I ate the lakey frog juice.

WREN: It was a hundred years old!

DAKOTA grabs a sick bag from the trunk.

DAKOTA: Here! Use this!

DAKOTA goes to hand it to SCOUT, but CONNIE grabs it out of their hands.

CONNIE: No, don't use this! It's history!

SPENCER: How is a sick bag history?

AVERY grabs the bag gently, and floats it along imaginary waves. The other ANCIENTS join in, swaying as if on a ship.

AVERY: Percy and Katharine sailed the seas again and again.

RIVER: Percy - eight times around the world.

PERCY appears proudly at the bow of a ship.

CONRAD: Katharine - six.

KATHARINE joins him, looking out at the rolling ocean with wonder.

TAYLOR: And poor Miss Tibbott joined them on a few as well.

MISS TIBBOTT appears, looking sea sick.

SUTTON: To make it to America, 5 days on a great ocean liner.

ASH: A floating palace of steam and steel.

CASEY: Five days of cabins, chandeliers, dining halls and swaying halls...

The DISCOVERERS groan.

VESPER: Ladies and Gentlemen, Passengers of the SS Victoria, welcome...
to the Captain's Costume Ball.

The ANCIENTS quickly grab costume parts - hats, scarves, masks. They sweep across the stage like elegant passengers.

JESSIE: A costume party? On a boat?

TOMMY: I guess they needed something to occupy themselves.

WREN: Yeah, like how now some airplanes have TV!

NELLY pretends to faint dramatically.

NELLY: Careful! I'll faint in my finery!

PENNY: Just imagine... Swirly gowns, sparkly lights... whilst outside, only sea and stars.

PENNY looks up to KATHARINE with a smile.

KATHARINE: Even in the middle of the ocean, Percy would've danced.

KATHARINE curtseys.

PERCY: And Katharine with him, six voyages strong.

PERCY bows.

A jaunty dance tune begins.

The ANCIENTS pair up, dancing while the ship rocks and the music plays.

The ANCIENTS dance grandly. The DISCOVERS jump up and join them.

The FROGS do some funny frog dances.

Suddenly Scout groans.

SCOUT: I don't care how pretty the costumes are, I still feel sick!

Everyone freezes. DAKOTA holds up the bag with a smile.

DAKOTA: Which is why we kept this.

The boats disperse as the FROGS take the stage.

FROGS: Rock and Roll, side to side
Five days long on the ocean tide
Round the world not once but more,
Eight for Percy, six for sure!

SCENE EIGHT - A Skull

GRETA: If one around the world trip is roughly 25,000 miles... multiply for Six... Plus two others....

NELLY tries to do maths.

INDIGO: That's.... Like.... A gazillion miles!

JESSIE: More than I've ever done. I've only been as far as Scarborough!

TOMMY: I want to stuff my ears with cotton balls after ten minutes in the car with my brother....How did they survive so much travel!?

WILLOW: *(with a smile)* Together.

Some DISCOVERERS rummage through the trunk, FREIDA pulls out an animal skull.

FREIDA: Whoa... a skull!

NELLY: Boo!

NELLY jumps at JESSIE, who yelps.

JESSIE: Don't do that! My heart nearly fell out of my ears!

GRETA: This is no ordinary skull. It's a hunting trophy...

SPENCER: Like a prize?

WREN: Like something dead.

PERCY walks forward and takes the skull reverently.

PERCY: To be, or not to be....

ELLIS: ...that is not this play.

KATHARINE joins calmly, and EDITH TIBBOTT peeks nervously from behind.

CONRAD: Percy Stewart - traveller, adventurer, hunter, and author. He collected trophies from across the world.

RIVER: But he wouldn't be an author if not for Katharine, who wrote down his notes and organised his thoughts, even on topics she wasn't interested in.

ELLIS: History aside, I think in this scene, we need to heavily lean into Percy's clear calling as a comedic character type.

PERCY: Observe! The mighty African Buffalo!

PERCY strikes a heroic pose, then immediately yelps and hops about.

PERCY: Ants! Ants in my pants!

ELLIS: Genius!

PERCY flails and runs off, embarrassed. Another ANCIENT takes over as Percy.

A couple of FROGS leap up.

FROGS: Ants in his pants, ants in his pants! Dance Percy, dance, Percy dance, dance, dance!

The FROGS sit back down, happy with their chant.

SUTTON: Katharine made no fuss, and by all accounts never got ants in her pants.

COLL: I like to think she tried to understand and love all the bits about Percy that - maybe no one else could see.

SUTTON: He even took her out chart fishing once, and she partook calmly, Skillfully.

PERCY: And she did brilliantly... I was proud.

AVERY: Miss Edith Tibbot, however, did not quite enjoy the hunting excursions as much.

EDITH: Snakes, I don't like snakes. Not one bit.

The DISCOVERERS hiss like snakes, wriggling their arms. EDITH squeals

and leaps away. Everyone laughs.

VESPER: Not every journey included Edith. Sometimes she stayed home, looking after Burnby. But when she went, she was Katharine's greatest companion. A steady friend in faraway places.

KATHARINE gently guides EDITH back to centre stage.

TAYLOR: Katharine saw many of the wonders the world had to offer.

CONRAD: Like Niagara Falls in Canada.

ELLIS: Sparkling waters, endless spray, rainbows in the mist - what a romantic setting for a scene!

KATHARINE looks up at the waterfall, unimpressed.

KATHARINE: I've seen better.

The DISCOVERERS laugh at Katharine's bluntness.

JESSIE: Savage!

WILLOW: To be fair, she had seen Victoria Falls before Niagara!

QUINN: Ants, elephants, buffalo, and trouble. But all worth it, for the adventures they shared.

PERCY and KATHARINE look out on the world.

FROGS: Round the world, they laughed, they roamed,
Sometimes far, but always home.
Ants and snakes and waterfalls -
Adventures big, adventures small!

SCENE NINE - Suffragette's Flag

The DISCOVERERS rummage again. WREN pulls out a piece of folded fabric.

WREN: It's a towel?

NELLY grabs it.

NELLY: It's a cape! I'm Super-Nelly!

SUPER-NELLY flies around, wearing the fabric like a cape.

CONNIE: Not a cape. A flag. Purple, white, and green.

FREIDA: *(Shouting)* JETT!?

JETT appears.

JETT: WHAAAAT!? We're *trying* to get ready for the next scene!

FREIDA: What's this?

JETT: Hmm... Oh! Hold on! CASEEEEEY!?

CASEY appears.

CASEY: WHAAAAT!? We need to get ready for the next scene!

JETT: What's this?

CASEY: Hmm... Hold on.

CASEY starts rummaging through a box, pulling out pride flags.

CASEY: I don't think it's one of these... If I had to vote on it it might be...

DAKOTA: Vote on it! It's the Suffragette flag! Women fighting for the right to vote!

The ANCIENTS enter. KATHARINE appears, joined by two stern-faced AUNTS. They raise teacups like swords.

SUTTON: Katharine Stewart's Aunts were fierce Suffragettes. They refused to pay taxes until women had the vote.

AUNT 1: No vote? No money!

AUNT 2: Not a penny to Parliament until women are heard!

The DISCOVERERS cheer! The scene shifts, chairs are pulled into a circle for a parlour soiree. KATHARINE, EDITH, and FRIENDS sit with teacups, whispering and gossiping like a mix of politics and play.

KATHARINE: We may well have the vote now, but what good is it if we do not use it?

PENNY: A soiree of secrets and scones... scandalous!

EDITH: And good gossip too! Did you see who she went to the polling station with?

KATHARINE stands.

KATHARINE: We must use our voices. Not just for ourselves, but for the women who fought, and for those still fighting.

The ANCIENTS rise, and the parlour scene transforms into a march. The DISCOVERERS join, chanting and marching with the flag.

ALL: Votes for Women, loud and clear!
Raise your voices, let them hear!

As they march, holding the flag up high, ELLIS happily waves a pride flag.

ELLIS: *(Proudly)* Different colours, same message: equality, justice, love, and freedom.

The flags are lifted up high. The DISCOVERERS look up, amazed.

GRETA: So flags don't just decorate. They stand for people.

NELLY: People shouting *really* loudly!

CONRAD: Katharine was inspired by her Aunts' courage. She carried it on - not with anger, but with steadiness.

QUINN: With every soiree, every vote, every story she shared...

ELLIS: She made sure the fight was never forgotten...

ELLIS and COLL share a nod.

ALL: Purple, green and white we show,
Voices strong, let justice grow.
Raise the flag, lift it high,
Voices strong, they never die!
Past and present, side by side,
Suffragettes and Pride in stride!

They take the march offstage as they chant. Leaving ELLIS and COLL onstage, holding a pride flag and the suffragette flag.

COLL: So...

ELLIS: So... I was *potentially* wrong about Katharine.

COLL: Potentially!?

ELLIS: Fine! Yes. She is actually pretty brilliant.

COLL: She's good isn't she!?

ELLIS: Yeah. Still haven't quite worked out Percy yet though...

COLL: Yeah - what did *she* see in *him*?

ELLIS shrugs, they share a look and in unison place the flags onto the set. They take a step back and look proudly.

Pause. ELLIS starts to walk off.

ELLIS: I think we should perform the next scene completely in interpretive dance!

COLL: No!

COLL runs after them.

SCENE TEN - Rattle

The DISCOVERERS rummage in the trunk.

TOMMY: Aww! A baby rattle!

NELLY: Knew it! They had *loads* of kids. What else was there to do in 1910?

MARLEY: A whole football team of Stewarts running around Burnby Hall!

GRETA: Or a marching band! Babies playing clarinet!

FREIDA: Bet Percy taught them how to wrestle lions and crash cars.

LINDEN: I bet Katharine taught them to always have their seatbelt on, especially if Percy was the one driving!

CONNIE: I bet they called Miss Tibbott - Aunt Edie, and she spoilt them rotten!

KATHARINE appears, holding a rolled up blanket like a baby.

The ANCIENTS step forward.

VESPER: Not quite.

CONRAD: For one reason or another...

RIVER: The Stewarts never had children of their own.

KATHARINE pauses, looking down at the baby with love.

CONNIE: But... then what's a rattle doing here?

EDITH appears.

EDITH: Because they did have children in a way, the children of Pocklington were theirs. Every giggle in the garden, every muddy shoe print on the Hall's steps - they welcomed it all.

KATHARINE throws out the bundle, turning it into a picnic blanket, EVERYONE jumps up and crowds around, painting a picture of a happy Summer's day.

KATHARINE: What use is a grand house if it has no laughter inside?

INDIGO: So, the rattle wasn't for *their* baby...

DAKOTA: It was for *everybody's*.

SCOUT: The whole town was their family.

The DISCOVERERS nod, thoughtful.

The FROGS jump on, thoughtful and gentle for a change.

FROG: Rattle, rattle...

FROG: Shake, shake, shake...

FROG: Not for one...

FROG: But all to take.

FROG: Children's laughter,

FROG: Far and near.

FROG: Pocklington's Family...

FROG: All gathered here.

SCENE ELEVEN - Toy Cars Revisited

Back to the trunk.

BLAKELEY: There's not much left...

WILLOW looks around the trunk and pulls out another car.

WILLOW: Another car!

NELLY: Told you! They had a fleet of cars. Stewart United FC must've travelled in style!

JESSIE: Probably just Percy travelling in style, especially after the Sutton Bank fiasco.

CONRAD: Not quite.

RIVER: Percy did love his cars...

VESPER: But what he loved more was sharing them...

A grand Rolls Royce is imagined with chairs and boxes. PERCY appears proudly behind the wheel. He honks the horn, and waves. A group of ANCIENTS become CHILDREN, clambering in with excitement.

KATHARINE: He loved offering a lift...

The DISCOVERERS watch, astonished.

FREIDA: So... Percy wasn't just zooming around showing off?

INDIGO: He was the town taxi!

PERCY: Everyone in? Right then - off we go!

The lights shift, the stage becomes a lake. Percy teaches fishing.

PERCY: Keep your wrist straight - let the line fly... That's it! And remember, patience. Fishing is about waiting, and listening.

The CHILDREN beam with pride. KATHARINE watches, smiling.

COLL: I think I get it now, why Katharine loved him.

ELLIS: But he was silly, clumsy, always crashing cars, insisting people called him Major...

COLL: Yes, but look at him. Big heart. That mattered more.

They watch PERCY kneeling, listening earnestly to a child.

ELLIS: Maybe he wasn't just the comic relief after all.

CONRAD: Percy was foolish at times, but not unkind.

RIVER: And maybe that's what Katharine loved.

The DISCOVERERS nod solemnly.

WREN: So Percy's legacy wasn't just hunting trips and cars...

PENNY: ...It was kindness.

WILLOW: A Roll Royce, a fishing rod, and sixpences given to any child who could recite the lord's prayer... It sounds old fashioned, but it was pretty sweet.

KATHARINE joins PERCY and they stand side by side, looking out on the lake.

SCENE TWELVE - Kate's Paintbrushes

WREN pulls out an old, worn paintbrush from the trunk.

WREN: A brush?

NELLY: For dusting?

PENNY: For wizard spells!

NELLY waves it like a wand, swish swish!

GRETA: It is clearly a paintbrush.

The ANCIENTS step forward.

VESPER: Katharine's paintbrush.

RIVER: She painted what she loved most.

The stage shifts, shimmering like a pond.

CONNIE: Waterlilies!

PENNY: Just like Monet! How dreamy!

KATHARINE appears with a palette and brush, painting strokes in the air, peacefully.

KATHARINE: The world is full of colour, if only you dare to look.

PERCY enters proudly with a fishing rod.

PERCY: Look, Kate! The lakes are built! Pike and trout, perfect for fishing!

KATHARINE lowers her brush, firm.

KATHARINE: The lakes will be for lilies, not hooks.

PERCY: *(Baffled)* Lilies instead of fish?

KATHARINE: Beauty instead of sport. Stillness instead of struggle.

PERCY hesitates, but nods and places his hand on KATHARINE'S shoulder.

DAKOTA: She made him get rid of the fish?

JESSIE: That's kind of savage.

GRETA: Or kind of brilliant.

CONRAD: And so the lakes became a sanctuary for lilies.

VESPER: Fifty varieties introduced by Katharine...

QUINN: The start of a collection that still blooms today.

JORDAN: Now, more than eighty.

WILLOW: So, where are her paintings now?

The ANCIENTS bow their heads.

VESPER: Lost.

ELLIS: Sold.

COLL: Scattered at estate sales.

The DISCOVERERS sigh, disappointed.

PENNY: Gone forever?

ELLIS: Not gone.

COLL: Never gone.

KENNY: The lilies are still here, we can paint them again...

The waterlilies are unveiled. Everyone looks in wonder.

FROGS: *(Floaty)* Brush to water, paint to sky,
Lilies bloom and never die!
Elms to Ivy, Burnby Hall,
Her vision shaped and holds us all!

SUTTON: With the allowance Katharine received from her family, she and Percy purchased The Elms.

ASH: They spent three years remaking it - an opulent Edwardian home.

RIVER: They renamed it Ivy Hall.

CONRAD: From 1904, they began the formal gardens we can walk through today.

VESPER: They purchased more land, piece by piece.

QUINN: Until the estate reached three thousand acres...

MORGAN: As far as the village of Burnby.

AVERY: And then the name changed once more...

ALL: Burnby Hall.

SUTTON: As Burnby Hall grew, so did its gardens.

CASEY: Not only lakes for lilies, but rocks for wonder.

CASEY takes a rock out of the trunk.

VESPER: Percy and Katharine gathered stones, some from as far as Scotland and Wales and built a garden like no other.

KATHARINE and PERCY appear.

KATHARINE: I saw rock gardens in the Alps - wild and strange and wonderful.
Why not here?

PERCY: Why not here.

The DISCOVERERS look around, wide-eyed.

DAKOTA: So they didn't just collect things...

WILLOW: They built whole landscapes.

FREIDA: It's like Burnby was their giant art project.

ELLIS: Maybe that's the truth of them. Percy with his adventures,
Katharine with her vision... Together they created something
bigger than both of them.

COLL: That's why she loved him. Not just the big heart, but the way her
dreams could grow inside it.

PENNY: So Katharine didn't just paint lilies...

DAKOTA: She painted the whole world.

WREN: A world we're standing in right now.

PENNY: It's like the whole town is part of the painting...

SCENE THIRTEEN - Love Letter

BLAKELEY looks down at the trunk, solemnly.

BLAKELEY: *(Sadly)* Whistle!

ALL look to Blakeley.

BLAKELEY: There's only one thing left...

JESSIE: What is it?

BLAKELEY slowly kneels and takes the last object out, an old and stained envelope.

SPENCER: What does it say?

BLAKELEY: The envelope reads... 'In case of my death to be given to Mrs P M Stewart, Ivy Hall, Pocklington.'

BLAKELEY looks around at everyone, unsure. Everyone nods solemnly and joins Blakeley, looking at the letter. BLAKELEY slowly opens the letter.

BLAKELEY: My Dearest K, I don't know when you will get this letter, but, whenever it may be, do not grieve as I shall be free from sorrow and pain. I want to tell you...

PERCY appears.

PERCY: ...how happy I have been with you and what a perfect and good comrade you have been to me. Knowing you as well as I do I feel like I can make a will of which you will entirely approve, though knowing you definitely check matters, I will not trouble you with its details. It will relieve you of any anxiety, and my relatives to whom you have been so generous always and save you dispensing of Ivy Hall upon which we have always thoroughly agreed. I hope that you will continue to live comfortably [and] happily there, pleasantly haunted by my spirit which will award love tenfold over you if it is feasible; and that you will in due course make a will please, a sum similar to mine in its upkeep when it passes into the hands of the town.

We may forth then feel that we have not lived in vain in the countryside and finding much pleasure, after it is to the named and future generation.

BLAKELEY: Please assure all who are mentioned in my will of my undying affection and give all a loving farewell from me should I be unable. To do so and present each with some little thing you think suitable in memory of me.

PERCY: Try to forget my faults and keep me in memory as one who loved you always and rejoices in having, in some small measure, contributed to your happiness...

BLAKELEY & PERCY: Yours always, *Major Percy Marlborough Stewart*...

PERCY steps away.

Pause. EVERYONE takes a breath

PENNY: So... what did she reply?

ELLIS: She didn't.

CASEY: She never even got to read it.

Pause.

WILLOW: Why?

KENNY: Because she died first...

QUINN: He wrote it for her to get when he died.

TAYLOR: Percy and Edith live for years without her, missing her strong will,
her independence...

Pause.

PENNY: What *would* she have said?

The group sings a SONG, writing their letter from Katharine to Percy.

SCENE FOURTEEN - Time Capsule

CONNIE: I guess that's it...

GRETA: But, wait! There's still so much we don't know about Katharine...

SPENCER: And we may never get to.

TOMMY: All we can do - is tell these stories. Tell our stories.

Pause, before Scout leaps up snapping their fingers!

SCOUT: I have an idea!

The lights change, as the DISCOVERERS each place their own special objects into the trunk, one by one. The ANCIENTS watch them from the back, smiling at the idea.

ELLIS: Right then, no more time for sappy stuff! Let's run it from the top!

ALL: I want to be Katharine!

COLL smiles and gives ELLIS a glance, who nods proudly..

COLL: We can take turns.

EVERYONE nods and leaves chattering about rehearsals, leaving space for one last froggy chant.

FROGS: Plop! Ker-splash! The tales are told,
Stories new from treasurers old!
Hop to the left, hop to the right,
Burnby's voices shine tonight!

Plop! Ker-splash! The trunk is deep,
Guarding stories while we sleep.
Past and present, hand in hand,
Burnby's tale will always stand.

The FROGS grin as they bounce away.

THE END.