

Piece 1 - William

William By God. It's good to be home. 'Home'. It doesn't matter who you are, what you are. To be back in the first place you ever truly felt you belonged. Well. What more could one ever wish for? Don't you think? I am 'Nobody'. You will have met me. You will have been me at some time. I was also 'Somebody'. Once. Very quickly, I became 'Nobody' again. And finally, I was 'Forgotten'. I became 'Forgotten'. Have you ever even considered what it is to be 'Forgotten'? Do you know? Do you care? Oh, you should. Because you will be. Mark my words. But don't get all worked up about it. Because by the time you're one of the 'Forgotten', you won't be here to care. For most people, 'Forgotten' is an eternity. Natural. Expected. That is, unless you just happen to cross paths with a chap called 'Chance' who knows another fellow called 'Coincidence' and then the 'Luck' twins, 'Good' and 'Bad' they're called. You need to watch out for them. Pair of buggers, they are. Excuse my profanity. And if, just if, all those fellows come together in your life in the right order, it becomes irrelevant whether you were 'Somebody' or 'Nobody' because you just might attain a status which is beyond comprehension. You are 'Remembered'. And all that my friends happens if you have been on good terms with the last fellow of all: 'Destiny'. But becoming 'Remembered'. By gum! It is bigger than life or death, riches or wealth, influence or power. Whether you are a King... or an Orphan. And it can connect the two. So, you see, even a 'Nobody' can play a small part in *making* history. Whether history remembers that 'Nobody', well, that's a matter for you. Isn't it? And the fact that you are here and listening to me, now, has already set that in motion. Welcome to making your own personal history, my friends. Welcome to my friend 'Destiny'. And welcome to my story; a story that could so easily have been yours... and still could. (*James Dixon enters and sits at his desk. William's demeanour changes, now warmer, engaged by the man before him*). Now then. Meet James Dixon. Superintendent of the newly opened Blackburn Orphanage in Wilpshire. A Scot. Born in Annan in 1855. And at precisely 4.30pm on the 18th July 1878 he arrived here in Lancashire aged just twenty-three years. He would remain here for the rest of his life. And what a life. Now here was 'Somebody'. He kept a journal, as his father did before him. Even in the early pages of it, the nature of the man is laid down.

Piece 2 – Jane & James

James is sitting at a small writing desk with a pile of papers. Jane enters with cup of tea and a broom. She gives the tea to James.

Jane How are the bills looking?
James Still like bills.
Jane Staring at them won't help us find the money to pay them.
James I know.
Jane I love seeing you at this desk. It was a fine wedding gift from the Board.
James It was our only wedding gift. But then again, some gifts have no price.
Jane (*Kissing James on the forehead and begins sweeping the confetti up, pausing as appropriate*). Indeed they don't. So. How much have we got?
James Not enough.
Jane We have the orphanage. Never lose sight of that. Five thousand pounds, James. That's how much you have raised, and you started with just fifty pounds of your own. You've achieved a great thing.
James We Jane. We. And God. And we will always have each other.
Jane Indeed.
James The list is never-ending. I hadn't appreciated all the things that an orphanage would need. Last night's committee meeting brought it home to me. Fire grates, wash-house fittings, plaster cornices, fifty pine boxes for lockers, boot racks, plate racks, peaked caps for the bigger boys, sailor caps for the younger ones. And then there's the tenders to draw up, the contracts to consider and...
Jane ...and the small matter of how much we have achieved, the children we have helped, the good we have done, will do.
James I know. But how can we be sure that what we are doing is right? That we are getting it right?

- Jane James, I don't know. Who could know? But I know this. I walk around this town and see the poverty and despair, all fuelled by the curse of drink. And then I return to here. And all I have to do is open my eyes and see just one life being placed on a different track. A track which offers no promises about the destination but is paved with hope. Which is lit by the lamps of faith. And has been built by a man who has cared enough to care. I look into the faces of the children whom we care for and remember the story that their eyes told us when they walked through those doors. If just one child is given hope, a life, an opportunity, then what price do we put on that? What measure could show anything else other than we have done right by them? (*James stands and embraces her*). And to prove my point... (*She produces an envelope from her apron pocket, takes out the letter from it, and hands it to James*).
- James What's this?
- Jane A prayer answered. The reason why we have faith, and proof that we are getting it right.
- James (*Reading it quickly*). Is this real? Please tell me this is real?
- Jane It is. A cheque from Mrs Yerburch. One thousand pounds, James. One thousand!
- James A thousand pounds! The giver of all good again influences the hearts of those to whom He has given the silver and the gold, to give it freely to the Lord's work. The good book indeed speaks to us. He truly is a father to the fatherless.
- Jane So maybe, just maybe, you are getting it right after all?
- James No. But we are. (*He hugs Jane*).

Piece 3 – Maude & William

The lights crossfade to Maude who is sitting on a bench holding her teddy bear. William enters and walks past her. He pauses when he sees her. Uncomfortable. On edge. He is wearing a sailor's cap. As he walks past she sings the first few lines of a song from 'HMS Pinafore'.

- Maude "We sail the ocean blue and our saucy ships a beauty...". (*William stops in his tracks, spins around as she stops singing, and glares at her. She smiles back*). Hello. Jolly Jack Tar. Where are you sailing to today then? Setting out on the noon tide perchance... in your hat?
- William Are you making fun of me?
- Maude Me? Goodness, no. Why would I do such a thing? You're managing just fine on your own, I think. (*Beat*). Lovely hat.
- William Sorry?
- Maude Lovely hat. Very nautical. Jaunty. Gay.
- William I don't think I like you.
- Maude I know I don't like you. (*William goes to walk away. She talks to her bear which stops him*). Well then, Bear, we'd best be off.
- William Bear?
- Maude Sorry?
- William Bear?
- Maude Meaning?
- William Bear?
- Maude Have you got a stutter?
- William Like you've got no imagination?
- Maude Meaning?
- William You've got a bear... and he's called Bear?
- Maude She. And what would you call her?
- William Don't know. Never thought about it 'cos I've not got a bear. Called Bear. But I think I could do better than 'Bear'.
- Maude (*Moving towards William, very close, making him uncomfortable*). Do you know who she is, what she is? (*Beat*). Well? (*No answer*). She is my best friend. She is my only friend. She listens. She never criticises. She's an orphan like me. Abandoned. But she will always be there. No matter what. Is that good enough for you, sailor boy?

William I'm sorry.

Maude Yes, well, you'd best be off. (*William makes to exit*). After all, you've got a boat to catch! (*She exits, running off in the opposite direction*).

William turns to call after Maude. As he does so, James enters behind him.

William You're still a cheeky bugger!

Piece 4 - Jane

Jane is sitting at the desk, reading from a newspaper.

Jane (*Reading*). "One poor, miserable little girl was found at eleven o'clock at night in a common lodging-house of anything but good repute. Mr. Dixon made enquiries, and, finding that the child was friendless, offered to take her home with him to the Orphanage. The gift of an orange seemed to the little one a proof of the rescuer's bona-fide intent, so she trustfully and gladly agreed to go with him. On passing out into the street however, she suddenly drew back, and looking into her new-found friend's face pleaded: "I wish you'd take my brother too; if you will, I'll give you this orange". (*She puts the paper aside*). Until then, Mr Dixon had been unaware of the existence of any brother, but such an appeal was not to be resisted. So, guided by the sister, the boy was sought out, and both were taken into the Home. The boy was found to be seriously ill, the result chiefly of neglect, and the doctor, on being called in, solemnly shook his head. "The boy won't live long", said he; "there is tuberculosis in the bone, and even if an operation were performed, it couldn't prolong the poorly little chap's life much". But the Superintendent of the Home and his wife had great faith in Wilpshire air and Wilpshire nursing, and, at their request the operation was performed. For weeks, nay, months, it was uncertain whether the poor little patient would ever recover, but little by little, health and strength returned to him, and eventually, by God's blessing, he was able to make his way about the place on crutches, and, marvellous though it seemed to all concerned, he was able to take his share in the children's much-loved games of football. That lad is today a married man with two bonny children of his own, occupying a responsible and well-paid position in Blackburn. Mr Dixon, some little time since, found opportunity to visit him, but on this occasion the 'Old Boy' insisted on being host, and no host could have fulfilled the title better. He said to Mr Dixon: "You saved my life, sir. No more, no less. And now, look into my children's eyes as you did mine all those years ago; for now they are as much yours as they are mine".

Piece 5 – William & Maude

A few years have passed. Maude is discovered, sitting on a bench. William enters aimlessly, he looks at her and she does not look up. She has a bundle of loose paper and is writing on it with a pencil. She has a small teddy bear on her lap. He meanders over to her, clearly trying to pluck up the courage to speak. He is rehearsing it behind her. After a short while she realises he is there and turns around and discovers him 'practising' but he pretends to be doing something else. Eventually...

William Hello. (*No answer*). I said hello. I said...

Maude I heard you.

William I've not seen you around much. I said...

Maude I heard you.

William I was just sayin', I've not seen you around. Well. I have seen you, obviously.

Maude We've both been here six years. Not that difficult.

William (*Pausing*). But, well, we've never spoken. Not proper...

Maude (*Beat*) ...lee

William Who is?

Maude Lee.

William Sorry?

Maude Proper-lee.

William Right. Anyhow. We haven't spoken proper-lee. Well, apart from a few times: you pulled your tongue out; I laughed at Bear. You laughed at my clothes. I called you a silly (*whispering*), bugger. You slapped me across the face, trampled on the flowers I gave you. If all that counts, a sort of speaking. (*No answer*). But we've not ever spoken, civil like.

Maude Then you won't be disappointed now then, will you?
William Happen not. (*No answer*). We came in here on the same day y'know.
Maude Fascinating.
William Eh?
Maude What horses eat.
William Sorry?
Maude Accepted.
William I've wanted to talk to you, but I'm, well, you know. Shy like.
Maude All evidence to the contrary.
William (*Pausing*). You'll be fifteen by now, then. I'm fifteen now.
Maude Congratulations.
William It's not my birthday.
Maude Pity.
William Why?
Maude You might have been at a party.
William Party?
Maude Not here?
William Oh. Aye. (*Silence*). What are you doing? Are you writing?
Maude What does it look like?
William You're writing.
Maude Then I'm writing.
William What are you writing?
Maude Stuff.
William Stuff?
Maude Yep.

William stands, looking over her shoulder. Maude turns the papers over, staring forward. He moves away. She resumes writing.

William Still writing then?
Maude I am now.
William What y' writing?
Maude Words.
William And what do they say?
Maude Stuff.
William What type of stuff?
Maude Stuff made from words.
William But what...
Maude A poem. It's a poem. Satisfied? Now go away.
William Poem? That's like, well, what would you call it?
Maude A poem.
William Yes, but a poem is like,
Maude Poetry.
William I know but poetry is well, it's like,
Maude Words.
William Aye, but together it's, it's...

Maude is by now staring at him, and then:

Together ...a poem.

Piece 6 – William & Maude

The following day. Maude is by the bench, pacing, impatient. William enters.

Maude Where have you been, Will? I've been waiting for you for ages. You said one and it's nearly half past two. 'One o'clock by the mill gate', your note said. I was here and you weren't.

William I had stuff to do. Let's get going now.

Maude No, wait. Stuff? What stuff?

William You know.

Maude No... (*Silence*). Unless this is a Musical Hall act and we're going to read each other's minds then... Well?

William I had, you know.

Both Stuff.

Maude Yes, you said that, so what does that...

William (*Interrupting*). Some people to see.

Maude Is that it?

William I guess so.

Maude Not a bit of this story missing, then?

William I don't think so.

Maude 'I keep six honest serving-men, they taught me all I knew; their names are What and Why and When and How and Where and Who'.

William (*Pausing*). We need to go.

Maude Will, what's the matter. Has something happened? Will?

William I've joined up. (*Pause*). Well, say something?

Maude stares at him, then without warning, she slaps him hard across the face. William does not move or speak. Maude slaps him again. He grabs hold of her.

Maude Get off me. Get off me! (*She breaks away and steps back from him, staring, shaking with rage, before shouting*). Are you completely insane?

William Shush! People are staring at us, Maude.

Maude Why?

William Look, I know we talked about...

Maude Why?

William I must.

Maude Why?

William Because.

Maude That's not an answer. Why?

William It's the right thing to do.

Maude Why? For whom?

William Look Maude...

Maude (*Interrupting*). No you look, see what you have done, realise what you have done. Do you know? Do you care? All we talked about, all we dreamt of? Was it all a lie? Did it, us, mean nothing to you?

William Maude, everybody is joining up.

Maude No! No! No! You're not everybody. We are not everybody. You're the nobody that's going to be somebody. Remember? The man with nothing to prove, with no history, but with a future, my future, our future. You told me. You promised me.

William I had...

Maude (*Interrupting*). You promised me.

William But...

Maude (*Interrupting, louder*). You promised me.

William It was...

Maude (*Interrupting, shouting*). You promised me.

William (*Shouting back*). Some things are bigger than promises. Men are dying!

Maude And I don't want you to be one of them! (*William goes to hug her*). Get off me.

William I love you. (*Maude goes to slap him again but he catches her arm, preventing her*). Some things are bigger than promises.

Maude Like what? Lies?

- William Not lies. It was never lies. I would never lie to...
- Maude (*Interrupting*). No. Don't you dare. Don't you dare say that after what you have done. The first thing you ever said to me was that you don't lie. Years ago. All the things we said. You promised me. So tell me. Enlighten me. What is more important than promises?
- William The right thing. Doing the right thing.
- Maude According to who? For whom? For you? Certainly not me.
- William There's more than you and me.
- Maude Name names. Who are these people more important than us, the unknown you seem so passionate about?
- William Well, I don't know. Look. The world is going to war, Maude.
- Maude But we aren't! So strangers matter more?
- William Strangers are the rest of the world. We're a grain of sand in a desert, a drop of water in an ocean of, of...
- Maude (*Interrupting*). Of lies? Dress it up how you want, soldier boy. The King has an orphan fighting his lot for him now. One orphan against the world and for the world. Brilliant. One orphan who will make a difference above anybody, above everyone else. 'The King's Orphan' who had a chance for a future. A chance to be something, somebody, with someone. With me.
- William And I still can.
- Maude And what about me? Well? Did you ever in your wildest little dreams ever, for one second, think of me? Of us?
- William This isn't about you and me.
- Maude No! It is all about you!
- William Is that a bad thing?
- Maude Well. Thank you. At least I now know and understand.
- William You don't understand.
- Maude And you clearly do?
- William Maude, others of the lads have gone. If they can go, then why am I so different? The Old Boys from the orphanage must do their bit in this war, for the only family we have ever known. A family of our own making. The best family an orphan could ever hope for. War can't tell the difference between a King or an orphan. But this orphan has a job to do for his King. And I will do it. I am resolved. (*Silence*). Will you write to me?
- Maude Yes. Because writing is all I have ever had; all I've ever been good for, isn't it? And it would appear that it is to carry on.

Piece 7 - Maude

- Maude Twelve abreast they marched the streets, the day they left the town.
The band competed with our cheers which echoed all around.
The biting wind upon my face, excused the flowing tears.
All spoke loud of King and right, too proud to voice our fears.
Twelve abreast they wove through town, festooned with flags and pride.
Squabbles and petty arguments were gladly set aside;
For we were there for unity as they marched to catch the tide.
No one spoke of war or death, though both gnawed deep inside.
Twelve abreast they passed the school, the factory, then the mill.
Each had come from one of them; I longed that they were still,
A part of one or all of them, to keep them in our stead.
No one spoke of why they went, none dared think of them dead.
Twelve abreast they left as boys, in weeks they would be men.
Not knowing what would happen; if we would meet again.
All knew their reason was to fight, defend for all our sakes.
No one spoke of their return, reunited at their wakes.

Twelve abreast were brothers, workers, husbands, sons and friends.
With one hope, one prayer one wish: to come home at the end.
I beat through crowds to make sure that I kept sight of his face;
Dear God when twelve abreast return, don't let his be the space.

Piece 8 – William & Parsons

The Western Front. Parsons and William are discovered sitting behind some sandbags. Both have a rifle and wear a tin hat.

William Are you afraid, Mr Parsons?

Parsons I believe I am, William.

William Why?

Parsons Why? Why wouldn't I be? Thousands of men somewhere not too far away and whom I have never met are pointing guns, shells and bombs at me. And you. I have never done anything to them. I'm sure you haven't. They, as far as I am aware, have never done owt to me. The issue is that the big men we have never met on both sides want things that the other disagrees with. So. The first question should be, why am I here?

William Well?

Parsons I guess because I am afraid. Fear brought me here. Fear keeps me here. Fear will make me kill a man I have never met, and the reasons? Where do we start? I was told to be here, it's my duty to be here, I do it for me and I do it for my family. And the last one my young friend is most important. Because if I don't stop them on the other side of that hill, they might try and do to the ones that I love at home, what they are trying to do to me. And whilst there is breath in my body, I will not allow that to happen.

William Blimey. Never thought of it in them terms. But that's me. Act first, think later. But I don't have a family. I don't have kids, a wife. I had parents, but they didn't want me so the only reason I'm here is because my friends are and I guess ...

Parsons Well?

William Well, I suppose I'm here for my King and my Country. My duty.

Parsons Then thank you from the bottom of my heart.

William Why?

Parsons Because it means you are here for my family.

William But I don't know your family. I don't know you that well.

Parsons Do you need to? You said you came for your King and Country. I am not your King. But so many people you have never met are your duty. A duty, a country depending on you and me. So no matter who and what we were at home, you and I are equal.

William You wouldn't think so the way you boss me around. *(They laugh)*. Bit odd. An orphan fighting for someone else's family, don't you think?

Parsons Not from where I'm sat. Is there no one?

William No.

Parsons Really?

William Well.

Parsons Go on, lad.

William There is someone back home.

Parsons A girl?

William Aye. But we're just mates, really. Now. Not, y'know. We've known each other all our lives. Well the bit of my life that mattered. In the orphanage. And I should've, you see, I meant to ask her if, if...

Parsons I know. War makes us do that, lad. Makes us remember all the things we should've done, meant to say.

William So I guess because of that, we're just good friends.

Parsons I met my wife when I was nine and we've been together ever since. We started off friends and have always been ever since; good and bad! But that's love for you.

William Yeah, but you're old.

Parsons Be very careful what you say, young man. *(They laugh again, then, silence)*. Do you like her?

William Oh, I don't, y'know, she's just like, well, we've been like, well, and I don't think she cares much for me now that I...

Both Yes.

Parsons So. Not just fighting for King then, are you, orphan boy?

William I guess not.

Parsons The King's Orphan has a potential family.

William I wouldn't say...

Parsons A family worth fighting for. Seems it needed a war to make him realise it.

William 'The King's Orphan.' That's what she called me before we, y'know...

Parsons Fell out?

William Aye. Before we left for France. I promised I wouldn't sign up. I signed up. We argued. She gave me a bear. I left.

Parsons So you're engaged, then?

William What? No!

Parsons Sounds it to me.

William I haven't asked her yet. Well, not proper like.

Parsons She gave you a bear.

William That doesn't count.

Parsons It's a token of her love.

William How would you know?

Parsons produces a small bear from his pocket. William sheepishly then produces 'Bear'.

Parsons My wife gave me this the day we left. And I'm not the only man in this war with one. What do you think to that, young orphan?

William It doesn't mean we're engaged.

Parsons Not yet.

William I haven't even given her a ring.

Parsons Not yet.

William *(Smiling)*. Aye. Not yet.

Parsons So get your pen, paper and bloody finger out, lad. 'Not yet' doesn't linger around these parts very long. Make sure you turn it into a 'when'. And then it might just turn into the family you've never had.

William Give over...

Parsons ...and this good old war might end up being far more than you think it is now, young orphan.

William A family. I never, ever, dreamed I might, y'know...

Parsons Not yet. Dreams are to hope. And hope is what your friend Mr Dixon always told you to have. Give it time, son. But not too much, eh? Even an orphan deserves dreams. And it all starts with that letter, remember?

William I just hope to God this place will give me the time to do it.

Parsons Aye. Ain't that the truth. It's just words, son.

William 'Words are all I have'.

Parsons Pardon?

William Something she said to me.

Parsons Then give her more than words. Don't just give her somebody. Give her you.

Piece 9 – Maude & Jane

Jane sits at the desk looking at paperwork. Maude enters.

Maude Post has arrived Mrs Dixon.

Jane Thank you, Maude. *(Maude puts some letters on the desk and is makes to leave)*. Have you heard from William?

Maude No.

Jane Have you written to him yet? *(Maude does not reply)*. Oh Maude, why have you not written to him?

Maude Because he doesn't deserve to get a letter after what he did.

Jane But if he was here, he would have been called up by now. So what difference does it make?

Maude It's the principle.

Jane Principle? You talk of principles when a war is waging in Europe? (*Maude makes to leave again*). Maude?

Maude I just... he hurt me Mrs Dixon. He lied to me

Jane Yes he did. So?

Maude He went against all we had decided.

Jane We?

Maude Yes. We decided that he should stay here, in the mill.

Jane You both discussed it and agreed exactly that?

Maude Well, not exactly that but...

Jane Oh, Maude!

Maude ...but he knew how I felt about it. What I wanted.

Jane Marriage is not about always getting what we want.

Maude He didn't even have the guts to ask me. Well, we won't have to find out my answer, will we?

Jane Meaning? (*Silence*). You mean to tell me that with that young man in Europe, fighting, not just for us, but for his life in, God knows what circumstances...

Maude (*Interrupting*). I think you need to ...

Jane (*Interrupting*). I am speaking and you will stay silent. You are telling me that your relationship is over?

Maude (*Taking out an envelope*). I've written him a letter saying just that, and I intend to... (*Jane gets up quickly and marches over to Maude, snatching the letter from her hand*). Mrs Dixon, what are you doing?

Jane The right thing.

Maude That letter is for William.

Jane That letter is for the bin. (*She tears it up and puts it in her apron pocket*).

Maude Mrs Dixon!

Jane How dare you. How dare you write such a wicked, wretched, unforgiveable letter. What gives you the right to ...

Maude (*Interrupting*). He lied to me and...

Jane (*Interrupting*). And I am still speaking!

Maude But...

Jane Silence! You selfish, ungrateful, wretched girl. Abandoned by his parents when but nine years old. That boy is at war with nothing to his name other than you. Nothing other than the hope of what is here for him when he returns. And you dare, dare to take that hope away from him? You, with your high principles and your noble plans? You who led that boy a merry dance all those years and now, because you couldn't have your own way, you throw him to one side? Dear God, girl, use the brain God gave you and the soul I thought you had! He loves you, you love him, and for the sake of pride you will cast all that to one side, just to be right? Have you no decency, no compassion, no sense of where we are in history? We are at war! Instead of your pride, have you considered his bravery? Have you for one moment thought how frightened he might be? For all you know he could be...

Maude What?

Jane I've said enough.

Maude But...

Jane He could be dead!

Maude I thought...

Jane Enough, I say! You thought. Think of the life you had and what brought you here. Think of the opportunity which is within your grasp, and which you not only plan to cast to the floor but stamp on with a heel of spite. If I ever, ever find out that you have even considered composing such a letter again... get out.

Piece 10 - All

James "31st July 1917. Dear Mr Dixon. I apologise for not being in touch sooner.

- William I know it is a month since I wrote to you. And it may be months before you get this letter. But I am alive. That is all I can pray for and my prayers have been answered. Everyone says this dreadful war will be over soon and I will be back with you and importantly, my beloved Maude. Give her my love as ever. Tell her I'm sorry for still not writing. But I have written and hope it will arrive with this one to you. I am hoping that this next push will be the last and I will then be on a troop ship home. We move out soon. I cannot tell you all the details, but the area sounds so beautiful. Some names have that sense of beauty don't they? Every time the Captain mentioned it I saw in my mind rolling hills and serenity; a peace that we have not had since we landed in France. I saw in that name, Lancashire and its green fields, farms and family; I saw all of you. More importantly, I saw Maude and the life we will have. So. Here's to being home soon and here's to having that dream realised and that this next camp and next offensive will be our last. Here's to the end of the war. Here's to being amongst loved ones again. Here's to finding out if Maude answered the question I asked in my letter to you. And here's to our next stop. I don't know how you spell it, so excuse if my spelling now offends the eye, but here's to my final sojourn before home, the beautiful and idyllic sounding... *(The light fast fades on him)*.
- Jane What James, what... what, tell me where is he? You are such a tease! Then give it me! *(James drops the letter. She runs to pick it up and frantically scans it to get to the end)*. Clumsy man! Now let me see: "...the beautiful and idyllic sounding... Passchendaele". *(She and James are still, silent.)* Open the telegram.
- James I can't.
- Jane James.
- James Please don't make me.
- Jane James! *(She runs at him, grabs the telegram, opens it and reads it)*. "I deeply regret to inform you that Private William North was... 31st July 1917 at Passchendaele. The Army Council express their sympathy. Yours Faithfully. Secretary, War Office".
- Maude *(Entering, she bursts in, full of energy, talking at full belt)*. I tell you, Father, how you have kept your patience with all of us over so many years is beyond me. But how you dealt with our parents, well, you are both saints. Mrs Hodgkiss sent Daisy to school today and you know how they dressed her, just guess; how do you think? She looked like a clown in a circus! A long red skirt, striped blouse and green shoes that would have fit you, never mind... *(She stops, looking at them for a response)*. What's the matter?
- Jane Nothing.
- James Nothing? Nothing?
- Maude What is it?
- Jane I need to go.
- James Stay where you are
- Jane James, please don't make me.
- James *(Shouting)*. Stay where you are, woman!
- Jane Please!
- James You will do as I say!
- Maude Father, what is it? Why are you both shouting? What could have possibly...? *(They all stand in silence, numb, scared, apprehensive. James holds out to her the bundle of letters)*. What is it? What's that you're holding?
- Jane Letters from William.
- Maude *(Suddenly, she lights up, excited)*. Well, let me see them. Has he sent one for me? Did he get mine? About time! *(She walks over, takes the letters and the telegram and reads them but is clearly not taking anything in, randomly scanning them. She drops each letter in turn)*. Well at least he's apologising! Aww bless him, he's too beside himself and wanted you to tell me!
- And what's this? "Tell her if I would be honoured if she would consider being... ", being what? Honoured if what? The other page is missing. He wants to marry me when he gets back doesn't he? Oh, thank you God, thank you, thank you. I thought he didn't love me anymore. That I'd ruined everything. But he loves me, Mrs Dixon. He loves me and does want to marry me! *(She turns the letter over and goes down on her knees, frantically picking up the letters and, shaking, tries to find the missing page)*.
- Maude Where's the rest? Is there another letter? The last line is missing, he might have put something else in the other letter.

- Jane *(Almost matter of fact)*. Yes. The first envelope had been opened so the last page must have been taken out or lost. I wouldn't be surprised if the army had...
- Maude *(Interrupting, reading the letter)*. "My beloved Maude". "Give her my love as ever". Well, it's took him long enough; still not an apology, exactly, but it'll do. Who'd have thought it, eh? He proposes in a letter and the most important bit gets lost! But he loves me. I hoped, but I knew all along he couldn't have given up on me. He's going to ask me to marry him. I don't deserve to feel like this, to be so happy.
- James Give it to her.
- Jane James, I...
- James *(Shouting)*. For the love of God!
- Maude What! Why do you keep shouting at Mrs Dixon? What is it?
- Jane There's another ... it's, a ...
- James It's a telegram.
- Maude Telegram? From Will? He's coming home! *(Silence. Stillness. She runs over to Jane, takes the telegram and opens it)*. Is he home and letting me know that...?

As Maude reads the telegram, James approaches and stands behind her. She goes to faint but he catches her.

- James You will not hear what I am going to say, but you need listen to it, now, before one more word or tear invades this moment. Child, when we lose somebody that we love, we also, for a time, lose ourselves. We choose to forget because remembering is hurting. We remember all the wrong things at the wrong times in the wrong places. We remember the things which hurt. We remember the things, the people that we feel we need to blame. And when you choose to spend all your time on your own, the only person left to blame is yourself. If we're not careful, all we have are the memories that caused the hurt. So we just hurt. But with effort, with time, we are capable of a simply wondrous thing. We remember laughter; we remember love. We turn away from loss and we remember life. And then, child, a miracle happens. We remember how to live again. And with it, we bring the one we mourn back to life by allowing them to live within us, through us again. And we are alive. Be alive, child. Remember a life. Remember how to live. Remember the one who has died. But the hardest thing of all. Remember it wasn't you.

Piece 11 – Jane & James

- Jane On the 11th November 1918, peace was declared. An occasion that a small, insignificant and little-known orphanage, along with the rest of the world, thought would never arrive. And James recorded the event in his diary.
- James "1918, November 11th. Peace Day. End of the Great War. Went to the dentist".
- Jane The church bells around the town rang out resoundingly with sounds of thanks and acclamation. We decorated the orphanage with streamers and we ran the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes up the flagpole on the front. And there was a band. A beautiful, shining brass band. It glistened and gleamed in the bright light of the day, as if the reflected rays carried the music into our very souls. The children ran home from school singing patriotic songs to find a party waiting with sweets and fireworks, followed by a service in the school room. The sun shone in shafts through the windows picking out expectant faces and behind them, lives to be lived, dreams to be realised, hopes to be satisfied and new families just waiting to make a new world. A better world. A remembering world.
- James My dear children. I would like you all to think on the words of a hymn, not the new one you have just sung, but the one from this morning which had the words: "God bless our soldiers, Guard them each day, Make them victorious, O'er all the way: In the great conflict, may they endure; God bless our soldiers, Make victory sure". Well. That they have. So, after our celebrations have ended, remember that the aftermath of the war is yet to be addressed. Thousands of bereaved and saddened hearts and homes. And sometimes I ponder and think: Are we as a nation any nearer God and better and nobler living than we were? There is still the selfishness, greed and lust; and the hateful Drink still holds sway, apparently unheeded and unchallenged by many professing Christians. God grant that after this sacrifice of blood, tears and agony, there may yet rise a nobler race.

Piece 12 - Maude

Maude It's funny children. All I came in with when I came to the orphanage at Wilpshire, was a teddy bear. I can't remember how or why, or who gave her to me now. And I was going to say that all I am left with is my teddy, my bear, my friend. But within her, surrounding her, because of her, is so much more. She represents love, a chance, hope, opportunity and yes, happiness. And I found all that here, with Mr and Mrs Dixon, and all of you. And for a brief time when all of those things seemed to slip through my fingers, I did a simple thing. I closed my eyes... and I remembered what Mr and Mrs Dixon gave me and have given you. Hope. And today, I keep my eyes wide open, and with it, keep an open mind, an open heart and all for a memory that I will not allow to slip away. I remember. And nothing will ever stop that. For I have so much love, so much to be thankful for. As do all of you. You cannot ever stop folk from pitying you when you tell them you were, are, an orphan. Well, you just remember this day. This time. These people. You are an orphan because of the past. But the future will make you so much more. I, we, are truly blessed. *(She places her bear on the floor in front of her)*. I would like to introduce you children, to Mrs Bear. She had a friend... but he went away and that made me, us, very sad. *(She opens her journal)*. So I wrote a poem, children. A poem that Mrs Bear helped me to write. A poem to help me understand. A poem to help me remember. A poem that helped me to recall happiness... and to recall Mr Bear; and never to forget him...