

Music No. 14: STORM CLOUDS

SANDRA – How much is it?

CONNIE Two pounds a week.

SANDRA Two quid?

CONNIE Each.

SANDRA I thought strike pay was like a salary. I can't live on two quid a week.

WOMEN
 EVERYBODY OUT
 EVERYBODY OUT
 EVERYBODY OUT

(End of scene.)

SCENE THREE

Outside the factory. Thump, thump, thump of rhythmic industrial production – specifically the sound of the continuous production line. The girls on the picket line outside the River Plant. Suddenly the sound design cuts, the plant has stopped running.

CASS Whappen?

BERYL It's gone quiet.

CONNIE They've stopped the assembly line.

[MONTAGE #1.]

WOMEN
 STORM CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON
 TENSION IN THE TOWN
 PRESSURE BUILDING UP
 RUMOURS GOING AROUND
 MONEY RUNNING SHORT

DOWN TO OUR LAST POUND
DON'T LET THE BASTARDS GRIND YOU DOWN

(The men start filing past, some walking, some cycling.)

- STAN You got some face, ain'tcha, after this?
- CONNIE What's up?!
- STAN Five thousand men laid off, that's what's up.
- BARRY You happy now?! Eh, eh?!
- CLARE What's going on?!
- RONNIE We ran out of seats, ain't we.
- BILL Go back to work!
- BARRY You're only working for pin money! *(Kisses teeth.)*
- CASS *(Kisses teeth.)* It ain't pin money for me, boy!
- BARRY Wa?! You caannn' get a man!
- CONNIE Bill!? You told me there was enough seats for another week.
- BILL There is.
- CONNIE Management's fighting dirty.
- RITA Listen, this was always going to happen. No one said it would be easy, we've got to stick together.
- RONNIE If you're a communist go and live in Russia!
- STAN You happy now, Connie Riley!? You've closed down Dagenham. You've put five thousand men out of work!

[MONTAGE #2.]

MEN
WELCOME TO EQUALITY

THIS IS WHAT IT'S LIKE
THIS IS WHAT IT'S LIKE
EQUAL SHIT FOR EVERYONE
WHEN YOU GO ON STRIKE

WOMEN
STORM CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

(TOOLEY and HOPKINS. TOOLEY reading MONTY's file. Enter MONTY.)

TOOLEY Your expense account. You've had more fish dinners than Moby Dick. Rail fares, dry cleaning. A Chinese massage?

MONTY That's two separate items. A Chinese and a massage.

TOOLEY I need you to bust this strike. Or I'll bust you.

MONTY You can't talk to me like that, mate.

TOOLEY Mate, I'll eat you for breakfast and blow you out my ass.

MONTY (*Aggressive.*) Do that and I'll register a grievance!

HOPKINS What Mr Tooley wants to know is – which girls are feeling the pinch?

MONTY My job is to represent these women –

TOOLEY – Men's jobs are at stake.

MONTY Sandra.

HOPKINS (*To TOOLEY.*) Sandra Beaumont. She's a bit of a dolly bird.

TOOLEY So one of these broads is short of money and doesn't look like Walter Matthau. Can we offer her promotions work?

MONTY So Ford America's worried are they?

TOOLEY Do you understand domino theory?

MONTY Yeah. Get rid of your double six as soon as you can.

TOOLEY If England falls to equal pay, the rest of Europe will follow.

[MONTAGE #3.]

ALL WOMEN
STORM CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

LISA
PROBLEMS IN THE HOME

(Domestic. EDDIE washing up in his wife beater top. Enter RITA.)

SHARON Mum, some men came and took the television!

EDDIE We couldn't pay the monthly.

RITA There was ten quid in the kitchen pot.

EDDIE *(Raising his voice.)* I had to get a new tyre for the motorbike.

RITA Ten quid on a motorbike tyre?! I don't spend that on shoes!

EDDIE You're not gonna come off your shoes at ninety mile an hour are you!

RITA Don't you ever ever raise your voice at me in front of my kids, Eddie O'Grady.

EDDIE Whassamatter?

RITA I'm on strike! That's what's the matter!

[MONTAGE #4.]

HAROLD WILSON
HELP ME, THE ECONOMY
IS SIMPLY IN FREEFALL

MEN
CUTTING DOWN ON BOOZE AND FAGS
AND EVEN ON FOOTBALL

TOOLEY
THE ECONOMIC INDICIES
MAKE THE BLOOD CHILL
WITHOUT FORD YOUR TRADE FIGURES
ARE SIMPLY ROADKILL

(TOOLEY, HOPKINS, LISA *have just finished a fondue at the HOPKINS house.*)

TOOLEY I never knew eating cheese could be both dangerous and exciting.

HOPKINS It's a fondue, it's a Swiss dish, like Lisa.

TOOLEY Are you a Swiss dish, Lisa?

LISA No, I'm not.

(TOOLEY *proposes a toast with cheese forks.*)

TOOLEY Here's to the great British dolly bird!

LISA Excuse me!?

HOPKINS Mr. Tooley doesn't mean you, darling. One of the strikers, we offered her a cash contract with the promotions department.

LISA And she accepted?

HOPKINS Yes, the launch of the 1600E Cortina.

LISA What's her name?

HOPKINS Why do you want to know her name?

LISA Because if I choose to join in this conversation I would like to use her name and not refer to her as the "dolly bird".

HOPKINS Sandra Beaumont.

LISA And when does this promotion happen?

TOOLEY Friday. You see, Lisa, breaking a strike is like breaking a horse. You gotta break its will.

LISA I thought Ford was in the habit of simply shooting strikers.

TOOLEY Michigan 1932 is history.

LISA Which is my subject. Five strikers dead, and sixty chained to their hospital beds with shotgun wounds.

HOPKINS Darling, that's enough. Please, bring in the dessert.

TOOLEY Oh, wow! What's for dessert?

LISA (*Standing.*) Cheese.

[*MONTAGE #5.*]

ALL
STORM CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON
TENSION IN THE TOWN
PRESSURE BUILDING UP
RUMOURS GOING ROUND

HAROLD WILSON
UNEASY LIES THE HEAD
THAT WEARS THE CROWN

BARBARA CASTLE
DON'T LET THAT BASTARD GRIND YOU DOWN

(*Domestic. EDDIE opens the door to LISA.*)

LISA Could I speak to Rita, please?

EDDIE Why? Who are you?

RITA Don't be like that, invite her in. She's a friend.

(*Enter LISA.*)

LISA They've offered Sandra a Ford promotions contract.

RITA What?

LISA They're trying to crack your solidarity. The launch of the 1600 E
Cortina on Friday.

[*MONTAGE #6.*]

TOOLEY
WE HAVE TO BUST THE STRIKE
BE RUTHLESS GET IT DONE
IF YOU DON'T WE'RE OUTA HERE
WE'LL MOVE TO BELGIUM

HAROLD
THIS IS A ROUGH PATCH
I READILY ADMIT
BUT PLEASE DON'T GO TO BELGIUM

ALL
COS BELGIUM'S REALLY SHIT

(*Enter BERYL.*)

BERYL Rita!

EDDIE Bloody hell, it's like Piccadilly Circus here!

BERYL It's Connie. She fainted. Went unconscious. She's in the Old
Church Hospital. Acute Unit. Listen, she's asking for you.

[*MONTAGE #7.*]

ALL
STORM CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON
TENSION IN THE TOWN
PRESSURE BUILDING UP
RUMOURS GOING AROUND
MONEY RUNNING SHORT
DOWN TO OUR LAST POUND

DON'T LET THE BASTARDS
GRIND YOU DOWN
DON'T LET THE BASTARDS
GRIND YOU DOWN

IT AIN'T ABOUT YOU
 IT AIN'T ABOUT THE LAW
 IT'S THREE THOUSAND FAMILIES
 UNEMPLOYED AND POOR
 DON'T LET THE BASTARDS
 GRIND YOU DOWN
 THE BASTARDS GRIND YOU DOWN
 THE BASTARDS GRIND YOU DOWN
 THE BASTARDS GRIND YOU DOWN

Music No. 14a: STORM CLOUDS – Scene Change

SCENE FOUR

Hospital. RITA and EDDIE with flowers. EDDIE is carrying motorbike helmets.

EDDIE If you're quick, we can be home by two.

RITA Eddie?! Connie's got breast cancer, I'm not "gonna be quick".

EDDIE I din't mean it like that, just that, you know, my mum's got the kids until five, that'll give us a bit of time.

RITA On our own.

EDDIE Yeah. Go on. I'm alright. Exchange and Mart, and I'm on a promise!

(RITA kisses him, it feels like a promise. EDDIE sits and reads. RITA moves on to the ward and finds CONNIE, who is in a bed with a typewriter on her lap, tapping away painfully slowly. RITA shows the flowers, triumphantly.)

RITA Da, da!

CONNIE They'll take them away. There's bacteria in flower water.

RITA Don't drink it then!