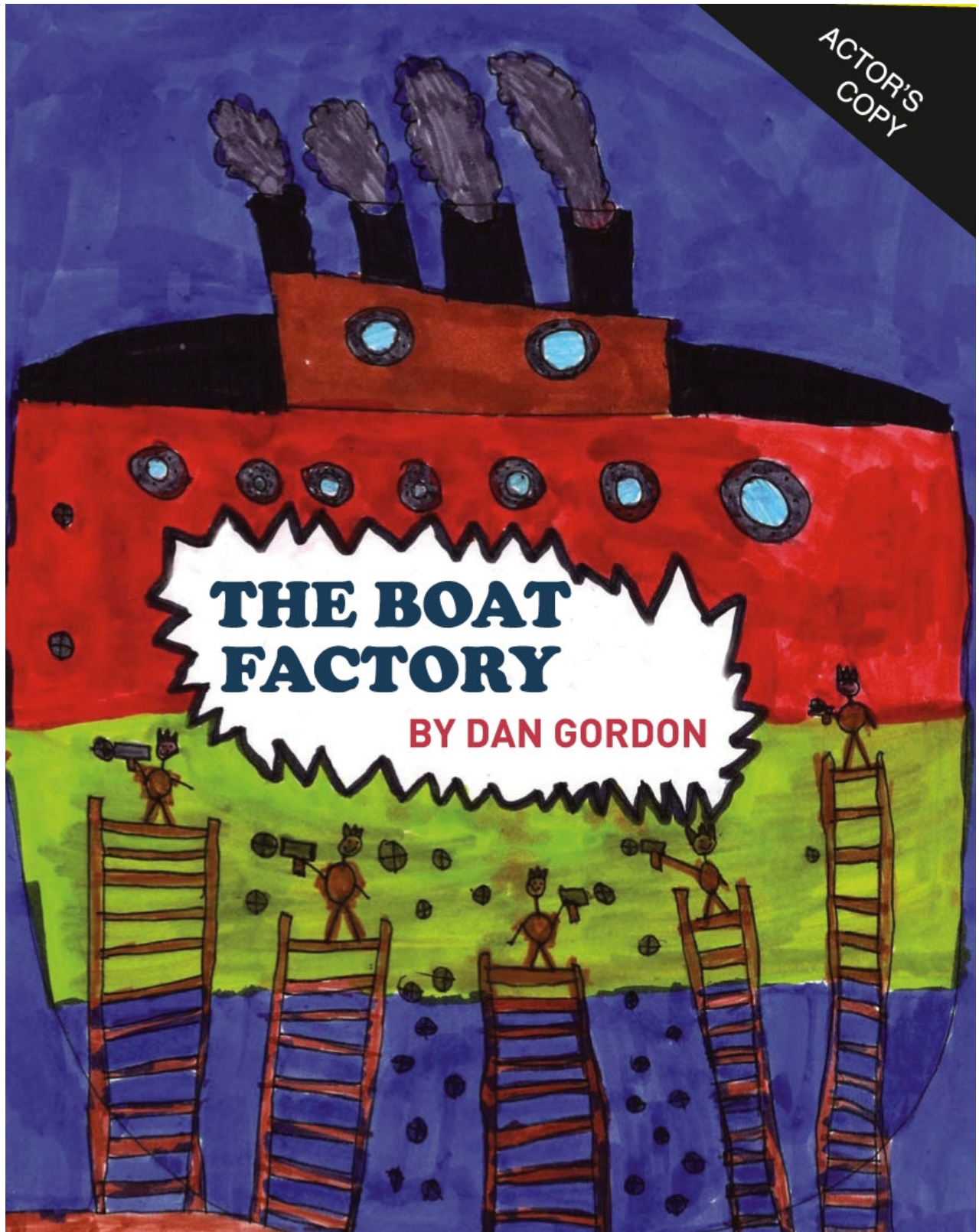


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Boord o Ulster-Scotch

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# Pat & Plain

[Chapter One]

## THE BOAT FACTORY

by Dan Gordon

This is the story of a new apprentice in the Belfast Shipyard in the late 1950s.

Willie McCandless is 14 years old. When he arrives late for his first day of work at *Harland and Wolff*, fellow apprentice, Tucker Wylie, takes him under his wing and explains to Willie what life in 'The Boat Factory' with 35 000 men will be like.

He learns all about their foreman, Moocher McQuillan and the tricks that the men will play on him. Tucker takes him to one of the highest places in the shipyard and they explore the views across the country.

Before long, Willie (now with a new nickname) finds himself playing for Moocher's team in a football match against some other apprentices.

There's a lot at stake! Can Willie's skill help win the day and save his foreman's reputation?

The play contains lots of Ulster-Scots words and many words and expressions which people in Belfast would have used at that time.

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# CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

CHARACTER	APPEARING IN SCENES
Foreman 1	1, 2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12
Foreman 2	1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 12
Foreman 3	1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 12
Foreman 4	1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 12
Foreman 5	1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 12
Foreman 6	1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 12
Foreman 7	1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 12
Foreman 8	1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 12
Willie (Lucky) McCandless: <i>a new apprentice</i>	(1 optional), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12
Tucker Wylie: <i>a 4<sup>th</sup> year joiner's apprentice</i>	1, (2 optional), 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12
Worker 1	4, 6
Worker 2	4, 6
Worker 3	4, 6
Worker 4	4, 6
Worker 5	4, 6
Worker 6	4, 6
Worker 7	4, 6
Worker 8	4, 6
Worker 9	4, 6
Worker 10	4, 6
Worker 11	4
Worker 12	4
Worker 13	4
Worker 14	4
Moocher McQuillan – <i>a foreman joiner</i>	6, 10, 11
Dignitary 1	9
Dignitary 2	9
Dignitary 3	9
Dignitary 4	9

Dignitary 5	9
Dignitary 6	9
Worker A	10
Worker B	10
Worker C	10
Marky Johnston - <i>player on Moocher's team</i>	10, 11
Jack Frost - <i>player on Moocher's team</i>	10, 11
Titch Macauley - <i>player on Moocher's team</i>	10, 11
Sparky Alexander – <i>a foreman welder</i>	11
Player 1 on Sparky's team	11
Player 2 on Sparky's team	11
Player 3 on Sparky's team	11
Player 4 on Sparky's team	11
Player 5 on Sparky's team	11
Referee	11
Spectators	11
Geordie (No dialogue)	11
Geordie's Da (No dialogue)	11
<i>Workers: always on but often frozen or working silently unless directed to create their own sound effects.</i>	

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## SCENE 1: GETTING THE MEN TO WORK

### *Shipyard Horn sounds*

*Eight workers are revealed, or march in and stand centre stage.  
They are the foremen and all wear bowler hats.*

**FOREMAN 1:** Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,

**FOREMAN 1/2:** Willie and Sammy and Michael and Rob,

**FOREMAN 1/2/3:** Tommy and Johnny and Peter and Saul,

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4:** Willie and Stewartie and Trevor and Paul.

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5:** Cedric and Cecil and Campbell and Mac,

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5/6:** Albert and Samson and Bailey and Jack,

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5/6/7:** Gary and Graham and Philip and Tim,

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8:** Dougie and Raymond and Stanley and Jim.

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8:** Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,  
Willie and Sammy and Michael and Rob,  
Tommy and Johnny and Peter and Saul,  
Willie and Stewartie and Trevor and Paul.  
Cedric and Cecil and Campbell and Mac,  
Albert and Samson and Bailey and Jack,  
Gary and Graham and Philip and Tim,  
Dougie and Raymond and Stanley and Jim.

*After this 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the chant, the rest of the cast join in, building to a crescendo, marching to work. They are all dressed as shipyard men – dark clothes, jackets and trousers and heavy boots - some have overalls under their jackets. Many wear Dunchers (flat cloth caps) – no gloves and all carry piece boxes (lunch boxes – biscuit tin boxes or margarine boxes).*

**FOREMEN  
AND CAST:**

Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,  
Willie and Sammy and Michael and Rob,  
Tommy and Johnny and Peter and Saul,  
Willie and Stewartie and Trevor and Paul.  
Cedric and Cecil and Campbell and Mac,  
Albert and Samson and Bailey and Jack,  
Gary and Graham and Philip and Tim,  
Dougie and Raymond and Stanley and Jim.

*On a given signal the cast fade to a whisper and underscore the following.*

**FOREMAN 1:**

Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,  
Get out of your **pit** and away to your job.

**FOREMAN 2:**

The horn's after sounding, it's long past the **scaich**;  
Queen's Island is calling and you haven't a **make**.

**FOREMAN 3:**

The rent man is coming - you have to show willing;  
Get away to your job and make an oul shillin'.

**FOREMAN 4:**

There's boats to be built, the time keeper's waiting;  
Don't tell him you lost your **board** down a **gratin'**.

**FOREMAN 5:**

He'll never believe you, you'll never get paid;  
Get out to your job and away to your trade!

**FOREMAN 6:**

A stager, a plater, a riveter bold,  
Your **oul da** before you, you're from the same mould.

**FOREMAN 7:**

A painter, a spark, a wee heater boy,  
On a **cowl** winter's morning there isn't much joy.

**FOREMAN 8:**

So Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,  
Get out of your **pit** and away to your job.

*The volume of the workers increases and they pick up the round one last time.*

**FOREMEN  
AND CAST:**

Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,  
Willie and Sammy and Michael and Rob,  
Tommy and Johnny and Peter and Saul,  
Willie and Stewartie and Trevor and Paul.  
Cedric and Cecil and Campbell and Mac,  
Albert and Samson and Bailey and Jack,  
Gary and Graham and Philip and Tim,  
Dougie and Raymond and Stanley and Jim.

**Shipyards Horn blows:** *the working day begins. The groups start working in various locations around the hall and/or on the stage.*

*Many can remove coats – they mime quietly their various workstations: welding, painting, sawing, scaffolding, crane driving, measuring, marking, drilling.*

*They make their own sound effects with their voices imitating machine drills/crane noises – any mechanical/or man made noises – a cacophony of voices, they call out to each other: warnings of loads, give directions for reversing, shouting taunts.*

*Suddenly they stop and freeze.*

## SCENE 2: WILLIE McCANDLESS

*Willie moves alone: he is an apprentice on his first day. He picks his way through the workers all around, up and into the centre of the stage. He stops, puzzled, looking around at all the frozen action.*

**FOREMAN 1:**

This is the story of Willie ‘McC’:  
A likely wee lad - as smart as can be.  
At the shipyard in Belfast he’s starting the day,  
Left school at fourteen and into the fray.

**FOREMAN 2:**

He’ll have to learn fast and he’ll have to show keen,  
For work in the yard can be cruel and mean.

**FOREMAN 3:**

Thirty five thousand’s the number of men,  
With hammer and welder, brush, chalk and pen.

**FOREMAN 4:**

They come here by bike, on foot and by cart;  
If Belfast’s the body, then the yard is the heart.

**FOREMAN 5:**

They make their own ‘lectric, concrete and steam;  
From rivets to anchors they’re building the dream.

**FOREMAN 6:**

Tall ships and long ships, big ships and small,  
*Titanic, Gigantic* - fearless ships all.

**FOREMAN 7:**

There’s crane men and winch men who sit up on high,  
And never a boat built, a man doesn’t die.

**FOREMAN 8:**

So sit up there boy and **straighten your face**,  
The time is back then and this is the place.  
There’s work to be done and much more to say,  
For Willie McCandless is starting today.



### SCENE 3: TUCKER CALLS WILLIE

#### *Shipyards Horn sounds*

**TUCKER:** Hey boy!

*Willie looks around.*

**TUCKER:** Hey boy!

*Willie is puzzled and still can see no-one.*

**TUCKER:** Hey boy! I'm up here ya **gulin** ye – up on the staging.

**WILLIE:** What's the staging?

**TUCKER:** The scaffolding – up here - up the side of the boat.

*Willie looks up.*

**WILLIE:** Whatdaya want?

**TUCKER:** Are you Willie McCandless the new apprentice?

**WILLIE:** Aye – are you Mr. McQuillan the foreman?

**TUCKER:** Don't be such an **eejit** – do you see me wearing a bowler hat?

**WILLIE:** No.

**TUCKER:** Well then I'm not a foreman! I'm Tucker Wylie and you, Willie McCandless, are late!

**WILLIE:** I got off the tram too early and I got a bit lost.

**TUCKER:** No excuse. Aul Moocher McQuillan will have yer guts for **glowter** if you can't come up with a better one than that.

**WILLIE:** What's **glowter**?

**TUCKER:** You don't know much do ye? It's black **slabbery** slime that slides the boats down the slipways.

**WILLIE:**                   Where will I find him?

**TUCKER:**                 At the time-keeper's hut.

**WILLIE:**                   Where's that?

**TUCKER:**                 Boys a dear, you really are an **eejit!**  
**Howl** on a minute - I'm coming down.

*The workers spring back into life with all the accompanying work.*

*Tucker climbs, dodges and weaves his way through the other workers and vanishes (if moving to Scene 4) or stays for Scene 5.*

## SCENE 4: SHIPYARD TRICKS (OPTIONAL)

*The workers spring back to life, chanting while they work.*

**WORKER/S:** Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,  
Willie and Sammy and Michael and Rob,  
Tommy and Johnny and Peter and Saul,  
Willie and Stewartie and Trevor and Paul.  
Cedric and Cecil and Campbell and Mac,  
Albert and Samson and Bailey and Jack,  
Gary and Graham and Philip and Tim,  
Dougie and Raymond and Stanley and Jim.

*The workers split into two groups either side of the stage or even either end of the hall.*

**WORKER 1:** Here boy, who are you?

**WILLIE:** Willie McCandless - new joiner's apprentice.

**WORKER 1:** Well Willie McCandless, apprentice, I have a very important  
*(including the others in on the joke)* job for you – get away over there to them boys and ask them for a  
a big tin of tartan paint for Mr. Harland. What have you to bring?

**WILLIE:** A big tin of tartan paint for Mr. Harland.

**WORKER 1:** Good lad - here give us and I'll mind your piece *(Willie hands over his lunchbox)* - now run away quick.

*Worker 1 opens the lunch. He and the other workers eat it between them.  
Every time Willie runs between them, **the Laurel and Hardy theme tune** is heard.  
Willie runs over to the other group of workers and asks...*

**WILLIE:** Mr. Harland sent me to get a tin of Tartan paint.

*The group all laugh uproariously.*

**WORKER 2:** Oh did he indeed! Well you tell him he can't have it until he sends  
us down a bucket of blue steam for Mr. Wolff. What has he to  
send?

**WILLIE:** A bucket of blue steam for Mr. Wolff.

**WORKER 1:** Good lad - now run away quick.

*Willie runs back to the first group of workers and asks...*

**WILLIE:** Mr. Wolff says you have to send him down a bucket of blue steam.

*The group all laugh uproariously.*

**WORKER 3:** Do you hear that boys? Mr. Wolff wants his bucket of blue steam – well you tell him Willie McCandless that before he can have it, he needs to send three packets of elbow grease for Lord Pirrie. What has he to send?

**WILLIE:** Three packets of elbow grease for Lord Pirrie.

**WORKER 3:** Good lad - now run away quick.

*Willie runs to second group of workers and asks...*

**WILLIE:** Lord Pirrie says you have to send him down three packets of elbow grease.

*The group all laugh uproariously.*

**WORKER 4:** Do you hear that boys? Lord Pirrie wants three packets of elbow grease – well you tell him Willie McCandless, that before he can have it, he needs to send a box of sky hooks for the Duke of Abercorn. What has he to send?

**WILLIE:** A box of sky hooks for the Duke of Abercorn.

**WORKER 4:** Good lad - now run away quick.

*Willie runs back to the first group of workers and asks...*

**WILLIE:** The Duke of Abercorn says you have to send him a box of sky hooks.

*The group all laugh uproariously.*

**WORKER 5:** Do you hear that boys? The Duke of Abercorn – well you tell him Willie McCandless, that before he can have it, he needs to send two bags of electricity for Sir Frederick Rebbeck. What has he to send?

**WILLIE:** Two bags of electricity for Sir Frederick Rebbeck.

**WORKER 5:** Good lad - now run away quick.

*Willie runs to the second group of workers and asks...*

**WILLIE:** Sir Frederick Rebbeck wants two bags of electricity.

*The group all laugh uproariously. Willie runs back and forwards getting more out of breath as they tell him what they want.*

**WORKER 6:** The keys of the boats.

*Willie runs back.*

**WORKER 7:** He needs to measure the height of nonsense.

*Willie runs back.*

**WORKER 8:** Ask for a long weight (*wait*).

*Willie runs back.*

**WORKER 9:** Ask for a long stand.

*Willie runs back.*

**WORKER 10:** A bolt hole.

*Willie runs back.*

**WORKER 11:** A can of sparks to start the engine.

*Willie runs back.*

**WORKER 12:** A skirting board ladder.

*Willie runs back.*

**WORKER 13:** A glass drill.

*Willie runs back.*

**WORKER 14:** A left handed hammer.

*The groups have a hearty laugh. Willie gives up and falls exhausted.*

*The groups return to work. Someone hands him back his empty piece box.*

## SCENE 5: WILLIE AND TUCKER MEET

*Tucker arrives beside Willie and the other workers work silently and without distraction.*

**TUCKER:** So Willie McCandless, you're a new start on the Queen's Island.

**WILLIE:** A what?

**TUCKER:** A new apprentice here in The Boat Factory – Harland and Wolff: the finest shipyard in the world.

**WILLIE:** Yes, my Mother has paid my £5 indenture – I'm to be a joiner.

**TUCKER:** Same as me, it's my 4th year – you'll work alongside a proper joiner who'll teach you – and in five years you'll have served your time and your ma will get her fiver back.

**WILLIE:** Five years? I could be a doctor in that time.

**TUCKER:** Aye, but what doctor can build a cabinet, mitre a corner or hang a door?

**WILLIE:** I suppose.

**TUCKER:** You suppose right or my name's not Tucker Wylie.

**WILLIE:** Why do they call you Tucker?

**TUCKER:** Because my name is Tommy – see? – Tommy Tucker you know, like in the nursery rhyme? 'Little Tommy Tucker sings for his supper.' Anybody called Tommy gets called Tucker. And everybody in the shipyard has a nickname.

**WILLIE:** Everybody?

**TUCKER:** Oh aye – wait d'ya see. It's usually something they do or something they've said.

## **SCENE 6: NICKNAMES** (OPTIONAL - CAN BE EXCLUDED UP TO MOOCHER)

*There is a procession of ten workers, in quick succession, across the front of the stage.*

**Snare drum**, which drums to allow each worker on, then stops for dialogue/underscore, then begins again to allow them off and the next worker on.

**WORKER 1:** *Freezing acting.*

I'm always freezing - even in the summer.

*Opens his overcoat to show hot water bottles strung round his neck and from his belt.*

**WORKER 2:** He's called Dread-the-winter.  
*(Scottish accent)*

*Then scratching acting, wearing a kilt...*

I never wash and I play in a pipe band.

*Smelly acting from Tucker and Willie.*

**WORKER 3:** *Smelly acting.*

He's called the Dirty Kiltie.

*Then stuck-up acting: he puts on posh accent and doffs the bowler hat he's wearing...*

I got promoted to chargehand and told my mates not to call me by my first name.

**WORKER 4:** He's Sammy-me-no-more

*Then bobbing/pigeon neck acting...*

I'm very nosy as I walk to work down Mersey Street.

**WORKER 5:** He's called Look-in-any-windae

*Whooping and boxing acting...*

I love cowboy and Indian pictures and I'll fight with my own shadow.

**WORKER 6:** He's called Crazy Horse.  
*Then empty pocket acting...*  
I'm always trying to borrow money til payday.

**WORKER 7:** He's called Coupla-shillin's.  
*Then awkward and clumsy acting: welder's mask which he lifts and drops...*  
I'm a welder who's not too careful.

**WORKER 8:** He's called Blazeaway.  
*Then embarrassed acting...*  
I've the same name as me Da, and my Da keeps dogs.

**WORKER 9:** He's called the Pup.  
*Then limping acting...*  
I have a bit of an oul bad leg and a herpily hip.

**WORKER 10:** He's called Nail-in-the-boot.  
*Then sneaky acting...*  
I'm a boss who's always trying to catch people not working.

**ALL WORKERS:** He's called Air Raid.  
*Guilty acting and back to work.*

**[SCENE 6 - OPT BACK-IN POINT]**

**WILLIE:** I don't have a nickname.

**TUCKER:** Don't worry, you'll say something or you'll do something and some bright spark will give you a name – just don't say or do anything stupid because they'll be onto you like a **cleg** if you do.

**WILLIE:** What about Mr. McQuillan, the Foreman I've to meet?



**TUCKER:** Moocher McQuillan – he’s always sneaking about trying to catch boys like us not working.

**WILLIE:** I have to clock in so they know I’m here.

**TUCKER:** Aye Moocher will give you a wee bit of wood like this (*shows him one*) with your number on it – you get it every morning when you come in and give it back to the time keeper when you go home – it’s called your **board**.

*Shouting from off up.*

**MCQUILLAN:** Oi you! Willie McCandless - what you at down there?

*Looking up off.*

**TUCKER:** Oh boy, that’s our Moocher now and he sounds ready to give somebody a **tonguin’**. I’m away.

**MCQUILLAN:** Tucker Wylie, youse stay right where you are!

**TUCKER:** Oh no, he’s seen me too.

**WILLIE:** What should we do?

**TUCKER:** Follow my **pattren** and run!

*They run around like headless chickens.*

*The following is chanted double time during the run around.*

**WORKER/S:** Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,  
Willie and Sammy and Michael and Rob,  
Tommy and Johnny and Peter and Saul,  
Willie and Stewartie and Trevor and Paul.  
Cedric and Cecil and Campbell and Mac,  
Albert and Samson and Bailey and Jack,  
Gary and Graham and Philip and Tim,  
Dougie and Raymond and Stanley and Jim.

*They eventually run straight into Foreman McQuillan, in a bowler hat, who catches them by the ears and marches them around.*

## SCENE 7: THE FOREMEN - BUT THERE'S EIGHT OF THEM!

*As the following is narrated, Willie, Tucker and McQuillan act it out in a mime.  
The rest of the cast continue their jobs.*

- FOREMAN 1:** So Willie gets started off on the wrong foot,  
And Tucker's in trouble and Moocher's a beaut.
- FOREMAN 7:** He gives them a row and he slaps both their **lugs**,  
He kicks both their tails and tells them they're mugs.
- FOREMAN 3:** He gives Willie his board from the time keeper's hut,  
To clock in and out and to keep his **gub** shut.
- FOREMAN 6:** He tells Tucker from now to look after Willie,  
To pull up his socks and not be so silly.
- FOREMAN 5:** So Tucker agrees, says he'll give it a go,  
And best friends are made and they'll always be so.
- FOREMAN 4:** They work side by side, they laugh and they shout,  
They cod and they **coggle** and they **footer** about.
- FOREMAN 2:** They work on the boats, they keep their **nebs** clean,  
And their work is as good as any has been.
- FOREMAN 8:** They can see clear for miles from Belfast to Bantry,  
As they climb to the top of the great Arrol Gantry.

## SCENE 8: THE ARROL GANTRY

*The boys begin a climbing sequence – they mime a climb, which is accompanied by music or a soundscape of shipyard workers shouting, hammering and working. Some of the cast might have seagulls on long sticks. They fly them and make cawing sounds around the boys as they climb.*

**TUCKER:** *(shouting)* ‘Bout ye boys –.

**FOREMAN 1:** *(from a distance)* Youse uns alright up there?

**TUCKER:** *(shouting)* Aye we’re dead on.

*Tucker stands upright while Willie clings on, sitting.*

**WILLIE:** I should have wore a pair of **gutties** - these boots are too heavy for climbing. *(sees around)*  
Oh it’s high up here - I think I’m going to be sick.

**TUCKER:** Not atall, don’t be such a big **Jinnie Anne**, up here is the best view in the whole shipyard.

**WILLIE:** Why do they call this the Arrol Gantry?

**TUCKER:** *(Scottish accent)* Sir William Arrol and Company, of Glasgow, put up this big frame so they could build the Olympic and the Titanic underneath it – it’s near nine hundred feet long and it’s –

*Shouting to Foreman 1 at the back of the hall.*

Hey boy? How high up are we?

**FOREMAN 1:** What? What do you say son?

**TUCKER:** I said how far up are we?

**FOREMAN 1:** Two hundred and twenty foot.

**TUCKER:** Two hundred and twenty feet up – it was the biggest in the world. It was the same crowd built the Forth Rail Bridge. They’re never done painting that either.

**WILLIE:** I hate heights. Why did I ever let you bring me up here?

**TUCKER:** You’ll be alright in a minute - you’ve a grip on that gantry **like a butcher’s dog**. I love it up here. Look, there it all is before us – Belfast Shipyard.

**WILLIE:** I can't look - it's too scary.

**TUCKER:** You'll be alright. Start in the distance – look at the horizon – that's what the crane drivers do - then work back. Start at the Mourne Mountains away to the South – see them?

**WILLIE:** Yes! Yes I can, is that where they are?

**TUCKER:** Alright now turn your head to the other side – see the Cavehill to the North? – Look, you can see wee men walking up on the top against the skyline.

**WILLIE:** Yes, I see them.

**TUCKER:** Look to the right – you can see our part of Belfast – the East where the wise men come from – St Mark's church spire and St Donard's and St Matthew's Chapel – you can see the Ropeworks and Gallaher's cigarette factory where my Ma works. There's Inglis' biscuits and the Oval Football Ground and there's the roof of our old school in Mersey Street.

**WILLIE:** It all looks so tiny - wee, like a picture postcard.

**TUCKER:** Right, now take a breath and look straight ahead right down the Victoria Channel past Belfast Lough.

**WILLIE:** *(excited)* Boys o - I can see Scotland.

**TUCKER:** Now bring your eye back up Belfast Lough and look down around us – alright?

**WILLIE:** Alright – oh!

**TUCKER:** It's alright, you're fine. Now what do you see?

**WILLIE:** I can't see anything.

**TUCKER:** You will if you open your eyes. Here maybe this'll help ye – *(grabs him)*

**WILLIE:** Ah mammy! Don't Tucker – let me go, you'll knock me off.

**TUCKER:** Well open your eyes and tell me what you see.

**WILLIE:** Alright they're open, they're open – I can see the Clarence and Alexandra works, the slips below in the Victoria Yard, the Graving Dock, the fitting out docks and the Thompson Dock. I can see stagers building scaffolding and the steam cranes on the tracks pulling steel plates over to the Abercorn yard.

**TUCKER:** What else?

**WILLIE:** The foundry, the aircraft stores, the Musgrave channel, the boiler shops and the engine shops.

**TUCKER:** Good. Look at it down there Willie – look at them, there's thousands of workers down there like ants in cloth caps – ating their pieces with jam and drinking cans of tay – they're playing footie – or gambling – there's card schools and holy choirs – there's arguments and rows, there's fights over the colour of the paint on the boat and the size of the fish somebody caught in the dock –but when the siren sounds they're all Shipyard men.

And now that you've climbed to the top of the Arrol Gantry – so are you!

*The workers are silently coming to life and slowly beginning to work again. A seagull flies overhead. Willie clutches his head- it has pooped on him!*

**WILLIE:** Ah yuck – look what that seagull just did on my head.

**TUCKER:** That's supposed to be Lucky.

**WILLIE:** It's minging!

**TUCKER:** No Willie, that's your new name – Lucky - that's what we'll call you from now on - Lucky McCandless.

*They laugh – Tucker slaps Willie on the back and Willie pretends to fall and scares Tucker – Tucker realises the joke and laughs too.*

## SCENE 9: THE SHIPYARD LIFECYCLE (OPTIONAL)

### *Soundtrack of atmosphere.*

*The workers go into a full scale working and hammering, welding, craning and building routine – the shipyard at its busiest. Lots of individual activities and shouts – improvised – even danced sequences.*

*There is a boat launching party that appears several times. It can be made up of workers springing out of the activity and then back into it - groups of dignitaries in frock coats and top hats – Lord Mayoral chains or simply ties and jackets – accompanied by ladies dressed for the occasion with hats, and men with button-hole flowers and workers in pristine white overalls.*

*The dignitaries take it in turns to launch the imaginary ships centre stage and the work restarts.*

**DIGNITARY 1:** I name this ship *The Munster*. God bless her and all who sail in her.

*Everyone cheers.*

**DIGNITARY 2:** I name this ship *The Leinster*. God bless her and all who sail in her.

*Everyone cheers.*

**DIGNITARY 3:** I name this ship *The Imperial Star*. God bless her and all who sail in her.

*Everyone cheers.*

**DIGNITARY 4:** I name this ship *The Granuaile*. God bless her and all who sail in her.

*Everyone cheers.*

**DIGNITARY 5:** I name this ship *The Ramore Head*. God bless her and all who sail in her.

*Everyone cheers.*

**DIGNITARY 6:** I name this ship *The Juan Peron*. God bless her and all who sail in her.

*Everyone cheers.*

**WORKER/S:** Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,  
Willie and Sammy and Michael and Rob,  
Tommy and Johnny and Peter and Saul,  
Willie and Stewartie and Trevor and Paul.  
Cedric and Cecil and Campbell and Mac,  
Albert and Samson and Bailey and Jack,  
Gary and Graham and Philip and Tim,  
Dougie and Raymond and Stanley and Jim.

## SCENE 10: THE CHALLENGE

*Moocher enters and stands on a box.*

**MOOCHER:** Right you lot, listen here to me – gather round – gather round, I have an announcement to make.

*The curious workers gather around.*

**TUCKER:** I don't like the look of this - he has a **bake** on him **like a Lurgan spade**.

**WILLIE:** Somebody said he'd a big **barney** with another foreman called Sparky.

**MOOCHER:** That big **hallion** – Sparky Alexander, the Foreman Welder from the East Yard, has issued us a challenge.  
*(standing on a crate)*

**WILLIE:** Told ye.

**TUCKER:** Ssssh ya **buck eejit**.

**MOOCHER:** He says that his apprentices are the best apprentices in all of Harland and Wolff and can bate any apprentice in the yard at anything we care to name.

**WORKERS:** Rubbish! Nonsense!  
*(randomly)* No way! His head's a **marlie**!

**MOOCHER:** Glad to hear yis say that because they offered us a game of five-a-side football in the meal hour and I told them we'd take them on.

**WORKER A:** But Mr. McQuillan at least four or five of them welder apprentices play in the League – they're really good.

**MOOCHER:** **Ack awaywiya!** Are you trying to **take the hand outta me?**

**WORKER B:** No, he's right Mr. McQuillan – you should have done your **ecker** - you've been tricked!



**MOOCHER:** No wonder **thon big skitter** looked like the cat that got the cream. He said just to make it interesting, whoever loses has to pay for a slap up feed for the other squad's apprentices.

**WORKER C:** There's about twenty of them. That'll cost us a fortune!

*General harrumphs and agreements from the others.*

**MOOCHER:** Well then, yous'll just have to make sure yous win, that's all. Tucker Wylie, Jack Frost, Titch Macauley, Marky Johnston and Lucky McCandless - you're the team!

**WORKERS:** You must be kidding!  
No way! Hit him a **scally!**  
**He hasn't a baldy!**

*The workers move off in groups, downcast. The eight foremen appear from the back and move through the workers to the front.*

**FOREMAN 1:** Moocher has took things right to the limit,

**FOREMAN 2:** He's got them a game, there's no way they can win it.

**FOREMAN 3:** They say Sparky's boys are all footballing kings,

**FOREMAN 4:** They say all their boots are fitted with wings.

**FOREMAN 5:** They say Sparky's boys will lead them a dance,

**FOREMAN 6:** They say Moocher's boys really don't stand a chance.

**FOREMAN 7:** So over to Titch and Marky and Jack,

**FOREMAN 8:** For Tucker and Lucky there's no turning back!

*The team assemble – the workers and foremen return to their work.*

**TUCKER:** What are we going to do lads?

**MARKY:** I don't know why he picked me, Tucker - **I cannae kick back doors.**

**JACK:** Never mind Marky, Titch is a good player - aren't ye Titch? I remember you from school - you were a brilliant footballer.

**TITCH:** Aye Jack, I'm all right, but I can't play them all on my own.

**WILLIE:** Tucker and me are pretty good too. We might be all right.

**TUCKER:** Pretty good? Will you catch yourself on Willie ye **blether** ye, who are you trying to kid? Oul Moocher is one **quare oul chancer**. Titch is the only one of us cud **kick his way outta brown paper beg**.

**JACK:** I'm a good shot if we get a penalty.

**TUCKER:** Jack wee lad, **wise a bap** will ye? – as my Granny wud say - **yer stanin in yer ain light** – take a penalty? – You couldn't hit that wall with a handful of soup mix. We're **bate** before we start.

**WILLIE:** Look, here they come – there's nothing else for it - we'll have to **tak them on**.

## SCENE 11: THE FOOTBALL GAME

*Sparky appears with his team.*

*If possible, they are all huge and they all wear proper kit.*

*They bounce an imaginary ball – and they kick it back and forwards between themselves. A real ball is never used – instead it is an imagined one – which, when in play, it is important all the actors know where it is and act accordingly.*

*One of the bowler-hatted foremen steps forward – produces a whistle and blows it. The crowds gather all around the playing area (which doesn't have to be huge).*

**REFEREE:** Right, sort yourselves out – captains over here please.

*Tucker and one of Sparky's boys come to the referee – the referee mimes picking up the ball - they mime the tossing of a coin and it is clear Sparky's boys win and select to play the other end – so the teams have to switch ends.*

*The Spectators cheer and boo accordingly.*

**SPECTATOR:** Look at that - Tucker can't even win the toss!

*The other Spectators laugh.*

**SPECTATOR:** Away home to yer mammy Tucker.

**REFEREE:** Right, Sparky's boys won the toss - they have kick off.  
Here we go!

*Referee throws down invisible ball to Sparky's boys and the game begins – lots of passing and running rings around Tucker and Willie's team who are tripping, falling and sliding all over the place.*

*Eventually Sparky's team scores – this happens three times. Then Titch manages to pull a goal back. Just as he scores, he is sandwiched by two of Sparky's biggest and has to be stretchered off.*

**SPECTATORS:**  
*(taking a line each  
and overlapping)*

Away and **boil yer heads!**  
**Howl yer wheesht** and play the game!  
Go on you **feardie** cat get stuck in!  
You **cudn't bate back doors!**  
Get off yer **hunkers** and stand on yer feet!  
Yer rubbish Macauley and yer whole **connection!**  
They're **running rings round ye!**  
**Jings cribben's help ma bob!**  
**Trail** yerself up and hit him a **dig!**  
Go on ya **gulpins!**  
**Eedyits** hit it a **scally!**

**REFEREE:**  
*(blows whistle)*

Right - half time.

*The teams change ends – everyone freezes except Moocher's team who are exhausted.*

**TUCKER:**

Did you see what thon big **hallions** did to Titch when he scored the goal?

**WILLIE:**

We're only 3-1 down, Tucker - there's still time to catch up.

**JACK:**

Catch up? Are you playing in a different game to me Willie? Them boys are just warming up and now we've lost Titch we're down to four men.

**WILLIE:**

I've got an idea. *(calling)* Referee? Referee?

**REFEREE:**

What is it?

**WILLIE:**

We want to bring on a substitute.

**REFEREE:**

What are you talking about?

**WILLIE:**

It's supposed to be five-a-side. We only have four, so we want to bring on a new player.

**REFEREE:**

Well, I suppose that'll be alright. Who is it?

**WILLIE:**

My mate, wee Geordie. He's still at school but he's standing over there with his Da, who's an Iron turner.

**REFEREE:**

Still at school? Yous must be desperate! That's ok by me – *(shouts to Sparky's team)* yous happy enough?

*Sparky's team all grunt.*

**WILLIE:** Geordie – on you come.

*Geordie pushes his way from the back of the crowd and runs on.*

**REFEREE:** Second half - here we go!  
*(blows whistle)*

*With the score at 3-1, the game restarts – a different game ensues. Geordie wears a bright red shirt and is brilliant – he makes the rest of the team look brilliant too. He is directing them and making them pass backwards and forwards. This time it is Sparky’s team who are having rings run around them. Willie and Tucker’s team score two more goals.*

**REFEREE:** Right that’s three each – one minute to go.

*The pressure is on – but Willie scores the final goal, which is set up by Geordie. The final goal comes a split second before the referee blows the whistle for the end of the game.*

**SPECTATORS:** *(chanting)* Lucky! Lucky! Lucky! Lucky! Lucky! Lucky!

*The crowd goes wild - Moocher is delighted!  
When the celebrations peak – then everyone freezes.*

*The foremen come to the front of the stage and the opening rhythm starts up.*

**FOREMAN 1:** So the joiner apprentices win their big game,

**FOREMAN 2:** And Lucky McCandless is Willie’s new name.

**FOREMAN 3:** He worked even harder and finished his time,

**FOREMAN 4:** And our story is over - we hope you don’t mind.

**FOREMAN 5:** Though his Da was a yard man, wee Geordie was tighter,

**FOREMAN 6:** He kept playing football and his star it got brighter.

**FOREMAN 7:** Tucker and Lucky, they’ve both lived the dream,

**FOREMAN 8:** The day Geordie Best played on the same team!

## SCENE 12: GOING HOME

*The foremen start to stamp their feet on the spot as each joins in the chant. The first starts the chant and on each line the next joins in, until all eight are in unison - their voices are heard repeating in 1-2-3-4 time to the percussion of their steps.*

*The workers are heading home. The main cast form on stage – the rest around the edges of the audience. When they get to the last word all the lights go out to signify the show is over – and then back on for the bow.*

**FOREMAN 1:** Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,

**FOREMAN 1/2:** Willie and Sammy and Michael and Rob,

**FOREMAN 1/2/3:** Tommy and Johnny and Peter and Saul,

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4:** **Lucky** and Stewartie and Trevor and Paul.

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5:** Cedric and Cecil and Campbell and Mac,

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5/6:** Albert and Samson and Bailey and Jack,

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5/6/7:** Gary and Graham and Philip and Tim,

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8:** Dougie and Raymond and Stanley and Jim.

**FOREMAN  
1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8:** Tucker and Andy and Billy and Bob,  
Willie and Sammy and Michael and Rob,  
Tommy and Johnny and Peter and Saul,  
**Lucky** and Stewartie and Trevor and Paul.  
Cedric and Cecil and Campbell and Mac,  
Albert and Samson and Bailey and Jack,  
Gary and Graham and Philip and Tim,  
Dougie and Raymond and Stanley and Jim!

**THE END**

## GLOSSARY

<b>ack awaywiya</b>	you don't say
<b>bake 1</b>	face or mouth
<b>barney</b>	noisy quarrel
<b>bate</b>	beat
<b>blether</b>	nonsense talk, ramble
<b>board</b>	numbered wooden identity marker
<b>boil yer heads</b>	realise your stupidity
<b>buck eejit</b>	young, male fool
<b>cannae kick back doors</b>	very poor football skills
<b>cleg</b>	a horse fly that sucks yer blood!
<b>clock in</b>	register with the time keeper/office
<b>cod</b>	prank, practical joke
<b>coggle</b>	wobble, jiggle
<b>connection</b>	extended family
<b>cowl</b>	cold
<b>cudn't bate back doors</b>	weakling
<b>dig</b>	hit
<b>ecker</b>	homework exercise
<b>eejit</b>	idiot
<b>feardie</b>	be afraid
<b>footer</b>	fiddle, ineffectual work
<b>glowter</b>	paste, mixture
<b>gratin'</b>	slatted drain cover
<b>gub</b>	mouth
<b>gulpin</b>	a raw youth, a fool
<b>gutties</b>	gym plimsoles
<b>hallion</b>	lazy, good-for-nothing
<b>he hasn't a baldy</b>	he doesn't know what is happening
<b>herpily</b>	a limpy walk, a rolling gait

<b>howl</b>	hold
<b>howl yer wheesht</b>	be quiet
<b>hunkers</b>	hunches, squat down
<b>Jings cribben's help my bob</b>	shocked, stunned & not a little amazed
<b>Jinnie anne</b>	effeminate man
<b>kick his way outta brown paper bag</b>	weakling
<b>like a butcher's dog</b>	a tight grip
<b>like a Lurgan spade</b>	a long, grim face
<b>lugs</b>	ears
<b>make</b>	money, basic coin
<b>marlie</b>	marble
<b>nebs</b>	noses
<b>oul da</b>	old man, father
<b>pattren</b>	pattern, follow example of
<b>piece</b>	sandwich, piece of bread
<b>pit</b>	bed
<b>running rings round</b>	out play
<b>scally</b>	thump
<b>scaich</b>	break of day
<b>slobbery</b>	drooly
<b>straighten your face</b>	stop scowling
<b>tak them on</b>	compete
<b>thon big skitter</b>	big trickster, rascal
<b>tonguing</b>	tongue lashing, telling-off
<b>trail</b>	pull
<b>wise a bap</b>	realise your stupidity
<b>yer stanin in yer ain light</b>	fooling yourself