

(FRANK, RITA, BOB, DOROTHY and JANICE enter)

FRANK Welcome to the 1960 Andover Mardi Gras.

RITA There are bales of straw in the High Street.

DOROTHY A merry-go-round for the little ones.

JANICE Stalls where you can buy bags of confetti to chuck over people.

BOB By midnight you'll be able to write your name in the stuff.

FRANK Best of all - we have dancing to the latest hit sensation - Chubby Checker.

(They dance to Let's Twist Again)

DOROTHY I live for dancing.

FRANK Friday night, the Fiesta.

RITA The Blue Notes.

FRANK Trumpet.

BOB Trombone.

JANICE Someone serious looking playing the piano.

DOROTHY It's music to dance to - a waltz, a foxtrot.

RITA A pop song if you were lucky.

(FRANK and DOROTHY dance)

JANICE Saturday night the old TA drill hall.

FRANK Marty Wilde.

DOROTHY John Leyton.

RITA Gerry & The Pacemakers.

JANICE Boys keep asking me to dance. I always say yes. They'll offer to walk me back home and we'll have a kiss at the door but I won't go out with them again. It will be a different boy each time. I don't know what people think.

FRANK Toni's alleyway.

JANICE Waiting for the last bus.

RITA The boys saying goodnight to their girls.

BOB Rows of entwined girls and boys up against Kennedy's wall.

DOROTHY What would our parents say?

BOB There's always a lot of noise on the last bus home.

RITA Mr Razey would scratch his head, and sometimes on a tight bend shout "hold tight!"

DOROTHY When we reach my stop, there's a long road to run up. Mr Razey will stay with the lights on until I'm out of sight.

(DOROTHY and JANICE exit)

FRANK Andover was very different then.

BOB A lot of us had the old Hampshire country accent - a bit like you still get down Bristol way.

RITA Being born in Andover didn't make you an Andoverian. Your parents had to be born here too.

BOB The Advertiser used to have a weekly competition, Recognise someone prominent from their silhouette.

RITA We knew each that well.

FRANK I liked that.

RITA It was so boring.

(FRANK, BOB and RITA exit. DOROTHY and JANICE enter)

DOROTHY People say that it's all cafes nowadays, but Andover has always been full of them. If there were four of us girls, just one of us would buy a frothy coffee. Another would buy in the next café. One coffee, four girls. No-one minded.

JANICE That's the life. Tour the cafes, see what lads there are.

DOROTHY Try and chat them up if we fancy them.

JANICE Only try?

DOROTHY End up at Toni's.

(The MAJOR enters)

MAJOR I'm sure you young ladies will be willing to sign the petition.

DOROTHY What petition?

MAJOR To keep Andover the way we like it.

JANICE Who wants it any different?

MAJOR Haven't you heard about the overspill threat?

DOROTHY No. What's that?

MAJOR They're going to bring in twenty thousand Londoners.

JANICE Twenty thousand? That's more than there are of us.

MAJOR See what I mean by threat? There's a meeting at the Guildhall. Come along and make a stand.

(CHAIRMAN and ALDERMAN enter)

CHAIRMAN Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. We're here tonight to listen to the arguments for and against overspill. Alderman, will you tell us why you are in favour?

JANICE Do we want overspill?

DOROTHY No, no, no!

CHAIRMAN Please, Ladies and gentlemen. Let everyone have their say.

ALDERMAN It's not that I want it, Mr Chairman. The fact is we need it. Andover's dying.

JANICE Never.

ALDERMAN Shut your eyes if you want, but outsiders see a run-down town, badly in need of repair.

DOROTHY It's a lovely town.

ALDERMAN For us it is. What about our children? They have to leave because there isn't work for them.

JANICE Bring in jobs.

ALDERMAN We've tried hard enough. But employers look round the town and say 'it's all very nice, but there's nothing here.' They want more shops; somewhere to go for a swim; the things you expect from a modern town.

JANICE Build them.

DOROTHY You're the council.

ALDERMAN We don't have the money.

DOROTHY On our rates?

CHAIRMAN Please, everyone - let the Alderman present his case.

ALDERMAN Yes, our rates are high. A shilling above the national average. But that's barely enough. Our costs are getting bigger; Andover's not. It's as simple as that. I love our quiet little town, but we need overspill if we want to preserve it.

DOROTHY How's that going to help?

ALDERMAN There's no space left in London. The only way a business can expand is to take its workers and move to an overspill town.

JANICE We don't want slum dwellers.

ALDERMAN This is an entirely separate scheme. The newcomers will be ordinary people, like you and me.

DOROTHY Bringing their own jobs?

ALDERMAN That's correct.

DOROTHY That won't help us find work.

ALDERMAN Expanding firms take on extra staff. People like you. And the beauty is, London will pay for everything - houses, factories, amenities.

JANICE London's full of immigrants. They're shifting them down here.

DOROTHY Janice!

JANICE It's what someone told me.

CHAIRMAN We won't have prejudice in Andover, thank you very much.

ALDERMAN If someone wants to put in a shift, I say welcome to Andover.

DOROTHY How will you know?

ALDERMAN We'll have checks in place to weed out any scroungers.

JANICE So you say.

ALDERMAN Andover's in decline. If we don't do something to stop that we'll be no more than a large village. That's no future for our children. For their sake, support overspill.

CHAIRMAN Major, you oppose the overspill scheme.

MAJOR I most certainly do.

JANICE Do we want overspill?

DOROTHY No, no, no!

MAJOR I've nothing against incomers, wherever they come from, but twenty thousand of them? We'll be swamped. They'll change the whole character of the town.

ALDERMAN For a better one.

MAJOR Andover suits me as it is.