



Thomas Hyde
That Man Stephen Ward

Damian Thanfrey baritone
Nova Music Opera Ensemble
George Vass conductor

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One-man Opera by Thomas Hyde
Libretto by David Norris
Op. 8 (2006-07)

Damian Thantrey *baritone* (Stephen Ward)

Nova Music Opera Ensemble

Kathryn Thomas *flute*
Catriona Scott *clarinet*
Madeleine Easton *violin*
Amy Jolly *cello*
Timothy End *piano & keyboard*
Jonny Grogan *percussion*

George Vass *conductor*

About That Man Stephen Ward:

'[...] a score that deftly conjures up the songs and dances of the era, but also has an apt, brittle edge'
The Times

'With a modest but punchy chamber ensemble conducted by George Vass, it turned small history into surprisingly large musical gestures'
Opera Now

That Man Stephen Ward

1. Scene 1: Consultation	[10:12]
2. Scene 2: Conversation	[9:07]
3. Scene 3: Congregation	[10:03]
4. Scene 4: Consternation	[10:30]
5. Scene 5: Condemnation	[10:42]
6. Scene 6: Consummation	[12:19]
Total playing time	[62:57]

World premiere recording



Synopsis

Scene 1: Consultation

Harley Street, London. 1963.

Society osteopath Dr Stephen Ward is attending to his patient Lord Bill Astor. Ward refers to their many mutual friends and the meaning of friendship. But Bill asks for the keys to Spring Cottage back. Ward conjures up the fading world of Spring Cottage and Cliveden in a song.

Scene 2: Conversation

Spring Cottage, Cliveden, 1960.

Ward is at Spring Cottage sketching a beautiful girl, Christine. He meditates on his ideas of beauty and grace and describes how they first met. Ward tutors Christine on how to make an effect in polite society.

Scene 3: Congregation

Wimpole Mews, London, October 1962.

Against news reports of the impending Cuban missile crisis, Ward, the socialite, entertains his numerous guests including Peter Rachman and Minister for War, John Profumo. He sings a hymn of praise. Eugene Ivanov, a Russian naval attaché arrives. Ward decides he can solve the international crisis and bring about world peace by introducing Ivanov to Profumo. At that moment shots are heard. This spells big trouble.

Scene 4: Consternation

A few minutes later. Johnny Edgecombe, an ex-boyfriend of Christine, furious at having been dumped by her, has shot at Ward's front door demanding to speak to Christine. The police arrive to take names and statements. They turn a blind eye to the more distinguished guests, but notice there are a lot of girls about. Ward is dismayed by the press reports but is confident that his friends will rally around to protect him. But will the phone ring?

Scene 5: Condemnation

Summer 1963.

Having been charged with living on immoral earnings, Ward prepares to defend himself at his trial at the Old Bailey. Still waiting for his friends to phone with support, Ward becomes a jumble of twitches and panic. He recalls a schoolboy incident that suggests what he should do. But will he?

Scene 6: Consummation

London, 30 July 1963.

Facing ruin, Ward takes an overdose of pills and vodka. The phone is taken off the hook. In his mind, he is transported to an idyllic fantasy. Then he sits at his desk to write a final letter.

Stephen Ward

Stephen Ward, born on 19 October, 1912, was undoubtedly well-bred. His mother was Anglo-Irish stock; his father was Vicar of Torquay. Thus at thirteen he was sent away to Canford, a brand-new, old-fashioned country boarding school – and he liked it. For example, he never forgot owning up to a schoolboy prank – and taking the punishment – though utterly innocent. Well, one does the decent thing by one's friends, doesn't one?

Decent but lazy, Ward left school lacking much ambition. He drifted. But in 1934, with a push from his family, he left for America where he qualified as a general medical practitioner.

He might have stayed there and practised among '*warm-hearted... hospitable people ...*'. Instead he came home to begin his career among the '*standoffish British*' of Torquay, as the local... *osteopath*?

At the start of World War II, Ward volunteered for the Royal Army Medical Corps and was rejected. But he wasn't a proper doctor, was he?

Eventually he was conscripted into the Royal Armoured Corps, where he practised a little

osteopathy where needed, until the RAMC intervened... only to enrol him afterwards as '*a commissioned stretcher-bearer*'.

As such Ward was posted to India where by chance he quite unofficially treated Jawaharlal Nehru who needed attention to his neck and shoulders...

... After the War osteopathy began to prosper, especially in London where it became quite fashionable. Now Ward found recognition and with it a position in a fashionable Marylebone clinic.

Such treatment was expensive and 'exclusive'. Ward's first patient was the multi-millionaire American Ambassador, Averell Harriman ... next was Duncan Sandys, Winston Churchill's son-in-law... then it was Winston himself, who told Ward (always a very good listener and easy, conversationalist) that if *he* – the Great Man – had ever had *his* hands around Nehru's neck...

... Ward was feeling confident and appreciative of his own talents. He set up his own practice off Harley Street. Always socially correct and gentlemanly, he was now suave and polished to boot; increasingly welcomed into the best social circles.

He loved his blooming social life. Only the best

restaurants... Nightclubs and parties with lords and ladies, actors and artists, important foreigners, all the West End socialites. And – ah – the prettiest girls. Streams of them ...

By day, too, he was still with the highest in the land and relations in the consulting room were more... intimate. His hands: their ear. He was their confidential, professional associate. *Mr* Ward, Consultant. By appointment. Best of all he was Stephen, their friend.

Most of these friends were eminent – eminently respectable and eminently married. (As was Ward, briefly.) But quite a few also liked... 'girls'. Ward, himself liked girls very much. Very much more than he liked sex.

The girls he liked most were unsophisticated girls, drifting up to London for a bit of fun and a bit of life. And Ward '*liked to help*' them find both. And he liked to improve them.

He met Christine Keeler, for instance, when she was no more than another Soho showgirl. *He* was charming; *she* was seventeen; *he* offered security – plus fun; she moved in. And became a favourite at his parties.

Ward's parties rivalled any he was invited to. Everyone was there. Girls... And politicians... Girls... And barristers... Girls... And diplomats...

One diplomat, Yevgeny Ivanov, the Russian military attaché and probably a spy, became friends with Ward – which Ward duly reported to Whitehall. For he was ambitious now. One aspiration was to help – if only backstairs – the worsening relations between Russia and the West, soon to culminate in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Fanciful perhaps, but he was encouraged by 'government agencies' to continue his friendship with Ivanov.

Ward wanted to help *all* his friends. One of them, Lord Astor, a millionaire politician and owner of a great stately home, Ward helped by guiding him through his first experience of a night-club, and as a bonus by introducing him to Mandy Rice-Davies. In return Astor let Ward use a cottage on his Clivedon estate at a next-to-nothing rent.

And they helped each other by sharing weekend parties there, Astor providing the drinks and swimming pool, Ward bringing girls, of course, and before long, trouble, too.

It was in that swimming pool one warm weekend in July 1961 that Ward introduced Christine Keeler to John Profumo, one of Lord Astor's guests and Minister of War in MacMillan's Government. Profumo fell for Christine at once – almost before he could be introduced, poolside, to Ivanov, a bosom friend of Christine's already.



More fun; more 'networking'.

And helpfully, Ward reported these new relationships to MI5, who seemed more interested in an easy, sexy girl who might trap a Russian agent into defecting... Wasn't Profumo's crush a complication? Something to think about later...

For a few weeks? six months? Keeler and Profumo carried on their affair, with Ward providing their rendezvous. Where better, safer, than his own house? Christine lived there anyway. So the passion flared – and then it died. Had anyone known? The Press? Probably not. Not yet.

Then, in 1963, Christine was called as a witness in the trial of another ex-lover. This one had fired off a pistol – at least twice – out of disappointed passion. She didn't turn up.

Now, while a jilted lover was everyday, to the Press Christine Keeler was 'The Missing Witness', a mysterious *femme-fatale*, a headline. Out of her depth, Christine tried placating the papers by selling her story. *Sex orgies with toffs... a Russian spy... a Government Minister...*

Scorching news, heavily stoked by Christine's imagination. But too hot to handle. Except by *Private Eye* who on 21 March, 1963,

published the story, presenting it comically but plain enough for all to see who was who and what was what...

Next day, Profumo rose in the Commons to deny that his acquaintance with Miss Keeler was at all 'improper'. He threatened to sue.

Surely from a man of honour that was enough. A call-girl babbling her money-grubbing phantasies to the gutter press? Even her 'agent', that man Ward, had denied it and was standing four-square behind Mr Profumo.

So that was that...

Except for... 'events', as MacMillan is celebrated for saying. And the first event happened very soon after Ward learned that the Metropolitan Police was investigating him, on suspicion of 'immoral earnings'...

Outraged because he certainly did not live on anything his girls received... humiliated by the spreading talk making him the centre of high society corruption... and frightened, Ward turned again to Whitehall. To tell all...

On 5 June 1963, Profumo rose once more – to admit now that his friendship with Christine Keeler had been an affair. Although there was no evidence his romantic interlude or his acquaintance with Ivanov had led to

any breach of government confidentiality or national security, for Profumo complete public disgrace followed.

For Ward, too.

The general public, tutting, seemed to enjoy these revelations. But at the same time the idea was growing of widespread sleaze at the top of British society, including government circles – AND NOBODY'S DOING ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

But the Met (urged on by an exceptionally severe Home Secretary) were doing something. Two days after Profumo fell, they arrested Ward on charges of 'procuring and living on immoral earnings'.

He had little chance of a fair trial.

The Press had every detail well before the trial opened. When that day arrived, though the case against him was weak (little financial evidence) Ward's friends rushed to the prosecution's rescue.

Christine Keeler, a proven liar, and Mandy Rice-Davies, a brazen self-publicist, both testified against him. Whitehall said nothing about their sly use of him over the previous three years.

Naturally, none of Ward's society chums were there to speak up for him. How could they? Some were already 'holidaying abroad'; most of them feared for their own reputations.

So there was never much doubt about the verdict. The prosecution followed the Press in attacking Ward's reputation: he had inhabited 'the very depths of lechery and depravity'. On 30 June, in his notorious summing-up Mr Justice Marshall agreed. The verdict would be a formality. And Ward knew it.

That night he wrote his farewell letters, before taking an overdose of barbiturates. 'The day is lost...' he wrote.

He'd only tried to help, hadn't he? Now he was being sacrificed for others – for his friends. He might even have remembered Canford. A scapegoat. Again.

'I cannot face it', he said.

Stephen Ward knew the jury's verdict but did not live to hear it delivered. He died on 3 August, 1963.

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Thomas Hyde (left) with librettist David Norris

Thomas Hyde (composer)

Thomas Hyde is a composer described by *Opera Magazine* as 'clearly his own man on his own turf' whose works are increasingly performed in Britain and abroad. Born in London he studied at Oxford University and the Royal Academy of Music where his teachers included Robert Saxton, Simon Bainbridge and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. He was Manson Junior Fellow at the Royal Academy of Music (2001-2) and more recently has taught at City University and Worcester College, Oxford. In 2016 he joined the staff of King's College London as Teaching Fellow and Lecturer in Music. In 2017 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.

Thomas Hyde's largest work to date is the one-man opera, *That Man Stephen Ward*, premiered to great acclaim in 2008 and recently revived by Nova Music Opera at the Cheltenham Festival in 2015. Other notable works include a string quartet (2009-10), a violin sonata for Jennifer Pike (2012), a piano trio (2016), and a series of choral works published by Novello. Guild Records issued a disc devoted to his chamber music in 2012.

As well as his composing and teaching commitments, Thomas Hyde is chair of the

Lucille Graham Trust, a member of the Little Missenden Festival committee and also active as a writer on music. His study of David Matthews was published by Plumbago Books in 2014 and he has recently completed a biography of the Welsh composer William Mathias.

Forthcoming works for 2017/18 include a setting of the Magnificat commissioned by the Brugge Concertgebouw for performance by The Sixteen, a new work for the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in March 2018, and a comedy overture inspired by Les Dawson to be premiered by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

www.thomashyde.co.uk

David Norris (librettist)

David Norris worked for many years in London as a schoolmaster. Now retired to France he furthers his own education, idly.

Damian Thantrey (baritone)

Damian studied law at Clare College, Cambridge, working in the City before studying singing at the Royal College of Music, where he won the Tagore Gold medal and held the Mills Williams

Junior Fellowship. His many operatic and stage appearances include Deputy Mayor in Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Anna Nicole* and Marullo in *Rigoletto* (Royal Opera House); Lun Tha *The King and I*, Cinderella's Prince/ Wolf *Into the Woods*, Count Ludovic *Passion*, Franz/Randolph *Sunday in the Park with George* and Mr Lindquist *A Little Night Music* (Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris); Chau Lin *A Night at the Chinese Opera*, Eisenstein *Die Fledermaus* and Brother *Seven Deadly Sins* (Scottish Opera); English Clerk *Death in Venice* (Opera North, Aldeburgh and Bregenz Festivals, Opéra de Lyon); Traveller *Death in Venice* (Opéra de Metz); Pastore *Orfeo* and Messenger *Oedipus Rex* (Opera North); Nardo *La finta giardiniera* (Garsington Festival); and the title roles in *Eugene Onegin* and *Owen Wingrave*. He specialises in contemporary repertoire and has premiered over forty new works. His recordings include Erik Chisholm's *Simoon*, Turnage's *Anna Nicole* (DVD) and Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park with George* (TV). Outside performing, his English translation of Handel's *Riccardo Primo* – co-written with Lee Blakeley – was recently premiered in the United States (Opera Theatre St Louis). He is also the Artistic Director of the Hargrave Music Festival and is the guest Artistic Director for the 2018 Lichfield Festival.

www.damianthantrey.com

George Vass (conductor)

Respected English conductor George Vass studied at the Birmingham Conservatoire and the Royal Academy of Music.

In 1992, he was appointed Artistic Director of the internationally renowned Presteigne Festival in Wales, is founder Artistic Director of Nova Music Opera and is also Artistic Director of Orchestra Nova.

As a guest conductor he has worked with the Bournemouth Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National and Ulster orchestras and has broadcast for BBC Radio 3; his ever-expanding discography includes some thirty commercial recordings for Dutton, Guild, Champs Hill, Lyrita, Naxos, SOMM and Toccata of works by British composers.

In his dual career as conductor and festival director, Vass maintains a strong interest in the performance and promotion of contemporary music. Over the last thirty years he has commissioned and premiered a variety of new works from composers including Martin Butler, Gabriel Jackson, Paweł Łukaszewski, David Matthews, John McCabe, Cecilia McDowall, Paul Patterson, Robert Saxton, Peter Sculthorpe, Huw Watkins and Hugh Wood.



For the operatic stage, Vass premiered Thomas Hyde's *That Man Stephen Ward* (Hampstead and Highgate Festival, 2008; Nova Music Opera revival, 2015) and for Nova Music Opera: Sally Beamish *Hagar in the Wilderness* (2013), Stephen McNeff *Prometheus Drown'd* (2014), Cecilia McDowall *Airborne* (2014) and Charlotte Bray *Entanglement* (2015). He has also conducted *Curlew River* (Nova Music Opera, 2013; Hampstead and Highgate Springfest, 2009) and *Savitri* (Nova Music, English Music Festival, 2010).

www.georgevass.co.uk

Nova Music Opera

A relatively young arts organisation, Nova Music Opera has already established itself as a successful company working with singers and instrumentalists of the highest calibre. Its focus being on artistic excellence and creative production, but always with music at its heart.

The brainchild of respected conductor and festival director, George Vass, and founding producer Alison Porter, Nova Music Opera presented its first independent fully-staged production at the 2010 English Music Festival – Gustav Holst's *Savitri*, performed together

with Frederick Delius's incidental music to *Hassan*.

Nova Music Opera celebrated the Britten centenary in 2013 with a national tour of *Curlew River* and a specially commissioned companion piece from Sally Beamish – *Hagar in the Wilderness*.

The company has since had great success, having commissioned and premiered chamber operas from Charlotte Bray *Entanglement* (2015), Cecilia McDowall *Airborne* (2014) and Stephen McNeff *Prometheus Drown'd* (2014) and revived Thomas Hyde's *That Man Stephen Ward* in 2015. The company has performed at St John's Smith Square, LSO St Luke's, the Cheltenham, Canterbury, Presteigne and St Andrew's Voices festivals, at the Barber Institute in Birmingham and for Music at Oxford.

www.novamusic.org.uk

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Libretto

Scene 1: Consultation

The first sound is the first pip of the Greenwich Time Signal (on tape). A counterpoint of news reports (phrases taken from an imagined BBC news bulletin of July 1963). Stage lights up to show WARD (Stephen Ward) in a white medical half-coat standing listening to the news. On the portable table by his side lies, largely – but largely invisible to the audience – the naked figure of his patient, BILL (Lord Astor). WARD switches off the wireless and attends to BILL.

WARD

That he, being a man
Knowingly assisted prostitutes in the plying of
their trade
– *Bill, I only wanted to help* –
And all the games they played
– *You know, Bill, being a man* –
And every penny that they made
– *In any way I can* –
He was paid
– *Man to man.*

Douglas? Is he well?

[no reaction from Bill]

Of course, he's fit
And fun.
Always so dapper,
And wild –
With one bound he was free, I –

[He stops – remembering his own predicament]

Seen him lately?

I saw Philip yesterday.
In their car.
The Phantom.
Alone. Himself. Driving himself...
We were alongside –
I – in my Bentley, too.
At those new lights by Chelsea Bridge.
I saw Philip yesterday.
In their car.
The Phantom.
Alone. Himself. Driving himself...
We were alongside –
I – in my Bentley, too.
At those new lights by Chelsea Bridge.

Visiting Asper's,
Possibly.
Eyes front.
He can't have seen me.

[still no reaction from Bill]

We were as close as –
Bill, as you and I –

Aha! You were at Asper's that day,
Weren't you, Bill ?
With friends –
Douglas,
And Chrissie...
And Tara the tiger.
And Frankie –
The little monk...ey of Eaton Square.
And me.
And our other friends –
smakeral of fun –
I am so lucky, Bill.

[silence]

Stephen you are cold and sober.
You are on the outside
I said
I need a friend
A girl.
I said.
But here
We're all friends here
We help one another
One mind in two bodies.

[silence]

Douglas called me a good egg.
He'll be calling me.
I'll get by.

No body [sic] else this morning, Bill.

No body [sic] but yours.
No more appointments
Till...
– No one but you, my friend...

[BILL slowly holds out his right hand, open and upwards... WARD clasps it, as if it has been extended in an impulsive gesture of friendship and sympathy... WARD leaves go of BILL's hand... but BILL's hand is still outstretched – still open! ... WARD realizes that BILL is asking for something – and he quickly understands what it is]

Ah. [WARD realizes]
Aha. [WARD is momentarily rueful]
Ah. [WARD reaches into his trouser pocket]
Ah... [WARD sighs as he places the keys to Spring Cottage in BILL's hand]
Thank you, Bill,
For Spring Cottage,

And all that...
– And all that it means... meant...
Still.
Still...

[Cabaret Song: a spotlight on WARD. A sudden change of mood]

"Little baby, it's weekend.
Let's do my other bare –
My country place –
Full of friends.

Little baby, you'll meet Bill:
Big fish – and smaller fry.
Just love them all. I
– Know you will.

Little baby, can you swim?
My darling Christini,
Your best bikini
Will suit... him.

Little baby, now we're here !
That's Bill Astor's place:
Such style, such air, such grace –
Such a dear!

Little baby, don't be poor.
Smell the honeysuckle –
pure moneysuckle –
Round my door.

Friday, Saturday, Sunday:
Fresh air, fast friends, fine wine –
And all this is mine.
Till Monday."

[BLACK OUT]

Scene 2: Conversation

Stage lights up to show WARD in Spring Cottage. He is sketching a beautiful young woman (CHRISIE) who is seated in front of him.

WARD

We often share a bed.
But that's all.

You're just this girl, say,
From somewhere. Off the bus, off the train.
But beautiful in the rain.
On your way, Chrissie,
Nowhere. Late in the afternoon.
You stayed there a while,
And I'm just driving... somewhere.
And I see you, I see you –
(And what I can be to you –)
And you smile, Chrissie...
– Here you are.

You stretch on my chair.
Your legs are... lovely-long:
So natural...
You are my perfect model.
I see what I can be for you,
Do for you, Chrissie...

What you can really be.
You can be perfect:
The perfect girl.
Let me, let me.

Stretch your soft white arms... like that...

[CHRISIE moves her arms]

Like that... No... Yes!

Curve your wonderful neck...
That's it.
Style.

Put your small hands here... each finger... here.
Poise.

Your lips open... eyes wide... hair free...
It's Johnny Profumo!

Move up to him now.
Ready. Wait for him:
His nod.
Go on. Now.
His smile.
Yes – and you smile.
His first word –
And you will know how to talk to him.

Call him John.
And afterwards... Johnny.
He's your man.
I promise.

[WARD sings in CHRISIE's voice (falsetto) while actress mouths the words in synchronization]

"What about Edgcombe?
He's a man. My man now.
I promised him.
He's crazy about me –
He says he likes me... a lot."

[WARD's in his own voice again]

I liked you, Chrissie,
With your wet hair.
In Oxford Street, that afternoon.
I saw you behind all that rain.

[In CHRISIE's voice, as before]

"I was lonely out there, Stephen."

"So was I."

"Nice flat you have here, Stephen."

"Keep still now, baby."

"Are you really an artist?"

[Is he sketching her or caressing her?]

"Close your lips now, baby."

"Don't forget the rest."

"I always start at the top."

"Well, don't stop there, Stephen."

[CHRISIE (actress) moves to kiss WARD. WARD turns away from CHRISIE to avoid kiss]

[pause]

I took off her clothes.
Dried her hair,
And kissed her forehead.
Like a benediction.

[LIGHTS FADE]

Scene 3: Congregation

Radio reports (on tape) announce the Cuban missile crisis. The scene is WARD's London flat. A wild party is taking place. Or, rather, WARD is trying his best to

make the party wild. WARD is the eager host.

WARD

Douglas! You've found her.
... and also a drink.
Darling, tell Douglas just what I told you...
That story...
About Sir Winston, you know...
A pundit... and Pandit... and little old me!

When I told the Old Man
That these hands were round Nehru –
(Osteo-professionally, of course –)
Round his arms and his shoulders
... and his little brown neck –

[cod Churchillian voice]

"Why didn't you strangle the bugger? Any gentleman would!"

[A slight loss of wind, accepting the irony in the last comment]

Sensational.
... but not circulatory!
Typically Winston!

[A new arrival at the party –]

Peter Rachman!
Mr. Rachman, please may I say -
My home is your home
(Or may be one day!)
You're welcome!

[WARD looks round the room to identify...]

And Linda. So lovely.

So slim and so beautiful.
Beautifullinda... Beautifullinda...
You were too young to be a... mother!
Come on in! Let me get you a drink!

[He looks around the room again at his guests]

And Topper... and Ronnie... and Binkie...
and... who is that, Boo? – Boo who?

[groan!] Halloo Boo!

And Luke... and Deborah... and Bob (hopefully Bing)
... and...

Ah... Now!
It's Bill!
Linda! It's Bill!

[WARD holds up the keys] Bill, I must thank you for
another weekend.

My old friend, my Bill... and Linda...
My friend's friend.
And friends of my friends of my friends.

Mr. Profumo – an honour, good sir!
At such a momentous –
And the news is so –
Chrissie! Chrissie!
It's Johnny! He's found us a moment on this terrible
day!

And my guest of honour?
H.R.H.?
If, if, if –
Will she knock at the door?
Do they do that?
Do they ever do that?

Or will the door fling itself open – just open...
*[He makes a magic wave – like a conjuror – almost
Tommy Cooper!] like that?*

“Your Highness!
Your ROYAL Highness!
Can I get you a gin?”

*[... he tries to draw H.R.H. to his party by making magical
hand movements...]*

She's coming...
She's coming...
She's coming...
[orgasmically] She's almost...

[not that word, instead, rather bathetically...] ... arrived!

If H.R.H. comes here tonight,
Then this could be Heaven!

*[WARD, perhaps now a little drunk and certainly very
pleased with his apparent success in holding this party,
sings a hymn of thanks]*

Our Father –
[to conductor] Music, maestro, please!

My father who is in Heaven –
Isn't Heaven like this?
Isn't it?
Friendship and laughter,
Here and hereafter;
Familiar faces,
Friends in high places...
Girls and Earls!
Isn't it?

Isn't this Heaven?

Isn't it?
Now the day is ending,
Thanks for my daily bread,
And the coke
And the smoke –
And all the drinks,
Forgive us our trespasses;
And hoping our high-jinks
Are not offending You
– Or anyone!
For ever
And ever –
'And I will party for ever and ever'

A – *[men?]*

[... then a new and significant guest arrives]

Ah... Comrade Ivanov! Drogaya Eugenia!

[Pause: the news reports are heard from the wireless...]

Can I talk to you, Genya?
I want to say something
Important and serious – listen!

Can I possibly help? I want to help!
I know I can...
There is a way I can help!

[WARD calls over to IVANOV]

Eugenia! *[bringing them together]* Johnny!
Mister Profumo, sir!
You know Captain Ivanov?

So ...
Shall we take the night air?
We can end this before things go too terribly far –

The door is opening...

*[PROFUMO and IVANOV approach to shake hands.
But... A gun shot is heard. All three men suddenly
stop. Then...]*

*A complete change of mood. All three men into a dance
routine, A Cold War Fantasy in which WARD is clearly
brokering a peace deal!*

Another gun shot.]

I think we can end this before things go too terribly far –

[WARD turns his head to the side, stunned.]

[BLACK OUT]

Scene 4: Consternation

WARD, *head emerging from his hands, is alone again.*

WARD
No. That was the beginning...
Three shots.
[Another gun shot is heard]
We must be correct.
After all, this may be history.

[WARD picks up a newspaper and reads...]

'Gunman bursts in! –'
Mister Edgecombe, come in!
The other Johnny.
(Chrissie had two...)
Too many.

*[quoting again from newspaper] '... Drug-crazed...
love-crazed...'*

Crazy for Chrissie.

Calling for Chrissie –

[imitating Edgcombe] “Chrissie! Come out here now!”

[quoting from the newspaper again] ‘Bursts into socialite’s party –

... Friends’ names... famous names...
Calling for Chrissie.’

And nice neighbours noticed the noise...
Whitehall one-two-one-two:
Are you the comforting Boys in Blue?

[WARD now plays the part of a policeman arriving on the scene]

[WARD as Policeman]

“And who exactly are you, Sir? ...
[writing it down] Johnny Edgcombe.”

‘Up at the window’ he says...
‘Likes her a lot’, he says...
‘Looks down on him’, he says...
She drove him to this, he says...

[imitating Edgcombe]
“Chrissie! She’s mine!”

[as Policeman again] “So, young lady, your name is Chrissie? ...
And how old might you be, Chrissie?
Alright Ward, party’s over.
I’ll have to take ALL their names...”

[Begins. Writing down.]

“Now, ‘Astor’, you say...
– The Earl of –

[He realises. Suddenly very ingratiating]

Oh! Yes, of course, my lord –
I quite understand.
Good night, my lord!”

The policeman said.

“And...?
‘Profumo’ ...
‘The Right Honourable’...
[Again, he realises]
Ah! No need to bother you with this.
Cheerio!

“Don’t I know you, young lady ?
Mandy... and Linda... and Vicky...
Now I do know you...
Rather a lot of these girls about...
“Your crowd has melted.
Doctor Stephen Ward?
It is Doctor Stephen Ward, isn’t it?”

[as himself now]
Yes. That is my name. Yes.

“Oh – and just one more thing...”

... the policeman said.

“A Minister? In here?”

And a Russian? From Russia?”

And then he was cautioning Chrissie.

[WARD reads out once more from the newspapers]

‘The Model and the Russian Spy – New Revelations...’
‘Cabinet Minister and Call Girl...’
New pictures.
‘Letters Found in Honeytrap... ‘Darling... Love, J...’

[WARD notices something particular in the newspaper]

‘He provided popsies for the rich...’
‘He?’
Me.

“Your crowd has melted, Doctor Stephen Ward”, the Policeman said. “Perhaps you would like to come to the station with us, Dr Ward?”

[Pause. Then a sudden change of mood into a cabaret song]

I’m expecting the telephone to ring.
I know it will.
Peter... Douglas... Aspers...
Or Bing...
Or, probably, Bill.
Any time now, he will.

He’ll say ‘This is too terrible, Stephen,
But really there’s nothing to fear.
You can always rely on the powers that be.
Or even

A word in the judge’s ear.’
I’m waiting here.

He’d want to put an arm around my shoulder:
There’s a bill and someone must pay...
As for Chrissie, ‘Ah Chrissie!’ they can’t
prove you controlled her,
What are you going to say?

So I’m expecting the telephone to ring.

Of course it will!
Peter... Douglas... Aspers...
Or Bing...
But definitely Bill.
Any time now, he will.

But I don’t think I have to sing any more.
We’re a club,
We dine, we drink, we agree about things;
Bill... He will...
won’t he?

[LIGHTS FADE]

Scene 5: Condemnation

WARD is standing in front of a full-length mirror. He is dressing – preparing for his trial.

WARD

Not guilty, my... friends!
It’s not true!
There was no money,
(no money really...)
No money on the pillow...
In the morning... on the bed...
[vehemently] It wasn’t trade.
I wasn’t... trade.

My friends know that.
The girls know that.
They’ll testify.
All I did
Were favours for my friends:

A girl... a name... a number...
A little stuff... like that...
It’s what you do –
You do! –

Friends know that.
They always said.
They'll testify.

And if not...
And if they disappear...
If I don't hear...
[looks at the telephone] If I don't hear...
Then I will hear –
I can still hear –
Over the years...
Something to save my –
[almost audibly, he does not say ' – skin']

[An interlude in which WARD keeps lifting the telephone receiver to check his line is operational. He becomes an increasing jumble of nervous twitches and shaking...]

WARD
[seemingly lost in his own thoughts of his past]

I was a boy – among friends – all of us
Dormitory boys.
Yes, [wryly, at his repetition] again...
Now. Then.
And there was a prank –
You know... a rumpus...
Out late... cigarettes...
Girls in the village...
Discovery...
And then an endless fuss.

I was in there... somewhere.
Oh, it was one of us... two, three of us.
But not me!
No... it's true:
Not guilty!

[In voice of a Judge / Policeman / Headmaster]
"We must end this!"

The judgement came.

"We must," we said.

The joke was over.

So... one for all
And all for one, you know.
We always do the honourable thing.

"You do your stuff", I said.
"You do", they said.
So...
"It was me," I said. "It was me, sir"
"I. Alone."
Stephen.
I own up.
I take the fall.
One for all.
And all my friends...
Behind me.
And the Headmaster gave me an almighty thrashing.

"You do your stuff", I said.
"You do" they said.

[LIGHTS DARK]

Scene 6: Consummation
WARD is writing his suicide note. By his side a bottle of vodka and, in a brown bottle, the Nembutal pills.

WARD
[writes] "Thank you for everything...
I hope I haven't let people down
Too much.

Day after day in the courts...
On the streets...
It's a wish not to let them –
I'd rather get myself...

Distribute my things.
You can have the car –
But it needs a little oil...

[WARD looks up. He seems lost in his own memories]

"Little baby, it's weekend let's ..."

[In Policeman's voice] "Alright Ward, party's over"

"My friend's friends, and friends of my friends of my friends ..."

[In Chrissie's voice] "Are you really an artist, Stephen?"

"I in my Bentley, too ..."

"Douglas called me a good egg!"

[pause]

I was always afraid of this.
The moment they threw me to the dogs.

[WARD now turns to the audience directly for his last song – his swansong – a lyrical farewell to the life that once he lead, or thought he lead.]

The wide open road;
a summer's afternoon:
the girl so sparkling;
and the air so clean.
Smiling... and laughing...
and soon... soon...

You know what I mean.

To the dunes... you know...
a dip in the sea –
'Soft is the sand, my dear;
creamy the waves...'
And, well, there's a thermos of vodka, and love before tea –

Then... [WARD is momentarily mute]
the light fades...

But – [Forcing himself to take heart again and continue his idyll ...]

... the evening's before us,
quiet and long.
I open a window;
I turn down a light –
A few more martinis, [WARD breaks down first laughing at the stupidity of it all, and then into sobs. Gradually recovers...]
a familiar song –
And [another mute moment...]
welcome the night!

[WARD returns to his letter. He signs it and seals it in an envelope. He props it up on one of the tumblers at his hand.

WARD stands up and pours himself a full tumbler of vodka, putting the glass down afterwards. He picks up a brown pill bottle and shakes the contents – all the pills – into his left hand. He throws the pills into his mouth and swallows them with a drink from his glass. Then, he refills his glass – to the brim. Holding his glass, he turns to his right to leave the stage ...

Suddenly, he stops.

He turns and looks out into the audience, as if some friends are arriving (for another party?) ...]

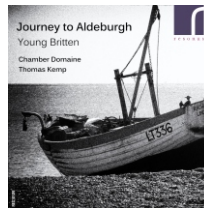
WARD

Bill!
Binkie!
Boo!!

[When he has uttered the last word – with some irony – he lifts his glass of vodka to his lips... and, without stopping for breath, drinks it all down to the last drop.]

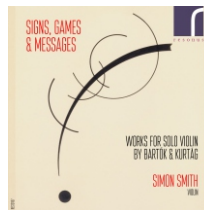
END OF OPERA

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Cover image: Dr. Stephen Ward on his way to trial at the Old Bailey, London, July 22, 1963.
(Courtesy: CSU Archives / Everett Collection)

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