



Music by Andy Price

Book and lyrics by Gary Wilmot

London, circa 1948. Britain is emerging from the darkness of war. The friends we turned to in our hour of need are now looking to us for a fresh start. There is hope of a new beginning, but with change comes uncertainty.

A fourteen year-old white girl hurries from house to house, searching for something. Bundled in her arms is her mixed race baby son, hours old. The girl has been told she cannot keep him.

#### A THOUSAND DOORS

She desperately searches for the future she knows she could never give him. Finally, through a window she sees the perfect family and, through tears, leaves her son on their doorstep. She hopes to have found all the love he will ever need and the future he deserves behind this one of a thousand doors.

In reality, the baby (Robbie) grows up in the painful world of children's homes, foster parents and social workers until, at the age of nine, he arrives at the door of Gwen and Vernon Richardson. The Richardsons, like so many Caribbeans, were asked to come to Britain to help put their beloved 'mother country' back on its feet after the war. However, when they arrived, aboard the Empire Windrush the reception they received was "colder than the damned climate". Despite this, Robbie soon recognises that the resilient and loving Richardsons and their daughter Chrissy is the family he has longed for. With the help and encouragement of Vernon, who runs a local boxing club, Robbie grows up to be a talented young boxer.

#### CROWD

Sandra Tully and her friend Joan, both sixteen but not so sweet, have had enough of exams, school and their parents' expectations and vow to run away in search of a more exciting life.

#### FRED ASTAIRE

Robbie's first professional fight ends badly. His after-the-bell punch lands his opponent Billy Beckett in hospital. In an attempt to take Robbie's mind off the situation, Vernon encourages him to go to a party. There, Robbie meets Sandra and before the evening is over the two have their first sexual experience together. But Sandra is the daughter of a high-ranking police officer (Geoff Tully), so Robbie is left crestfallen when she tells him that a black boyfriend is the last things she needs.

Billy Beckett's condition deteriorates. He is now in a coma. Robbie decides that he no longer wants to be a boxer and vows to visit Billy every day until he wakes up. Vernon knows that Robbie possesses an extraordinary boxing talent and believes that he could "go all the way".

#### Giant

Nine months later, midwife Chrissy Richardson, together with trainee midwife Carmen Jeffries, attend the birth of a baby. Carmen recognises the expectant mother as the girl she saw dragging a boy into a bedroom at the party. The birth goes horribly wrong. The baby boy survives but his mother, Sandra Tully dies. A drunk

Geoff Tully screams at Chrissy to get out and take the “little black bastard” with her. At the hospital, Billy Beckett finally dies. Both mothers grieve for their children.

#### THERE ARE NO WORDS

Following the death of Billy, the devastated Robbie runs along the embankment of the River Thames. Unbeknownst to him on Lambeth Bridge sits a sad and troubled Carmen Jeffries.

#### RIVER

Robbie spots Carmen on the parapet of Lambeth Bridge. He is convinced that she is about to jump, so he intervenes. They soon discover that they both have problems and no one to talk to. Robbie suggests that they remain nameless and completely open up to each other and then go their separate ways. They agree to do just that but, before they can, her problem arrives in the shape of her jealous and abusive boyfriend Tony. He punches Robbie and drags Carmen off in his car. Carmen asks Chrissy to help her get out of her toxic relationship with Tony. Chrissy takes Carmen to the Richardsons for sanctuary.

#### DEVIL

Returning home from his early morning run, Robbie meets Carmen again. They immediately recognise each other from Lambeth Bridge. It's not too long before Carmen realises that Robbie is the boy she saw with Sandra Tully at the party. Chrissy, Robbie and Carmen put the pieces together to realise that Sandra's baby must be Robbie's son.

Carmen and Robbie visit Sandra's parents. Bigoted Geoff Tully refuses to hand over the baby to Robbie and tells them that it will be put up for adoption. Tully fears that giving the baby to Robbie would result in him coming around for frequent handouts. Geoff Tully's wife Gwen comforts the newborn.

#### SLEEP SAFELY

Robbie is desperate. He would do anything to stop a child experiencing the same upbringing he had, especially when it's his own son.

Geoff Tully is told that he has been overlooked for the promotion he was expecting. His superiors are not happy with him now having a black family member. This, together with losing his beloved daughter, sends him over the edge. He hits the bottle hard and in a fit of pique attempts to suffocate the baby with a pillow, but he can't bring himself to do it.

The relationship between Robbie and Carmen grows. He takes her to the house where he was left as a baby and tells her that he understands why his birth mother did what she did and how he tries to make her proud every day, just in case she is watching him.

From his car, Tony sees Robbie and Carmen return home after a night at the cinema. Tony rings the door bell. As the door opens, Tony lunges forward and thrusts a knife into Robbie's chest. But it's not Robbie. It's Vernon, who is mortally wounded. Tony is arrested and charged with murder.

Hundreds of people line the streets for Vernon's funeral.

#### HERO

Remorseful, Geoff Tully now supports Robbie to win custody of his child.

The Richardson's doorbell rings. Beyond the glass, Robbie has a feeling who it is that has called.