

Phar Lap's Last Lap

Dave Davis – An American

Beatrice (Bea) Davis Harry Telford – Phar Lap's trainer

Tom Woodcock – Strapper

Elvira Telford (Vi) – Harry's wife

Cappy Gerald Telford (13 -16) Vi and Harry's son

Emma Cunningham – Tom's girlfriend

Interviewer/voiceover male:

Jim Pike – jockey – voiceover

Band singer – jazz & cabaret-style

Opening Music

1928 Act 1Scene 1

Emma and Tommy out

under a tree Tommy was thoughtful enough to throw a horse blanket down for them to sit on. Emma brings a lunch box and puts it in front of Tommy looking very pleased with herself. Tommy reciprocates by catching her hands and placing a much smaller box in her hand closing the other over it and smiles... Emma looks startled then... surprised.. then excited... gasping.....

Tommy: well? open it Em-

Emma: What is it Tommy.... *OH MY GOD...* is it a ring?!

Tommy: It's a friendship ring

Emma, we can't go getting' any silly ideas now can we?... *not just yet anyway.*

Emma: Ok I won't *pause...* oh remember that girl

you were going out with last year- that plain Jane, my friend, remember when you took us both down to the stables?

Tommy:

Pause, eyes gleaming while he looks intently at Emma

Well yeah but she's got nothing on you though Em

Emma: I remember when I met you, you were
training that flighty horse and you let Jane take the lead rope then the horse
took off like a rocket when she let go and you had to run off after it!

Laughs

Tommy: Yeah, but you wouldn't do a silly thing like that now would ya?
He says teasingly with a dig in her ribs, Emma giggles

Emma: well anyway, that's...oh it doesn't matter
*Coyly Emma replies with eyes slightly lowered
turning her head away, looking over her shoulder away from Tommy*

Tommy: What Em?
*Tenderly Tommy brings her
head gently back around to look into her eyes*

Emma: I think that's when I fell in love with you.
When you came back with the horse, all in a sweat and it was just the way the
sun was on your hair and skin, I noticed your broad chest and your eyes were
so blue... your gentle voice....

Voice trails off, she gives a beautiful smile, looks away again coyly

Tommy: Oh yeah?

Emma:
Looks directly back into Tommys' eyes and smiles brightly
Yeah you were the best looking boy I'd ever seen

Tommy:
Looks down tentatively as if hoping for reassurance
Gosh Em, I'm not *that* good looking – really

Emma:
Emma replies encouragingly
Mum and dad are just going to *love you* when they meet you **Tommy:** Yeah
right...

Shifts in his seat and gets alittle awkward again
we might wanna slow down on that one Em...

Emma:
Emma looks at Tommy with a puzzled expression
but why, when I know you're the one for me Tommy?

Tommy: Ok it's good you know what you want
Em, you *are* one fine filly...

Emma:
She leans over and gives him a tender kiss
oh Tommy....

Tommy:

Tommy feeling alittle awkward then Emma takes his hand and he brings her into a loving embrace

Emma listen, Harry my boss, is looking at new horses *and* we don't know how these yearlings will turn out Emma

Slight hesitation, change of tone to of confidence

they need a lot time put into them, lots of work you know. I guess what I am trying to tell you is that if I'm busy around the stables, well, what I am trying to tell you is, I'll still be here for you Em... coz I love you I guess is what I'm trying to say...

He gets up, pulls her up into his arms, they embrace, he kisses her and holidng hands,

*talking quietly they walk off.... Stage left
(End of scene one)*

Scene 2: Act 1

Harry, Vi, Cappy and Dave

Harry:

(Harry, Vi and Cappy enter upstage right)

Vi and Cappy are at home sitting around the table enjoying a cup of tea and dampers

Vi: Well ...

Harry: Well, what do ya say Elvira?

Vi: He's pretty skinny, his coat is in really bad condition it looks like he's got rain scald or somethin' his ribs are stickin' out so bad, probably riddled with parasites and he is covered in warts!... that's what I think

Harry:

***IMMEDIATELY~** Harry snaps at Vi in a tone that is dominating and puts Vi in her place with a highly defensive tone*

Well ya don't buy bloody racehorses just to look at the damn things~!!

after a short pause changes his tone and in a softer tone continues

He just lost weight on the ship over that's all, give him a chance woman!

Sighs exasperated leans back in his chair and picks up the newspaper shaking into order, picks up his drink, then throws a glance at Cappy...

What do you think of the horsey, Cappy?

Do ya think he'd beat your little wooden horse here?

Cappy:

Immediately retorts while playing with his yo yo:

No way!

Harry:

Snorts a chuckle looking up into the top right of his paper raising an eyebrow as something caught his attention

What?!

Cappy well he's just looks funny Dad!

Harry:

Shoots a sideways glance back at Cappy

Yeah well, you were a bit funny looking too when you were born.

Cappy:

Looks to his mum for reassurance and in a defensive tone

No I wasn't, was I Mum?

Vi: Harry stop teasing the boy!

Harry:

Continues to tease winding Cappy up and annoying Vi

I swear, spots on you too just like that rocking horse of yours – wasn't much to you either, just like a runt you was!

Vi: Harry! Leave the boy alone, you're always upsettin' him

Harry:

Picks up the newspaper and starts scanning it for something interesting purposefully dismissing Vi's pleas

HUMBUG! that boy of yours a bloody sissy it's your fault your too soft on him...

Cuts his sentence short when he hears the gate, looks up from his paper and out the window to see Dave coming through the front gate

Here's Mr Davis now!

Harry drops his paper gets up from the table and goes to open the front door to greet Dave.

Vi and Cappy follow and follow Harry out of the house onto the porch.

Dave, wearing a sports jacket and beige linen trousers carefully walks to the porch dodging horse poo.

Dave:

Throws up his arm then lets it to fall into a hearty handshake

• Harry!

Looks square into Harry's eyes

smiles purposefully then while shaking turns his head briefly to Vi,

Mrs Telford. What have got for me this time, I hope better than the last horse!

...chuckles under his breath then breaks into a hearty smile and looks back to check Harry's face. His left hand pats Harry's shoulder before relaxing back hands on his hips

Harry: Funnily enough, I was just telling Vi here that he'll fill out by next season.

Dave:

Creasing his forehead in concern head bowed and tosses his glance to fix on Harry for confirmation

I don't know about horses, but he looks a little ill, are you sure he's settling in ok?

Harry: Sure he will Mr Davis, he'll come right, he is just come in off the boat

Dave: I just hope we're not laughed out of Flemington, that's all.

Vi:

Vi caught drift of Daves concern while Cappy plays with his ball she enters the conversation to support her husband then quietly but confidently attempts to lift the mood

Harry said you love horse racing, Mr Davis. And this is your first racehorse. How exciting!

Dave: Hopefully not my last, Mrs Telford, hopefully not my last.

Harry looks on edge

Vi: Harry studied bloodlines for years it's his passion.

Harry: Vi – take Cappy off to kick his ball around or somethin'

Vi: Come on, Caps

they walk upstage right Vi has a little game with Cappy in the background while the two men talk

Dave: Harry, he looks like a donkey. Sell him for the best price you can get and we'll move on.

Harry:

Glancing back at Vi – lowering his

voice, talking slowly, with a business tone full of quiet determination

I am this sure about the horse, Mr Davis, I'll lease him off you. I can't afford to buy him; I would if I could. ... Give me three years, no training fees or feed, no expenses. I'll give you 1/3 of his winnings.

Dave: Hang on, Harry – slow down, we're talking about his winnings.. and tha is only IF HE WINS!

Harry: This colt is going to be a champion Mr Davis, he has Carbine – a great New Zealand stallion – on both sides of his bloodline, just give me a lease for three years and you *won't* be disappointed.

Dave: Carbine, a great New Zealand stallion you say...Never heard of him!

Dave: Well, *(laughs)* since he's got it on both sides, why don't we call him Double Barrel Carbine??

Harry: Well, that name is way too long! But I like two names for a racehorse. The last seven horses of the Melbourne Cup had two-part names: Night March, , Spear Felt, Wind Bag, I was thinking Phar Lap *(pause)* it means lightning in Thai

Dave: Lightning? The Melbourne Cup? Harry! He hasn't even RACED!

Harry: Just you wait! Phar Lap will be a winner! I have a gut feeling about this.

(fist to stomach)

Dave: I like you Harry, I really do. You have a nice family here but I do have a reputation to keep, you understand ?

Harry: Yes, Mr Davis.

Dave: ... Just call me Dave. I believe in giving people a shot.

Harry: Thank you, Mr Davis, ah.. 'Dave'

Dave: Oh, don't thank me. Thank Bea. She's the one that loves horses – second marriage.

Harry: Right.

Dave: Well, it's no use having a few Mc Kinleys unless you know how to enjoy them right Harry?

Harry: .. A right you are Dave.. A Mc Kinley you say?

Dave: A Mc Kinley! It's what we Yanks call a 500 dollar note Harry. (*a chuckle*)

I just hope I don't keep wasting good money after bad. Phar Lad might be my first **and last** racehorse!

Harry: That's Phar Lap Mr Davis; and you have my word, you won't be disappointed.

Dave: All right, Harry. Just three years. That is it – I hope I don't regret this, but Phar Lap it is!

Dave shakes Harry's hand and leaves. Harry rejoins his family.

Cappy: Does he even like the horse Dad?

Harry: What? Oh, sure he does. He thinks it's '*real swell*' (*Harry imitates Daves American accent*)

Cappy: Then why did I hear him saying he looks like a donkey!

Harry: No! Did he say that?

Cappy: Yeah, I just heard him.

Vi: *to Cappy* Honey that's enough with the questions, your father is trying hard enough.

(Vi sounds concerned)

-He did pay for the horse, didn't he, Harry? You said he would pay for the horse-

Harry: He will.

Vi: *(Vis' concern grows)*

Harry? Is there something you are not telling me?

Harry:

(tries to reassure Vi)

Well, I am going to train the horse for nothin' an' hope he settles in and wins a few races, that's all...

Vi: Well, how long will that take?

Harry: A good couple of years.

Vi: A good couple of years!!!

Harry: Vi, don't rush me. Good things take time.

Vi: *has now worked herself up and is very Anxious!*

but it is such a risk, I mean what if he brakes a leg, then what'll we do? He'll need to be put down.. and what'll we do for money.. and....

Harry:

Harry cuts her off while Putting a comforting arm around Vi in a moment of affection

Well that's right darling- but lets not think of the worst aye love?

End of Scene 2 Act 1. The couple walk off at a leisurely pace with Harrys' arm still around Vi

Exit downstage left

Scene 3 Act 1

Bea and Dave

Bea is at home filing her nails and looking through a fashion magazine waiting for her husband to come home from work.

Dave: Now where's my sweet pea, Bea?

Bea: *in a very 'dishy' tone*

Oh Darling you're home

Wanders over to the bar to mix a drink while smiling and expecting a kiss

Bea has his drink ready and as soon as he gives her a kiss she gives him his drink (as a reward)

He takes it and wanders over to his favourite chair

Bea:

Lingers whilst mixing herself a long drink with all the extra time on her hands Bea is starting a little drinking habit it seems

Well darling, how did it all go?

Dave: To be honest, he looks like a bag of bones but Harry says he's got a gut feeling about this horse and seems to think he has potential on account of the fact he has Champion bloodlines.

Bea: Oh now-now, you didn't pretend to know anything about horses now did you? . You didn't, did you!

Laughs at Dave tauntingly

REALLY...!. You wouldn't know it's head from it's tail, surely~

Bea hesitates realizing she is out of line so walks over to work her charms

You did get a white horse, didn't you? I told you last week I wanted a white horse Darling, I don't like the brown ones as much, they're just not as pretty.

Dave: Bea, honey, they are all brown. This one has some red in his coat.

Bea: Red? Oh well.

(pause) walks back to her chair and with a suspicious tone demands to know

and **who** is this man you bought him from? Has he had any successes before?
Whats his 'TRACK RECORD'

(scoffs mockingly) Does he have any other clients? Or are we the only ones?!

Dave: Well, *pause* Harry is a nice guy. He has just been a bit down on his luck of late. We could really turn things around for him.

Bea: Well, how much was the horse?

Dave: 160 guineas.

Bea: *sarcastically*

oh well, we may as well kiss those guineas goodbye!

Dave: Just give them a chance, Bea. Harrys' not chargin' us for the horse's feed, and so on.. training lodging an' all, upkeep

Bea:

maintains a tone of sarcasm

Well, don't you think that's abit odd Darling?

Dave: Well, let us just say the man is a little desperate and he swears this horse will be a winner

Bea: The horse is red you say? I wonder if I should wear my red dress when we are in the winner's circle?

Dave:

Laughs and starts casting an eye over his delightful Bea watching her twirling, his voice changes tone as his desire for her ignites

One step at a time, Bea. He's just settling in. One step at a time!

Bea: Oh, it is exciting though lets go and see the horse tomorrow!

Dave: Well, we might just do that

Bea:

squeals joyfully and in a girlish tone exclaims

Oh Dave..... Just think, I will be the only one in my family with a real racehorse.

Dave: *we see the spark between Dave and Bea and a different side of Dave shines through, we see how Bea inspires and excites him*

Well now my little turtle dove you just lurrve to Razz me up now don't ya?

Say! Whataya say we head on up stairs and you can put on that pretty red dress or yours

Catches her and cuddles, kisses Bea on the neck Dave puts on his sexiest voice and his accent deepens knowing Bea gets turned on by that..

Whataya say now sweet-pea? Huh??

Bea giggles and slaps him playfully then he sweeps her up in his arms and carries her off

*Exit upstage right,
End of Scene 3 Act 1*

Act 2 Scene 1

Emma and Tommy

*Soundtrack – click-clop and neigh a fake horse is wheeled out.
(centre stage)*

Tommy

(enter upstage left)

Tommy is busy with buckets and mixing feed at stables when his girlfriend Emma arrives to visit.

Emma: *(enters downstage right)*

Hi, Tommy!

Tommy: By Jingo Em – *pause* – You look a treat, a real treat!

Emma: Gee thanks Tommy – *She shows off her dress* – I bought this today at Myers; there was a sale on I went with Mum

Tommy:

attention is lost immediately after his first few words and falls back to the horse completely immersed in what he is doing

Oh, sorry Em – *pause* – I mean, Bobby, he's just getting into the knack of winning. I've really had to work on his confidence; he beat Dolly today by a whole length in track work. Who knows how he'll feel tomorrow! He's a very moody horse.

Emma: Bobby, why don't you have a nickname for me?

Tommy: Yeah, I do.

Bobby bobs his head

see ... like he's talking to you! There's a good boy. Well, what have you been up to Emma?

Emma:

Getting Huffy

I just told you; you weren't listening. Well, I spent the day with Mum shopping.

Tommy: oh sorry Em, I'm just abit busy that's all

Emma:

Is insistent and somewhat impatient wanting attention

That we have been going out for a while, since I was 16 that was ages ago, now I'm over 20 and you know married your boss married Elvira at 19!!!

Tommy: Oh yeah, I forget you two are friends from dressmaking class.

Emma: Sewing class, well, I just wanted to tell you –

Tommy:

Tommy mixes up Phar Lap's feed –

Hang on Em. He's got to have molasses mixed into his feed or he won't eat it
Well, what's that you were thinking about?

Emma: I was just hoping you would ...

Tommy: What?

Emma: Tommy, when you were little did you want to be someone and go somewhere I mean have goals?

Tommy: No, not really! I always knew I wanted to work with horses and go out with pretty girl

Emma: That's all? Like I have the dream of opening a dress shop – remember when I told you that.

Tommy: Righto –

Emma: Don't you want to get married, Tommy?

Tommy:

Change of tone, Tommy now serious and addresses Emma directly

Now? I told you, Em. If Phar Lap wins the Melbourne Cup, we are getting hitched. I'm sorry I can't think about anything else till then. I'm a one-track mind kinda guy (racetrack)

Little laugh at his own joke

Emma:

Annoyed and even more huffy

Some people would say you love that wretched horse more than me!

She huffs off

Tommy: *Emma!*

pauses for a minute But goes back to lovingly grooming Phar Lap then says to the horse

Women, hey? You're lucky you're a gelding, mate!

Emma: What? Tommy, were you just talking to someone?

Tommy:

Replies absent mindedly

... um, no not really...

Emma: Oh, now you talk to the horse more than you talk to me ...
Wonderful!

Tommy: Don't be like that, Em.

Emma: Daddy was right about you being abit dim. I'm going!

Tommy: Yeah, OK. 'Bye, Em.

Emma: *makes an exclamation and stropps off.*

oooooh!

(Exit downstage right)

End of Scene 1

Scene Act2, Scene 2

Emma, Vi, Cappy and Harry

Enter upstage right

Both women come in from the back yard to have a cup of tea Cappy is kicking his soccer ball out the back

Vi: Oh.. I don't know, Emma it seems all Harry can talk about is bloodlines and breeding. Half the time I don't even know what he's talking about. I just let him go on

She pours Emma a cup of tea and while she pours carefully holding the lid on the pot asks in a level voice

Have you ever heard of Carbine?

Emma: No, Vi. I don't much follow horse talk, just between you and me it bores me to death. Tommy will not talk of anything else either.

Cappy:

Cappy comes into the house and bursts out

Mum have you seen my marbles??? My feet hurt!!!

Vi:

You left them lying around so I put them over here out of the way
Right, we'll buy you a new pair of shoes next week. I haven't forgotten darling.

Say hello to Miss Cunningham

Cappy: Hello

Emma: Hello, Cappy! How's school?

Cappy: It's OK

Vi: Just OK?

Cappy: I got the cane today for forgetting my sums

Vi: *cuts in..*

I didn't hear that! and make sure your father doesn't catch wind of it either!

Cappy shrugs standing still looking down at his marbles for a moment

Emma: Well, teacher knows best hey?

Cappy: *Cappy runs off*

Emma: *after a pause Emma enquires*

why did you call him Cappy?

Vi: It's actually Gerald but Harry started calling him Captain and Cappy just stuck!

pause

Hells Bells! where were we? Oh yes, Carbine.

Immediately and confidently goes on

That's the horse's grand sire; apparently Phar Lap has Carbine on both sides of his bloodline, which is a good thing.

Emma:

makes an 'inhouse' joke with Vi

Hells Bells alright!

Pauses with a puzzled look on her face

Isn't that inbred?! if you have the same great-grandfather on both sides~!!

The two women have a quiet laugh together Emma finishes her cup of tea

Emma: Vi, I'm sooo worried...

Vi:

Reaches over to the young Emma places a hand on hers and in a concerned voice asks...

What is it Dear? You can tell me Em what is it?

Emma is quite upset now

Please don't tell anyone Vi

But Tommy is so **obsessed** with this horse!!

Emma is getting quite worked up now

if the horse doesn't win the Melbourne Cup, I can forget about the wedding! Everything's riding on it!! and I've tried to talk to Tommy... but he can't... he just....

She pauses then bursts out..

He sleeps with the horse Vi! I've caught him in the stable sleeping with Phar Lap!!!

Emma starts crying

Vi:

in a motherly way goes around to sit next to Emma and puts her arms around her and takes a hanky out of her apron pocket and puts it into Emmas hand

Oh dear Emma!! Dear dear Emma... there, there...there there

After a moment Emma calms down Vi continues in a quiet tone

don't you worry, thanks to Harry being down on his horse luck! I can't even afford to Cappy shoes!

I know he's doing his best but I can't talk to Harry either at the moment. Last night I found him at 3:00 am at the kitchen table pouring over his pedigree charts

Emma: But Harry bought Phar Lap, didn't he?

Vi: Harry is leasing the horse off some rich American businessman.
All the while we don't even have 2 shillings to rub together!

Emma: *looking puzzled*

but I thought you were doing alright, I mean, your fine china for a start!

Vi: *gives a little chuckle*

In my family for years. Cappy's clothes are hand-me-downs

But if Phar Lap doesn't get any wins, we're in big trouble. Some of my friends can't even afford to pay off their houses. They have to sell and we will be next...

Emma:

I don't know why men are so obsessed with winning. I feel like telling Tommy to stop strapping and get a real job. I hear they are hiring for the tramways. I feel like going and signing him up.

Vi: well we're both better off not getting in the way of their horses

Emma:

Feeling better now the tone changes and Emma perks up

...well....*pause*...when we get married, we'll have children and I can raise them near you in Moonee Ponds. It's always been my dream.

Vi: *in a steady reassuring tone Vi continues*

Oh, that's great, Em, we can't give up hope, when Phar Lap wins *all our troubles will be over*

Harry enters

Harry: and what have you two girls been gas bagging about?

Vi: Oh just telling Emma how well you are doing with Phar Lap.

Harry: *Toooo Right!*

He's a trainers' dream come true! That Phar Lap is the most perfectly bred animal I've ever come across Vi thinks I am mad. Did she tell you that?!

Shaking a finger and looking sternly

Ah well, you'll see...I'm onto a winner with this one. I was afraid someone else would snap him up...

gloating

but I've got him aye?! and I reckon you're backing a winner too young Emma with that Tommy of yours aye?

Vi: Well, I'll dish up soon if you wanna call Cappy in and wash up for tea

Harry: Righto Love

Emma: See you at the cup, Mr. Telford.

Harry: Right you are young Emma, right you are

Harry exits upstage right and the women talking in low tones get up and Vi sees Emma out the front door mid stage left
(End of Scene 2)

Scene 3

1930 Melbourne Cup Race

Harry, Vi, Cappy, Bea, Dave and Tommy

Voiceover: *Welcome, Ladies and Gentlemen, to the nineteen hundred and thirty Melbourne Cup. A fine day at Flemington and great thoroughbreds racing today include the crowd favourite: the people's horse, Phar Lap! Yes, Phar Lap, with his wonderful red coat and large build at 17 hands high!*

Crowd cheers Phar Lap! Phar Lap!

Voiceover: Where is Phar Lap? The red terror is over 20 minutes late!

– Crowd grows restless waiting –

Voiceover: Here is the champ now. Look at him! He looks like he has already won it. Would you please settle down, please, people, so the race can get underway!

– The crowd quiets –

Tommy and Harry at the mounting yard.

Harry is taking a moment to relax unwinding with a quiet scotch to celebrate, reflecting on Phar Laps win, he takes out a cigar, clips and lights it, he drifts away on the smoke for a moment when Tommy comes bursting in

Tommy: We won!!

pause **Boss?**

Harry:

Harry is far away in thought and after a few seconds, Harry turns round slowly and looking past Tommy is still lost in his thoughts...it takes him a moment to respond

Bloody Oath we did Tommy! I knew all along this horse was special but no one bloody well believed me did they!

Drops his head for a second looking tired, after a pause, shakes his head once or twice.. scoffs...

They'll all be eating their words now after today won't they my boy?

Nods his head whilst quietly gloating looks over to Tommy

Won't they aye?... Too right!

Tommy: They do now, Boss! ... They do now!

I'll go and pick up the sash aye boss?

Harry:

Falling back into his daydream drawing on his cigar

Go, Tommy. Go pick it up with Davis ... and Tommy – marry that Sheila of yours, you bastard, and get the hell out of this horse racing business.

Tommy: But it's my life Boss, it's all I've got!

Harry: It's not worth it in the end Tommy, you put you bust your guts and ya don't get much back, just a few bob...and only if ya lucky..

Tommy: Phar Lap will win again Boss.

Harry: Oh, and ah, one more thing... let me know if Davis gives you a few bob extra as well aye Tommy?

Tommy: right you are Boss.

Harry: There ya go mate,

Stuffs a fist full of paper notes into Tommys shirt pocket

Now go and take that girl of yours somewhere nice for tea.

Tommy: What like a place to eat and get some tucker?

Harry: No, mate like a restaurant down town.

Tommy: you mean a fancy one Boss?

Harry: Yes mate, something like that.

Tommy: Righto then, fancy it is.

Tommy turns to leave when out of the blue Harry has a sentimental turn

Harry:

Oi! Tommy... come here a minute son, pull up a pew. Come an' have a drink with me boy.

Splashes a bit of scotch into an empty glass then raises his glass waiting for Tommy to meet his

Ere's to a job well done!

Clinks glasses

Harry:

Harry studies the quiet Tommy while he downs another scotch, whacks his tumbler on the table and looks deeply at Tommy...

What's eating at ya son?, you're a bit of a wet blanket there Tommy, it was a job well done, we worked hard for this, you should be jumpin' for joy!

Tommy:

His awkward self, shifts in his chair and lowers his head, looking into his drink and after a moment.. swigs down the last drop after a moment Harry leans over without a word and tops up his glass... a moment passes.... Tommy searches his thoughts..

It's Emma.....

Harry: Bah humbug! Stick with horses boy, they're less trouble...

Scoffs Come on, out with it then... aye, ain't that Sheila of yours the Bees Knees?

Tommy: Yes Harry, it's just I don't know what to do...?

Harry: Well it ain't like tetherin' a mare for mounting don't go gettin' any wild ideas there cowboy!

Laughs out loud at his own joke while Tommy protests lamely

By gees Boss, that's abit below the belt!..

Tommy struggles to compose himself

Caw blimey... I aint got nuthin' but the .. but the..

Harry belly-laughing all the harder watching Tommy reeling from his 'below the belt joke' Tommy stammers trying to get the words out, still thrown by Harrys crudity .. embarrassed.. he musters up his courage to continue... takes a deep breath as if he's about to be pushed off the plank.. stammering harder...

.. I've got nothing but the highest, for her.... respect... Boss! The ut... what is it... by geeeeeezzzzzz

Harry: well? spit it out boy, what's the matter, cat got your tongue?

Tommy: *Bursts out* I mean how did you do it with Elvira, your wife, I mean...

Harry jumps out of his seat, in a single reflex raises his hand ready to backhand Tommy with a look of astonishment wobbles, grabs the table to steady himself

Tommy cowers and yells out

ASK HER TO MARRY YOU!

Harry: By Geez boy, what's come over ya?

falls back into his chair ... raises his eyebrows looking terribly impressed by Tommys sudden bout of courage... nodding... approvingly

I mean, how did you know it was the right time and everything, you know.. *that she was the one?*

Harry: Aaaahhhhhh by Jingos! stop muckin' about get on with it, you hear me?

Tommy: Right thanks Boss.

Harry: ahh.... Look mate, it's just like wooing a Brumby... in a low calm voice, Emma you and mes' been going out for a while now and I just think its about time we got married.

Put it to her straight son and don't forget to tell her something nice, Sheilas like that sort of thing

Tommy: On what?

Harry: Oh I don't know Tommy on her dress.

Tommy: Right, what if she's not wearing a dress?

Harry: ahh Tommy.... Ya don't mean me she's one of those modern young things that wears PANTS now do ya...?

Harry squeezes a frown and tisks

My oath!

...well now Tommy complement her on hair then, that'll do the trick.

Tommy:

Tommy feeling the effects of the scotch by now and in his boyish manner forgets himself and approaches Harry to give him a hug... catches himself, straightens up...

right you are Boss,

lets out a sigh of admiration and respectfully exclaims

by jingos... thanks a lot Harry, you're like me own dad.

Harry:

Drifts back into his daydream, Tommy seeing this gets up quietly and creeps out so as not to disturb Harry's moment of contentment... Harry mutters as if talking to himself...

... he's a one-in-a-million that horse, a real Hot Shot...

With a longing in his voice and a hint of affection he rattles on...

Now pick up the sash with Davis and get that damn Hack watered and fed.

... go on now, beat it.. scram!

Tommy obediently retreats but casts a caring glance back at Harry

(exits upstage left)

Harry lingers a moment, relights his cigar and wanders off

(exits downstage right)

End of Scene 5

Scene 4 Act 2

The Melbourne Cup Party

Opening jazz song with band (1930s) singing & celebration

From the start

As you can see your love means nothing to me, the key was already unlocked from the start. The light in the room like a sunbeam in your eye, at least you were frank from the start. That you may be here to disappoint, you were already clearly a man from the start.

But I could see, it was clear to me that you were the love of my life from the start.

The scene starts with the Jazz singer downstage centre, as she sings into an microphone of the era and sways gently the actors filter onto stage entering upstage

from both sides picking up drinks from a waiter circulating, gently they move in front of the singer who quietly melts away through the crowd and off exits upstage left, Harry has obviously had too much to drink and is becoming loud and keeps throwing cutting glances at Dave who sees this and shows a degree of concern at what he hopes will not be a spectacle

Harry: *Drinking* – That’s a laugh, Tommy who would of thought, he is a strapper for God Sake! and he’s stayin’ on with Phar Lap

Vi: Well now your lease is up on him it’s over to Dave now love.

Harry: For Gods sake Woman! Don’t you see? ..

Sighs impatiently and drunkenly

Davis wants his pound of flesh from Phar Lap. He’s putting him in the *Agua Caliente Handicap next year*. He will stop at nothing – typical for Jews, bloody money hungry bastards the lot of ‘em!!

Staggers, Vi steadies him..

Vi: Not so loud! We don’t want everyone to hear you are a racist. Well, it’s probably a dream of his. It might not even happen.

Harry: He’s already entered him. He is heading to Mexico next year to compete in the 50,000-pound race. The horse will not have time to acclimatise. It is a big waste of time.

Vi: Darling, shh! I think Mr Davis is about to make his speech.

Harry: Oh, hear we bloody go!

As the party guests move into position stage right while Dave walks up to the Podium downstage left

Dave:

At the podium with Bea to the audience

Thank you, thank you all. I as you may well know, I am Phar Lap’s proud owner and as god would have it, a Yank, but please don’t hold it against me!

Enjoys the ice breaker with the audience

My wife Bea and I are absolutely delighted with this horse’s success. My dealings with Harry began several years ago when I brought a mare called ‘*Time Will Tell*’

.. and.. like a lot of females, we just couldn’t work her, so,

tongue in cheek chauvinist horse humor

we used her for breeding!

Women shocked muttering disapprovingly in the crowd, men laugh raucously

... Dave calms the crowd then continues...

then few years on, I get a call, Oh no! It's Harry and he has another horse!
Sure I was a little concerned because of the last horse being a DUD! but the
moment I lay my eyes on this great red beast, there was no doubt in my mind
that he was going to be a winner!

Crowd responds favorably, lots of nods and smiles

.. Dave eyes the crowd off and builds their excitement...

so, we're getting ready to take on the best of the U S of A

Crowd goes crazy, cheering, clapping... more cheering Dave raises his voice over the crowd!

AT THE AGUA CALIENTE!

men yelling PHAR LAP! PHAR LAP!

Crowd cheers! Clapping...

Dave lets the crowd enjoy the moment then just as the clapping trails off, as an after thought, raises his hand to pause the crowd and.. bursts out with a smile on his face change of body language like a cheap salesman..

Also before I hand you over to the VRC I run a small business making
pictures and frames, if anyone in the crowd tonight wants a photo of the
horse with their loved ones please get in contact with the *Australasian*
Portrait Company,

People start to laughing again..with a sense of relief

he is *afterall*, the people 's horse and I don't mind sharing him!

Finishes off by laughing and clapping with the crowd, nods of approval all round, party goers bring their glasses up and Bea puts a glass of Champagne into Daves hand

Dave walks over to the side of the stage and brings out a microphone of the era and places it downstage centre then steps aside making way for the Jazz singer to approach

Harry: *looking as if he's had a bit to drink starts clapping (alone)*

Ya bloody Yank!

Vi: Harry! Whats got into you? People can hear you!

Harry: Money hungry Yank! Phar Lap should be back in Melbourne resting up and not on a bloody boat to the Americas!

Vi: Harry, the jazz is about to start. Calm down and at least look as though you're enjoying yourself

Jazz singer comes on centre upstage to centre downstage the spotlight finds her then she begins to sing.... Dave is quietly eyeing her off and Bea is trying to hide her jealousy

A flash of red

As you came around the turn, you came into my life, it was clear it was a flash of red.

Can't you see it should be said ... said that I was really in love.

*Racing pacing gallop a haste, the dream horse of mine is about to win the race, race to my heart. A flash, a flash of red, could it be said, I am in love.
A flash, a flash of red, can't you see the colour of my love?*

*The spotlight falls onto the crowd and a couple of swing dancers come out of the crowd while the music picks up slightly
(End of Scene 6 Act 1)*

Scene 5 Act 2

Full Cast

At the party everyone starts getting somewhat intoxicated and 'messy' relations get strained, things are said that shouldn't have been we see another side of the characters

Harry: *to Tommy*

... what kept you so late in the morning? I said by 6.00 am get that bloody horse settled!

Tommy: Sorry, boss, but someone took a crack at us!

Harry: what are ya talkin' about?... and what's that you bought?

Tommy: Oh, it's a new winter rug for Bobby.

Harry: I told you to buy a gift for Emma.

There is a pause Tommy looks at Harry with an upset expression on his face and looking at Vi who knows as if to say... he doesn't know?

Vi: Love. Haven't you heard Tommy's a hero?

Harry looks up... inquisitively, then his expression changes dramatically when he hears from vi about the assassination attempt

Someone tried to shoot the horse from a car. Tommy put his pony and himself in front of the horse. You have to thank him for the Cup.

Harry:

lets fly a course of expletives, goes abit nuts throwing the chair on the ground whacks the table, stropps around then after a pause hanging his head down, Vi quietly picks up the chair, Harry leaning on the back continues in a solemn tone..

Tommy, you could have been killed! Why would they want to kill Phar Lap?!!

Tommy: It's the Bookmakers Boss, they'll lose bucket loads because you decided to scratch Phar Lap from the Caulfield cup.

Harry: People won't stop at anything, he couldn't run in both cups! HE NEEDS A BREAK!

Dave: I have another announcement!

Bea: Honey, lay off the scotch.

Dave:

putting his hands on Tommy's shoulders

Well, I'm appointing Tommy head trainer in Mexico. No one knows the horse better than Tommy. I hear he sleeps with the horse is that true???

Emma comes up a little drunk while Dave laughs at the thought

Emma: Let me just tell you something Mr Davis

Stumbles onto Dave who catches her and stands her back up casting a glance at Bea

Tommy...

Slurs, points and glares at Tommy

sleeps with the horse!

bursts out laughing, Bea looks embarrassed for Emma Dave takes it in his stride

Tommy: No, I don't, Em.

Emma: but you do! I've seen you!

Tommy: No, I was just

Bea: Well, people have all sorts of connections to animals. I love my cats.

While Davis goes up to talk to Vi and Harry, is getting drunk and flirty eyeing Tommy off the way a cat looks at a mouse

Bea:

Well, isn't that something, Tommy, that you'll love the States; I'll take you shopping, you're going to look so good in a suit... oooo a zoot suit!

Pause I can just see you now... 'puttin' on the Ritz!'

Tommy: Well, thanks, Mrs Davis.

Bea: We will have you looking *just* fine. Does Emma tell you you're handsome?

Tommy: Well, no, Mrs Davis.

Bea: Just Bea is fine, Tommy. Well, you are!

Vi:

Tries to calm Emma down out the by distracting her

Come on now, Emma. Just come out and get some air it's been a great party!

Don't you look beautiful, I love your dress, is this the one that...

Stubbornly, stops abruptly to protest

Emma: No! I'm sick of all this bullshit about the horse! What about the people who are suffering out there and losing their jobs? You're all acting so high and mighty with all your plans!

Tommy: Emma please you're embarr ...

She cuts him off

Emma: You don't even care, 'cos you're all doing all right only because of the horse – may I remind you all.

Tommy: *Emma*, can't you just let me enjoy my moment?

Emma: Oh, you have had your moment Tom, again and again.

Dave: Emma, the horse rated in *The Age* last week as a top crowd pleaser; he even ranked higher than Vegemite. (I think it's best on toast anyway)

Emma: Oh do you just! Well you can go toast your own vegemite!

Vi: Tommy will make an excellent trainer, if you don't go. He knows the horse more than we do Harry.

Dave: You just have to let the boy live out his potential.

Harry: Tommy doesn't know the first thing about training. He is a *strapper*. Oh, but that's right. You don't know horse terms, just terms like *lust & greed*!

Vi: Harry! Please! everyone's just gone a bit far tonight.

Harry:

Snaps at Vi and turns square on to Dave

I'm not talkin' to you woman!

Glares at Vi

If you work Phar Lap 'round the bloody world, race after bloody race... milking em for all the bloody money you can bleed em for... *you'll kill'em!*

Dave: I tried to help you out when no one else would. Harry, you were a poor broken trainer when I met you. I turned it around for you and it's a pity you can't see that!

We'll be in touch about the upcoming races, Tommy.

Emma and Tommy leave

Harry: If you take Phar Lap to America, you'll kill him.

Dave: *Pause* It's Mexico, Harry. Oh, that's right. Oh I forgot, you've never been anywhere other than Sydney! You just don't want me to win, you're doing all right now, aren't you? Well, let me just tell you this. My business has been down the drain for months. People don't buy fine cutlery during a Depression, do they? I'm in the red to my eyeballs. The horse has to win the race. The trip will not kill him, it will just kill you!

Harry: Well, you can say goodbye to the friendship then.

Dave: If that's what it has to be.

Pause:

Vi: I bet Emma didn't get her proposal. That's why she's annoyed.

Harry: Alight we best call it a night.

Vi and Harry leave

Crowd cheers. Music continues into the night.

Bea and Dave by themselves dancing.

Bea: You didn't tell me we were struggling, darling!

Dave: We'll, we're not.

Bea: Well, why did you just tell Harry?

Dave: I need a good reason to go.

Bea: Oh, Dave. Maybe we should rest the horse, he's done well today, he's done us all proud.

Dave: Bea, *pause*, how many times do I have to tell you – you have to go after the things you want!

Bea: I don't need anything. I have everything I need... I have you! ...

Dave: Bea, do ya want the latest Dior dress? Do ya want the latest gramophone? Do ya want the latest Mercedes Nazi convertible?

Bea: Sure, I would love them!

Dave: Well, we're going to America and we're going to win that race – the richest race in the world! oh and honey, one thing! *Pause*

Bea: Yes, darling.

Davis: Don't ever, ever flirt with the stable boy.

Bea: *pause*, Well it's alright for you to say that Dave but what about that jazz singer then?

Davis: What singer?

Bea: The one you were flirting with at the party with dark hair, I saw you talking to her, do you know her? I think I have seen her at a bar I used to work at- The one with dark hair.

Davis: I heard you the first time, Bea *pause*, Well I do know her, I have seen her around a couple of bars I drink at.

Bea: Oh god don't tell me...

Davis: Alight, I will tell you Bea, yes she is a call girl. while you have been gallivanting around from shop to shop, you have been neglecting your duties to me as your husband!

Bea: Oh you bastard! You wouldn't ... you havn't!!!!

Davis: Well it only happened once *pause* or twice.

Bea: Well ok I don't really like sleeping with you anyway, your old man smell and you snore during the night last night you woke me up twice

Davis: Well you chose to live with me and my money, so, live with it baby!

Bea: *throwing a book near him-* Oh you are such a bastard
pause

Davis: Thanks Bea, well you are just free to go anytime you want, you might want to to resume working at that nursery school, you really loved the kids didn't you?

Bea: Oh, I don't need to hear this, I am going to bed.

End of Scene 5 Act 2

Bea exits upstage right, Dave lingers for a couple of minutes then retreats

Exit upstage right

Scene 6

Bea

Bea at home by herself playing a little 20s music in nightgown, slippers, brushing her hair, she's been drinking again and is a little tipsy and talking to herself

Bea:

Oh god how did I get into this mess, *pause* I guess what attracted me to Dave in the first place was his driving, relentless ambition and his greed. It was my friend Betty who begged me to go up to him. She knew people he worked with, he was... Handsome enough – We were in the American Bar off Collins Street in Melbourne. I thought, well, what do I say to this man?

Pause

He was swaying gently to the music. I do not smoke so I can't ask for a light. So I end up saying: You're a super hot dancer! He smiled, and from then on he seemed to take care of everything. He imported china and cutlery from Europe selling them at a friend's store for half the price if there was money to be made anywhere, David was at the forefront. It was all good before the Depression hit – but, well, like Dave is, he always has the next plan cooking then along comes the horse ... I guess it was my mother, that told me to flirt with men to always get what you want. I used to watch her... she told me if you can wrap a man around your little finger, you'll get anything you want. that's what I thought I've been doing with Dave but now, I've got nothing!

I gave up my work, my life and he's right, all I do is buy dresses

Well, at least they are the new imported collection from Europe

Downs the last of her drink before going to bed

Exit upstage right

End of Scene 6

Scene Act 3 Scene 1

Cappy, Vi and Harry

Enter downstage right

Vi comes out first and gets dinner on the table, then she calls out to Harry and Cappy. The family sit around the eating their dinner

Vi: Dear, did you bring the Herald in?

Harry: Yeah, a

pause while he chews his food then continues with a mouth full, rambling on....

he is fussy Vi, remember how fussy he is? He has to be spoken to before a race, I think he likes that.

I said: Now you have another race, my boy.. I said straight to him, before the Melbourne Cup...I said don't worry about the others they are nothing to you. Get out of the barriers, that's your first hurdle jump well and clear, then when and only when you feel a light feather tap from Jim, then is your chance, make your move my boy...

he likes his nose strap tight but not too tight!- Oh and is he a fussy eater the right amount of barely, mixed with the right amount of oats.

while Vi starts clearing the dishes then as she sets the table with a pot of tea and tea cups goes on

Vi: well Dear, I think you need other interests, Davis is a really good tennis player, I have seen him in action, when I walked past East Melbourne Tennis Club, you should play too!

Harry: Why would I want to pick up a snobby sport like tennis?

Cappy: Well people would say horse racing is snobby

Harry: What would you know you little runt..

Cappy: Well I *would* know Dad and I don't think it is my lot in life to wake up at 4am and follow you around the stable, it isn't actually my dream come true.

Harry: Ah you don't know anything! Stop acting queer

Vi: Dear, he's not acting queer, but he does like reading though, what are you reading Cappy?

Cappy: It's D. H. Lawrence, it's about an unconventional woman growing up in Mid England.

Harry: Sounds a bore!

Vi: Go on love, tell him.

Harry: Tell him what?

Cappy: *Cappy get out of piece of paper*

Why I don't want to work with horses by Gerald E. Telford.

Harry: Oh for *god* sake!

Vi: *says encouragingly*

Go on Cappy..

Cappy: Their coat is full of dust it makes me sneeze...

Harry: Humbug!

Cappy: They are unpredictable and often never win, you said yourself Phar Lap was a once in a life time a real Hot Shot!

Harry: oh did I say that now did I?

Cappy: I like to sleep in..

and before Cappy has a chance to go on... Harry and growls at Cappy

Harry: I'm passing my trade on to you, my father was a racehorse trainer as was his father before him....

Cappy: anyway, that's my story, I'm going to bed now

Harry: *grumbles under his breath*

Vi: Goodnight love:

Harry: I know why he won't pick up the reins-

Vi: What?

Harry: It was the day he fell off Sun Dancer

after that, he won't get back up no matter what, stubborn as a mule!

There is a pause, all you can hear is Vi tinkling her spoon in her teacup as she adds sugar and is looking quite concerned...

Vi: Harry, I'm worried, we've only had just ONE WIN just one, all the rest of the yearlings you brought are duds, you can't replace Phar Lap, let it go Dear. *An uncomfortable pause between them as Harry takes a pensive moment*

Vi goes on...

Dear, have been gambling again ?

Harry: You have been snooping through my things?

Vi: I found your TAB paper in your bag when I put your lunch in it. You never use to bet Harry, why start now?

Harry: Well I do now so deal with it.

Vi: I won't deal with it when all our money is going down the drain.

Pause look we can still be ok if you stop gambling and for god sake, don't buy any more yearlings

Harry: It's that bloody Horse, Without Phar Lap.....ah.....I've just lost interest!

Nothing else interests me anymore

Vi: I know Dear, including me and our boy

Harry: I didn't mean it like that, you always twist my words around.

Vi: Well it's we haven't been in your lives for years now, all you've got room for is horses, now Phar Laps gone, maybe its time for us now, as a family ... Harry? Dear?

Vi reaches her hand out tenderly and with some apprehension hoping Harry doesn't snap at her as usual... there is no reply. Harry gets up and taking his paper with him wonders off to bed

Exit upstage left

Harry: I'm off to bed

Vi is alone at the kitchen table and plays with the tea cosy, she talks to herself dreamily

Vi: Good night Dear...

There is no reply and she looks away sadly

we were in love in the beginning then the training took over and then the obsession of it all

Soon horses were the only thing on his mind morning, noon and night. It was also the horses that came first. When Cappy was born, he I realized that horses were his true pride and joy. Poor Cappy, he has a right to choose his own interests to be his own man.

Vi quietly stands up and goes off to bed

Exit upstage left

End of Scene 1

Scene 2 Act 3

Bea and Dave at the stables

Enter downstage right

Bea: Darling..... I've got something to tell you.

Davis: What, what has my poppet bought this time?

Bea: Oh you will love it Dave.

Davis: A new dress, and a pair of shoes you have can barely walk in perhaps, a puppy???

Bea: No I put a down payment on a new horse, it's one of Harry's new yearlings.

Davis: Bea, now we've done that, we had that thrill with Phar Lap, I'm interested in Tennis now, I made the finals

Bea: Right well, that's great Darling, but listen I have developed a real passion for horses and I think it's my new thing!

Davis: I thought dresses were your thing.

Bea: Well they are both my thing.

Davis: I'm just curious about how you got the money?

Bea: Well I ...

Davis: Well I....?

Bea: Well I went to your safe, which was unlocked one night.

Looking amused

Davis: Did you now??

Bea: Oh don't be silly it will be a success, we've got gold fingers, just wait Harry will train Dark Davis.

Davis: Dark Davis?

Bea: Well yes, that's his name, don't you like it?

Dave: Well yes, it's wonderful and when does Davis have his first race?

Bea: Our DARK Davis will be racing in a few weeks and you will never guess his colour ?

Dave: Well let me see? - Dark.

Bea giggles like a child

Bea: How did you guess?

Dave: Don't know Bea, I guess it was a stab in the dark!- Bea nothing happens twice, we were lucky with Phar lap

Bea: Harry is a good trainer we can trust him!

The couple walk off together hand in hand

Exit downstage left

End of Scene 2 Act 3

Scene 3 Act 3

Tommy and Cappy at the Stables

Enter downstage right

Tommy: Right there Cappy, just hold him tight, he doesn't much like cold soapy water running down his back but we have to get the sweat out of his coat. - There's a good boy- Dark Davis.

Cappy: Oh Dark Davis – Davis new horse – well what do you think of him?

Tommy: You know what? To tell you the truth- I don't think he is any good his galloping action is all wrong. I can't tell Mrs Davis, she really excited about him – Cappy don't stand behind him – he might kick you-

Cappy: *trying to win Tommys' sympathies*

I'm trying he tried to bite me before.

Tommy: *realizes this and replies in a brotherly tone*

Just give him a slight tap on the nose he has to know who is boss;.... who is the boss Cappy?

Cappy: *replies trying to mask his insecurities but fails and begins to reveal his true feelings*

I am boss, I 'm boss oh god no I'm not. I can't do this, I can't do this, look at him stirring at me with those evil eyes.

Tommy: Cappy mate what's wrong? I thought you love all this.

Cappy: *Cappy is getting worked up and explodes to Tommy*

Oh god Tommy, I hate it, I hate it. I tried to write a story about it and I even read it out to Dad and.... that I hate horse racing, he just laughed at me and called me queer and said he's going to pass it all onto me!.. *but I don't want it!!!...*

Starts calming down after his little outburst

.... *Tommy*

Tommy: Oh gosh Capps I would love to be in your shoes, you have all these opportunities with horses that I don't have

Cappy: I bet you wouldn't want to be in my shoes Tommy....

Tommy: Well you're growing up, be strong with your and hard headed as he is, he's your father and I'm sure he'll listen.

Changes tone and picks the mood up

so what do you like to do with yourself?

Cappy: Well I love reading and doing scientific experiments on bugs & mice I like to see what's inside them.

Tommy: *immediately taken aback, shocked and amused but catches himself*

Righto mate.

Cappy: Yeah, it's really fun! Nothing like horses and stuff, anyway....
how's things with Emma

With a glimmer in his eye shoots a question at Tommy quite excited

Are you going to marry her? Have you asked her yet?

Tommy: Oi! Cheeky boy.... I guess you'll know when I do right coz you'll be comin' to our weddin now won't ya?

Cappy: Well I guess we both have our things to tell Tommy don't we?

Tommy: we do alright, we sure do

Cappy: Tommy.... I was wondering, will Jim Pike ride Darkie?

Tommy: No Cappy, Jim was found drunk at the pub last night, he gambles too much, he started last year and now he can't stop! so no he won't be riding again he washed up, he is finished.

Cappy: God Tommy, I have to get out I don't to be washed up and finished like him.

Tommy: well if you keep playing with your bugs then I'd say there's a good chance you wont!

Cappy starts laughing, Tommy joins in

Tommy: here now lets get out of here whataya say we go get some tea and damper

Tommy picks up the buckets gives one to Cappy and the two leave the stage

Exit upstage left

End of Scene 3 Act 3

Scene 4 Act 3

Tommy and Harry at the Stables.

Enter downstage right

Harry: Tommy, how's Darkie going?

Tommy: Yeah he is settling in well boss.

Harry: Good good he looked like he did a good bit of track work yesterday.

Tommy: Boss do you think Cappy is enjoying the stable work, I mean is it him?

Harry: Aww... Whats it to ya boy?

Tommy: Well he doesn't seem that interested that's all.

Harry: He'll be right.

Tommy: He likes bugs and books.

Harry: Well when you have kid's, I am not going to you how to raise them.

Tommy: Well you see boss, I got Emma pregnant and Dave 's asked me to train his horses and other people have asked me to train their horses as well, so ah....it just seems like time I step out on my own Boss

Harry: Right, well you will never have the success I did with Phar Lap.

Exit downstage left

End of Scene 4 Act 3

Scene 5 , Act 3

Bea and Dave at the races together.

Enter downstage left

Dave: Well Bea, that's it, Dark Davis is no winner.

Bea: but Phar Lap lost three of his first races didn't he?

Dave: Well that's right, I'm not sure about this new horse, he sure is no Phar Lap, but the red terror will be our saving grace in Mexico.

I leave with Tommy in a few days. The first time the boy is seeing anything of the world, there is a lot that needs to be done I'm sorry Toots, I've just got a lot on my mind ...

He starts walking off purposefully and Bea follows behind with a glum expression

Exit downstage left

End of Scene 5

Scene6, Act 3

1931 Official footage of the Mexican race: Overhead

Scene 7, Act3

Enter downstage right

Tommy reads a letter to Emma from America:

Wakes up in the middle of the night, restless, cant get back to sleep, he turns on the lamp and from under his pillow brings out the letter he is writing to Emma

Tommy:...

I have to get this right and send it off tomorrow, I'm just so hopeless at this sort of thing..... anyways....

Clears his throat and in a soft voice

Dear Emma

I'm thinking of you and I hate being so far away from home but I'm glad I did it.

Bobby was better than me at handling the long ocean journey. I was crook for weeks after. Well, the race went well and the Yanks did not know what to think of Bobby and I am pleased to tell you that on the 20th March 1932, despite my short period of training with him and the difficulties of his acclimatization, Bobby won easily in record time, trained by myself and ridden brilliantly by Willy Elliott. Bobby knew he had to win this one and he put everything he had into it.

Pause....

The fact is, Emma, is that the Americas will be his last stop as he was crook by the end of the race and won't be coming home with us.

long pause

He died three nights after the race with me holding him... the thing is, I gave him evening medication for his bad hoof. Then Mr. Davis told me later on that evening that the vet had injected him with the same medication.

Oh Emma, I can't even think about it. I hope I didn't overdose him.... It would just be terrible if I did. I can't even think about it ... the Australian public would never forgive me!

Emma, you are now my everything, and I just want to come home to you and our baby.

Love

Your Tommy.

Exit downstage left

End of Scene 7

Scene 8, Act 3

Emma and Vi reading Tommy's letter at Vi's house, having a cup of tea at the kitchen table

Emma: I'm Tommy's everything now Vi, now that wretched horse has died! *pause*

I married Tommy 6 months after he returned from the States and I did open a dress shop, in Collingwood called *Emma Woodcock dress designs* but Vi, to be honest Tommy never got over Phar Lap!

pause

he still calls his name when he's sleeping but at least I got my Tommy in the end!

Vi: Well, I'm so happy for you Emma, it was tough but you made it. Harry's obsession never faded either. Horses came in and out of our training facility in Melbourne but nothing like Phar Lap.

Pause

I never wanted any more children after Cappy. It didn't matter really. It seems Harry was not interested and all he could think about was training the next winner, but that never happened. Phar lap was to be his first and his last winner.

When I was just sixteen I met Harry meet me at a fancy department store called Mark Foy's where I worked as a shop assistant.

Lost for a moment in happy memories

We're looking at 20 years of marriage this year, how the years fly.

When Harry was a boy, a horse stepped on his toe and crushed it, never really healed so for the rest of Harry's life he would walk with a limp and would kind of swing his left leg. I was the young shop assistant at Mark Foy's when Harry came in looking for a pair of shoes. I looked and found a kangaroo hide pair, that I thought would do the trick and I said...

Harry enters upstage right..

Harry: ...and you said 'It is very, very soft. It could be just what you want Sir.' I noticed this chubby young woman of Irish – Danish descent. I smiled.

Vi: ...and you smiled and you were abit shy, you brought the shoes...

Harry: ...then came back to the store to ask you out

Vi: ...then within a couple of years we were married.

Cappy wanders into the kitchen with his toy car...

enter downstage right

Cappy: I never liked horses I told Dad after Phar Lap died so he knew I wouldn't take over the training facility.

I mean, up at 4.00 am every day! I mean if it were cars, I would! I love Mr. Davis' sports car. I would do that for sure. Cars are so much better and they

can't break your heart like Phar Lap broke Dad's when he died. Anyway, Mum said everyone's different so at least I got to tell dad that I wasn't like him.

Dave wanders in with his cigar mulling it all over in his mind... pensive... enter upstage left

Dave: Sure, the one you want to hate is me! I took the horse from his Aussie home and took him to the States... and I'm not sorry, no Sir-ee that horse set me up for life. I took a risk and fortunately for me it paid off, after all, I am a Russian Jew.

I came to Australia to make my money then go back to the states. I am an only child. I don't have a family. My first wife is in Atlanta with my two boys and we are not in contact. I had to think of myself ... a new life in Australia. Bea can't or won't have children she's far too busy spending all my money...*laughs*....women!

pause

I am really not that bad. I ended up giving Harry a half share in Phar Lap at the end of 1930.

Pause

Well, if it weren't for me he'd be be a fading memory, I paid for the taxidermist.... you didn't know that, did you?

Pause

That's right! out of my own pocket, so he will be visited by Australians for years to come. I hear the Aussie's love a good sporting hero! Ha!

Walks away to the side, downstage left, Harry steps up to center stage looking into his paper and continues...

Harry: Vi, I'll be putting this in *The Sun* as soon as I can now that Hack has kicked the oat bucket.

I'll write Phar Lap was resting up at Mr Edward Perry's ranch at Atherton near Menlo Park, California. He was soon to embark on an ambitious racing program on the chief American tracks when, on the 5th April 1932, he became suddenly ill and died within a few hours.

Short pause

..although it was believed he was poisoned by grazing on pasture over which lead arsenate orchard spray had drifted, expert opinion states that the amount of poison found by postmortem were not sufficient to cause death. The horse probably died of a colic condition, the cause of which is unknown.

'Phar Lap', our Bobby, started 51 times for 37 wins, three seconds, and two thirds, and was the third-highest stake winner in the world at the time of his death. The Sydney jockey JE Pike won 27 races on 'Phar Lap'. He was the

only odds-on favourite in a Melbourne Cup, and the only horse to start favourite three years in succession. 'Phar Lap' is considered by racing experts to be second only to the great 'Carbine', the measuring-stick for all Australian racing performances.

Nobody would doubt that he was one of the most extraordinary thoroughbreds ever seen on the Australian turf. I'll have written on his epitaph at the stable Tommys' words

'He took it like a gentleman and died like a thoroughbred'

In a somber tone

Harry Teford: Phar Lap's trainer/part owner.

– **The End** –