Men Should Weep
By
Ena Lamont Stewart
‘Men Should Weep’ by Ena Lamont Stewart
Written in 1947  Rewritten in 1982

Setting

Set in 1930s in a tenement in the East End of Glasgow. The Morrison household. The set itself makes a comment about the social effects of poverty. Stage directions show this clearly. “Ernest appears at the door … and stands there in his bare feet and wearing an old coat over tattered pyjamas.”

Men Should Weep tackles social issues but these are interlinked with political and gender issues. It resonates with a contemporary audience and comparison can be made between Scotland today and the Scotland as presented in the play

Social Issues

- Poor quality housing and overcrowding
- Unsanitary conditions
- Lack of food and malnutrition
- Lack of income
- Extreme poverty
- Urban Scotland

Political Issues

- Effects of Poverty
- Effects of Unemployment / Depression
- Effects of Poor Housing Conditions
- Power and Control (including fiscal control)
- Health of the Population
- Feminism and the growth of female emancipation

Gender Issues

- The role and portrayal of women in 1930s Glasgow
- The role and portrayal of men in 1930s Glasgow
- Domestic violence
- Plight of the elderly
- The role and portrayal of children in 1930s Glasgow

Use of History and Nostalgia

- Set in 1930’s working class Glasgow
- Life in Scotland Past and Present
- Comparison with an audience today
- Rising unemployment
- Recession / Depression

Evidence for
Poor quality housing and overcrowding

- The flat only has a kitchen with a bed recess, a bedroom and the ‘back parlour’
- The living conditions are cramped and the family have little privacy
- Ten people share this space (Maggie, John, Granny, Jenny, Edie, Ernest, Marina, Christopher, Alec & Isa)
- Maggie & John sleep on a mattress on the kitchen floor and use old coats as blankets
- Christopher and Marina sleep in the bed housed in the recess
- Jenny shares a bed with Granny & Edie
- Isa and Alec’s tenement flat collapses and they are forced to live in Maggie and John’s tenement flat as a result. (Alec has to share a bed with Bertie and Ernie. Isa has to share a bed with Edie, Granny and Jenny.)
- There was a severe shortage of decent housing in the 1930s. There were many slums and private landlords had a lot to answer for. Getting a council house was gold dust

Unsanitary conditions

- The lack of washing and drying facilities
- The shared toilet on the landing
- There was no inside bathing facilities other than the kitchen sink and perhaps a metal bath which had to be filled using water from the kettle
- The absence of hot running water (water had to be boiled on the range)
- The flat is in a ‘muddle’ as Maggie cannot cope
- Christopher has rickets
- Mary Harris has lice
- Bertie has TB. In Act 2, Scene 1 we discover that he is kept in hospital. This is devastating news for Maggie. TB patients had to be isolated as TB was a highly contagious disease and life threatening
- They get washed at the sink using the same face cloth
- The ‘Sanitary’ man from the council could be called in to investigate infestations or poor hygiene procedures such as not washing the dunny stairs

Lack of food and malnutrition

- John is unemployed and cannot afford to buy enough food to keep his wife and children.
- There is obvious ignorance regarding the sort of food you should be giving babies. (Maggie dips the baby’s dummy into a sugar bowl.)
- The children are forced to eat bread and jam to fill their stomachs, as John and Maggie cannot afford a meal at suppertime.
- Maggie sends Alec for ‘ninepenny worth o chips, two pies an a tin o condensed. Then tae the baker an see if there’s ony stale tea-breid left.’ This would have been a rare treat. Hardly a balanced diet
- When Jenny worked at the fruit shop, Maggie was there at night to get the ‘bashed tomatoes’ and rotten fruit for free

Lack of income and poverty
John and Maggie rely on Lily to help them feed their children (she gives them food – ‘black puddin….on Wednesday, gingerbread on Sunday, forby a the cest-affs and the odd bobs…’ ‘I brought ye a tin o baked beans the night.’ Lily also buys medicine for Bertie as there was no NHS as we know it, you had to pay to see a doctor or a dentist.

- John and Maggie rely on Granny’s meagre pension allowance
- John and Maggie rely on Jenny’s wages and the bashed fruit and veg she brings home
- The children wear cast off clothing
- Edie has ‘nae breeks’
- Maggie is forced to go to the ‘Mission’ (charity for second hand pants)
- The Morrisons didn’t even own a ‘wireless’ (radio)
- Johan and Maggie don’t have enough decent bedding for their bed – they have to use coats along with a blanket to keep them warm at night
- Women had to wash clothes at communal ‘Steamies’

**Lily is a support to the Morrison family**

- Lily provides them with food on a regular basis
- She gives Maggie money
- She brings medicine for Bertie
- She has loaned money to Alec

**Political Issues**
• It was rewritten by 7:84 (a theatre company with declared socialist sympathies)
• Depression of 1930’s is the backdrop
• The plight of the individual shows the effects of government policy
• The situation at the time meant opportunity for those who could take advantage of the situation but poverty for others. “Some men gets on and makes money, depression or no. It hasnae the brains.” Jenny
• John reveals the realities of looking for work when there are ‘Hundred o us, Maggie, beggin for the chance tae earn enough for food and a roof ower our heids.’ When John finally gets a job in Act 3: ‘This is the first Christmas I’ve had a decent job for ten year; it’s gonnae be the best.’
• Lack of training opportunities and no opportunity to better themselves. “Nae trainin. Nae skill; juist a laborer when there wis labourin needed; and when there’s nane – the Burroo.” Those on the Burroo (Dole) blame the government.
• Unemployment benefits were first instituted in 1911. Over 2 million people were relying on the payments by 1921, as the United Kingdom was experiencing economic hardship after World War I.
• The housing collapse shows a lack of maintenance generally and no provision for those displaced. A council house was very difficult to find.
• Old age pension introduced in 1908 for those over seventy. “Goad bless Lloyd George! Him that gie’d us wur pension books.” For those looking after the elderly, this was a much needed boost to the family coffers.
• There is a perceived devaluation on the pound – “a ten shillingy note’s no a ten shillingy note ony longer”. Maggie notices that the cost of living is increasing. I dinna ken whit they dirty rotten buggers in Parliament are daein wi ma money, but they’re daein something.’
• No government support in maintaining the nation’s health and therefore rickets, TB, lice abound. The lack of a National Health Service means that Maggie cannot afford to take Bertie to the doctor or to buy him the medicine he needs. Health is therefore a question of wealth – and not every citizen’s right as it is today.
• Maggie’s journey can be seen as a political one. By charting Maggie’s transition from oppressed wife and mother a woman who provides justification and excuses for her own and other people’s oppression, through her growing disenchantment with the state of her relationships to eventually seizing of control over her own and her family’s destiny, the play challenges the existing social and political status quo on questions of female roles in society.
• The play can be seen to promote the feminist political perspective
Gender Issues

- The role and portrayal of women in 1930s Glasgow
- The role and portrayal of men in 1930s Glasgow.
- Domestic violence
- Plight of the elderly
- The role and portrayal of children in 1930s Glasgow

The role and portrayal of women in 1930s Glasgow

- Women were expected to get married, have children, stay at home and look after the family.
- Wives were expected to be dutiful.
- Lily had a ‘disappointment’ and she is in the unenviable position of being a spinster.
- Women were economically dependent on their husbands.
- Lily, unusually for a woman, works in a ‘Coocaddens pub’.
- Isa breaks the mould and doesn’t work. She gets Alec to run after her even to the extent that he thieves for her.
- Most women took great pride in keeping their homes clean. This was vital in communal living such as sharing a close and lavatory.
- Isa isn’t a typical 1930s Glasgow wife. She goes out to pubs, get involved in muggings, doesn’t have children and detests her husband. She also goes out of her way to make Alec jealous. She doesn’t respect Alec. Isa’s pass at John would have been very shocking for 1947 when it was shown. Isa goes out with other men behind Alec’s back.
- In Act 2 Scene 2 we discover that Isa has been – ‘gaun wi yon fat bookie’. Shocking!
- Isa leaves Alec. This would be considered shocking as women were expected to stick by their husbands through thick and thin.
- Alec’s knife attack and strangling of Isa would have been very shocking indeed. This would also have been seen as a great act of cowardice.
- The women had to rely on each other for support. This included your neighbours as well as your family.
- Jenny asserts her independence and leaves the Morrison household.
- Jenny dresses like a tart and has started to drink gin. She stays out very late and hangs out with a bad element. She chases men who have money.
- Many women had the philosophy that you just had to put up with men.
- Lizzie was untypical as she was a moneylender who charged a high rate of interest. She also bought old clothes at a cheap price and would sell them on for a profit. The people she sold the clothes had little option but pay her, as they couldn’t get a loan from a bank.
- In Act 3 we discover that Jenny has a ‘sugar-daddy’. Jenny is ‘living in sin’. This would have been very shocking to a 1947 audience.
The role and portrayal of men in 1930s Glasgow

- Men were expected to be the breadwinner.
- Unemployment would have been seen as a disgrace and the man would feel less of a man if he couldn’t provide for his family.
- The man was considered to be the head of the house.
- The man tended to lay down the law and set the rules of the household.
- A man would consider housework, cooking and looking after children as the responsibility of the women of the house.
- Men would worry about what other men thought if they did contribute to running the household.
- Men hid their feelings and didn’t show their emotions (hence the title)
- Alec is not a typical 1930s man. He is a weak ‘mammie’s boy’ who has not got control over his wife. He is dishonest and thieves to feed Isa’s hunger for the good life. He runs after Isa. Alec does as Isa tells him.
- Young men were expected to ‘learn a trade’. Alec has let his father down by being idle with no real employment prospects, as he has no trade.
- John used to be an alcoholic – typical of the strong drinking culture in the West of Scotland. After Marina was born though, he became Tee Total – gave up the drink. He takes refuge in the local library in part to avoid going to pubs.

Domestic violence

- Mr Bone (the man upstairs) beats his wife when he is drunk. (This happens on a regular basis.) John threatens Maggie with violence.
- Women were expected to put up with the domestic violence.
- Alec is prone to bouts of violence. (He once threw a bread knife at Lily) He threatens Isa with a knife and nearly kills her.
- It was not unusual for a father to take his belt to his children.
- It was not unusual for parents to hit their children frequently to discipline them.

The role and portrayal of children in 1930s Glasgow

- Children were expected to do as their parents’ asked/demanded.
- Jenny is rebellious. She stays out very late and has stopped following her father’s advice.
- Young men and women were expected to stay at home, hand over all of their wages to their parents and only leave home once they got married.
- Jenny goes out with her new boss. He owns a jewellers shop. John doesn’t approve of this relationship.
- Jenny has been drinking. This was frowned upon. Isa is fond of booze. It wasn’t regarded as respectable for women to go to pubs. On the whole pubs were the domain of men and their view was that only ‘loose’ women tended to frequent them.
- Jenny leaves home which was against the norm.
- Lily warns Maggie early on about the fact that Jenny is friendly with ‘...the riff raff o the toon, and dressed up like a bloomin tart wi peroxided hair’ ‘Yon Nessie Tait’s a right bad lot…’
- Alec sponges off his mother when he should be helping to support the family.
- Alec is a gambler. Lots of West of Scotland men had a gambling habit.
- Alec owes Lily money. When he wins at ‘the dugs’ he doesn’t pay her back thus not fulfilling his obligations.
- In the past, Lizzie got a ten-day prison sentence for fraud.
- Alec threatens suicide to get his mother to feel sorry for him. This would have been shocking to a 1947 audience.
The plight of the elderly – Granny Morrison

- She gets no real peace and quiet from the children
- She is neglected as Maggie is run off her feet and exhausted (looking after the household as well as working as a cleaner part-time)
- She is sent to bed early in order to cope with her
- She has a very uncaring daughter in law (Lizzie, the wife of John’s dead brother) who is only interested in her pension book
- There is an arrangement whereby she lives with her son John part of the time, then she is packed off to live with Lizzie part of the time
- She has to take her bed with her. The removal men are used to the routine
- Granny feels that she is ‘naethin but an auld nuisance.’

Role of the neighbours

- They are all part of close-knit community.
- The women are gossips.
- The neighbours know everyone’s business.
- The neighbours help each other out.
- Mr Bone beats his wife.
- Mr Bone is a heavy drinker.
- In 1982 Giles Havergal’s production, the 3 neighbours were observed to act like a Greek chorus – thus were both insiders and outsiders commenting on the action as much as being part of it.
- They emphasise the social control exerted by men (their husbands)
- Highlighted the female social experience and interrelationships (having tea, making jokes about the men out of earshot and therefore safely)
- They pass judgement on this social status quo in Maggie’s domestic life

History and Nostalgia

- Set in 1930’s working class Glasgow. How much have times changed?
- An audience today finds itself facing rising unemployment and the onset of recession (some have called it a depression).
- We now have a National Health Service but outbreaks of dysentery were recorded in 1990’s in Glasgow Housing schemes (cf Doreen in The Steamie whose aspirations are to have a house in Drumchapel and TB is on the rise again.
- The issue of female emancipation is as relevant to say as it was in 1947 and 1982. Women often have careers now, laws have changed to protect women from institutionalised sexism … but legal rights and what is common practice is not necessary the same thing.
- Women’s right’s movements has had less effect on working class
- Has life in Scotland changed hugely in the last 80 years?
Characters in Men Should Weep

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<th>Maggie</th>
<th>John</th>
<th>Lily</th>
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<td>Alec</td>
<td>Isa</td>
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<td>Neighbours</td>
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Maggie

Downtrodden, oppressed, poor, overburdened, working class at the opening but emancipated by the end. Archetypal mother - suffering hardship but fiercely nurturing her children. She is weak where Alec is concerned and distrustful of Isa.

She could be seen in the opening moments of the play as stereotyped initially but her journey to self assertion throughout the play destroys that view. When she stands up to John and humiliates him into accepting her own wishes (taking Jenny's money and moving to a healthier environment), she is identified as a woman of self determination - making sure that SHE takes responsibility for her own well being. She takes control of her own life and her relationship with her husband will never be the same again. "I can manage him. . . I can aye manage him." At the end, she finds herself, and finds self expression and independence.

Lily

Single. Working. Independent and highly dismissive of men, unstereotypical for her time

She has rebelled against the steretypical woman in the 1930's. A controvertial figure perhaps in 1947 when the play was first produced ... much more accepted now - in fact, almost a caricature of the radical feminist - in our modern post-feminist era. She is hostile towards all men ("dirty brutes") but John in particular and his final humiliation is a triumph for her. She revels in it as a condemnation of the entire male species! Lily can be seen as bitter and negative as her gless is at the expense of John's feelings rather than a celebration of Maggie's new found freedom.

The Neighbours

Gossips and part of the community and therefore insiders to the drama but also symbolic of the wider society and therefore can comment on the action as outsiders. They can also help to amplify certain themes such as the social and economic control men have over women (Mrs Bone's husband bangs on the floor for her, Mrs Wilson leaves in case Mr Wilson wants his tea, and Mrs Harris says she doesn't need her husband but needs his wages), female social experience, domestic relationships and Maggie's situation and circumstances. Issues (physical violence and domestic abuse, economic dependence and socialisation) are raised but never fully developed through these characters or their interactions with others. Some humour comes through these characters too.

Granny

A caricature - but makes the point that as an elderly woman she has absolutely no independence whatsoever and is reliant upon others for everything - even being put to bed. Some humour surrounds her - "eatin' and greetin' " but her role does not forward the plot significantly.

John

Out of work, chauvinist, idle male but we feel some sympathy for him. He is a proud man but this pride is misplaced as he is not "heid o this house" as he asserts. His struggle to maintain his role at the centre of the family is constrained by unemployment. There is criticism of male power and female oppression and the play works towards John's humiliation at the end. His daughter's criticism of the poor conditions in which they lives also hurts John's pride. He is as weak with jenny as Maggie is with Alec. He is locked into a socially constructed gender role with traps him into expressions of macho posturings which sit uneasily with his habitual use of - and undeniable pleasure in - the library. His tee total is also at odds with the social expectations. Maggie's truth concerning his unrestrained, irresponsible sexual appetite also undermines him. "Aye, I was your whore. An I'd nae winning that i can mind o."
Alec and Isa

The relationship forms a sub plot. Alec is Maggie and John's eldest son, and Isa his his wife.

Alec is weak and, finally, violent. He is easily manipulated by his wife but can also manipulate his mother, taking cigarettes and money from his mother at every occasion. He is a spoilt young man. He is dishonest and has been in trouble with the police. He lacks understanding, is jealous and selfish because he is immature and can only tackle the perceived problem in his marriage by resorting to violence, first by drawing a knife on Isa and then by nearly strangling her. Alec leaves the play vowing revenge on Isa and her new man.

Isa is hard, calculating and ambitious. She is somewhat independent and highly flirtatious in nature, not afraid to use her sexuality to get what she wants. "You're no the only pebble on my beach." She will even go so far as to flirt with John - "You're a man as well's ma father-in-law". Unlike Alec's mother, she will not kowtow to Alec's demands. Her independence is not, however, like Lily's and she has little sense of her own identity. She adopts the culturally accepted behaviour that a woman's identity is a reflection of her man's. Her independence is less economic than Lily's and less revolutionary than Maggie's.

Jenny

Jenny, like most young people, wants a better life for herself. She has been the apple of her father's eye but is also the recipient of his aggression. She reveals the disparity between the family's ambitions and the stark reality of their social and economic conditions. She is ambitious for herself and realises that, like Isa, she can use her sexuality to further her own desires. When she leaves home, appalled at the restrictions which their poverty imposes on her, she breaks John's heart and heightens his guilt. His inability to find work means he cannot provide her with the kind of life she wants.

It is her pivotal role in the play that drives the plot and she acts as the deus ex machina. (The phrase comes from Roman Theatre and means God from the machine. Playwrights were instructed by Horace that they should not resort to having a God appear to solve an insurmountable problem to end their play. It was seen as a poor story telling technique. In Roman (and Greek) Theatre a crane (machine) was used to lower actors playing "gods" into the acting area - hence deus ex machina.) Her reappearance at the end with enough money ("wages o' sin" and "whore's winnins") to set the family up in a "decent part of the toon" provides the resolution - the happy ending - though some would criticise this as unrealistic. Note that the resolution does not return the family to the state at the opening of the play - the status quo - It is a new set of circumstances which are created by Maggie's wishes not John's abilities. Jenny's role is pivotal in allowing Maggie to complete her journey to self-discovery and self-actualisation.
Men Should Weep Quotation Exercise
Find quotes for the following:

**Poor quality housing**

**Lack of food and malnutrition**

**Unsanitary conditions**

**Lack of income**

**Extreme poverty**
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Granny’s living situation</th>
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<td>Maggie’s role in the household</td>
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John’s lack of employment

Alec’s dishonesty

Expected role of children

Women’s jobs

Men’s jobs
The neighbours’ attitude to the Morrison family
Men Should Weep

Quotes

Poverty

Stage Directions: “A space has been cleared, centre, for a mattress on the floor with pillows, blankets and old coats.”

Lily (talking about Maggie) “Livin in a slum an slavin after a useless man an his greetin weans.”

Edie: ‘Ma. I’m hungry, Ma’

Edie: ‘I’ve nae breeks.’

Maggie: ‘Money disnae stretch’

Lily (talking about the wean Christopher): ‘Whit else is bowly legs but rickets?’

Maggie: ‘Someday we’ll have a wireless, son.

Lily: ‘And ye can tell yon precious Alec o yours that the next time he maks enough at the dugs, tae get fleelin drunk in the middle o Argyle Street, he can pay me back ma ten shilingy note.’. This shows that Alec gambles, gets drunk and borrows money.

Jenny talking about her mum waiting at her work for rotten fruit: ‘I had enough o Ma waitin at the shop door every Friday closing time….askin for chipped apples an bashed tomatoes an disgracing me afore the hale shop.’

Granny: ‘Maggie aye bought a bit bacon wi ma pension’

Poor housing: ‘Your Alec’s street. The hooses has collapsed.’

Lack of hygiene- Maggie when she finds out that Mrs Harris’ daughter has nits: ‘So just you get something frae the chemist’s or I’ll get the Sanitary tae ye.’

Maggie: ‘It’s only rich folks can keep theirselves tae theirselves. Folks like us huv tae depend on their neighbours when they’re needin help.’

John: ‘Every time I’ve had tae say “no” tae you an the weans it’s doubled me up like a kick in the stomach. Christ Almighty! A we’ve din wrong is tae be born intae poverty! Whit dae they think this kind o life dis tae a man? Whiles it turns ye intae a wild animal. Whiles ye’re a human question mark, aye askin why? Why? Why? There’s nae answer. ‘Ye end up a bent back and a heid hanging in shame for whit ye canna help.’

Maggie: ‘An then rin across tae the baker an see if there’s ony stale tea-breid left.’

Jenny on that fact that Bertie can’t come back to the house because of the damp: ‘Mammy seems tae think they’re letting Bertie hame; but they’re not. No here. No tae this, Mammy.’

Jenny on why Bertie can’t come home from hospital: ‘It’s rotten, this hoose. Rotten. Damp. Ye ken yersel. It’s a midden looking oot on ither middens. It’s got rats, bugs’
Unemployment

John: ‘Hundred o us, Maggie, beggin for the chance tae earn enough for food and a roof ower our heids.’

‘A man’s got nae right tae bring weans intae the world if he canna provide for them.’

‘Things’ll no aye be like this, Jenny. I ken it’s no the hame for you yer mammy an me would like, but it’s no oor fault…it’s the way things are.’

Jenny shouting at her father John: ‘Some men gets on and makes money, depression or no. Ithers hasnae the brains.’

John – on Jenny leaving home: ‘An I couldna mak enough tae gie her a decent hame. So! She’s left us! She’s as guid as deid tae us.’

John: ‘I’ve had nae prime. I got married. Nae trainin. Nae skill; juist a laborer when there wis labourin needed; and when there’s nane – the Burroo.

When John finally gets a job in Act 3: ‘This is the first Chrisimas I’ve had a decent job for ten year; it’s gonnae be the best.’

John: ‘There’s naebody can ca me a layabout. I worked when there wis work tae get.’

Role of men
Lily suggests that John should be ashamed of himself for giving Maggie ‘all the weans’, Maggie defends John:

‘He’s a man and I’m a wumman. We’re flesh and blood’

Maggie always sticks up for John:
‘Lily: “If John wid gie hissel a shake…”’
Maggie: “You leave John alone! He does his best for us.”

When Alec and Isa’s hoose fell down, John had no sympathy: Mrs Wilson: ‘My thae men! Nae word o sympathy! They’re right hard nuts.’

Maggie: ‘That’s just talk. If onythin wis tae happen tae ony o the weans, John would tak it bad. They canna staun up tae things like a wumman. They loss the heid and shout.’

John insulting his son: ‘You couldna knock doon an empty midden-bin’
Alec: There ye are! That’s whit ma feyther thinks o me. Ye’ve aye been the same tae me. Despisin…Despisin.’

Isa to Alec after he comforts his mum: ‘Mammy’s bit tumphy! G’on ye big lump o dough!’

John: ‘Tae Hell wi this Jessie business every time I’m oot o a job! I’m no turning masel intae a bloomin skivvy! I’m a man!’

Isa to Alec after he has tried to choke her: ‘Goad! Yon wis rough, Alec! That’s mair like a man!’

John – when Jenny says she has the money to help the family out to move to somewhere better: ‘I’d an idea I wis the heid o this hoose’
Role of women

Maggie thinks Lily’s life is awful: ‘Servin durty hulkin brutes of men in a Coocaddens pub.’

Maggie telling John about Jenny: ‘She’s wantin tae leave hame’

Jenny not wanting the life that her mother has: ‘The kitchen’s aye like a pig-sty…there’s never ony decent food, an if there wis, ye’d hae nae appetite for it…an sleepin in a bed-closet in side a snoring aul wife. Naw I’ve had enough. Im gonna live ma ain life.’

Isa on her husband Alec: ‘He’ll dae whit I tell him, that’s mair than you can say. I can twist him roon ma little finger.’

Maggie on her relationship with John: ‘It’s because things have aye been right atween you an me that I can struggle on.’

Maggie: ‘I dinna ken whit way we bring weans intae the world at a. Slavin an worryin for them a yer days, an naethin but heartbreak at the end o it.’ After Bertie has to stay in hospital with TB and Jenny says she’s leaving.

Jenny – about leaving home: ‘There’s better places than this. Jist because I wis born here disnae mean I’ve got tae bide here.’

Maggie to John after John says Alec can’t get any whisky: ‘Who earned that money? You or me?’ Maggie standing up for herself and challenging her husband.

When Maggie loses it and hits her son Ernest, John says: ‘Yer mammy’s just tired. She’s been oot a day cleanin ither folks’ hooses, and mebbe we ought tae hae helped mak things a bit easier for her.’

Jenny defending her ‘sugar-daddy’: ‘The man I’m livin wi is kind, an generous…. ‘We’ve a nice wee flat in a clean district wi trees an wee gardens.’

John to Jenny when she offers him money: ‘You can take that back tae yir fancy man. We’re wantin nane o yir whore’s winnins here.’

Maggie when she stands up to John at the end and takes control: ‘Whit wis I , when we was coortin, but your tart….aye I wis your whore. An I’d nae winnins that I can mind o.’

Maggie: ‘Dinna fret yersel, Jenny. I can manage him…I can aye manage him’ talking about John and how she ‘can always take control and make the decisions’
Political

Granny: ‘Goad bless Lloyd George! Him that gie’d us wur pension books.

Maggie: ‘I dinna ken whit they dirty rotten buggers in Parliament are daein wi ma money, but they’re daein something.’

Maggie to John after he’s been ‘looking for work all day’: ‘Aye I’ve seen yous men looking for work. Haudin up the street corners, ca’in doon the Government – telling the world whit you’d dae if you wis rinnin the country’

Elderly

Maggie (talking about Granny)
‘I wish you could pit yersel tae bed. Ye’re as much bother an anither wean.’

Granny: ‘I’m jist an aul nuisance takin up room.’

Mrs Wilson: ‘old folks is an awfu problem.’

Granny: ‘It’s awfu tae be aul an kicked about frae yin hoose tae the ither.’

Violence/ Crime

Lily talking about Alec – the violence ‘Ye mind yon tempers? Mind the time he jist missed me wi the breid knife?’

‘John takes Jenny by the shoulders and shakes her’ - stage directions.

‘John hits her across the face’ - stage directions John hitting Jenny.

Trouble that Alec had got into in the past. – ‘the Polis…and the court…and yon Probation Officer.’

Mrs Harris on seeing Mrs Bone’s black eye that she got from her husband: ‘Hoo’s yer keeker the day? Och, it’s no near as bad as the last yin ye had. Whit did ye bump intae this time?

Lily to Alec about Isa: ‘If I wis you, Alec, I’d wallop that impudent wife o yours till she wis black an blue.’

Alec about stealing the handbag: ‘It’s no safe, Isa – ye’ve got tae get rid o the evidence-the Polis…’

Alec after Isa has been flirting with another man: ‘I’ll kill ye! I wull! I’ll kill ye!

Suicide – Alec: ‘If I chucked masel intae the Clyde naebody’d care. I wisht I could! But she’s right – I hevnae the guts!’
Suicide – Jenny: ‘it kind o slinks alang slow, a river, in the night. I was meanin tae let it tak me alang wi it.’

Isa and Maggie arguing: Isa: ‘You keep yer insultin names tae yersel, ye dirty aul bitch!’ Maggie: ‘I’ll learn ye tae ca me a bitch (she slaps Isa’s face)’

Maggie loses it when she sees Ernest’s scuffed toe-caps on his new boots: ‘Whaur d’ye think I’ll find the money for anither pair? Oh, I cannae staun ony mair o this…I cannae staun it!….(shouting at John)Leave me alane! … I hate ye! I hate the hale lot o ye!

Alec to Isa after pulling a knife and holding it to her face: ‘Mark ye? Whit makes ye think I’d stop at spoilin yer face for ye?’