

GEORGE

I used to dream that when I grew up I'd learn everything there was to know about the stars.

(thoughtful pause)

Funny. I haven't thought about all that in years. I'm not usually sentimental.

BERT

S'good to look back sometimes.

GEORGE

Is it? I'm not so sure.

A MAN HAS DREAMS OF WALKING WITH GIANTS,
TO CARVE HIS NICHE IN THE EDIFICE OF TIME.
BEFORE THE MORTAR OF HIS ZEAL
HAS THE CHANCE TO CONGEAL,

The cup is dashed from his lips.
The flame is snuffed aborning.
He's brought to rack and ruin in his prime!

BERT

Life's a rum go, Guv'nor, and that's the truth.

GEORGE

You know what I think? It's Mary Poppins! From the moment she stepped into the house, things began to happen to me!

MY WORLD WAS CALM, WELL ORDERED, EXEMPLARY.
THEN CAME THIS PERSON WITH CHAOS IN HER WAKE,
AND NOW MY LIFE'S AMBITIONS GO WITH ONE FELL BLOW.
IT'S QUITE A BITTER PILL TO TAKE.

It's that Poppins woman! She's responsible for all this!

BERT

I know the very person. What's that thing she's always saying?

A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR, THAT IS ALL IT TAKES.
IT CHANGES BREAD AND WATER INTO TEA AND CAKES.
A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR GOES A LONG, LONG WAY,
SO 'AVE YOURSELF AN 'EALTHY 'ELPING EVERY DAY.

GEORGE

A healthy helping of trouble if you ask me!

(GEORGE attempts to occupy himself with papers in his study.)

BERT

Like you say, Guv'nor.

(placing the vase pieces carefully in the rubbish bin)

YOU'VE GOT TO GRIND, GRIND, GRIND AT THAT GRINDSTONE
THOUGH CHILDHOOD SLIPS LIKE SAND THROUGH A SIEVE.
AND ALL TOO SOON THEY'VE UP AND GROWN,
AND THEN THEY'VE FLOWN, AND IT'S TOO LATE FOR YOU TO GIVE...

(The CHILDREN come out of the nursery and start downstairs. MARY POPPINS watches remains behind on the stairs. GEORGE re-enters the parlor.)

JUST THAT SPOONFUL OF SUGAR TO 'ELP THE MEDICINE GO DOWN,
THE MEDICINE GO DOWN, MEDICINE GO DOWN...

(holds out his hand to GEORGE)

Well, good luck, Guv'nor.

(For a moment, GEORGE is still and then, deliberately, he takes the sooty paw and shakes it firmly.)

GEORGE

Thank you, Bert. And good luck to you, too.

(BERT pauses in the hall only to turn and look up at MARY POPPINS. She answers his look with a nod and he leaves. The CHILDREN approach their father cautiously. As they speak, MARY POPPINS comes down silently, carrying something.)

JANE

Father...

GEORGE

What is it?

MICHAEL

We've come to say goodnight.

GEORGE

Ah. Yes. Goodnight.

(But GEORGE is less severe than usual. JANE approaches.)

JANE

Daddy, do you remember when we came to the bank?

GEORGE

Yes.