

## SALLY WORBOYES

Sally Worboyes was born and grew up in Stepney in East London with her four brothers and a sister. She brings a lot of the raw history of her own family background to her work. A lot of her work is based in the East End of London with such titles as Down Stepney Way, Over Bethnal Green, Mile End Gate and Whitechapel Mary amongst others. These are all references to places in the East End of London. Sally Worboyes now lives in Norfolk with her husband with whom she has three grown up children.

<u>BOOKS AND PLAYS BY SALLY WORBOYES</u>	
1995 THE DINNER LADY THE HOUSE PLANT	KEEP ON DANCING WHITECHAPEL MARY GIRL FROM BRICK LANE
1996 RED SEQUINS	
1997 THE HOP PICKERS (MUSICAL) WILD HOPS	2002 BANISHED FROM BOW TOBACCO DOCK SPARROW'S NEST TIME WILL TELL JAMAICA STREET
1998 DOWN STEPNEY WAY OVER BETHNAL GREEN MILE END GATE	
2000 DOCKER'S DAUGHTER THE DINNER LADY	2004 EAST END MEMOIR

### THE HOUSE PLANT - PLAY SYNOPSIS

The play title is a 'play on words' which is to say that the title has two meanings. A 'House Plant' is simply any leaved plant that is found in a house to add decoration. The other meaning of 'plant' is when something is 'planted' somewhere. In the context of the play the old lady is the 'plant' which means she has been put into the house with a specific reason in mind. The reason becomes clearer as the play unfolds.

5 The play starts with Mrs. Clark in her room, she looks old and frail. The doorbell rings and we meet Lee-Anne and Philip, who are prospective buyers of the property. The property however has to be bought with Mrs. Clark as a sitting tenant. This means that she has the right to stay in the house until she leaves or dies.

Lee-Anne and Philip start looking around the house. They are sure that Mrs. Clark won't be around for long and therefore the value of the house will go up without her there. They have obviously done this type of thing  
10 before with no regard for the sitting tenant.

The play then moves forward a few weeks when Lee-Anne and Philip have bought the house and are moving in. They start to plan how they will assist in removing Mrs. Clark from the house by either driving her out or affecting her health in some way. There seems to be something different however as Mrs. Clark  
15 seems to have got younger! She has changed her appearance and offers the young couple a present - a rubber plant (a 'House Plant') that she knows Lee-Anne hates.

Mrs. Clark by now seems to have 'lost' quite a few years and puts it down to the younger couple giving her new youthful energy. Lee-Anne decides to start her attempt to drive Mrs. Clark out. She starts to tap dance on the floor above Mrs. Clark's room to annoy her. Mrs. Clark however decides to confront Lee-Anne and gives her a tap dancing lesson! The battle between Lee-Anne and Mrs. Clark has begun.

20 One Sunday afternoon Mrs. Clark invites a quite a few of her friends around for a garden party as she has access to the garden. They are enjoying themselves, making a lot of noise and disturbing Lee-Anne and Philip who are unable to do anything about it. Things get much worse however as Agnes, one of Mrs. Clark's friends, has to use their toilet as the others are engaged. Lee-Anne and Philip start to argue as the plans are going horribly wrong. Things get even worse when Agnes is unable to pull her knickers up and is asking  
25 them for assistance.

The couple have finally had enough and have decided to sell up but no-one seems interested in buying the house. The final scene is when things finally become clearer as to what has happened. We hear Mrs. Clark talking to the estate agent who is also her lover. They have arranged for any potential buyers to view the house while the couple are at work and Mrs. Clark has managed to put them all off. The estate agent now  
30 makes them an offer to sell the house at a loss just to get away.

We discover at the end that Mrs. Clark is an actress who has been playing the part of the old lady with the purpose of driving the couple away. She has played the young couple at their own game and won. She now plans on how to spend the money they have made from buying the house back at a cheaper price. She flicks through a holiday brochure deciding where they will go with the money they have made.