



CASTLES

OF

STEEL

BY

NICK WRAY

A PLAY FOR RADIO SET AGAINST

THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND 1916

CASTLES OF STEEL

A 60-minute radio drama set against the Battle of Jutland, 1916

BY NICK WRAY

“One man can lose WW1 in an afternoon...
...but which man is it?”

Part 1 of 5 (Scenes 1 – 7)

The full text of ‘Castles of Steel’ by Nick Wray is now available
on Amazon in print and e-book. [Click here.](#)

More information at: www.castlesofsteel.com

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Biography

Nick Wray is a freelance writer who also works on 'Futures' projects. Nick has written for the *Independent*, *Screen Digest* and *Viewfinder*, as well as other publications and media. Nick has an MA in Interactive Media from the Royal College of Art and his polemic on the digital world, *The Living Garden*, won the ICL-Fujitsu prize for innovation in media. Nick's short play 'Heart of Glass', about Google Glass, was recently shortlisted by the Finsbury Theatre, London 'Little Pieces of Gold' competition.

Nick is currently working on '[Lunch with Jason King](#)' - a collection of short stories & bedtime tales from the past, present & future of the Digital Age.

CAST & FANTASY CASTING SUGGESTIONS

Gunner Armstrong (middle aged) - **Bernard Hill/Jerome Flynn/Robson Green**

Vice-Admiral David Beatty – Jellicoe’s second in command (the cruiser fleet) – **Matthew MacFadyen/ Peter Firth/ Michael Fassbender/Anthony Hopkins/Christian Bale**

Winston Churchill – Voice talent/doubling

Jack Cornwell (16 year old boy gunner from Leyton) – Voice talent

Lily Cornwell – Jack’s mother – **Julie Walters**

John ‘Jacky’ Fisher (Ex-First Sea Lord and naval driving force of the Dreadnought) – **Ian Holm**

Lieutenant Grant – Jellicoe’s gunnery officer – **David Tennant/Ewan McGregor**

Admiral John Jellicoe – Commander in Chief of the British Grand Fleet (the Battleship fleet) – **Ralph Fiennes/Jeremy Irons/Colin Firth/Ben Kingsley**

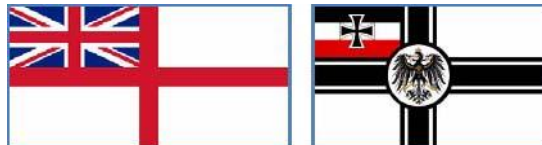
Lord Kitchener (Secretary of State for War) – Voice talent

Lieutenant Ralph Seymour (‘Flags’) – Beatty’s signal officer – **Kenneth Branagh/Rupert Everett**

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This work ‘Castles of Steel’, a play for radio, is a *fictional interpretation and re-telling* of the real events and characters in the contentious WW1 naval engagement of 1916 known as the Battle of Jutland, in which the British and German fleets met *en masse* for the first and only time during the course of the First World War...

*



Production notes

Lightest to heaviest ships have different acoustics to establish size:

HMS Chester (Jack) Lightest armoured scout: highest pitched engines, but harmonic.
A happy ship.

HMS Lion (Beatty) a large cruiser: acoustic mid-range bass, but dissonant. HMS Lion's engines etc. always have a discordant quality (rising with the action)

HMS Iron Duke (Jellicoe) Largest battleship: deepest, most powerful, but also harmonic acoustic. Include theme of chess clock ticking (UNDER) each time scene opens

“Der Tag!” Map of the Jutland/Skagerrak battle area

The ‘Jutland’ battle area (blue, below) where the British Fleets (commanded by Jellicoe & Beatty) Met the German Fleets (Hipper & Scheer) in 1916



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SCENE 1.

EXT – HMS CHESTER. FORWARD OPEN GUN TURRET.

FX DREAM-LIKE ECHOIC ACOUSTIC. WE ARE HEARING EVENTS
YET TO COME (IN SCENE 20) SHELL VOLLEYS AND NEAR
MISSES IN THE SEA.

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Christ, they've got our range!

FX MORE RAPID SHELL VOLLEYS LAND CLOSELY

(IN FALSE SPIRITS). Bit close for comfort, eh Jack me lad?

JACK CORNWELL: (SOBBING) I want to go home. I want to go home.

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: So do I mate! (SINGS LINE FROM HEARTS OF OAK) 'Steady Boy
Steady!'

JACK CORNWELL: (HYSTERICALLY) Let me go! Let me go!

FX SHELLS EXPLODE ON DECK. TEARING METAL AND SCREAMS
FADE OUT

SCENE 2.

GRAMS: FADE UP 'A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE'
INSTRUMENTAL PLAYED BY THE BAND OF H M ROYAL
MARINES. MIXED TO SOUND LIKE BAND IS MARCHING PAST
OUTSIDE THE ARMY & NAVY CLUB.

INT: FISHER ENTERS CLUB. CHURCHILL AND KITCHENER ARE INSIDE PLAYING CARDS.

FX GRAMS CHANGE AS DOOR CLOSSES. WE HEAR THE SOUNDS OF
A GENTLEMEN'S CLUB, MURMURS. DRINKS. FISHER'S
FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

CHURCHILL: Winner takes all, Lord Kitchener? (ASIDE) Ah, Fisher!

FX FISHER SITS IN A CHAIR BETWEEN CHURCHILL AND KITCHENER
WHO ARE PLAYING CARDS

FISHER: Winston, Lord Kitchener.

KITCHENER: 'K', please. That's another ten Guineas, I'm down.

FISHER: Playing for gain, again, Winston? I thought that the Army &
Navy Club disapproved of that kind of behaviour? I'm sorry I'm
late.

CHURCHILL: Proper pea souper outside, Fisher.

FISHER: (COUGHING) And inside, Winston! Must you always smoke
those infernal cigars? (COUGHS) I can barely see what you're
up to.

CHURCHILL: Smog of War! Anyway, I smoke less than your fleet does, Fisher.

FISHER: It's thanks to my warships that you can enjoy a good Havana. And a drink. (UNDER) Or two.

CHURCHILL: "It's not just France we are fighting for, but Champagne!"
(LAUGHS)

FX SOUND OF CORK POPPING THEN CHAMPAGNE POURING

FISHER: (IRRITATED) Quaff away, Winston. Meanwhile, the navy is securing our people's daily bread.

CHURCHILL: Now, now Fisher, don't get Bolshy.

FISHER: At least their revolutionaries are working together to win their war.

CHURCHILL: Here, a cigar will calm you?

FISHER: You know I don't. Filthy habit!

CHURCHILL: (NEEDLING) Some caviar then?

FISHER: You may laugh, Winston. But should the Kaiser ever gain the upper hand at sea, then securing cigars, champagne, *or* caviar, will be the least of our worries. (FISHER TAKES A BREATH TO CALM DOWN). So, 'K'. Are you winning?

KITCHENER: Poker or the war?

FISHER: (GIGGLES) Either?

KITCHENER: Neither, I'm afraid. The War Cabinet has given me the boot.

FISHER: I had no idea. I'm sorry, K. Still 'Your Country Needs You'?

KITCHENER: I'm not sure that it does. I'm taking the bullet for the shell shortage.

FISHER: That's a bit rum. Fat lot of difference popping away at them in the trenches seems to be making anyway.

FX LOW SOUND OF ANOTHER CHAMPAGNE CORK POPPING IN BACKGROUND

KITCHENER: I'm being sent to Siberia, so to speak. "To liaise with the Russians." (PAUSE) I'm to sail to St Petersburg in a week or so, from, oh where is it? Up in the Orkneys?

FISHER: Scapa Flow! It will be an astounding sight for you. We've over a 100 warships there right now, including all our castles of steel!

KITCHENER: Castles of steel?

CHURCHILL: Battleships. Fisher's very proud of his battleships. He virtually invented the Dreadnought! Biggest, strongest, most heavily armed and armoured ships the world has ever seen.

KITCHENER: I'm afraid, even on the mightiest of vessels, my sea legs are weak.

FISHER: *Fear God and Dread Nought*, Lord Kitchener. I'll wire Admiral Jellicoe, the fleet commander. He'll look after you.

KITCHENER: I doubt that even an admiral can order the sea to calm enough for me.

FISHER: You'll be in safe hands.

CHURCHILL: Perhaps too safe?

FISHER: What do you mean, Winston?

CHURCHILL: Ever played poker with Jellicoe?

FISHER: (DEFENSIVELY) It's not his game.

CHURCHILL: (SARCASTICALLY) Too risky?

FISHER: Jellicoe's more of a chess player. He's a brilliant mind.

CHURCHILL: There's a difference between check mate and stalemate.

FISHER: That's unfair.

CHURCHILL: But is he *too* cautious? It's been *two years*. We've lost half a million men since 1914. Kitchener, show Fisher the latest casualty figures in today's *Times*?

FX SOUND OF NEWSPAPER BEING WAFTED

The country grows impatient for the War to end.

FISHER: You mean, I think Winston, that the country grows impatient with *you*?

CHURCHILL: We have the largest navy the World has ever seen, equipped with the most powerful and advanced weapons of mass destruction ever developed, the Dreadnought battleship, thanks to you, my dear Fisher.

FISHER: You flatter me.

CHURCHILL: And that's it! It's a bloody waste!

FISHER: Winston!

CHURCHILL: I mean it! 100 ocean-going Titans. Leviathans! Built for 'Der Tag', the next Trafalgar! It's time we put them to the test.

FISHER: Stop playing to the gallery. It's a blockade Jellicoe's managing, Winston. Not a punch up. Not the next Trafalgar! If the chance comes, Beatty//

KITCHENER: Sir David Beatty?

FISHER: Yes, Jellicoe's second in command. Beatty's in charge of our cruisers – our eyes and ears, Lord Kitchener. Should the Hochseeflotte, the German High Seas Fleet, ever set to sea, then Beatty's job is to alert Jellicoe and his (sarcastically) *Leviathans*, (NORMAL) so they can deal with the Kaiser's fleet.

CHURCHILL: But when? *When* are we going to play our hand, Fisher? All that power you've built up for us. All that investment! For the country, for the Empire. Just swinging at anchor in Scapa Flow.

FISHER: Jellicoe exercises them tirelessly.

CHURCHILL: You would say that. Jellicoe's your protégé.

FISHER: And Beatty is yours.

CHURCHILL: Well then. Head-to-head: would you put a Guinea on Jellicoe to win?

FISHER: How many times, Winston? You know that's not the game. As long as the Kaiser's ships are bottled up in Wilhelmshaven, we're free to reinforce our troops in Flanders by sea. Whilst starving Germany into submission. It's Win-Win Winston!

CHURCHILL: There must be a short-cut?

KITCHENER: Like Gallipoli?

CHURCHILL: Ouch!

FISHER: If Jellicoe wagers the fleet on a bad hand, he could lose the entire war for us in an afternoon.

CHURCHILL: (LAUGHING) I'll write that down. I might use it.

FISHER: You always do, Winston, you always do!

FX FOOTSTEPS AS MESSENGER APPROACHES FISHER

What is it? Excuse me, gentlemen.

FX OPENS TELEGRAM

CHURCHILL: You looked flushed, Fisher?

FISHER: (PAUSE) The German admirals must have been listening to you Winston.

CHURCHILL: What?

FISHER: It's from the admiralty. (UNDER) Intelligence. A handful of German light cruisers have set to sea. If we're quick, we may just be able to bag them! Fancy joining me for some sport, gentlemen?

FX LOUD CHAMPAGNE CORK POPS IN BACKGROUND

SCENE 3.

INT – JELlicOE’S CABIN HMS IRON DUKE.

FX HMS IRON DUKE AT SEA. IN BACKGROUND ENGINES
THROBBING ON HALF SPEED. BELLS SOUND FOR CHANGE OF
WATCH AND SOUND OF SAILORS’ CRIES AND FOOTSTEPS.
FADE UP TICKING CHESS CLOCK

JELlicOE: See this, Grant?

GRANT: Admiral Jellicoe?

JELlicOE: “The Rules of Chess”

GRANT: The rules of chess? I’m lost?

JELlicOE: Look at it.

FX BOOK HANDED OVER, PAGES TURNING

GRANT: There’s not a lot to look at?

JELlicOE: Exactly. Within a few pages, you have a formula for every game of chess that ever has been, or ever will be played.

GRANT: Admiral?

JELLICOE: Implicit within a few basic instructions, every imaginable match and outcome is contained.

GRANT: But not individually described?

JELLICOE: Exactly. My job, as Admiral //

GRANT: // As chess grandmaster?

JELLICOE: You're too kind! My job is not to write the rules of the game //

GRANT: Fisher and his Pond-life have done that?

JELLICOE: (COUGHS) Precisely: the naval blockade of Germany. No, my job is to come up with moves that ensure the Kaiser //

GRANT: Loses?

JELLICOE: No. *Resigns.*

GRANT: What's the difference?

JELLICOE: Avoiding a head-to-head. Ensuring we win *and* emerge from the war with the Royal Navy – and therefore the Empire – completely intact.

GRANT: We've the biggest navy the world's ever seen! Surely, if it came to it, we can afford to lose a few pieces?

JELLICOE: When even a pawn is at least a thousand men in a ship? No! We need every one of our pieces. The fleet must remain equal in size to the combination of the next two strongest navies in Europe. It's a rule, immutable as any rule of chess. It ensures our security.

GRANT: Of course. The Two Power Standard. Splendid isolation and a bloody big bat!

JELLICOE: So we need to maintain that margin, not fritter away our ships (PAUSE) or men on reckless plays.

GRANT: So how do we win?

JELLICOE: Simple. Stalemate. A naval blockade of Germany blocks their raw materials. Munitions, war *materiel* and food.

GRANT: Starvation. A 'game to the death'? Not very sporting, is it?

JELLICOE: No, Grant. But then commanding a hundred warships crewed by tens of thousands of men isn't a game is it?

FX FADE UP TICKING CLOCK

SCENE 4.

EXT – HMS CHESTER. FORWARD OPEN BACKED GUN TURRET

FX BACKGROUND SEAGULLS / LIGHT CRUISER IN DOCKS

(ROSYTH)

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Come on, Jack. Show us your cards. It's your turn.

JACK CORNWELL: In a minute. What's the date Mr Armstrong?

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: It's Midshipman, Gunner Armstrong, Jack me lad.

JACK CORNWELL: Sorry Mr, Gunner//

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: It's the 30th May, lad.

JACK CORNWELL: (PLAYFULLY) Boy Seaman Cornwell, if you will, Gunner Armstrong.

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: (LAUGHING) You cheeky monkey!

JACK CORNWELL: (READING OUT AS HE WRITES) "Friday 30th May 1916. Rosyth. Dear Mum, she's lovely, the *Chester*. She's a small, light cruiser//

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Censor won't let you say that, Jack me Lad. Don't you know there's a war on?

JACK CORNWELL: (READING OUT AS HE WRITES) “small, *scout ship*”, then. “I saw Captain Beatty//”

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: //Vice-Admiral Beatty!

JACK CORNWELL: (READING OUT AS HE WRITES) “Vice-Admiral Beatty on *HMS Lion* yesterday. What a sight! A lion on a Lion! “

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: And you his cub?

JACK CORNWELL: (READING OUT AS HE WRITES) “Edinburgh looks grand. And stop fretting, Mum. I’m one of Beatty’s Boys now. I’m in safe hands. Love, Jack.”

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Lovely. Now come on. Show us your cards.

JACK CORNWELL: (READING OUT AS HE WRITES) “PS Thanks for the baccy as well as the ciggie cards. Once I nab the Kaiser, I’ll have a full set.”//

FX LETTER PUT AWAY. JACK LAYS CIGARETTE CARD DOWN

JACK CORNWELL: Right! “*Iron Duke*”. Commander: Admiral Jellicoe. (BEAT). Let’s see? “ (BEAT). Speed, 22 knots?

FX ARMSTRONG LAYS CIGARETTE CARD DOWN

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Ha! “*HMS Lion*”. Commander: Vice-Admiral Beatty (BEAT): speed, 31 knots! (MAKES SOUND OF EXPLOSION) Trumps!

SCENE 5.

INT – CABIN HMS IRON DUKE.

FX HMS IRON DUKE AT ANCHOR IN SCAPA. A RISING STORM.
CHESS GAME IN PROGRESS. SOUND OF CHESS CLOCK TICKING

JELlicoe: Anything from Rosyth, yet, Grant?

GRANT: Nothing, yet, Admiral Jellicoe. Weather's turning.

FX CHESS CLOCK BEING SWITCHED BY GRANT

GRANT: Your move, Sir.

FX SOUND OF RAIN AND DISTANT THUNDER.

JELlicoe: Sorry where were we? Let's see. (BEAT) Knight to E7.

FX CHESS PIECE MOVED ON CHESS BOARD

Check mate in one, Grant.

FX SOUND OF CHESS CLOCK BEING SWITCHED BY JELlicoe

GRANT: Where? How?

JELLICOE: My Knight?

GRANT: You can't check-mate with cavalry alone!

JELLICOE: No, but look, Grant. My castles are all in support.

GRANT: How on earth did you manage to // I didn't even see them!
I've as much chance of beating you as Beatty has of hitting his targets.

FX CHESS PIECES FALL AS SHIP ROLLS AT ANCHOR. METALLIC
CLANKING AND SHIP'S BELL RINGS WITH SWELL.

JELLICOE: Damn it. I've lost half my pieces.

GRANT: Saved by the bell!

JELLICOE: Saved by the swell!

GRANT: Scapa's turning rough, again. John (BEAT) Admiral Jellicoe. Are you all right?

JELLICOE: A little giddy. The ship rolling.

GRANT: Or your anaemia?

JELLICOE: Delicately put. You mean my piles.

GRANT: John. The surgeon said you're dangerously anaemic. On top of which you're exhausted managing the fleet. Hundreds of

ships, thousands of men. What if we're suddenly called to action?

JELLICOE: Can you imagine?: 'Where's Jellicoe?' 'Oh he's dry docked. Getting his bottom scraped!' I can't, Grant. The German fleet could set to sea at any time. A change in command now could be disastrous.

GRANT: The Germans have hardly left their docks in Wilhelmshaven in two years, since the raids on our East Coast.

JELLICOE: Keeping them bottled up in port is the plan. To blockade, to stop them going to sea. And it's working. But the press and the public see stalemate. 'Nothing happening.' Meanwhile our troops are bled dry in the trenches.

GRANT: That's not your fault. You work the Fleet continuously, John. The Hochseeflotte daren't set to sea.

JELLICOE: The fleet was always supposed to be a deterrent. A means to avoid war. No one expected the Kaiser to actually try and trump us. I sometimes wonder if the King had let *Wilhelm* win a few more yacht races at Cowes, none of this would ever have happened? Not quite Trafalgar, though is it? Just sitting here? Rolling at anchor in this bloody swell.

GRANT: Nelson was on blockade for two years before he had his chance to 'engage the enemy more closely.' Our time will come.

JELLICOE: I suppose Beatty could cover me if I were taken ill?

GRANT: Beatty! *Really?*

JELLICOE: He sank some of their ships, last year.

GRANT: Beatty underestimates the Kaiser's fleet. There may be more of us, but their ships are newer, better armoured. And they shoot a lot straighter than we do.

JELLICOE Grant!

GRANT: It's true! And yet, he rarely exercises the cruiser fleet's gunnery and//

JELLICOE: //That's enough

GRANT: Sorry, Sir.

FX KNOCK AND STEWARD ENTERS CABIN WITH SIGNAL. SOUND OF ENVELOPE OPENING.

JELLICOE: Thank you Steward. Well, it's in. The signal from Rosyth.

GRANT: And?

JELLICOE: One-in-fifty.

GRANT: (WHISTLES). I'm sunk. That's another wager I've lost. I didn't think it would be that bad!

JELLICOE: Beatty's cruisers hit their practice targets just one in every fifty shots during the exercises.

GRANT: We're lucky their stray shots didn't knock down the Forth Bridge.

JELLICOE: Which is why, Grant, I'm sending you down to Rosyth to sort out their gunnery.

SCENE 6.

INT. – FOX & HOUNDS PUB. EDINBURGH

FX LIVELY PUB. SAILORS SINGING RISES AND FALLS AS PUB DOOR
OPENS AND CLOSES. VINTAGE OMNIBUS KLAXON SOUNDS IN
DISTANCE. WE HEAR A SCOTTISH LANDLORD CALL ‘WELCOME
TO THE FOX & HOUNDS, GENTLEMEN’ IN BACKGROUND.
SOUND OF BEER GLASSES KNOCKING

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: You spilt my pint.

JACK CORNWELL: (SLIGHTLY DRUNK TO JS1) ‘You spilt my pint Boy Seaman
Cornwell’, if you please.

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: You what!?

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Leave it alone, Jack. (TO JS1). We’re wetting the baby’s head.
His first pint. Or two.

JACK CORNWELL: It’s my third, in fact, Mr Gunner Officer Armstrong. (MOCK
ATTENTION). Sir!

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: He’s just a lad. We don’t want any trouble, do we ship mate?
No use crying over spilt milk. What’s the name on your cap?
Iron Duke, Jellicoe’s ship? You’ve come a long way. Let me buy
you another?

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: Piss off!

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: No call for that, is there? Let's all just enjoy our shore leave.

JACK CORNWELL: That's all you lot do, up in the Orkneys, isn't it. Stay ashore!

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Jack!

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: I'd rather be down here in Edinburgh, with you squirts, than up in the Orkneys any day.

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: (LOSING TEMPER) Then you'll have to jump ship, won't you? Jellicoe's never going to appear from behind the heather. "John Rushworth Jellicoe." 'aven't seen much rushing from 'im so far, 'ave we? Us cruisers is always being left to do your dirty work.

FX JACK CORNWELL'S CAP TAKEN BY JELlicoe SAILOR 1

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: Think I'll keep this as souvenir, then.

JACK CORNWELL: Give me my cap back, you!'

FX RIPPING SOUND OF CAP BAND REMOVED

JACK CORNWELL: He's ripped off my cap band.

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: (READS CAP BAND) *HMS Chester*. What's that? Five-inch guns?

JACK CORNWELL: Five-point-five!

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: (SARCASTICALLY) Oooohhh. 'Five-point-five!' Call that a warship?

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: I'd rather be in a small ship under Beatty, than lolling around doing nothing all day in one of Jellicoe's rust buckets.

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: You'll be pleased enough to see our battleships when it comes to the real punch up.

JACK CORNWELL: Give me back my cap!

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Oih, I've said, now pack it in, he's just a lad. Come on mate, give it back.

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: Spoils of War. Fight me for it?

JACK CORNWELL: Give it!

FX RUNS OUT OF PUB. SOUNDS OF SCUFFLES

EXT. FOX & HOUNDS PUB. EDINBURGH

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Leave it, son! Spoiling for a punch up, he is.

JACK CORNWELL: Yeah! You lot 'ave been idle in the Orkneys too long. Everyone says so.

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: (ANGRILY) Leave it out, Jack! We're on the same side.

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: Are we?

FX FAINT ENGINE NOISE INCREASES.

Listen!

JACK CORNWELL: 'Fraid of their own shadow, that lot.

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Jack!

JELLICOE SAILOR 1: It's a Zeppelin!

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: (CONCERNED) Where?

FX ENGINE NOISE INCREASES.

JELLICOE SAILOR 1: Look! Behind the clouds. A shadow. It's closing. Shall we run?

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Those bastards, if I could just get my hands on them, just once.

JELLICOE SAILOR 1: Run!

FX KLAXON AS OMNIBUS PASSES AND PULLS UP

JACK CORNWELL: (DRUNKEN BUT RELIEVED LAUGH) Can't even tell the difference between a blimp and a bus.

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Aye, aye, it's the MPs [Military Police].

MILITARY POLICEMAN: Finish up lads. Shore leave's cancelled. Everyone back to their ships. Something big's up.

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: Making smoke?

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Maybe it's for real this time?

JELlicoe SAILOR 1: (SARCASTICALLY) Again!

JACK CORNWELL: Looks like you Jelly Babies might get your chance after all, then? Unless you *Scapa* off again.

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Jack, come away, now. You'll get us killed.

JACK CORNWELL: We'll try and leave a few tiddlers for you, won't we Mr Armstrong?

GUNNER ARMSTRONG: Gunner Armstrong! Now come away with you!

JACK CORNWELL: (MOVING OFF) Yeah, a few tiddlers for you, and Jellicoe. If you can keep up. (OFF)

SCENE 7.

INT – BEATTY’S CABIN. HMS LION.

GRAMS (PLAYING ON GRAMOPHONE IN CABIN) GILBERT &
SULLIVAN THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE: I AM A PIRATE KING

BEATTY: Flags! Flags? Where the hell is that man?

FX RUNNING FEET, CABIN DOOR OPENS. GRAMOPHONE NEEDLE
JUMPS, SCRATCHES AND STOPS

There you are Seymour. Signal all cruiser crew. Return to Rosyth. Immediately.

SEYMOUR: The usual places? Golf course, cricket club, the cinemas?
(ARCHLY) The bordellos? (NORMAL) Shall I let your wife know, too?

BEATTY: (ANGRILY) On the basis that half the fleet will be *paying her compliments*, too?

SEYMOUR: I didn’t mean (PAUSE) I’ve got it, Sir. The invitation.

BEATTY: Sandringham? At least that will please her. What would I do without you?

SEYMOUR: Sir.

FX MONTAGE OF SOUNDS. MORSE CODE MIXED WITH V/O OF ADMIRALTY ORDERS TELLING SAILORS TO RETURN TO CRUISERS IN ROSYTH, EDINBURGH AND SET TO SEA. SOLO VOICE STARTS HEARTS OF OAK, OTHER YOUNG AND OLD JOIN IN, JOYFUL, EXCITED – WE HEAR THE REFRAIN ‘...STEADY BOY, STEADY’

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The full text of ‘Castles of Steel’ by Nick Wray is now available on Amazon in print and e-book. [Click here.](#)

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