

# GERMS

A musical play by Cenarth Fox  
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## Synopsis

The action takes place inside a human's body as some germs spread infection. The human fights back. It's a terrific struggle, a fight to the death - literally.

But all is not well amongst the germs. Some are rebellious and believe their leader has some dark and terrible secret. There is talk of a coup - a bloodless coup!

The story builds to a gripping climax. We do not know what will happen until the very last moment. *Germ*s is infectious!

## Setting

Your performing space becomes a part of the human's body, perhaps the duodenum. It need not be realistic. Instead any type of wild and colourful backdrop and props can be used. There should be several hidden exits which enable the germs to enter/exit without delay. The leader's shelter and an alarm are essential.

Use raised platforms [different levels] and, if possible, a fireman's pole or slide for spectacular movement. More detailed suggestions are provided in the free *Production Notes*. One of the benefits of staging *Germ*s is the flexibility of the set.

## Orchestrations

*Germ*s is scored for piano, guitar, bass, drum-kit, percussion, trumpet, trombone, flute, clarinet and strings. These snappy orchestrations are for hire.

## Production Package and CD

Groups staging a Cenarth Fox show are given production notes [set-design, costumes, lighting, etc] lyric sheets for chorus members and activity sheets related to the show. These items are all free. Backing CDs are available for all Fox musicals.

## First Performance

*Germ*s was first staged by the students and staff of Salesian College, Melbourne Australia in September 1981. It has since been staged with great success in Australia, Britain, New Zealand and the United States of America.

## **Reviews of this hugely popular musical staged by just about everyone everywhere!**

A great musical and a great piece of kids' theatre **Mansfield HS and PS**

The production of GERMS was absolutely magnificent. The play is brilliant in concept. All the things that make theatre a terrific experience were there **Wesley College**

GERMS was marvellous. Our school community was thrilled with the performance. Many commented on the appropriateness of the story and the lively music **Kyabram PS**

A night they will never forget **Firbank Anglican School**

GERMS offers everything - music, dance, dramatic effects. GERMS offers innovations **Nhulunbuy HS**

Outstanding ... again! **Shepparton PS**

GERMS was a great success and our kids are still walking on air **Mowbray College**

Thumbs up for the kids of Voiceworks for their production of GERMS. This was one of the funniest plays I've seen in a long time and everyone who saw the show laughed heartily

**Jennifer Billings**

Thank you for your prompt and courteous service during our production of GERMS. It was a great success and we played to packed houses **Galen Catholic College**

A very successful venture. We had great feedback from our audiences and the children loved the idea of the Germs' story **Inglewood PS**

GERMS was a ripper success **Kew East PS**

GERMS was absolutely fantastic **Fish Creek PS**

Children and audiences loved the show. GERMS was super

**Eltham East PS**

Essentially GERMS is a fanciful piece of nonsense trying to convince us that occasionally it might be an idea to reverse things and try to put yourself in someone else's place. This musical romp is a remarkably sophisticated, energetic and humourous production. The leading performers showed such astonishing acting and singing skills at times it was difficult to believe it was a school production **Douglas Aiton**

GERMS held the audiences spellbound **Salesian College**

Extremely well received and the students had a great time **Bundamba HS**

We enjoyed GERMS immensely ... audiences received the show with great enthusiasm **Wanganui Park HS**

Students and staff thoroughly enjoyed the experience of rehearsing and staging GERMS **Winchelsea HES**

The children and staff thoroughly enjoyed presenting GERMS. It was wonderful to see talents which otherwise may have remained hidden **Mulgrave PS**

The show was a great success and we received lots of positive feedback. Both the teachers and students really enjoyed GERMS. **St. Columba College**

GERMS was a great success **Beaconsfield Upper PS**

The music was catchy, lively and great fun to sing. Your marvellous play was just fantastic! **Iona College**

GERMS was just the best. It brought so much goodwill to our district. We had 210 kids on stage. The audiences were spellbound. The music is so infectious. We had the best time of all **Cambewarra PS**

Highly enjoyable, fun and full of energy

**Barcelona Elementary School Arizona**

Our students thoroughly enjoyed your excellent musical GERMS **Millmerran SS**

Lively singing and colourful costumes, GERMS was terrific

**Timboon P12 school**

A little note to again say how much I enjoyed the mighty GERMS. It really is a fantastic show. The kids thoroughly enjoyed staging the show and will certainly remember it for a long time to come

**Dandenong South PS**

A most successful and enjoyable experience. The music was bright, the tunes catchy and the students enjoyed learning the songs and the musicians enjoyed playing the score. GERMS is a bright involving play, and is adaptable to producers' whims and interpretation in movement, lighting and staging

**Sebastopol Technical School**

GERMS was a great success and loads of fun **Dakabin SHS**

GERMS is fresh, colourful, bouncy – and a little bit weird

**St Catherine's PS**

Thanks for a marvellous show. GERMS was a huge success. Everyone raved about it

**Star of the Sea College**

GERMS was outstanding – again! **St George's Road PS**

GERMS was thoroughly successful and most enjoyable **Emerald PS**

GERMS is a musical about power, loyalty, rebellion, betrayal and retribution. The drama is complemented by an infectious musical score and suitably diabolical set and costumes **Helena College**

GERMS was a great success. We had three casts of leads and played for three nights. Many parents are still talking about the catchiness of the music and how dad shaves to *Germs Are Never Afraid* **Roberts McCubbin PS**

A great musical. The audience was left in awe. We will certainly be lining up for another of your shows next year **Tacoma PS**

The kids had a ball. The parents loved it. I hope you enjoy the video as much as we did putting on the show **Clyde PS**

A musical extravaganza **Tokomaru PS**

The audience reaction was great. Comments included ... an excellent play for children ... great characters ... good, bright songs ... very funny. Everyone was really buzzing. **Taree Youth Theatre**

All went well and we got some good responses including the interesting, "It's modern" **Korowa Anglican Girls' School**

GERMS was a wonderful success **Kismet Park PS**

Following the great success of GERMS, we would like to stage Lollies **Morisset PS**

The children enjoyed the show. The parents enjoyed the show. I enjoyed the show.  
The tape was great **Milton PS**

In the week prior to our evening performances, we offered the show to neighbouring schools – Gembrook, Woori Yallock and Monbulk. Our troupe boarded the coach, travelled and performed on three separate days. Reluctantly I could not offer the cast a national tour but the experience of performing in four different venues over the fortnight was exhilarating. Many thanks once again for your support and assistance with our production of GERMS. It has been highly acclaimed by all who saw our show and was enjoyed thoroughly by all our Year 6 performers

**Mt Evelyn PS**

GERMS was extremely well received and the students had a greqat time working on it. Thanks for all your efforts **Bundamba SHS**

The show was very successful and enjoyed by the students taking part and those who viewed the performance. Thank you for your co-operation **Mt Eliza North PS**

We can only report that the musical was a huge success and all credit should go to you for writing such a fast-moving and colourful script. We performed to a number of schools from the Western Region as well as our three evening performances. The teaching kits we offered as an incentive to visiting schools and were used by all grade levels in our school as the play became a focus for the school. Once again, thanks from all of us. No doubt we'll be in touch next year about our next big production. **St**

**Albans East PS**

GERMS is simply the best **Greenhills PS**

Amazing, unusual and wonderful **Wendouree THS**

GERMS is about unrest and dissatisfaction with the status quo. It is a story about subterfuge, loyalty, generosity, compassion, ruthlessness and downright greed. In short, it is about the full range of human emotion, all treated with a huge dose of humour and toe-tapping music **Bentleigh West PS**

Thank you for a marvellous musical. It meant so much to our whole community **St Kilda Park PS**

The musical was a great success. The children seized the chance to perform with great enthusiasm and Germs fever was with us for several months **Gowrie St PS**

Deep inside the human body an army of marauding germs have invaded with the sole intent of infecting and destroying it! But, as with humans, life sometimes wasn't meant to be that easy. We greatly appreciated your assistance **Merri PS**

Have you ever woken up feeling that a civil war was raging inside you? GERMS will convince you that you were exactly right **Casino HS**

Thank you for GERMS. The students were able to show great resourcefulness for costume and setting inspired by your musical and enetretained young local primary school children immensely in their two free performances. Thanks for the great play **Charles Sturt University**

## GERMS 2

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### Characters

**Surviv** - leader, brave, means well, respects all germs  
**Reclu** - deputy-leader, obedient, loyal, industrious, a touch pompous  
**Bacs** - rebel, has failed leadership exam, bitter, angry, ambitious  
**Enca** - friend of Bacs, dim-wit, thick, bully, crass, stupid  
**Timov** - friend of Bacs, average intelligence, supports Bacs, a follower  
**Ulf** - clown, buffoon, always in trouble, means well, liked by all  
**Revef** - solid citizen, reliable, supports the status quo, intelligent  
**Airalam** - friend of Revef, nervous, immature, easily swayed  
**Pmul** - guard, assistant to Reclu  
**Airetcab** - guard, assistant to Reclu  
**Amoc** - guard, assistant to Reclu  
**Lli** - non-speaking member of the bomb-disposal squad  
**Llip Gib** - large capsule swallowed by the human, non-speaking part  
**Smreg** - members of the germ company

### Musical Numbers

1.	Overture	Orchestra
2.	Play It On Their Bones	Company
3.	Germs Are Never Afraid	Ulf & Company
4.	Battle Cry [a chant]	Reclu & Company
5.	Bloodless Coup	Bacs, Enca & Timov
6.	Holy Music & One Pill Too Many	Orchestra, Surviv & Company
7.	Underside of Average	Ulf & Company
8.	Falling In Love Is Dangerous	Surviv & Company
9.	Don't Rock the Boat	Company
10.	We Did It	Company
11.	We're Sorry	Company
12.	Curtain Calls	Company
13.	Playoff	Orchestra

Note: The germs have no specific gender. Change references to he/him to she/her if you wish.

Because the germs are inside the human, their names have been reversed.

## GERMS 3

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*(Play the Overture. Curtain is down and/or lights are off. At the point marked in the score, begin sound effect of human heart beating. The curtain then slowly rises and/or the lights come up. The GERMS are scattered about the set. It is difficult to see them as the lights are dim. As each group of GERMS joins the opening song, more lights come up. Do this gradually. Once all GERMS are singing, the set will be well lit. ULF is not on stage. The Overture and Play It On Their Bones blend into each other with the heartbeat bridging the two musical items)*

### Play It On Their Bones

**Company [Group A]** *Play it on their bones, play it on their bones  
Scratch it on their skin, scratch it on their skin*

**[Add Group B]** *Stimulate those groans, stimulate those groans  
Help disease set in, help disease set in.*

**[Add Group C]** *We've got to spread infection to such perfection  
That every human then cries*

**[Full Company]** *Out loud for medications and operations  
How we hope every lousy human dies.*

**Solo 1** *I attack the human's liver  
I am a generous giver of suffering diabolical.*

**Solo 2** *I attack the precious tissue  
I make-a bigger issue infecting every molecule.*

**Solo 3** *I attack the human's tummy  
They always want their Mummy  
When I unload my trolley-full.*

**Trio [above]** *Yes we're really all pernicious  
Most dangerous and vicious, we are the germs.*

**Company** *Play it on their bones ....*

**Solo 4** *I produce bacillamia  
I cannot spell it either but still it gives me loads of fun.*

**Solo 5** *I love chol-e-doch-o-lith-toe-me  
It really ith a myhttery but what the heck I give 'em one.*

**Solo 6** *But I'm into halitosis  
It thrills me quite the mostest to help their breath smell overdone.*

**Trio [4, 5 & 6]** *Yes we're really therapeutic  
Make more than just a few sick, we are the germs.*

**Company** *Play it on their bones .....*

**Company** *Ah ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!  
Every lousy human dies*

## GERMS 4

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*Ah ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!*  
*We are, we are, we are the germs.*

*(GERMS freeze even through any applause. RECLU moves as he speaks. SURIV observes)*

**Reclu** You must obey your leader at all times. Yako?

**Germs** *(Fierce)* Yako!

**Reclu** You must work diligently and with enthusiasm. Yako?

**Germs** *(Fierce)* Yako!

**Reclu** There must be, there *will* be obedience, diligence and enthusiasm. Speak.

**Germs** Obedience, diligence and enthusiasm.

**Reclu** *(To SURIV)* Ready when you are, Leader.

*(RECLU and SURIV salute each other. GERMS salute either by punching the air directly above their shoulders one arm at a time or by crossing their arms and tapping twice their clenched fists on their shoulders. It is a rapid, precise and forceful motion)*

**Surviv** Thank you, Reclu. *(SURIV is quieter, less forceful than RECLU)* Please everyone, relax.

*(GERMS relax. They stand easy, some stretch. SURIV moves to an elevated position. In climbing, he shares a joke/greeting with some GERMS. They laugh. SURIV is popular. Facing the GERMS, he salutes. As one, the GERMS return the salute)*

**Surviv** Yadot I am happy. We've been inside this human a short time but already he's infected. *(Excited buzz from GERMS)* You are a splendid fighting unit. But our good start can turn sour. We must never relax until this human is dead. Yako?

**Germs** Yako!

**Surviv** Now feel free to ask questions. Anyone? *(Pause)* Well maybe next time. *(SURIV starts to descend but stops when BACS steps forward and speaks)*

**Bacs** Wait. I have a question.

**Reclu** State your name and question.

**Bacs** I am Bacs and want to know the details of our leader's previous posts. *(Murmur from COMPANY. BACS is a trouble-maker. SURIV is calm)*

**Surviv** Not the usual sort of question.

**Bacs** *(Still serious)* How he became our leader and what he intends to do after we've infected this human?

*(Bigger buzz/murmur from GERMS. This is serious)*

**Surviv** *(Still calm)* I see. And would you also care to know the size and colour of my underwear?

*(Pause. Suddenly tension is eased as the GERMS laugh at SURIV'S remark. The potential confrontation is diffused. But BACS is not amused. He waits for the laughter to subside)*

## GERMS 5

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- Bacs** Of course if you have something to hide. *(Tension returns)*
- Reclu** Enough! Seize him! *(GUARDS move but stop when SURIV speaks)*
- Surviv** Wait! Do not touch that germ. *(SURIV moves to BACS. GUARDS step back)*  
It's not usual for a germ Leader to discuss these things but for you, an exception. Germ Leaders are chosen after a series of exhaustive tests. So hard that many aspiring applicants are rejected. *(Directly at BACS)* But perhaps you already know that?
- Bacs** *(Not being drawn)* You haven't answered my question.
- Surviv** Very well. I have never been a germ Leader before. I was selected because I passed the necessary tests. And once this human is thoroughly infected I will consult my superiors for further instructions. Satisfied? *(BACS and SURIV stare at one another. A Mexican standoff. Suddenly BACS relents and returns to the company. SURIV looks around at the others)* Now, anyone else with a question? *(COMPANY shake their heads, murmur "No". To RECLU)*  
Thank you, Reclu. Dismiss.  
*(SURIV and RECLU salute. SURIV moves aside. RECLU roars at the troops)*
- Reclu** Germs ... no-it-netta! *(This word, like many others, is a human's word inside out. The GERMS are on the inside after all and they spring to attention as one)*  
You will soon start plan of attack number four. Make sure you have all your infection equipment and ...  
*(The meeting is interrupted by ULF who is late - again. ULF starts calling from off-stage where RECLU'S speech is underlined. ULF could enter by sliding down a pole, a slide, scoot on a scooter or simply burst in. He's in a hurry, out of breath and keen not to offend)*
- Ulf** *(Offstage)* A meeting! A meeting! Every germ there's a meeting! *(Enters)*  
Germs, germs, there's a meeting! Quickly or we'll all be in big trouble. *(Grabs a germ)* Are you deaf? There's a meeting. *(ULF continues then confronts/shakes SURIV)* Hey, Birdbrain, move! Or our Leader will go bananas!
- Surviv** *(Hasn't moved a muscle)* I am your Leader.
- Ulf** Oh very funny. *(Mimics)* I am your Leader. *(Realises)* I yi yi yi yi yi ...  
*(These get slower as the truth dawns)* Sorry, Surviv. *(Delicately brushing down the boss)* Sorry. I was only trying to remind everyone about the meeting. You said, "Remember the meetings".
- Airetcab** We have remembered. *(ULF turns, stumped. Pause)*
- Ulf** You have? Oh, great. Well, ah, you can start whenever you like.
- Pmul** We have started. *(Again spins round flustered but only momentarily)*
- Ulf** Oh. Ah ... still as long as I'm here before you finished.
- Amoc** We have finished.  
*(This appears to be the time for ULF to admit defeat. Pause. Just when his case seems lost, he smiles, raises an index finger and sort of issues an order, a pathetic joke)*
- Ulf** Right then. Everyone back to work.

## GERMS 6

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*(GERMS expect ULF to cop it. RECLU & GUARDS want punishment but SURIV is not so vengeful)*

**Surv** You're absolutely correct my friend, and as a reward for not missing the entire meeting, I'm posting you to the human's heart.

**Ulf** *(Thankful)* Oh thank you, Leader, thank you. *(Suddenly panics)* P P P Pardon?

**Surv** The human's heart. Surely you're not afraid?

**Ulf** Afraid? Me? Of course not. *(ULF is afraid)* It's just that ... that ...

**Surv** Yes? *(ULF is madly thinking for an excuse. Suddenly he gets an idea)*

**Ulf** It's dreadful up there, Leader. This human's a smoker and boy does it stink. All that rotten nicotine. There are messy, blocked arteries, clapped-out lungs, you name it. The heart's working overtime. We need danger money!

**Reclu** If you're afraid, it's your duty to own up.

**Surv** I can't accept frightened germs.

**Ulf** *(Back pedalling)* I'm not, honest. Cross me virus and hope to die.

**Reclu** *(Disbelieves ULF)* Honest? *(MUSIC BEGINS. Pause. ULF swallows then sings)*

### Germs Are Never Afraid

**Ulf** *George Washington had germs  
I'll bet they never told a lie  
I'll bet they never did a single thing that's wrong.  
A germ you see is blameless  
Just a shameless, famous shamus  
Who has proven that his character is strong.  
But I ain't quite so righteous  
In fact a germ you might 'jus  
Call a chicken-hearted, real ding-dong.  
So pardon if I s s s stutter  
'Cos I only want to utter  
Up a plea revealed within this song.  
Germs are never afraid, never ever afraid.  
They don't worry when things don't go right  
They keep infecting both day and by night.  
Germs don't panic or scare, never ever a care  
Doctors, nurses, voodoo curses  
Speed the day they need the hearses  
Germs afraid? No sir.*

**Company** *Germs are never afraid*

**Ulf** *Not afraid, not a tiny little bit afraid*

**Company** *Never ever afraid*

## GERMS 7

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**Ulf** *Not afraid, not an itsy bitsy bit afraid*  
**Company** *They don't worry when things don't go right*  
*They keep infecting both day and by night.*  
**Company** *Germs don't panic or scare*  
**Ulf** *Never scare, not a single one that you can scare*  
**Company** *Never ever a care*  
**Ulf** *Not a care, not a single worry or a care.*  
**Company** *Doctors, nurses, voodoo curses*  
*Speed the day they need the hearses*  
*Germs afraid? No sir.*  
**Ulf** *Just because we are small*  
*That don't worry us at all.*  
*Humans think that they are wise*  
*We soon cut them down to size.*  
**Surviv & Reclu** *Germs are fighters very tough*  
*We don't flinch when things get rough*  
*Full of pluck and guts and grit*  
*Are we cowards? Not a bit.*  
**Company** *Not a bit!*  
*Germs are never afraid ....*  
*(Song ends with COMPANY in rigid formation. SURIV speaks calmly to RECLU who is very military)*  
**Surviv** *Let's practise a drill. Something which covers a medicinal attack.*  
**Reclu** *Eya, eya ris. (They salute. SURIV exits. RECLU addresses the COMPANY)*  
*Our Leader has ordered a drill.*  
**Timov** *(Fed up) We're sick of drills.*  
**Reclu** *(Furious) Silence! (To TIMOV) Listen you ... (To BACS) and you ... (To COMPANY) and anyone else who wants to cause trouble. You breaka da rules, we breaka your neck.*  
**Ulf** *(Thinks it's him) Oh not again, please. I no breaka da nothing.*  
**Revef** *Except the speed limit. (COMPANY laugh. Tension is broken)*  
**Reclu** *We'll practise a drill on the human defence program. Amoc.*  
**Amoc** *When a human is sick, he uses many devices to get better. One such device is the injection. Here's a model.*  
*(AMOC raises large model hypodermic. COMPANY buzz with excitement)*  
**Airetcab** *The injection contains a liquid which enters the human and spreads throughout his body. This liquid is a medicine which kills germs.*  
*(COMPANY gasp and buzz with fear)*  
**Reclu** *The Anti-Medicine Drill is our way of fighting back. But there is another form of medicine. Pmul.*  
**Pmul** *Humans fight germs by taking pills like this.*  
*(PMUL raises a football-sized pill. The GERMS are excited and curious)*  
**Ulf** *You sure that's not a Smartie? (ULF is ignored)*

## GERMS 8

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**Pmul** The human swallows the pill which, like the needle, contains deadly medicine.

*(Buzz from the COMPANY. RECLU takes over speaking loudly as usual)*

**Reclu** So there are two types of medicinal attack. One, the injection and two, the pill.

**Bacs** *(Sarcastic)* No doubt you leaders have a brilliant plan of defence.

**Reclu** We follow a well-established method, a tactic used in countless battles of germ warfare. *(Pause. COMPANY listen with interest)* We hide!

**Company** *(Surprised)* We hide!?

**Bacs** That's pathetic!

**Enca** Talk about gutless.

**Ulf** I reckon it's fantastic. What a great idea.

**Reclu** Which is better, a dead hero or a coward who lives to fight again?

**Ulf** *(Enthusiastic)* I vote for the coward.

**Reclu** Germ leaders are trained for one thing, the death of a human and dead germs kill nothing.

**Ulf** You're dead right ... *(Corrects himself)* I mean, you're alive and right.

**Bacs** So we hide together or does our Leader have a special shelter?

**Reclu** You know he does. Our Leader controls our destiny. His safety is paramount.

**Bacs** *(To a scoffing ENCA & TIMOV)* I might have known.

**Reclu** Now let's practise the drill. When you hear the alarm, move in a calm and orderly fashion. No panic. Understand. *(Emphatic)* No panic!

*(RECLU signals and a GUARD operates the alarm. The COMPANY does exactly the opposite. They panic, running wildly in all directions. RECLU and the GUARDS scream at them without success. "Get back! Don't panic" etc. A few GERMS entangle in front of SURIV'S shelter enabling ULF to sneak in without being seen. The COMPANY exits or hides. RECLU and the GUARDS are alone and furious)*

**Reclu** *(Fumes)* Disgraceful! Outrageous! Let's see if you can get it right. Hide!  
*(RECLU and the GUARDS quickly exit/hide. The stage is empty. The alarm still sounds and its light still flashes. LLI enters. He is from the bomb-disposal squad. He could wear protective clothing and carry a geiger-counter type machine. Alternatively he could hold a torch in one hand and a birdcage with a canary inside in the other - a la mine inspection. LLI moves around testing for safety. Satisfied, he switches off the alarm and exits. Slowly the GERMS emerge. They chat excitedly about the drill/alarm etc. RECLU has the GUARDS DL and mimes a tongue-lashing. They defend themselves)*

**Airalam** *(Panics, looks for REVEF)* Revef! Revef! Where are you?

**Revef** *(Breaking through the crowd)* Here. Take it easy.

## GERMS 9

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- Airalam** *(Relieved)* Oh Revef, I thought you were killed.
- Revef** It was only a drill, a practice. *(Taking REVEF upstage)* Come over here, dummy.
- Reclu** *(To COMPANY)* All right, line up. *(COMPANY chat and move to lines)* And be quiet! *(Hubbub stops. RECLU furious)* Let's review that from the top. Did everyone hear the alarm?
- Company** *(Feeble reply)* Yes.
- Reclu** *(Shouting)* Well?
- Company** *(Shout back)* Yes!
- Reclu** *(Softer, nastier)* Did everyone hide?
- Company** Yes!
- Reclu** *(Build it)* Did everyone move in a calm and orderly fashion? *(Pause)* Well!?
- Airetcab** They were hopeless!
- Reclu** *(Fuming)* Incredibly hopeless! Behave like that in a real crisis and, *(Mimes cutting throat)* goodnight germs!
- Bacs** *(Usual sarcasm/stirring)* Well we need instruction then, don't we?
- Reclu** Obviously. And look out anyone who steps out of line. *(RECLU moves as he speaks. The COMPANY and audience see ULF emerge from SURIV'S shelter)*  
Now pay strict attention. No germ is allowed in or near the Leader's shelter. *(ULF emerges. COMPANY are amused but afraid to laugh or speak)*  
That area is out-of-bounds. No-one, repeat, no-one may use that shelter. Understand?
- Bacs** *(Indicating ULF)* Not even our new Leader? *(RECLU discovers ULF)*
- Reclu** *(About to explode)* You!
- Ulf** Is it safe to come out?
- Reclu** How dare you hide in there! *(Summons the GUARDS)*
- Ulf** I'm just being a coward.
- Reclu** Out! *(ULF grabbed by GUARDS)* I sentence you to guard-duty in the oesophagus.
- Ulf** *(Distraught)* Oh please not there. It gives me a lump in the throat!
- Reclu** *(Pointing offstage)* Out!  
*(ULF turns, slowly exits. He stops at the edge, looks back hoping for last-minute reprieve. RECLU points defiantly and the forlorn hero makes sad exit)*
- Reclu** Let that be a lesson for you all. Now despite your abysmal performance in defence, we cannot forget our main purpose in life - attack. Suriv has ordered a new offensive in spreading disease. *(Gives command)* Prepare for infection inspection!  
*(COMPANY moves quickly to drill formation they know well. Some GERMS could be on elevated platforms to give more depth to formation. The GERMS stand rigidly to attention and only their lips move. They speak with fervour)*

**Battle Cry**

**Reclu** *Courage germs and arm yourselves, the battle lies ahead*  
**Germs** *Infect!*  
**Reclu** *Go empty out your precious poison, work until he's dead*  
**Germs** *Infect!*  
**Reclu** *It's heart, liver, lungs and bowel, be careful not to muck it*  
**Germs** *No!*  
**Reclu** *Help make this human really suffer and to kick the bucket.*  
**Germs** *Yeah!*  
**Reclu** *Infect!* **Germs** *Ha ha!*  
*Infect!* *Ha ha!*  
*We must infect him quicker.* *Yeah!*  
*Infect!* *Ha ha!*  
*Infect!* *Ha ha!*  
*And stop his bleedin' ticker!*  
**Germs** *Infect. Now. Ahhhhh!*  
*(With final chilling, drawn-out scream, the GERMS exit rapidly in all directions to destroy the human. The stage is bare. Silence. Pause. The lights dim. In the shadowy gloom we can just see a shadowy germ moving in a suspicious manner. It's BACS. He makes a softish sound. It's a password, a calling signal. The sound is echoed. It's quiet and mysterious. BACS moves DC and ENCA and TIMOV come out and follow. BACS beckons to them)*  
**Bacs** *Down here.*  
**Timov** *They've all gone, even Reclu.*  
**Enca** *And that crazy Suriv's locked in 'is special shelter.*  
**Bacs** *Shut up and listen. (Looks around quickly) Okay, here's the plan. We send Reclu and the guards on some wild-goose chase leaving our beloved leader unguarded.*  
**Enca** *(Bursting with evil enthusiasm) Let's do it now!*  
**Bacs** *Once we've got Suriv, the others'll follow.*  
**Timov** *Hang on. What's so special about Suriv? You sure you're not jealous or something?*  
**Bacs** *(Giving scornful look) Suriv, you doubting cretin, is not only incompetent, he's hiding something which is going to kill us all.*  
**Enca** *(Furious) I'll kill him! I'll kill him now!*  
**Bacs** *(Angry) Shut up! Get a grip on yourself. (ENCA suitably chastised)*  
**Timov** *Is it the human's medicine?*  
**Bacs** *I'm not sure. All I know for certain is that Suriv has a secret, a secret which means we die.*  
**Enca** *So what do we do? (MUSIC BEGINS)*  
**Bacs** *We oversee a change a government. Comrades, it's time for a bloodless coup!*

**Bloodless Coup**

**Trio** *Deep in this tissue with all this blood they'll miss you  
Let's have a coup but make it bloodless.  
Here while the others start up  
To try and mess his heart up  
Let's make a deal but make it heartless.  
Let's attack when we can, carefully plan  
Some surprise that's sure to crack 'em  
Let's destroy them at will, in for the kill  
Now's the time to overthrow them.  
Here in this person whose health is soon to worsen  
Let's have a coup but make it bloodless.*

**Bacs** *Oh why not me?  
They should have had me leading  
I know I've got the breeding  
To take control, go on patrol  
And show them how.  
Oh why not me?  
With all my great potential  
It simply is essential  
I must command and make a stand  
And do it now.*

**Enca & Timov** *Oh why not us?  
We know we've got the muscle  
Can handle any tussle  
A left, a right, a shortened fight  
And we're on top.  
Oh why not us?  
We know we've got the calling  
Our plight is quite appalling  
We've got the skill  
To make a kill and humans stop.*

**Trio** *Let's have a, let's have a ....  
Let us have a deal but make it blood  
Bloodless! Bloodless!*

*(Immediately the song ends, sound the alarm. Lights come up, the COMPANY rush in from different directions all talking at once. "What's going on? That's the alarm" etc. BACS and his cronies are momentarily horrified but quickly melt into the crowd and their plot remains undiscovered.*

## GERMS 12

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*The alarm is turned off as the GERMS form lines but keep talking. RECLU and an angry SURIV move to each other and salute. GERMS settle. Silence)*

- Surviv** *(Quiet anger)* Who gave the alarm? *(No reply. Pause. Louder)* Who gave the alarm? *(Silence. Pause)* I will ask for a third and final time. Someone, somewhere in this human set off the alarm. Who was it?  
*(Pause. Tension builds. Just when we expect SURIV to explode, we hear a familiar sound)*
- Ulf** *(Offstage)* Alarm! Alarm! *(Races in agog)* Danger! Trouble! Alarm. Everyone hide! Hide! Hide!!  
*(No-one moves. Not a blink. Silence. ULF stops to survey the frozen, grim-faced group. Thinks. "I'm in big trouble". Brainwave. ULF clasps hands behind his back, walks along line of GERMS inspecting the troops. Speaks with upper-class English accent)*
- Ulf** *(Inspecting)* I say, jolly good formation, chaps. *(Stops at one germ)* Chin up, chin up. *(Continues)* Now, I suppose you're wondering why I've called this meeting.
- Surviv** *(Controlled fury)* Did you sound the alarm?
- Ulf** *(Almost flippant)* Not just now old bean, I'm busy.
- Reclu** *(Bordering on apoplexy)* To misuse the alarm is a serious offence.
- Ulf** *(Still plummy)* Ah, but I was being serious.
- Surviv** *(Moving in for the kill)* So you admit it?
- Reclu** *(Moving in for the kill from other side)* You set off the alarm!
- Surviv** The truth or else!  
*(Pause. ULF looks from one angry GERM to the next then drops all pretence)*
- Ulf** *(Humble)* Yes. It's true. I done it.
- Reclu** *(Shouts)* Did it. I did it!
- Ulf** *(Thinks RECLU'S to blame)* Oh did you do it too?
- Surviv** Weren't you sent to the oesophagus?
- Ulf** *(Brighter)* Yes Leader. And that's why I gave the alarm. We're under attack! *(Buzz of excitement from GERMS)*
- Reclu** We know nothing of this? Where are the signs?
- Ulf** The human is taking a pill. *(Another buzz from GERMS)* He opened his mouth and popped in this huge capsule.
- Amoc** So where is it? Maybe it by-passed his stomach and went straight to his toes.  
*(GERMS laugh heartily. Not so SURIV and RECLU. This is serious)*
- Reclu** Do you know the punishment for giving a false alarm?
- Surviv** Just a moment. There was a flood of water on the monitor.
- Ulf** *(Excited)* Did you see me? Was I on TV? Was I?
- Airetcab** Perhaps the human wasn't able to swallow. Some of them can't take pills.
- Reclu** He still gave a false alarm.
- Surviv** Did you leave a germ behind to guard your post?

## GERMS 13

---

**Ulf** I think so. Ah, I'm almost certain.  
**Reclu** Think so! Almost! What's that supposed to mean?  
**Surv** Well my friend, you have a great knack for finding trouble. Most germs have five lives - you've had two. Back to your post and don't try for number three.  
*(Pause. SURIV points. ULF sad that he hasn't been believed and that he must depart. Slowly, with trembling lip and a few waves from friends, ULF exits)*  
**Reclu** *(Calling)* And stay awake up there!  
**Surv** So Reclu, how did the Anti-medicine drill go?  
**Bacs** Terrible.  
**Surv** *(Not sure what was said)* Pardon?  
**Reclu** *(Covering the disaster)* He said it was a terrible pity you missed it.  
**Surv** That good? I'm surprised.  
**Pmul** Yes, they moved with a style you couldn't forget.  
*(Suddenly the alarm sounds again. ULF enters in a flap)*  
**Ulf** Big pill! Big pill! This time it's really coming!  
*(GERMS most uneasy. They want to exit but await instructions)*  
**Surv** *(Calling above the increasing chatter)* Right, Reclu. Let's see this fantastic drill.  
*(Commotion builds. ULF continues telling everyone, RECLU has to shout)*  
**Reclu** Prepare for the Anti-Medicine Drill ... now!  
  
*(Panic. This is the spark which ignites the fear. GERMS scatter in all directions. SURIV moves C in disbelief and anger. He is bumped/pushed by fleeing GERMS. Choreograph everything carefully. In the panic, ULF disappears and no-one sees him go. SURIV is flattened as the last GERMS exit. He rises, furious, storms to alarm and switches it off. He shouts to the vanishing/ed GERMS)*  
**Surv** This is the most disgraceful, incompetent, unbelievable outrage. *(Sees a helpless RECLU)* You'll pay for this. Get out of here. *(RECLU and GUARDS beat hasty retreat. SURIV moves to shelter, throws open door. ULF is hiding. SURIV goes bananas)* You!! Get out of my shelter!  
**Ulf** There's a b b b b big pill coming.  
**Surv** *(Grabbing ULF)* So's Christmas. Now get out!  
*(SURIV flings ULF DC, enters his shelter and slams the door. ULF in a tizz, runs around briefly looking for somewhere to hide. Nothing. Exhausted, heart-broken, he staggers DC and drops on his knees. He clasps his hands in prayer, looks heavenward and prays silently. UR a giant pill enters and moves down to ULF. It stops beside ULF. Pause. ULF could move one way, then another and be followed by the pill without ever discovering it behind him. But don't prolong this business. Suddenly ULF rolls over and dies. The pill exits UL. NOTE: The pill could be lowered from the roof using thin wire. Slowly LLI enters as before to check if the coast is clear.*

## GERMS 14

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*The geiger-counter could be used. When it comes near ULF, the machine could be activated as if ULF has been contaminated. LLI steps back in fear then exits. Slowly the GERMS emerge. They are tentative and chat excitedly about the attack. Suddenly ULF is discovered)*

- Pmul** Look, it's Ulf! *(GERMS crowd around ULF)*
- Reclu** *(Pushing through)* Let me through. Get back. *(Kneels beside ULF)* Fetch Suriv. Quickly! *(GUARD moves to shelter)*
- Bacs** Notice our Leader is the last to come out.
- ENCA** *(In murderous mood)* Let's fix him now. Let's ...  
*(BACS & TIMOV gag the exuberant ENCA as SURIV steps out of his shelter)*
- Suriv** *(Angry)* That was the most disgraceful drill ... *(Hurries DC)* What's happened?
- Reclu** *(Almost moved)* The medicine has done its job.
- Suriv** *(Examines ULF. Also moved)* I see.
- Airalam** *(Crying)* Oh Ulf, poor Ulf. Why did he have to die?  
*(Continues to cry and is comforted by REVEF. Atmosphere very sombre)*
- Reclu** He must have absorbed the full amount of medicine. *(AIRALAM wails)* A very painful death.
- Suriv** *(Moves to a raised position to address the company)* I have a confession. Because of this germ's behaviour - being late, missing meetings, hiding in my shelter and such - I've formed a pretty poor opinion of him. I was even thinking of having him put down. *(GERMS gasp)* But now, seeing him like this and realising what he's just done, I'm forced to change my mind. Any germ who gives his life fighting the evils of medicine ... is a saint.  
*(COMPANY freeze. Blackout with simultaneous shaft of light from above onto ULF. Orchestra plays HEAVENLY CHORDS. The music finishes and the lights slowly crossfade back to their previous settings)*
- Suriv** We must honour him with a state funeral. Prepare the body.  
*(MUSIC BEGINS immediately. ULF is prepared for burial. He is placed on a small bench and could be covered with a light material. The lighting changes again creating an ethereal scene. This is a time of ceremony, of respect and reverence. The GERMS file past the body as a sign of respect as a soloist prepares to sing a la the lone piper high on the ramparts of Edinburgh Castle)*

### One Pill Too Many

- Soloist** *Yes he only took one pill too many  
Yes he only took one pill too many  
It was a terrible death, racked with incredible pain  
He is the bravest of germs who died not in vain.  
Yes he only took one pill too many  
Yet this one capsule was enough to kill  
He didn't save himself, oh but he gave himself  
And all because of one little pill.*

## GERMS 15

---

*(COMPANY repeats the song followed by a sung "Amen". Music over, COMPANY kneels except SURIV who delivers the eulogy)*

**Suriv** The life of a germ is never easy. Health and vitality lurk behind every muscle. Some of us succeed but alas, many fail. *(Subdued wail from AIRALAM)* You have not failed. Your sacrifice is not in vain. Germ Ulf, I salute you.

*(SURIV gives a dignified salute then kneels. He says "Bow" and every head drops as one. Nobody moves. Pause. A smallish snore is heard. It must be low-key. Pause. Still nobody moves. Another snore this time a little louder. A few GERMS look sideways but not up. RECLU speaks softly to SURIV)*

**Reclu** The medicine has some strange after-effect.

**Suriv** *(Still with head bowed)* Investigate.

**Reclu** *(Also with head still bowed)* Right.

*(RECLU moves carefully to the body. He brings his face slowly to ULF'S who obliges by giving another snore, slightly louder. Still in reverence, RECLU slides back to his position of respect beside SURIV)*

**Suriv** What is it?

**Reclu** I think he's asleep.

**Suriv** *(Whispers)* Asleep? *(Stands and roars)* Asleep!?

*(SURIV'S roar wakes ULF who "comes alive" in a flurry of arms and legs. The GERMS too are jolted into action, rising, talking with a slight touch of panic. ULF starts racing around calling "Big pill! ... Big pill!" etc. SURIV is seething. The GERMS realise what's happened and fall about laughing. The GUARDS chase ULF and drag him DR to a furious SURIV. ULF'S legs could thrash about if the GUARDS can hold him properly)*

**Ulf** Attack, Leader, we're under attack.

**Suriv** *(Roars)* Silence! *(ULF afraid. GERMS silent)* You're late for meetings.

**Ulf** There's a big pill coming.

**Suriv** You set off false alarms.

**Ulf** It's *very* big.

**Suriv** You hide in my shelter and go to sleep pretending to be dead. Well no more. My patience is exhausted.

**Ulf** *(Very tired)* So am I.

**Reclu** Suriv, wait. For once he's got a genuine excuse.

**Suriv** Excuse! That's his middle name.

**Reclu** That capsule was a sleeping pill.

**Suriv** A sleeping pill!

**Reclu** All it did was put Ulf to sleep. If there'd been any medicine, he'd be dead. *(Buzz from GERMS. SURIV is thinking. ULF is totally confused)*

**Ulf** Did I miss something?

**Suriv** *(Shaking his head)* This must be a germ record.

**Ulf** Pardon?

## GERMS 16

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- Surviv** I'm not sure about you. You're a bumbling, idiotic nincompoop who invents the most incredible excuses. Tell me Ulf, beneath that simpleton's exterior, is there really a mind of erudite and academic brilliance?
- Ulf** *(Hasn't a clue of course)* Ah, could I have the question again, please?  
*(SURIV moves to one side shaking his head. Some GERMS laugh. RECLU takes over)*
- Reclu** Tell us about your school days, Ulf. How did you go in your exams?
- Ulf** *(Don't ask me)* Exams? *(MUSIC BEGINS)*

### Underside of Average

- Ulf** *I'm [He's] always on the underside of average  
"Tries hard" is the usual thing they say.  
Won't be a genius, will make it more or less  
Even if I [he] has to get down on my [his] knees and pray.  
I'm [He's] always on the borderline or thereabouts  
On the social scale two rungs up from a slob  
But where would the world be without the plain and ordin'ry  
They keep the statisticians in a job.  
(COMPANY repeats song. ULF prepares to give more detailed information)*

- Ulf** *At maths I'm a terrible flop  
Can't handle the change in a shop  
The teachers in science  
Are scared their appliance  
In my care is in for the chop.  
My spelling's pathetically poor  
My writing has many a flaw  
My essays in his'try are treated as mys'try  
But still rate an ordin'ry score.  
I try, do I ever, I try  
Exams? Well I'd sooner die.  
For despite good intention  
My mind lacks retention  
Success passes me by.*

*(ULF dances, chorus is repeated. Song over, the GERMS crowd around ULF congratulating him on escaping a fate worse than death. SURIV & RECLU confer, salute and SURIV enters shelter. RECLU calls the troops to order)*

- Reclu** Pay attention. *(Chatter continues)* Quiet! *(Silence)* Our Leader has just issued a new order. Because the human is sleeping and we've infected so successfully, you are hereby given free time. *(GERMS react with barely restrained excitement)*

## GERMS 17

---

**Bacs** But the best time to infect the human is when he's asleep.  
**Timov** Yes. Resistance is very low.  
**Reclu** Don't believe all you read. Besides, we do what our Leader orders.  
**Enca** *(Fired up)* I wanna do some attackin'! *(BACS and TIMOV restrain him)*  
**Amoc** This is the perfect opportunity for every germ to rest.  
**Pmul** We need rest to build our strength. There might be a massive dose of medicine very soon.  
*(GERMS buzz with this news)*  
**Airetcab** We must look out for pills and needles.  
**Bacs** Well I reckon it stinks. *(Tense silence)* A ridiculous decision!  
**Reclu** *(Threatening BACS)* A clear warning. Open your mouth again and I'll close it ... permanently. *(Brief staring match between the two then RECLU turns to GERMS)* Now break off. *(GERMS start to exit but stop)* No, wait! Any germ interested in sight-seeing, there's a lovely spot of infection in the left lung.  
**A Germ** *(Excited)* That's mine! That's mine! I did that!  
**Reclu** Transport's easy. Just catch a bloodstream heading north.  
  
*(RECLU points and some GERMS dash off in that direction. The others wander off in different directions or relax. BACS, ENCA & TIMOV move UC. RECLU exits with GUARDS. REVEF & AIRALAM move DL)*  
  
**Revef** *(Touch exasperated)* Look I've told you. It's quite safe and you'll be all right.  
**Airalam** *(Worried)* But I don't know anyone.  
**Revef** Will you stop being so germish. No-one'll poison you.  
**Airalam** Oh Revef, I'm sorry. It's just that I'm so nervous.  
**Revef** Well don't be, or you can find someone else to annoy.  
**Airalam** *(On knees, desperate)* Oh Revef, please don't say that. Please. *(Continues)*  
**Revef** *(Embarrassed, annoyed)* Will you stop it? Let go!  
*(Pathetic dispute continues as BACS and Co wander down)*  
**Bacs** Need any help?  
*(REVEF and AIRALAM immediately stop their "discussion". AIRALAM rises and shelters behind REVEF)*  
**Revef** *(Cool. Doesn't like BACS)* No thanks. We're fine.  
**Bacs** Relax. I'm not here to stir.  
**Revef** That's a change. You've done nothing but ever since you got here.  
**Bacs** So what do you think of our wonderful Leader?  
**Airalam** He's very good.  
**Revef** He's all right.  
**Timov** You've got to be joking.  
**Enca** He's an idiot and we're ... *(TIMOV grabs him and BACS interrupts)*  
**Bacs** Come on Revef, you're smart, too smart to believe Suriv's doing a good job.

## GERMS 18

---

**Timov** What about this rest session?

**Revef** *(Cool, won't be drawn)* It's a bit unusual.

**Bacs** Unusual! It's crazy.

**Revef** Maybe. Maybe Suriv's got a special plan.

**Bacs** Aha! *(To cronies)* See, someone else knows too.

**Airalam** *(Hasn't a clue)* Knows what?

**Bacs** Suriv's got a plan all right but he's keeping something from us.

**Revef** Such as?

**Bacs** Such as where we go when the human snuffs it. Suriv's said nothing. Nix. And why? What's he hiding?

**Revef** You're just a stirrer. *(Turns away and AIRALAM follows)*

**Bacs** *(Calls after them)* Go on, walk away. Don't fight injustice. *(REVEF stops. AIRALAM copies. REVEF turns, moves back to BACS & Co)*

**Revef** If you've got proof, fine. If not, go and play in an artery.

**Bacs** I'll get you proof. But I need your help.

**Revef** What sort of help?

**Bacs** I need two germs to take Reclu to the kidneys to see some new infection.

**Revef** Why?

**Bacs** Because Reclu's important. Suriv'll listen to him.

**Revef** But not you? *(BACS shrugs)*

**Airalam** But how will that help us?

**Bacs** When Suriv hears about the new infection, you'll be promoted.

**Revef** It's your discovery, you tell Suriv.

**Bacs** Don't be stupid. He'll think I'm trying to take control.

**Airalam** Come on Revef. We can do this together.

**Revef** *(Thinks then decides)* Okay. But don't pull any tricks.

**Bacs** Me? I'm as honest as a virus. *(Almost pushing them off DR)* Now go tell Reclu the news. *(REVEF and AIRALAM exit watched by the TRIO)*

**Timov** Think they bought it?

**Bacs** Hook, line and sinker. Now here's the plan. *(BACS leads cronies DL and mimes plan. RECLU, GUARDS, REVEF and AIRALAM enter DR and head upstage. BACS and Co turn to watch party)*

**Reclu** And you're sure it's the kidneys? There's some strong medicine up there. *(RECLU and his party exit UR chatting about the new infection. BACS moves C, delighted)*

**Bacs** I've done it. Me. The new germ Leader.

**Timov** You ain't Leader yet.

**Bacs** *(Basking in anticipated glory)* Soon though. Nothing can stop me now.

*(Suddenly the alarm sounds. TRIO stunned and horrified. Any GERMS relaxing on stage spring to life. Others rush in. Lots of hubbub. BACS is genuinely afraid. He thinks he's been sprung. RECLU and the others burst in. RECLU assumes control)*

## GERMS 19

---

- Reclu** Into lines. Quickly! Move! Switch off the alarm.  
*(Alarm stopped. GERMS form lines still buzzing. Baddies move to one side)*
- Timov** We've had it, Bacs. They're onto us.
- Bacs** Shut it! Don't panic but get ready to run.
- (They move into the lines. SURIV appears. He and RECLU salute. SURIV mounts an elevated position and a hush descends)*
- Suriv** I've just received word the human is awake and planning a special activity.  
*(Buzz from the COMPANY. What's happening?)*
- Pmul** *(Dismayed)* He's not going jogging again?
- Suriv** Intelligence reports the human is overweight, overwarm and overworked. If he's overweight he's either a politician, publican or public servant. *(Hubbub)* If he's overwarm he's either an athlete, acrobat or animal trainer without a whip. *(Bigger hubbub)* But if he's overworked, he's a she and almost certainly a housewife and mother.  
*(GERMS instantly drop onto one identical knee, clasp hands on hearts and speak in revered tones as one)*
- Germ** A mother. *(They rise. Such movements should be simple and short)*
- Suriv** But never fear. This is probably a male human and about to embark on a very special mission - a date.  
*(Buzz from GERMS. A what? They do not understand)*
- Reclu** Leader, they don't understand.
- Suriv** Obviously. Now listen well. Humans have a particular habit called "falling in love". When this occurs, we germs are in for a torrid time. *(Fear amongst GERMS)* The human's heart beats rapidly and blood rushes everywhere.
- Airalam** *(Panics)* We'll all be swept away! *(OTHERS panic)*
- Suriv** *(Calling)* Not if do as you're told. *(Uneasy calm)* You must remain calm. Falling in love is tricky - for humans and germs. Just go back to your infecting and should the human fall in love, hide somewhere till the danger passes.
- Bacs** Excuse me, Leader.
- Suriv** You again. Another personal question?
- Bacs** I wonder if you could explain this love business. From what you've said, I think we need educating.
- Suriv** You're right. *(To COMPANY)* Now concentrate. It's tricky, tacky and tough. *(MUSIC BEGINS)*

### Falling In Love Is Dangerous

**Surviv**

*Your heart will flutter when you're in love  
Your pulse will stutter when you're in love  
Your poor young body will end up shoddy  
If you have a dabble in the old romantics.  
Your blood starts rushing when you're in love  
You can't stop gushing when you're in love  
Oh it thrills you then kills you  
Oh say can't you see, that  
Falling in love is .... Falling in love is ....  
Falling in love is dangerous.*

*The road to romance is rough  
The perils of passion are tough  
The workers of whimsy, their flirting's so flimsy  
The whole bloomin' business is bluff.  
The laneway of loving is long  
The danger is dreams can go wrong  
Idyllic ideas turn fondness to fears  
As sentiment is slandered in this  
Sentiment is slandered in this  
Sentiment is slandered in this song.*

*(COMPANY repeats the chorus with gusto)*

**Surviv**

I hope everyone now has a better understanding of the human. *(COMPANY nod)*

**Reclu**

We do, Surviv. And we await your new orders.

**Surviv**

I order the immediate resumption of infection. *(Buzz from GERMS)*

**Reclu**

We're about to see some new infection in the kidneys.

**Surviv**

Excellent. Report as soon as possible.

*(They salute and SURIV exits into his shelter)*

**Reclu**

*(Command) Germs. No-it-netta! (GERMS spring to attention) To your infecting, go!*

*(COMPANY disperse in all directions in rapid movements. BACS and Co pretend to leave but feign business. RECLU gathers the GUARDS, REVEF and AIRALAM)*

**Reclu**

Right, let's check these kidneys. Stay close and look out for any romantic rumblings. Come on.

*(They exit. BACS and Co now alone)*

**Timov**

That was close.

**Enca**

I'm gettin' sick of waitin'. Let's do something!

## GERMS 21

---

**Bacs** Right. Timov. Our Leader is required. *(TIMOV goes to SURIV'S shelter. BACS leads ENCA into ambush position)* In there and wait for my signal. *(BACS too hides as SURIV answers TIMOV'S knock on the shelter)*

**Timov** Suriv. The alarm light isn't working.

**Suriv** *(Moves to alarm)* Right, let's have a look at it. *(TIMOV follows)*

**Timov** I hope I'm not wasting your time. *(SURIV is about to examine the alarm when BACS signals and ENCA leaps out roaring to attack SURIV. ENCA is clumsy but effective. SURIV is knocked over and TIMOV leaps in to help)*

**Bacs** The poison! The poison! *(SURIV struggles but is overpowered. Lots of ad lib dialogue, grunting, etc. SURIV'S poison-pouch is ripped free. SURIV calls for help)*

**Suriv** Guards! Help! *(GERMS start to enter and are confused)*

**Bacs** *(Desperate)* Over here, throw it to me! *(Ad-lib calling by BACS and SURIV continues. More GERMS arrive. TIMOV throws SURIV'S poison-pouch to BACS who is triumphant)*

**Bacs** It's mine. I'm a germ Leader at last. *(More GERMS arrive)* I am your new Leader. I want everyone in formation. *(No-one moves. Fear. Confusion. BACS screams)* Get into line! *(ENCA and TIMOV leave SURIV who is desolate and powerless and wade into the GERMS pushing them into lines. SURIV limps towards his shelter, TIMOV bundles him inside and closes the door. The GERMS are in lines and afraid. BACS plays the role of Leader)*

**Bacs** Now hear this. I have taken control. Do as I say and you won't be hurt. *(Orders ENCA)* Keep watch. *(ENCA moves upstage to watch for RECLU)* You are watching a bloodless coup. The old regime is finished. Understand? *(GERMS murmur "Yes")*

**Enca** *(Calling)* Reclu's coming.

**Bacs** *(Moving into line)* Right. Let's do it. *(ENCA and TIMOV hide. Pause. RECLU and others enter and come down. RECLU immediately curious)*

**Reclu** What's all this? Why the formation? *(No answer. To GUARDS)* Fetch Suriv.

**Bacs** *(From the line)* No! *(Steps out pointing at RECLU)* Seize him! *(ENCA and TIMOV leap out and overpower RECLU who struggles and calls)*

**Reclu** Stop them! Get them off! *(GUARDS move to help but stop when BACS intervenes and calls)*

**Bacs** Don't move! This is Suriv's poison. I am your Leader.

**Reclu** You!

**Bacs** *(To PMUL)* Open the shelter. *(PMUL hesitates)* Open the shelter!

*(RECLU nods and PMUL opens SURIV'S shelter. Everyone turns. A pathetic SURIV emerges. Pause. Slowly SURIV moves DC. GERMS stunned. ENCA steps forward and pushes SURIV who falls at the feet of the triumphant BACS)*

## GERMS 22

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- Bacs** You are no longer our Leader. Because of your selfish and secretive ways, I was forced to revolt. Timov and Enca are my deputies and you, and everyone else, will do as I say. Yes? *(Pause. Silence. BACS screams)* Yes?
- Germ**s *(Meek acceptance)* Yes.
- Suriv** *(From the ground)* To disobey a germ Leader is a grave offence. To mutiny is unforgivable.
- Bacs** You forced my hand. You were overthrown because you refused to tell the truth.
- Suriv** I have the right to ....
- Bacs** Silence! You've had your chance.
- Revef** *(Brave, defiant)* You said nothing about this. You tricked us!
- Timov** *(Pushing REVEF back)* Get back you fool!
- Suriv** You won't get away with this.
- Bacs** Don't bet on it, pal. You ripped us off!
- Reclu** The Leader owes you nothing.
- Suriv** Traitor! You have no proof!
- Bacs** You're keeping something from us. What is it?
- Suriv** You're mad!
- Timov** Tell us your secret.  
*(Pause. SURIV says nothing. He and BACS stare at one another)*
- Bacs** Right. You're banished from this company for ever. *(Hubbub from GERMS)* Your poison will not be returned and you must infect on your own away from other germs. *(Points)* Now go!  
*(SURIV pauses, slowly rises. He starts to exit when familiar sound is heard)*
- Ulf** *(Off-stage)* A meeting, a meeting! Everyone there's a meeting! *(Bursts in panting/shouting)* Listen, there's a meeting! *(Stops DC. Sees everyone frozen staring. Pause)* Ah, would you believe a meeting?
- Bacs** Welcome Ulf. And despite your usual lateness, I do not intend to punish you.
- Ulf** Thanks. *(Looks around)* Say, what's going on?
- Timov** *(Indicating BACS)* Meet your new Leader.
- Ulf** *(Extends hand)* Hi! My name is ... *(Suddenly surprised)* New Leader!
- Enca** *(Indicating a pathetic-looking SURIV)* 'ere's the old one. 'E's a loser!
- Ulf** *(Indicates SURIV'S poison-pouch)* Ulf, do you know what this is? *(Intimate voice)* It's my key to power. Power over Suriv, you and every germ in this human. *(ULF afraid)* Don't be scared. I won't hurt you. I want your trust. *(Extends pouch)* Here, you may touch the pouch.  
*(ULF is reluctant. BACS continues to offer the pouch. Slowly ULF moves closer)*
- Ulf** W W W What is it?
- Bacs** *(Calm, friendly)* The key to happiness. *(ULF pauses then gingerly takes pouch)* It's the Leader's poison.

## GERMS 23

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*(Instantly ULF panics, screams/yells and tosses the pouch high because he's afraid. Panic. RECLU goes after the pouch. BACS explodes. A choreographed fight takes place. Keep it brief. AIRALAM emerges with the pouch and stands aloft, waving the pouch and calling. BACS and SURIV need to be apart)*

- Airalam** Here it is! I've got it!  
*(Fight instantly stops. Everyone turns to AIRALAM. Pause. Silence. Tension)*
- Bacs** Here, give it to me.
- Suriv** *(Has recovered)* I am your Leader. I order you to return my poison.  
*(Another pause as AIRALAM seems confused. Suddenly TIMOV grabs REVEF from behind in a headlock)*
- Timov** Wait! Return the poison to Bacs or your friend dies.
- Airalam** *(Distressed)* Revef!
- Revef** *(Struggling but well held)* No! Give it to Suriv!
- Suriv** You will return it to me.  
*(Another brief pause as AIRALAM decides. He shapes to throw it to SURIV then sees his friend in trouble so tosses it to BACS. To catch it, BACS has to step back a little. ULF is crouched on the floor being a coward. BACS catches the poison but in so doing stumbles over ULF. RECLU seizes the opportunity. Very quickly, RECLU grabs the poison-pouch from BACS and returns it to SURIV whilst the GUARDS overpower TIMOV and REVEF is set free. AIRALAM rushes to comfort his friend. BACS, ENCA and TIMOV are hustled forward and fall to the ground DC. They are dejected)*
- Suriv** *(Strapping on poison-pouch)* Bacs, Enca and Timov, your plan has failed. I charge you with mutiny.
- Reclu** *(Fierce order)* Remove their poison!
- GermS** *(Equally fierce)* Remove their poison!  
*(GUARDS move to TRIO but stop when SURIV calls)*
- Suriv** Wait! Their rights must be respected. They must stand trial. *(Issues order)*  
Prepare the court!  
*(MUSIC BEGINS. A simple courtroom set is established. SURIV dons a wig and gown and moves C onto raised area/box. The three accused are placed in a dock DL and a jury is placed DR. The public gallery is quickly filled with the other GERMS upstage)*

### Don't Rock The Boat

- Company** *Don't rock, don't rock the boat [Three times]*  
*Don't rock the boat.*
- Suriv** *I'm the judge I'm in charge of this court of law*  
*I'm the judge bringing justice I'm the counsellor*  
*I'm the judge, pay attention or you'll cop what for*  
*I'm the judge.*

## GERMS 24

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**Bacs** *I'm accused but I'm claiming I'm a-innocent  
I'm accused they're a-saying I'm a-violent  
I'm accused and I'm lining up for punishment  
I'm accused.*

**Reclu** *I'm the witness hear my words as I testify  
I'm the witness, [Points at BACS] he's the one I must identify  
I'm the witness all my claims I can a-verify  
I'm the witness.*

**Jury** *We're the jury and we represent the status quo  
We're the jury and we've gotta say a yes or no  
We're the jury in this crummy oratorio  
We're the jury!*

**Company** *Don't rock, don't rock the boat [Three times]  
Don't rock the boat!  
Don't rock, don't rock the boat!*

*(During final chorus, the GERMS chant "Guilty". The accused respond with "I'm innocent". End of song, Judge SURIV addresses the accused)*

**Suriv** You have been found guilty. I order your poison be removed. *(This is done by GUARDS)* You are banished to the most healthy part of the human and must never, never return. May Disease have mercy on your soul. *(Points offstage)* Go!

*(Genuinely distressed, the TRIO are bundled away by the GUARDS. The COMPANY jeers. During this brief business, the court set is removed, SURIV discards the robe and wig. RECLU gets things moving)*

**Reclu** Germs, infection formation, go! *(COMPANY forms lines very quickly)*  
Leader, I wish to report the company is ready for infecting. We await your command.

*(RECLU and SURIV exchange salutes. SURIV addresses the company)*

**Suriv** Nothing has changed. The bloodless coup has failed and we must now complete our task and kill the human. I order infecting commence immediately!

**Reclu** Three cheers for our Leader. Hip Hip!

**Germs** *(Fierce)* Ra! Ra! Ra!

**Suriv** Thank you. I appreciate your loyalty. But before you depart there's one germ I wish to mention. Ulf, where are you?

*(Buzz from GERMS. ULF is nervous. "What have I done wrong this time?" He steps forward gaining a few pats from amused GERMS)*

**Suriv** You certainly have many faults, Ulf, but moments ago you did something which will live forever in the encyclopedia of germ history.

**Ulf** *(Misunderstands)* I didn't mean to, honestly. *(GERMS smile, murmur. ULF thinks he's in big trouble and falls on one knee to plead for mercy)* Please, I promise I'll be good.

## GERMS 25

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*(Open laughter from GERMS. Even RECLU and SURIV are amused. A messenger GERM enters and goes to AIRETCAB)*

**Surv** Our role is dangerous and never-ending. Humans are tough. They fight fiercely right to the bitter end. But it's all worthwhile because of germs like you.

**Ulf** *(Pleasantly surprised)* Oh. Really?

**Surv** You help win the war. You make humans vomit, moan and groan. Because of germs like you, Ulf, humans are forced to the lavatory, medicine-cabinet, to doctors, nurses, chemists and hospitals. *(ULF is looking sick)* You help spread headache, toothache, ear ache, stomach ache, back ache ....

**Ulf** *(Pleads with SURIV)* Oh stop! Please stop!  
*(AIRETCAB crosses to RECLU with message)*

**Surv** What's the matter?

**Ulf** You're making me sick.

*(GERMS laugh and help ULF back into line. RECLU crosses to SURIV, whispers the message. SURIV mounts podium, addresses the COMPANY)*

**Surv** *(Very sombre)* I have just received devastating news. *(Silence. Pause)* The human is dying!  
*(Huge roar/cheer. MUSIC BEGINS. GERMS dance for joy and celebrate)*

### We Did It

**Company** *We did it, we did it, oh yes we really did it  
We fixed up this human for good.  
We did it, we did it, we definitely did it  
We knew all along that we would.  
Triumph, triumph now he's out on his feet  
Triumph, triumph we're a team you can't beat  
Triumph, triumph doesn't vic'try taste sweet?  
It does, it does, it does, it does, it does, it does  
We did it, we did it, we definitely did it  
We fixed up this human for good.  
Did it, we did it, oh yes we really did!*

*(Song ends with much back-slapping and congratulations all round. The hubbub doesn't cover the wail we hear almost immediately. A mournful "Ahhhhh" from offstage. The COMPANY stops celebrating, turn upstage and BACS, ENCA & TIMOV enter all wailing together. The sound stops)*

**Bacs** We know the answer.

**Reclu** You were banished from here. By returning you leave us no option but to kill you ourselves. Seize them! (*GUARDS rush to TRIO*) Prepare for an execution!  
(*COMPANY move, clear a space DC, chat in sombre tones. GUARDS bring TRIO DC where they are dumped on the floor. TRIO offers no resistance. RECLU takes a weird-looking gun*)

**Surv** Let the execution begin.

**Bacs** (*Calm in the face of death*) I know your secret.

**Reclu** According to the power of our Leader, I condemn you germs to death.  
(*Gun is raised/aimed*)

**Bacs** (*Still calm*) We are not afraid to die. We know Surv's secret.

**Surv** (*A touch nervous*) Kill them now!

**Bacs** Kill us and every germ here will die.

**Surv** (*Angry*) Enough of this nonsense. Execute them!

**Bacs** (*Warming to the task*) Look at your Leader. Why does he panic? What is he hiding?

**Surv** (*Moves down to RECLU*) I'll do it myself. Give me the gun.  
(*Just as SURIV arrives, RECLU steps back preventing SURIV from taking the gun. Tense pause. BACS seizes the initiative*)

**Bacs** Surv is a liar. You're all going to die.

**Surv** (*Furious*) Kill them!

**Bacs** (*Shouting*) You want to know Surv's secret? You're about to die!  
(*Tense buzz from GERMS. SURIV is furious, turns attention to RECLU*)

**Surv** I order you to kill these germs.

**Reclu** (*Tentative*) I don't wish to disobey but ...

**Bacs** Kill us and you kill yourselves. Let me speak.

**Surv** Give me the gun.  
(*Suddenly RECLU turns the gun on SURIV who freezes. Very tense moment. No-one speaks*)

**Reclu** I wish to hear Bacs speak. (*To BACS*) This is your last chance.

**Bacs** (*Pause. Calmly*) I know the truth about the life of a germ. It proves I should have been your Leader.

**Surv** He's bluffing. He wants power. Kill him!  
(*SURIV again moves in but RECLU again threatens him with the gun, this time with obvious intention to shoot. SURIV is scared and backs off. RECLU covers SURIV and speaks to BACS*)

**Reclu** Go on.

**Bacs** Surv has lied to you? He didn't say what happens when the human dies.

**Surv** I said I will consult my superiors.

**Bacs** Of course you will. You'll be alive. But you omitted one thing. When the human dies, we die!  
(*Gasp of fear, hubbub from the GERMS. RECLU is worried*)

**Surv** (*Desperate*) Traitor! Criminal! (*To GERMS*) I give you my word.

## GERMS 27

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**Bacs** Liar! You know when a germ completes a successful mission, the reward is death. Do you deny that? (*SURIV speechless*)

**Reclu** It's true. If the human dies, we'll have nowhere to go.  
(*Despair. The GERMS have got the message and caught the panic sweeping the COMPANY*)

**Enca** (*Pointing at SURIV*) 'E's got his own special shelter.

**Timov** He can hide then escape when another human come along.

**Bacs** We have nowhere to hide. When the human dies, we die with him.

**Surv** I order every germ to infect immediately. (*No-one moves*) Do you hear me?

**Reclu** It's true, Surv. You've left us to die.

**Surv** (*Screams at RECLU*) Infect or I'll remove your poison!

**Reclu** No! I'm taking control. (*To GUARDS*) Remove his poison.  
(*GUARDS remove SURIV'S poison who can't struggle, he's outnumbered and the game is over*)

**Surv** You fool. This is not the way.

**Bacs** Your way was to cheat and use us. I say, Death to Surv!

**Germ** (*Roar their approval*) Death to Surv!

**Reclu** Wait! If the human dies, we'll all be killed.

**Pmul** It's too late. The disease has set in.

**Reclu** We must stop the disease. (*Calling*) Save the human!

**Germ** (*Another huge roar*) Save the human!  
(*MUSIC BEGINS. COMPANY rush to various formations. SURIV slumps in a corner. The gun is put aside. The COMPANY could be divided into three groups and each sings its own part of the song coming together at the end. The GERMS are desperately pleading with the human not to die*)

### We're Sorry

**Group 1** *We're sorry, we're sorry, we're really very sorry  
We didn't mean to hurt you  
And we know that we're to blame  
You see we're sorry, we're sorry, we're really very sorry  
We didn't mean to hurt you, oh it's just a silly game.*

**Group 2** *He's dying! Dead! Oh no!  
Oh no, no, no, no, no!  
Oh no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no!  
Oh no! Oh dead! Oh no!, Oh no, no, no, no, no  
Oh no, no, no, oh, no, no, no, no, no!*

**Group 3** *Alive oh you can't die  
You've got to keep on living, living  
You can't die, you've got to stay alive  
Please don't die, you've got to start forgiving, 'giving  
You can't die, you've got to stay alive.*

**Company** *He's dead, he's dead, ....*

## GERMS 28

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*(During song, SURIV pleads with some GERMS but is brushed aside. Song slows gradually. As song slows, human starts to die. GERMS weaken. Song ends but human heartbeat continues. It slows, grows softer. Lights flicker and dim. Finally heartbeat stops. Weak, eerie lighting. COMPANY are frozen)*

- Germ** *(Bemoaning the obvious)* The human is dead!  
*(Groan of despair from GERMS who stumble slowly in the gloom. ULF lurches forward and is happy)*
- Ulf** Hey, we did it! We killed the human! What's the matter with you germs?  
This is a time to celebrate, to ... *(Coughs)* ... to cele ...

*(ULF is the first to die. He collapses and dies quickly. This is the cue for others all over the set to suffer a similar fate. Coughing, groaning, they collapse and lie still. SURIV is DR in anguish. RECLU and BACS are the only other survivors. BACS moves slowly towards SURIV obviously to kill him. RECLU sees this and, with the gun, steps between BACS and SURIV. RECLU raises the gun to shoot a frozen BACS. Just as he starts to squeeze the trigger, he dies.)*

*He falls to the ground. BACS moves in, collects the gun and steps towards SURIV. BACS aims the gun at SURIV. It is difficult. The weapon is heavy in the hands of a badly-weakened BACS. In the instant before firing, BACS too collapses and dies. SURIV slowly rises and picks his way over the bodies to the shelter. Perhaps a single light could shine on the shelter. With difficulty, SURIV opens the shelter door, falls inside and closes the door. This is most important. The audience must see that one germ has survived to fight another day. BLACKOUT. GERMS rise and exit in the blackout for Curtain Calls)*

### Curtain Calls

- Company** *Germs are never afraid, never, ever afraid  
They don't worry when things don't go right  
They keep infecting by day and by night  
Germs don't panic or scare, never ever a care  
Doctors, nurses, voodoo curses  
Speed the day they need the hearses  
Germs afraid? No sir.  
We did it, we did it, oh yes we really did it  
We fixed up this human for good  
We did it, we did it, we definitely did it  
We knew all along that we would  
Triumph, triumph, now he's out on his feet  
Triumph, triumph, we're a team you can't beat  
Triumph, triumph doesn't vic'try taste sweet?  
It does! It does!  
It does, it does, it does, it does*

## GERMS 29

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*We did it, we did it, we definitely did it  
We fixed up this human for good.  
Don't rock, don't rock the boat [Three times]  
Don't rock the boat!  
Don't rock, don't rock the boat!*

*Curtain*

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