

## LYRICS for HADESTOWN (A folk opera)

### WEDDING SONG

#### EURYDICE

Lover, tell me if you can / Who's gonna buy the wedding bands?  
Times being what they are / Hard and getting harder all the time

#### ORPHEUS

Lover, when I sing my song / All the rivers sing along  
And they're gonna break their banks for me / To lay their gold around my feet  
All a-flashing in the pan, all to fashion for your hand / The rivers gonna give us the wedding bands

#### EURYDICE

Lover, tell me, if you're able / Who's gonna lay the wedding table?  
Times being what they are / Dark and getting darker all the time

#### ORPHEUS

Lover, when I sing my song / All the trees gonna sing along  
And bend their branches down to me / To lay their fruit around my feet  
The almond and the apple and the sugar from the maple / The trees gonna lay the wedding table

#### EURYDICE

Lover, tell me, when we're wed / Who's gonna make the wedding bed?  
Times being what they are / Hard and getting harder all the time

#### ORPHEUS

Lover, when I sing my song / All the birds gonna sing along  
And they'll come flying round to me / To lay their feathers at my feet  
And we'll lie down in eiderdown, a pillow neath our heads / The birds gonna make our wedding bed  
And the trees gonna lay the wedding table / And the rivers gonna give us the wedding bands

### EPIC I

#### ORPHEUS

King of diamonds, king of spades! / Hades was king of the kingdom of dirt  
Miners of mines, diggers of graves / They bowed down to Hades who gave them work  
And they bowed down to Hades who made them sweat / Who paid them their wages and set them about  
Digging and dredging and dragging the depths / Of the earth to turn its insides out, singing  
*La la la la la la la...*

King of mortar, king of bricks / The River Styx was a river of stones  
And Hades laid them high and thick / With a million hands that were not his own  
And a million feet that fell in line / And stepped in time with Hades' step  
And a million minds that were just one mind / Like stones in a row  
And stone by stone / And row by row / The River rose up  
*Singing la la la la la la la*

### WAY DOWN HADESTOWN

#### HERMES

Follow that dollar for a long way down / Far away from the poorhouse door  
You either get to hell or to Hadestown / There ain't no difference anymore, anymore

#### **Way down Hadestown / Way down under the ground**

Hound dog howl and the whistle blow / Train come a-rollin' clickety-clack  
Nobody knows where that old train goes / Those who go they don't come back

#### **They go way down Hadestown / Way down under the ground**

#### PERSEPHONE

Winter's nigh and summer's o'er / I hear that high and lonesome sound  
Of my husband coming for / To bring me home to Hadestown

#### **Way down, Hadestown / Way down under the ground**

#### EURYDICE

Everybody dresses in clothes so fine / Everybody's pockets are weighted down  
Everybody sipping ambrosia wine / In a goldmine in Hadestown

#### **Way down Hadestown / Way down under the ground**

#### ORPHEUS

Everybody hungry, everybody tired / Everybody slaves by the sweat of his brow  
The wage is nothing and the work is hard / It's a graveyard in Hadestown

#### **Way down Hadestown / Way down under the ground**

#### FATES

Every little penny in the wishing well / Every little nickel on the drum, on the drum  
All them shiny little heads and tails / Where do you think they come from?

#### **They come from Hadestown, way down / Way down under the ground**

#### ORPHEUS & HERMES

Mister Hades is a mean old boss / With a silver whistle and a golden scale  
An eye for an eye! And he weighs the cost / A lie for a lie! And your soul for sale  
Sold! To the king on the chromium throne / Thrown! To the bottom of a sing-sing cell  
Where the little wheel squeal and the big wheel groan / And you better forget about your wishing well

#### **Way down Hadestown / Way down under the ground**

#### EURYDICE

Mr. Hades is a mighty king / Must be making some mighty big deals  
Seems like he owns everything / Kind of makes you wonder how it feels

#### **Way down Hadestown / Way down under the ground x 2**

#### **Way down under the ground x 2**

## HEY, LITTLE SONGBIRD

### HADES

Hey, little songbird, give me a song / I'm a busy man and I can't stay long  
I got clients to call, I got orders to fill / I got walls to build, I got riots to quell  
And they're giving me hell back in Hades  
Hey little songbird, cat got your tongue? / Always a pity for one so pretty and young  
When poverty comes to clip your wings / And knock the wind right out of your lungs  
Hey, nobody sings on empty

### EURYDICE

Strange is the call of this strange man / I want to fly down and feed at his hand  
I want a nice soft place to land / I want to lie down forever

### HADES

Hey little songbird, you got something fine / You'd shine like a diamond down in the mine  
And the choice is yours if you're willing to choose / Seeing as you've got nothing to lose  
And I could use a canary

### EURYDICE

Suddenly nothing is as it was / Where are you now, Orpheus?  
Wasn't it always the two of us / Weren't we birds of a feather?

### HADES

Hey little songbird, let me guess / He's some kind of poet- and he's penniless  
Give him your hand, he'll give you his hand-to-mouth / He'll write you a poem when the power's out  
Hey, why not fly south for the winter?  
Hey little songbird, look all around you / See how the vipers and vultures surround you  
They'll take you down, they'll pick you clean / If you stick around such a desperate scene  
See people get mean when the chips are down

## GONE, I'M GONE

### EURYDICE

Orpheus, my heart is yours / Always was and will be  
It's my gut I can't ignore / Orpheus, I'm hungry  
Oh, my heart, it aches to stay / But the flesh will have its way  
Oh, the way is dark and long / I'm already gone-- I'm gone

### FATES

Go ahead and lay the blame / Talk of virtue, talk of sin  
Wouldn't you have done the same? / In her shoes, in her skin  
You can have your principles / When you've got a bellyful  
But hunger has a way with you / There's no telling what you're gonna do  
When the chips are down / Now that the chips are down  
What you gonna do when the chips are down? / Now that the chips are down

## WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN

### FATES

Life ain't easy, life ain't fair / A girl's gotta fight for a rightful share  
What you gonna do when the chips are down / Now that the chips are down  
What you gonna do when the chips are down / Now that the chips are down  
Help yourself, to hell with the rest / Even the one who loves you best  
What you gonna do when the chips are down / Now that the chips are down  
What you gonna do when the chips are down / Now that the chips are down

### EURYDICE

Oh my aching heart...

### FATES

What you gonna do when the chips are down? / Now that the chips are down  
Take if you can, give if you must / Ain't nobody but yourself to trust  
What you gonna do when the chips are down? / Now that the chips are down  
What you gonna do when the chips are down? / Now that the chips are down  
Aim for the heart, shoot to kill / If you don't do it then the other one will  
What you gonna do when the chips are down? / Now that the chips are down  
What you gonna do when the chips are down? / Now that the chips are down  
And the first shall be first / And the last shall be last  
Cast your eyes to heaven / You get a knife in the back  
Nobody's righteous / Nobody's proud, Nobody's innocent, Now that the chips are down  
Now that the chips are down

## WAIT FOR ME

### HERMES

How to get to Hadestown / You'll have to take the long way down  
Through the underground, under cover of night / Laying low, staying out of sight  
Ain't no compass, brother, ain't no map / Just a telephone wire and a railroad track  
But you keep on walking and you don't look back / Till you get to the bottomland

### ORPHEUS

*Wait for me, I'm coming / Wait, I'm coming with you  
Wait for me, I'm coming too / I'm coming to*

### HERMES

River Styx is high and wide / Cinderbricks and razorwire  
Walls of iron and concrete / Hound dogs howling round the gate  
Them dogs'll lie down and play dead / If you got the bones, if you got the bread  
But if all you got is your own to legs / You best be glad you got em

### ORPHEUS

*Wait for me, I'm coming / Wait, I'm coming with you  
Wait for me, I'm coming too / I'm coming to*

### HERMES

You're on the lam, you're on the run / Don't give your name, you don't have one  
And don't look no one in the eye / That town will try to suck you dry  
They'll suck your brain, They'll suck your breath / They'll pluck the heart right out your chest  
They'll truss you up in your sunday best / And stuff your mouth with cotton

### ORPHEUS

*Wait for me, I'm coming / Wait, I'm coming with you  
Wait for me, I'm coming too / I'm coming  
Wait, wait, wait, wait*

## WHY WE BUILD THE WALL

### HADES

Why do we build the wall? / My children, my children  
Why do we build the wall?

### ALL

**Why do we build the wall? / We build the wall to keep us free  
That's why we build the wall / We build the wall to keep us free**

### HADES

How does the wall keep us free? / My children, my children  
How does the wall keep us free?

### ALL

**How does the wall keep us free? / The wall keeps out the enemy  
And we build the wall to keep us free / That's why we build the wall  
We build the wall to keep us free**

### HADES

Who do we call the enemy? / My children, my children  
Who do we call the enemy?

### ALL

**Who do we call the enemy? / The enemy is poverty  
And the wall keeps out the enemy / And we build the wall to keep us free  
That's why we build the wall / We build the wall to keep us free**

### HADES

Because we have and they have not! / My children, my children  
Because they want what we have got!

### ALL

**Because we have and they have not! / Because they want what we have got!  
The enemy is poverty / And the wall keeps out the enemy  
And we build the wall to keep us free / That's why we build the wall  
We build the wall to keep us free**

### HADES

What do we have that they should want? / My children, my children  
What do we have that they should want?

### ALL

**What do we have that they should want? / We have a wall to work upon!  
We have work and they have none / And our work is never done  
My children, my children / And our war is never won  
The enemy is poverty / And the wall keeps out the enemy  
And we build the wall to keep us free / That's why we build the wall  
We build the wall to keep us free / We build the wall to keep us free**

## OUR LADY OF THE UNDERGROUND

### PERSEPHONE

*I don't know about you, boys*

But if you're like me then hanging around / This old manhole is bringing you down  
Six-feet-under getting under your skin / Cabin fever is a-setting in  
You're stir crazy! Stuck in a rut! / You could use a little pick-me-up  
I can give you what it is you crave / A little something from the good old days, hey  
I got the wind right here in a jar / I got the rain on tap at the bar  
I got the sunshine up on the shelf / Allow me to introduce myself  
*Brother, what's my name? My name is*

### CROWD

*Our Lady of the Underground!*

### PERSEPHONE

*Brother, what's my name?*

### CROWD

*Our Lady of Ways!*

*Our Lady of Means!*

### PERSEPHONE

*Brother, what's my name? My name is*

### CROWD

*Our Lady of the Upside Down*

### PERSEPHONE

*Brother what's my name? I'll tell you my name: Persephone!*

Come here, brother, let me guess / It's the little things you miss  
Spring flowers, autumn leaves / Ask me, brother, and you shall receive  
Or maybe these just ain't enough / Maybe you're looking for some stronger stuff  
I got a sight for the sores eye / When's the last time you saw the sky?  
*Wipe away your tears, brother, brother, I know how you feel*  
*I can see you're blinded by the sadness of it all*  
*Look a little closer and everything will be revealed*  
*Look a little closer, there's a crack in the wall*  
You want stars? I got a skyful / Put a quarter in the slot, you'll get an eyeful  
You want the moon? I got her too / She's right here waiting in my pay-per-view  
Ooh, how long's it been? / A little moonshine ain't no sin  
One at a time, boys, straight line / What the boss don't know, the boss won't mind

## FLOWERS (Eurydice's Song)

### EURYDICE

What I wanted was to fall asleep / Close my eyes and disappear  
Like a petal on a stream, a feather on the air  
Lily white and poppy red / I trembled when he laid me out  
You won't feel a thing, he said, when you go down  
Nothing gonna wake you now  
Dreams are sweet until they're not / Men are kind until they aren't  
Flowers bloom until they rot and fall apart  
Is anybody listening? / I open my mouth and nothing comes out  
Nothing / Nothing gonna wake me now  
*Flowers, I remember fields / Of flowers, soft beneath my heels*  
*Walking in the sun / I remember someone*  
*Someone by my side / Turned his face to mine*  
*And then I turned away / Into the shade*  
You, the one I left behind / If you ever walk this way  
Come and find me lying in the bed I made

## NOTHING CHANGES

### FATES

Why the struggle, why the strain? / Why make trouble? Why make scenes?  
Why go against the grain? / Why swim upstream?  
It ain't no use (x3)  
You're bound to lose (x3)  
What's done is done (x3)  
That's the way the river runs  
So why get wet? Why break a sweat? / Why waste your precious breath?  
Why beat your handsome brow? Nothing changes  
Nothing changes / Nothing changes anyhow

## IF IT'S TRUE

### ORPHEUS

If it's true what they say / If my love is gone for good  
They can take this heart away / They can take this flesh and blood  
Take my mouth that kissed her mouth / Take my tongue that sung her praise  
Take my arms that used to reach out / In the dark to where she lay  
*If it's true what they say / I'll be on my way*  
If it's true what they say / If there's nothing to be done  
If there's no part to be played / If there's no song to be sung  
Take this voice, take these hands / I can't use them anyway  
Take this music and the memory / Of the muse from which it came  
*If it's true what they say / I'll be on my way*  
*We can all be on our way / If it's true what they say*  
But the ones who tell the lies / Are the solemnest to swear  
And the ones who load the dice / Always say the toss is fair  
And the ones who deal the cards / Are the ones who take the tricks  
With their hands over their hearts / While we play the game they fix  
And the ones who speak the word / Always say it was the last  
And no answer will be heard / To the question no one asks  
So I ask you as a brother / And I ask you as a friend  
And I ask you as a lover / And I ask you once again  
*Is it true what they say?*

## HOW LONG?

### PERSEPHONE

Hades, my husband, Hades, my light / Hades, my darkness  
If you had heard how he sang tonight / You'd pity poor Orpheus!  
All of his sorrow won't fit in his chest / It just burns like a fire in the pit of his chest  
And his heart is a bird on a spit in his chest / How long, how long, how long?

### HADES

How long? Just as long as Hades is King / Nothing comes of wishing on stars  
And nothing comes of the songs people sing / However sorry they are  
Give them a piece and they'll take it all / Show them the crack and they'll tear down the wall  
Lend them an ear and the Kingdom will fall / The Kingdom will fall for a song

### PERSEPHONE

What does he care for the logic of kings? / The laws of your underworld?  
It is only for love that he sings! / He sings for the love of a girl

### HADES

You and your pity don't fit in my bed / You just burn like a fire in the pit of my bed  
And I turn like a bird on a spit in my bed / How long, how long, how long?

### PERSEPHONE

How long? Just as long as I am your wife / It's true the earth must die  
But then the earth comes back to life / And the sun just goes on rising

### HADES & PERSEPHONE

And how does the sun even fit in the sky? / It just burns like a fire in the pit of the sky  
And the earth is a bird on a spit in the sky / How long, how long, how long?

## EPIC II

### ORPHEUS

Heavy and hard is the heart of the king / King of iron, king of steel  
The heart of the king loves everything / Like the hammer loves the nail  
But the heart of a man is a simple one / Small and soft, flesh and blood  
And all that he loves is a woman / A woman is all that he loves  
And Hades is king of the scythe and the sword / He covers the world in the color of rust  
He scrapes the sky and scars the earth / And he comes down heavy and hard on us  
But even that hardest of hearts unhardened / Suddenly when he saw her there  
Persephone in her mother's garden / Sun on her shoulders, wind in her hair  
The smell of the flowers she held in her hand / And the pollen that fell from her fingertips  
And suddenly Hades was only a man / With a taste of nectar upon his lips  
*Singing la la la la la la la*

## HIS KISS THE RIOT

### HADES

The devil take this Orpheus / And his belladonna kiss  
Beautiful and poisonous / Lovely! Deadly!  
Now it thickens on my tongue / Now it quickens in my lung  
Now I'm stricken! Now I'm stung! / It's done already!  
*Dangerous this jack of hearts / With his kiss the riot starts*  
All my children came here poor / Clamoring for bed and board  
Now what do they clamor for? / Freedom! Freedom!  
Have I made myself their Lord / Just to fall upon the sword  
Of some pauper's minor chord? / Who will lead them?  
*Who lays all the best laid plans? / Who makes work for idle hands?*  
Only one thing to be done / Let them think that they have won  
Let them leave together under / One condition  
Orpheus, the undersigned / Shall not turn to look behind  
She's out of sight! / And he's out of his mind!  
Every coward seems courageous / In the safety of the crowd  
Bravery can be contagious / When the band is playing loud  
Nothing makes a man so bold / As a woman's smile and a hand to hold  
But all alone his blood runs thin / And doubt comes, doubt comes in

## DOUBT COMES IN

### ORPHEUS & FATES

Doubt comes in / And strips the paint  
Doubt comes in / And turns the wine

### ORPHEUS

Doubt comes in and leaves a trace / Of vinegar and turpentine  
Where are you? Where are you now?

### ORPHEUS & FATES

Doubt comes in / And kills the lights  
Doubt comes in / And chills the air

### ORPHEUS

Doubt comes in and all falls silent / It's as though you aren't there  
Where are you? Where are you now?

### EURYDICE

Orpheus / You're shivering  
Is it cold or fear? / Just keep singing  
The coldest night / Of the coldest year  
Comes right before the spring

### ORPHEUS & FATES

Doubt comes in / With tricky fingers  
Doubt comes in / With fickle tongues

### ORPHEUS

Doubt comes in and my heart falters / And forgets the songs it sung  
Where are you? Where are you now?

### EURYDICE

Orpheus / Hold on  
Hold on tight / It won't be long  
Cause the darkest hour / Of the darkest night  
Comes right before the dawn

## I RAISE MY CUP TO HIM

### PERSEPHONE

Pour the wine and raise a cup / Drink up, brothers, you know how  
And spill a drop for Orpheus / Wherever he is now  
*Some birds sing when the sun shines bright / My praise is not for them*  
*But the one who sings in the dead of night / I raise my cup to him*

### EURYDICE

Wherever he is wandering / Alone upon the earth  
Let all our singing follow him / And bring him comfort  
*Some flowers bloom when the green grass grows / My praise is not for them*  
*But the one who blooms in the bitter snow / I raise my cup to him*

### PERSEPHONE

I raise my cup and drink it up

### EURYDICE

I raise it high and drink it dry

### PERSEPHONE & EURYDICE

To Orpheus and all of us / Goodnight, brothers, goodnight