

# **BABES IN THE WOOD**

**By**

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PRODUCTION NOTES.

## SCRIPT.

The script is complete with stage directions, comedy business and musical numbers, both singing and dancing. Allowing a maximum of 2 mins for each musical item it should run approx 2 hrs 15 mins excluding interval. Do not hesitate to adapt it to suit your particular company. If yours is a 'singing' group and comedy is not your strong point then cut out some of the business such as the 'betting' gags, the undressing or some of the business with the tree and insert musical items. Conversely if you are more humourous than harmonic then develop the comedy sequences and dispense with some of the singing or dancing. If it is dancing or juvenile work that you want then develop the dance items included or add more at suitable points but a quiet word of warning, if you put more in - then take something out as people these days do not expect shows to run for much over two hours. Leave them wanting more, don't bore them.

## MUSIC.

Try and select suitable modern tunes (although this seems to be getting ever more difficult to do), let the introduction overlap the preceding dialogue so that everyone doesn't have to wait for the song to start, and above all, keep them short. (NODA Ltd. keeps a very helpful delection of suitable music, love duets, point numbers, etc. and are always willing to give assistance)

## BUSINESS.

It is very difficult to be visually funny but funny 'business' is an integral part of pantomime. It is best to get the moves worked out and then time the words to fit them - not the other way round. Rehearse it and rehearse it, then rehearse it some more. Keep it fast and slick. And may the laughter ring out.

## COSTUMES.

Costumes should be as colourful as possible and with as many changes as possible. (Easier said than done!) The style is the traditional rustic Georgian with the girls in boleros and puff sleeved blouses (and colourful skirts of course) and the men in jerkins or knee breeches and square cut coats. Anything worn by the Dame should be as outrageous as possible. The only exceptions are the Good and Bad Spirits. Fairy sparkle is in a white and silver version of the latest youthful fashion and the Demon Imp although starting in the traditional red Tudor can gradually become more and more modern, but always in red.

## SCENERY.

The scenes are listed as full-stage set etc. but they could be quite simple, the essential elements such as the tree or the window on curtains but remember that spectacle should be a part of the show so do make the settings as impressive as you possibly can. Whether they are simple cut-outs or of west-end magnificence make them colourful and not too realistic. More in the nature of a cartoon than a Caniletto

## FINALLY.

Two golden rules: pace and good nature. Everybody is always in a good mood and even when they are arguing with someone we know they don't really mean it. And never let the show flag even for a second. A dull moment or two takes a lot of hard work to make up. Good luck and have fun.

## L.H.C.

MUSICAL NUMBERS.

OVERTURE

- |                   |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. OPENING CHORUS | CHORUS.                   |
| 2. CONCERTED      | COMPANY (Optional)        |
| 3. LOVE DUET      | ROBIN & MARION            |
| 4. COMEDY SEXTET  | MOPPET, SIMON & THE GIRLS |
| 5. EVIL TRIO      | SHERRIF & THE ROBBERS     |
| 6. SOLO           | SIMON                     |
| 7. COD STRIP      | MOPPET                    |
| 8. SCHOOL OPENING | CHORUS                    |
| 9. SCHOOL FINALE  | COMPANY                   |
| 10. QUARTET       | THE GIRLS                 |
| 11. ACT FINALE    | COMPANY                   |

INTERVAL

ENTR'ACTE

- |                      |                               |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 12. OPENING CHORUS   | COMPANY                       |
| 13. SOLO             | MOPPET                        |
| 14. SCENE FINALE     | BALLET                        |
| 15. DUET             | ROBIN & MARION                |
| 16. GHOSTLY DANCE    | CHORUS                        |
| 17. COMEDY LOVE SONG | SIMON & DOLLY                 |
| 18. SCENE FINALE     | COMPANY                       |
| 19. COMMUNITY SONG   | MOPPET & SIMON and/or ROBBERS |
| 20. WALKDOWN FINALE  | COMPANY                       |

PLAYOUT MUSIC

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S C E N E S

ACT ONE

Scene One  
OUTSIDE NOTTINGHAM CASTLE

Scene Two  
IN THE CASTLE COURTYARD  
(front cloth scene)

Scene Three  
THE BABES NURSERY  
(inset scene)

Scene four  
THE VILLAGE SCHOOLROOM

INTERVAL

ACT TWO

Scene Five  
THE FOREST

Scene Six  
NEXT MORNING BACK AT THE CASTLE  
(front cloth scene)

Scene Seven  
IN THE VAULTS

Scene Eight  
NOWHERE IN PARTICULAR  
(on curtains)

Scene Nine  
THE GRAND HALL AT THE CASTLE

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**\* CHARACTERS \***  
**\*\*\*\*\***

ROBBIN HOOD	PRINCIPAL BOY (played by a girl). Singer. A hearty 'lad' with lots of personality.
MAID MARION	PRINCIPAL GIRL, Singer (and Dancer), Pretty and feminine.
NURSE MOPPET	DAME, Played by a man. Comedian, traditionally robust part. Talks to the audience, needs to ad.lib. to some extent.
SHERIFF	The feared Sheriff of Nottingham, Character actor, an ineffectual baddie.
SIMPLE SIMON	Light comedian, 'Buttons' type. Likeable and easy going.
BERT & FRED	The ROBBERS, knock-about comedians, BERT is very much the forceful one, and FRED the dead-pan silly one.
BETTY & BOBBY	The BABES. lovable well behaved children. (!)
FAIRY SPARKLE	A rather modern FAIRY, good part for young actress.
DEMON IMP	A youthful EVIL SPIRIT who, not altogether successfully, follows the Fairy's lead and becomes modern.
CUDDLES	The DOG, pantomime animal.
DOLLY	The 'pretty' friend of Marion.
HOLLY	The 'matter of fact' friend.
GOLLY	The 'jolly hockey-stick' friend.
FOLLY	The 'rather silly' friend who giggles a lot.
OLD CRONE	The old castle crone. A shapeless old lady. (one scene only)
GHOST	Traditional white sheeted or black and shapeless.
CHORUS	Singers, Dancers, Juveniles as Village Folk, School Children, Ghosts, Animals of the Forest etc.

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B A B E S in the W O O D

## Act One

Scene One

OUTSIDE NOTTINGHAM CASTLE. A Full Stage set with country back-cloth, tree or cottage wings. Castle or part of castle on back-cloth if possible.

MUSIC NO 1. OPENING CHORUS.

A bright cheerful song and dance number. After first chorus MARION ENTERS L., music continues as she is greeted by the company, she takes the lead for the final chorus.

MARION           What a lovely day. It's so nice to be out here in the fresh air and away from that dreary castle.

HOLLY            Is your father in one of his moods again?

MARION           He always is.

GOLLY            He is awfully mean, your father, (to Folly) isn't he?

FOLLY            Yes.

SOUND of out-of-tune fanfare off L, ALL look to see who is coming. SIMON ENTERS L. dressed in the short tunic of a herald and carrying a long trumpet. HE comes to L.C. ALL see who it is and turn back to Marion.

SIMON            (importantly) My lords, ladies and gentlemen.

DOLLY            Where shall we go this morning?

MARION           I know where I am going, I am going to try and see Robin.

At the mention of the name 'Robin' ALL LADIES swoon.

SIMON            (loudly) OHI!

ALL stop swooning and look at him. He comes forward.

SIMON            I am the castle herald. Well go on - cheer.

Short sharp cheer. As the GIRLS continue chattering they step in front of him.

SIMON            (pushes through them) I am a very important person; much more important than you are. So you must all keep behind me. Do you understand?

GIRLS            Oh yes.

MARION and GIRLS get behind him.

**SIMON** Good. Now, Marion. I have a message for you, and all you girls.

BUSINESS. HE turns but they shuffle round and keep behind him, He can't see them and tries the other side, still no Girls.

**SIMON** Girls. Where have they gone? Where are you?

HE enlarges the circle, giggling they follow behind. HE suddenly turns and catches them.

**SIMON** What are you doing?

**HOLLY** You told us to keep behind you.

**FOLLY** Yes.

THEY laugh and gather round him.

**SIMON** I can see this isn't going to be my night tonight. (to Marion) Hello Miss Marion.

**MARION** Simon, what are you doing dressed up as the Herald?

**SIMON** You know what it is like at the castle, no none will work for your father; I'm the only one left. So when he ordered the herald to go and summon the people together - I had to come. And I don't like being the herald .

**DOLLY** Why not Simon?

**SIMON** It's so draughty. (the costume)

**MARION** I don't know why you don't leave as well Simon.

**SIMON** I couldn't do that Miss, I couldn't leave you all alone.

**MARION** That's very sweet of you.

SHE gives him a kiss.

**SIMON** I like that bit, let's do it again. I couldn't leave you all alone.

**MARION** Simon - get on with it.

**SIMON** Right. (clears his throat and makes announcement) Ladies and gentlemen, pray silence for the meanest man in all the county, the Lord High Sheriff of Nottingham!

Out of tune FANFARE. ENTER SHERIFF L. Bum note from accompaniment.

**SHERIFF** Who did that?!

**ALL** (pointing) He (she) did.

**SHERIFF** You are fired.

**M.D.** I shall want my money before I go.



**SHERIFF** You can stay. (to Chorus) Right gather round.

BUSINESS, SIMON is very awkward with the trumpet, He pokes the Sheriff with it every time he gets near, then hits him with it as he turns etc.

**SHERIFF** Now, you all know who I am.

**FOLLY** We all know what you are.

ALL laugh.

**SHERIFF** Stop that! (walks into trumpet again) Augh. Don't do that with that thing.

**SIMON** What shall I do with it?

**MARION** Simon.

**SHERIFF** Silence, or I shall throw you all into the dungeons.

**M.F.& G.** Oh.

ALL LAUGH.

**GOLLY** Oh, I say, you are awful. (sloshes him heartily)

ALL LAUGH.

**SHERIFF** (threateningly) I will not be treated like this. Silence!!

THEY ARE QUIET.

**SHERIFF** That's better. I will be treated with respect.

**MOPPET** (off R.) Awhooooo!

**SHERIFF** Who did that?

**SIMON** It wasn't me.

**MOLLY** (pointing off R.) Ooo, look.

**F.& D.** Whatever is it?

**GOLLY** Gosh.

MOPPET ENTERS U.R. She rides an old fashioned bicycle or some other odd form of transport, it is out of control, she is making a lot of noise. SHE CIRCLES THE STAGE she narrowly misses, or chases, the Sheriff and finally falls off C.

**MOPPET** Ooooo, I shall never be the same again. I think my big end's gone.

**SHERIFF** Why don't you look where you are going? You only just missed killing me.

**MOPPET** If I'd been looking i wouldn't have missed.

**MOLLY** Let's help you up.

BUSINESS The GIRLS try to lift her, but she is far too heavy, they get her half way up but she drops back down with loud THUMP! CHORUS all shudder as if the ground shook. THEY try again with same result.

DOLLY Come and give us a hand Simon.

SIMON joins them and together they lift her, they have her half way up -

SIMON It isn't a Simon you want for this job - it's a DERRICK!

ALL LAUGH. She drops, THUMP, SHAKE.

MOPPET This is the end (turns and gets up back end to audience).

SIMON You're telling me.

MOPPET I shall never be the same again.

SIMON The same as what?

MOPPET Why don't you go for a long walk on ..... (local reference) pier.

SIMON ..... hasn't got a pier.

MOPPET Exactly.

SHERIFF Enough of this nonsense. What do you want woman?

MOPPET Woman?! You are no 'Mother's Pride' yourself you know. Now which is the way to Nottingham Castle? I have a message for the sheriff. Sir Marmalade Rampant.

SHERIFF It's Sir 'Marmaduke', idiot.

MOPPET I beg his pardon. The sheriff, Sir Marmaduke Idiot.

ALL LAUGH.

SHERIFF I am the sheriff, Sir Marmaduke Idiot - I mean Sir Marmalade - oh give me the message.

MOPPET Here you are. (takes letter from leg of bloomers or ample bosom)

SHERIFF You read it Simon, after all you are the Herald.

SIMON (taking letter) It's from Messers, Smashit, Bashit, Wackit and Ouch, solicitors.

SHERIFF Go on.

SIMON And it says, 'This is to introduce Miss Clodhopper Moppet -

MOPPET That's me.

SIMON - the faithful nurse -

MOPPET That's right, very faithful.

**SIMON** - the loyal companion -

**MOPPET** Yes, ever so loyal.

**SIMON** - and very OLD friend - (pause) Well?

**MOPPET** No comment.

**SHERIFF** Get on with it Simon.

**SIMON** - and very old friend of your late departed brother, Percival. You didn't tell me you had a brother.

**SHERIFF** What difference does it make, he left home years ago and went to Australia, or ..... (local district) or some such place. Go on.

**SIMON** Nurse Moppet -

**MOPPET** That's me -

**SHERIFF** Shutup!

**SIMON** - brings with her in her mental flair, eh? oh, sorry, gentle care, Betty and Bobby the only children of the aforementioned brother knowing that you will look after them and care for them as if they were your own -

**MOPPET** (suddenly panicking) Betty and Bobby, oh my goodness me, what have I done? I shall never forgive myself, oh lack a day.

**SHERIFF** (after several attempts) Oh! Stop it Moppet!

**SIMON** There's a bit more, shall I carry on?

**SHERIFF** No, there is enough carrying on carrying on over here.

**MOPPET** Oh dear oh dear oh dear.

**SHERIFF** Silence woman. Does she mean that I am going to be landed with a couple of dreadful children?

**MOPPET** The children, they are lost. The little dears gave me a push at the top of the hill and that is the last I saw of them. (concerned) You don't think they could have gone into the forest?

General concern.

**SIMON** But there is terrible evil in parts of the forest.

**M.F.& G.** Oh.

**DOLLY** Oooooo.

**SHERIFF** Wait a minute, they might have brought some money with them. I will give a reward to anyone who finds them.

ROBIN HOOD ENTERS U.R. to C.

**ROBIN** Will you reward me sheriff?

FOLLY I's Robin Hood!

ALL LADIES SWOON in their various ways.

MARION (running to him) Robin.

HE speaks to her then she exits U.R.

SHERIFF (beside himself with rage) Robin Hood? Robin Hood! How dare you come here like this. Seize that man!

ROBIN You don't know why I am here.

DOLLY Who cares.

SHERIFF Simon, seize that man.

SIMON I'm not that sort of chap.

DOLLY I will.

ROBIN Sir, I heard some children crying in the forest and they told me they were coming to live with you, so, though you have threatened to arrest me on sight, I thought it was my duty to return them safely to you.

SHERIFF Quite right. Where are they?

ROBIN Here they are..

MARION ENTERS U.R. with BETTY and BOBBY.

MOPPET Ah, there you are, you did give me a fright. Now come and say hello to your new daddy.

BOBBY (eyeing him) Must I? (then) How do you do sir? I am Bobby and this is my sister Betty. Say hello to him Betty.

BETTY Don't want to. Don't like him, he's horrid.

SHERIFF Nurse, you will take charge of these brats and you will teach them some manners. Now, out of my way, all of you.

HE pushes his way through the chorus and EXITS U.L.

MOPPET Is he always like that?

SIMON No, sometimes he is quite nasty.

MARION Welcome to Nottingham Nurse Moppet, don't take too much notice of daddy.

MOPPET I don't think I shall take any notice of him.

MARION This is Robin Hood.

MOPPET How do you do? And how are the forty thieves? Sorry wrong show.

MARION And these are my friends.

MOLLY I'm Molly.

GOLLY I'm Golly.  
 FOLLY I'm Folly.  
 DOLLY And I'm Dolly.  
 MOPPET That's true. I'm sure everything is going to be absolutely splendid.

MUSIC NO 2. COMPANY NUMBER. (Optional)  
 Reprise NO 1 or similar.

MOPPET Now children, what's happened to that box you were looking after for me? And where is Cuddles?  
 BOBBY We don't know.  
 BETTY We lost him.  
 MOPPET You've lost Cuddles!?  
 BETTY He ran away.  
 MOPPET Oh Cuddles. My poor little doggie. Gone. Lost in the forest, among all those trees, what will he do?  
 BOBBY We ran after him.  
 BETTY That's when we must have dropped your box.  
 BOBBY We'll show you where.

GENERAL EXIT L. Leaving MARION and ROBIN.

MARION I did so hope we would meet today. And here you are. I can hardly believe it's true.  
 ROBIN It is true, we are together again for a while. And one day we shall be together - for always.  
 MARION I can't get over it, meeting you like this so unexpectedly. I'm so happy'  
 ROBIN (smiling) Calm down my dear.  
 MARION (pertly mocking him) But aren't you happy we are together?  
 ROBIN More than I can say. Marion, I am penniless and I have to live in the forest because your father has made me an outlaw, I have nothing in the world to offer you except my love. But one day I shall prove to you that I am no outlaw, then Marion, will you marry me?  
 MARION Of course I will, I will marry you tomorrow if you like. Let's run away and get Friar Tuck to marry us in the forest.  
 ROBIN No, you deserve a better life than I can offer you. So long as I know you love me enough to wait for me.  
 MARION I'll wait for you Robin, have no fear.

ROBIN I should give you a diamond ring as a token of my love for you, but truth to tell I only possess one thing that I can give you. (he takes a medallion from around his neck) Marion, will you accept this medallion as a token of my love for you? I give it to you with all my heart. (he places medallion round Marion's neck.)

MARION It's lovely. Thank you Robin.

MUSIC NO 3. DUET ROBIN & MARION.

THEY EXIT L. after number. MOPPET, SIMON (carrying box), FOLLY, MOLLY, GOLLY, and DOLLY ENTER R.

MOPPET Thank goodness we have found it. Because I am in charge of that box.

HOLLY Is it important then?

MOPPET Is it important? Is it important!?

FOLLY Yes, is it important?

MOPPET Of course it's important. You don't think I would be carting it about like this if it wasn't.

SIMON You are not carting it about. I am! Ooooo. (the lid of the box is opening under his hand) It's opening.

MOPPET It mustn't. Don't let it.

SIMON (hands box to DOLLY) Here, you take it.

MOPPET Whatever happens that box must not open.

LOUD SQUEAL from DOLLY as box tries to open.

MOPPET Don't let it open. You had better stay with it and look after it.

DOLLY No you (Molly) stay. (passes box to her)

MOLLY No you (Golly) stay. (passes box to her)

GOLLY No fear, you (Folly) stay with it. (passes box to her)

FOLLY Yes alright. (puts box on floor and sits on it)

SIMON Can't leave her with it. I can't think of anyone to look after it for us.

MOPPET (nodding toward the audience) I can.

BUSINESS of asking the audience to look after the box and to shout 'Moppey' if the lid opens. It is placed D.S. and a line through scenery or proscenium is secretly attached to the lid so that it can be opened from off stage. It does as soon as their back is turned. They thank the audience, it happens again.

MUSIC NO 4. COMEDY SEXTET.

MOPPET, SIMON, and the GIRLS perform a light-hearted song and dance number, hard though he tries to partner one of the girls he always seems to end up with Moppet. BOX OPENS once or twice during.

THEY EXIT.

----- (end of scene) -----

Scene Two

THE CASTLE COURTYARD. A front-cloth or curtains scene.

DEMON ENTERS L. cutting into the applause.

**DEMON** Cease this merriment, there has been enough laughter for one evening (day). Don't you know that laughter is bad for you? But hold, first I should introduce myself.

I am the evil spirit of this merry pantomime,  
I'll pick some mortal hereabouts  
And turn his will to mine.  
Yes I shall bring distress tonight (day)  
And thereby spoil your fun.  
I'll pick some mortal - yes but who?

SHERIFF ENTERS R.

Why yes, the very one!

Hey! 'Spindle legs'. (or appropriate gibe)

**SHERIFF** (as if the Demon were invisible) Eh? Who spoke? I thought I heard a voice.

**DEMON** (insidiously) You do not like those two noisy brats that have been thrust upon you do you?

**SHERIFF** I do not indeed, but who is it that speaks?

**DEMON** It is just the voice of your conscience. (to audience) I often use this trick, it never fails. (to Sheriff) You have good cause to dislike them, but more than you realise, much more. They are far more important than you are you know.

**SHERIFF** More important than I!?

**DEMON** (to aud.) Jealousy, another little ploy of mine. (to Sheriff) You really should read to the end of that letter that Nurse Moppet brought. It shouldn't be kept from a person like you.

**SHERIFF** How dare they keep it from me?

HE moves away R.

DEMON Ha, ha, ha, ha.

If I say it myself,  
Though I really should not.  
I think I handled that well,  
I've endangered the Babes  
And I've altered the plot,  
Now I must go back to -

During this FAIRY ENTERS R. and comes to R. of  
him. HE TURNS and sees her.

DEMON (without pause) - what are you doing here?

FAIRY Stop.

You'll not get away with a trick like that,  
You are silly to think that you would.  
For whenever the Imp of Evil appears -  
Then so does the Fairy of good!

DEMON You are a bit modern for a Fairy aren't you?

FAIRY Of course I am. This is nineteen ---- you know, not -----  
(rearrange numbers to sound old fashioned) You have got to get with  
it 'Baggy Pants'.

The DEMON is highly affronted at this attack on his  
dignity and his costume.

FAIRY So go, shoo, be gone. Get off the stage.  
Go back to wherever you may.  
And know from now on in this day and age  
That Fairypower rules - O.K!

DEMON That was a terrible rhyme.

FAIRY You can't be good at everything.

DEMON EXITS L. FAIRY turns to Sheriff.

FAIRY And you sir, change your ways.

SHERIFF (fawning) I will, I will. You are very young to be a fairy. Why  
haven't you got a wand?

FAIRY I have. Oh no! Don't tell me, I have left it behind again. I am  
always doing that. Thank you.

SHERIFF (still fawning) Anything I can do to help. Now I know you are here  
I will indeed change my ways.

FAIRY I'll protect the Babes from evil and harm,  
The Babes of whom we are fond.  
Then I'll pick on all meanness and evil - but first,  
I'll go and pick up my wand.

FAIRY EXITS R. SHERIFF straightens up.



**SHERIFF** Stupid fairy. Now I know you are here I will indeed change my ways, I will be nastier than ever. But I shall need someone to help me deal with those wretched Babes. But who? Who do I know who is bad enough?

SHERIFF EXITS L. as he does FRED ENTERS R. followed by BERT who holds one end of a large rope that leads off stage.

**FRED** Will you keep up?! Here we are at Nottingham Castle, what a lovely place to rob. Come on. (moves L.)

**BERT** Alright. (to off R.) Come on.

HE starts to move L. but the rope doesn't and HE lands on the floor.

**BERT** (getting up) Come on will you.

HE gives another pull but the rope pulls back and HE IS PULLED OFF STAGE.

**FRED** Now remember, when we get inside - now where has he gone?

BERT RE-ENTERS still holding rope.

**FRED** What are you doing? What's the matter now?

**BERT** (tugging on rope) It's the idiot on the end of this rope.

**FRED** I know it is, but what is wrong with the other end.

**BERT** You know, there are times when I think you don't think you like me. And after all we have been through together.

**FRED** How did I get landed with someone like you?

**BERT** You were always lucky.

**FRED** Alright, I'll give you a hand.

BUSINESS with rope. They pull but Bert is facing the wrong direction, 'the other way round', Bert turns round but still pulls in wrong direction. 'get behind me and do what I do' Bert does literally, every move. When he is discovered he is stopped. They finally after counting 'one, two, three' (with difficulty) they pull together but CUDDLES TROTS ON and they collapse in a heap. CUDDLES SITS happily on top of them.

**BERT** (after they have sorted themselves out) Where so you think he came from?

**FRED** Who cares. But now he is ours he can be very useful to us. we can train him to be a ruthless killer.

OPTIONAL BUS. of trying to train him. But without success. It ends with them being knocked flat by him as he rushes L. to greet MOPPET who ENTERS L.

**MOPPET** Ah, there you are you naughty boy. Whose a naughty boy then? Is he happy wappy to see his mummy wummy then? Nice old cuddles-wuddles.

**BERT** Is he yoursy-worsy?

**MOPPET** Yessy-wessy.

**FRED** Oh, goody-goody! Who are you?

**MOPPET** I am Nurse Moppet, Nurse-maid to the castle.

**BERT** I didn't know castles had to have nurse maids.

**MOPPET** Who are you?

**BERT** Oh we are robbers.

**FRED** Jobbers!!

**BERT** What he said.

**MOPPET** And this is my little dog 'Cuddles'

**FRED** He is not very well trained is he.

**MOPPET** Of course he is.

SHE gives Cuddles a series of orders, 'stand', 'sit' etc. but he does the opposite until she manages to fit in with what he is doing.

**MOPPET** There. Now I must get back to the castle. If you are looking for work there is plenty of work to do up there. (to Cuddles) Heel boy.

SHE EXITS L. followed by CUDDLES.

**FRED** Did you hear what she said?

**BERT** Yes, she said 'heel boy'.

SHERIFF ENTERS L. to R. of them.

**FRED** No she said there was work at the castle.

**BERT** Work at the castle.

**SHERIFF** Work at the castle.

**FRED** Dirty work at the castle.

**BERT** Dirty work at the castle.

**SHERIFF** Dirty work at the castle.

**FRED** (to Bert) Don't keep repeating everything I say.

**BERT** (to Sheriff) Don't keep repeating everything he says. Oh, look, Richard the third. He is all bent.

FRED                    There is a lot of it about.

SHERIFF                Who are you sirs?

FRED                    Fred -

BERT                    And Bert.

FRED                    Robbers in general -

BERT                    And masters of disguise.

SHERIFF                Masters of disguise. Did you say masters of disguise?

BERT                    (to Fred) Did I say masters of disguise?

FRED                    Yes.

BERT                    (to Sheriff) Yes I did say masters of disguise.

SHERIFF                Good, then I have work for you.

F. & B.                Work for us?

SHERIFF                Dirty work for you.

F. & B.                Dirty work for us.

FRED                    Can you afford it?

SHERIFF                There are two little brats that I want you to dispose of. Can you do that?

FRED                    Easy.

MUSIC NO 5. COMEDY EVIL TRIO.

(or Solo for Sheriff at end of scene)

SHERIFF                By the way, are you in disguise at the moment?

FRED                    Of course we are.

BERT                    What are we disguised as Fred?

FRED                    Human beings. (EXITS L.)

BERT                    Oh. Your disguise isn't very good Fred. (EXITS L.)

SHERIFF                'Can I afford it'? I have just learned from that letter that those brats are heirs to a large fortune, but if they were out of the way that fortune would be mine. Ha! Can I afford it?

(Alternate position for Musical Number)

----- (end of scene) -----

Scene Three

THE BABES NURSERY. An inset scene. (with the Schoolroom set behind) with bed, and practical window with curtains that can be operated from off stage. MOPPET is making the bed.

MOPPET Hey ho, a woman's work is never done. (she tucks the bedspread into her apron) There, perfect for the little dears. (walks D.S. trailing bedspread and talks to audience) Hello. Oh I say, still there? Hello! That's better. Eh? A what? Where? (pretends she cannot see the bedspread)

SIMON ENTERS L.

MOPPET Oh yes, so there is. Silly me. (to Simon before he can comment) Don't say a word. Put this back where it belongs.

HE DOES.

MOPPET (to aud.) Are you still looking after that box for us? Has it opened yet? Don't forget to shout if it does. (to Simon) What do you want anyway?

SIMON I've come to help.

MOPPET Wonders will never cease. Draw the curtains.

BUSINESS. HE does but as soon as his back is turned they open again. 'I thought I told you to draw the curtains' etc. She draws them, they stay shut - until they turn away. THEY ask the audience to tell them. BOX OPENS. They go to curtains. Curtains open when they turn away and close when they turn to look at them. Slow turn slow close; quick turn quick close. BOX OPENS to add more confusion. Finally, very pointedly, 'I know, lets leave the curtains open for the night' They close sharply.

MOPPET (to aud.) There is always a way. (angrily to Simon) Now get out of my way, it's all your fault.

SIMON Now, now. Keep calm,

MOPPET I AM CALM!

SIMON Calm? You are in such a state that if you threw yourself on the floor - you'd miss.

MOPPET That does it. Come here you pantomime passover. You come in here, you damage my decorum, you -

SIMON No, that wasn't me, I wasn't here; I was somewhere else.

MOPPET You weren't somewhere else.

SIMON I bet you I was.

MOPPET You are on.

**SIMON** What will you bet?

**MOPPET** I haven't got any money, but I have some sweets for the children.

**SIMON** So have I. I bet you your sweets against mine that I was somewhere else.

**MOPPET** You're on. (THEY put their sweets D.C.)

**SIMON** Right. Now, I wasn't over there in that corner was I? (points L.)

**MOPPET** No.

**SIMON** And I wasn't over there in that corner. (points R.)

**MOPPET** No.

**SIMON** Now - if I wasn't over there and I wasn't over there, I must have been 'somewhere else'. And if I was 'somewhere else' I wasn't here. Ha ha I've won.

**MOPPET** (standing beside him) I've been had haven't I?

**SIMON** You have.

**MOPPET** I'm the next thing to an idiot aren't I?

**SIMON** You are. (realises) Oh.

**MOPPET** Still it was a good gag. Ha ha ha, I must catch someone.

**SHERIFF ENTERS L.**

**SHERIFF** What is going on up here? Who is making all this noise?

**MOPPET** Urm - it's not me. I'm not here.

**SHERIFF** What do you mean? Of course you are here.

**MOPPET** (giggling with anticipation throughout) Bet you?

**SHERIFF** Bet you.

**MOPPET** Sweets for the children?

**SHERIFF** Sweets for the children,

**SOME SWEETS are PLACED D.C.as before.**

**MOPPET** Now, I am not over there (points L.)

**SHERIFF** No.

**MOPPET** And I'm not over there. (points R.)

**SHERIFF** No. (during next speech he picks up the sweets)

**MOPPET** Now, if I am not over there (L.), and I am not over there (R.), I must be somewhere else. And if I am somewhere else I can't be here, I've won where are the sweets?

**SHERIFF** As they are not here they must be somewhere else, and as you are somewhere else too you can get them. (chuckles)

**MOPPET** I've been had again haven't I?

**SHERIFF** You have. Is the room ready? It's time the children went to bed. By the way your room is next door. (indicates R.)

**MOPPET** What? That? It looks like a cupboard.

**SHERIFF** It is a cupboard.

**MOPPET** It's not big enough to swing a cat in.

**SHERIFF** Are you going to swing a cat in it?

**MOPPET** No.

**SHERIFF** Then what are you grumbling about? You can get changed in here. (EXITS L.)

**SIMON** Have you had any experience with children?

**MOPPET** Lots. And all of it painful.

**BOBBY and BETTY ENTER L. in dressing gowns over night clothes.**

**BOBBY** Excuse me, but the Sheriff said it was time we went to bed.

**BETTY** No he didn't. He said, 'Why don't you kids get out of here'. I don't like him.

**BOBBY** Betty!

**BETTY** I think he is a bit horrid.

**SIMON** So do I, and I know which bit's horrid.

**MOPPET** You mustn't talk like that! He is not a bit horrid. - He's horrid all over. Now get into bed.

**BETTY and BOBBY take off dressing gowns and get into bed.**

**BETTY** Tell us a story Simon.

**BOBBY** Yes please do.

**MOPPET** This should be worth hearing. (sits on bed with children)

**SIMON** Alright then. Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin. Jack and Jill went up the hill -

**BETTY** Why?

**SIMON** To fetch a pail of water. Jack fell down -

**BETTY** Why?

MOPPET 'Cause Jill tripped him up.

SIMON She didn't trip him up.

MOPPET She pushed him.

SIMON She did not push him.

MOPPET He was just clumsy.

SIMON He was - no he wasn't! I don't' know why Jack fell down, but he did; and he broke his crown.

BETTY Why was he wearing a crown Simon?

SIMON (to Moppet) Why was he wearing a crown?

MOPPET Because his tin hat didn't fit.

SIMON Because his - no! I'll tell you another story. Wee Willie Winkie, runs through the town, Up stairs, down stairs, in his night gown.

BETTY What happened?

MOPPET He got arrested.

SIMON He did not! I'll sing them a song. You go and get their bath ready.

MOPPET I want to sing them a song.

SIMON You, sing? Your voice makes the Mersey Ferry sound like a soprano.

MOPPET I can't help it if I can't sing, I can make an omelette.

SIMON What's so special about that?

MOPPET I bet the Mersey Ferry can't. (EXITS R.)

BOBBY She is funny isn't she?

SIMON Well she thinks she is.

MOPPET (popping head round wing) I heard that. (goes)

BETTY What story are you going to tell us Simon.

SIMON ..... (cue line into :-

**MUSIC NO 6. NARRATIVE SOLO SIMON.**

The story could be illustrated by (small) dancers.  
MOPPET ENTERS after.

MOPPET Bath time.

BOBBY (as he runs off R.) Bet I get wetter than you.

BETTY (following him) Bet you don't.

SIMON I'll make sure they don't drown themselves. (EXIT R)

MOPPET

If they don't drown you first. Better get ready for bed myself.

MUSIC NO 7. COD STRIP TEASE MOPPET

To a variety of tunes SHE takes off layer after layer of ever more remarkable clothing. Ad. lib. dialogue as necessary.

SIMON, BOBBY and BETTY ENTER L.

SIMON

Here we are. time for bed.

BETTY

I did enjoy my bath Simon.

BOBBY

I'm sorry if we made you rather wet.

MOPPET

Don't worry, he was wet already. Now say good-night.

BOBBY

Good-night Simon.

BETTY

Good-night Simon.

SIMON

Nightie-night, sleepy-byes, tuckums-in then.

MOPPET

Nightie-night, sleepy-byes, tuckums-in then? You soppo great dope. You don't talk to children like that. Say good-night properly.

SIMON

Good-night properly.

BOBBY

Nightie-night.

BETTY

Sleepy-byes.

MOPPET

That's better. And I'll tuckums-in then. (SIMON EXITS L.)

MOPPET

Now then, sleep.

BOBBY

Play a game with us before we go to sleep.

BETTY

Can we have a sweet? Simon gave us a sweet, and so did the Sheriff.

MOPPET

And I know where they got them from. Play a game? Have a sweet? Now's my chance. Alright, I'll bet you these two sweets that I am not here.

BETTY

But that's silly, you are here.

BOBBY

Go on nurse prove you are not here.

MOPPET

Well, I am not over there in that corner am I?

BETTY

No.

MOPPET

And I am not over there in that corner am I?

BOBBY

No.

MOPPET

Now, if I am not over there, and I am not over there, I must be somewhere else. And if I am somewhere else I cannot be here. (goes to take the sweets)



**BOBBY** Just a moment nurse, you cannot take the sweets.

**MOPPET** Why not?

**BOBBY** Because the sweets are here and you have just proved you are somewhere else. So if you are somewhere else how can you take them? (beaming they take the sweets)

**MOPPET** Flipping kids. But don't eat them tonight you have just cleaned your teeth. (settles them down)

**BOBBY** Good-night nurse. Thank you for the game.

**BETTY** Good-night Moppey, thank you for the sweets.

THEY seem to go straight off to sleep.

**MOPPET** Good-night Betty, good-night Bobby, sleep well.

SHE creeps out. Immediately BETTY and BOBBY sit up in bed.

**BOBBY** I'm not asleep are you?

**BETTY** No.

FAIRY SPARKLE opens the window curtains.

**BOBBY** Gracious me, who are you?

**FAIRY** (drops into the room) I am Fairy Sparkle. At your service.

**BOBBY** Are you a proper fairy?

**FAIRY** Of course I am a proper fairy, and I have come to look after you and your sister Betty.

**BETTY** How do you know our names?

**FAIRY** We fairies know everything. It's a super room you have. Some children only have a tiny little room.

**BETTY** Isn't your wand beautiful? Do let me have a look.

**FAIRY** Well, alright but be so ever so careful because it is the most precious thing there is. It's magic you know; it's how we fairies cast magic spells. In the wrong hands anything could happen.

**BETTY** Do some magic for us now.

**FAIRY** Ooo, I mustn't.

**BOBBY** Go on, be a sport.

**FAIRY** It would be rather fun wouldn't it? I've never used it before you know.

**BOBBY** Make somebody appear.

**BETTY** Someone young and pretty.

**FAIRY** Very well, but don't tell anybody will you?

SHE WAVES HER WAND. There is a FLASH R. and MOPPET (sleepwalking) ENTERS, circles the stage, and EXITS L.

**BOBBY** I think you must have got something a bit wrong.

**FAIRY** So do I, I should have paid more attention at lessons. (puts her wand down on the bed)

**BETTY** Are you going to stay with us all the time?

**FAIRY** I can't do that. But I will come and see you from time to time. You had better go to sleep now. I'll see you again soon. (goes to window) Bye-bye.

**BOTH** Bye-bye.

**FAIRY** (as she EXITS through window) I wonder what I did wrong?

**BETTY** She's gone.

**BOBBY** Look she has left her wand behind. Oh dear,

**BETTY** And it's so precious.

**BOBBY** We had better look after it for her. We will keep it safe in bed to night, - then in the morning -

HE settles down beside BETTY who is already asleep. MOPPET ENTERS L., still sleepwalking, BOX OPENS, SHE shuts it, thanks audience, signals them to silence because of the sleeping Babes and sleepwalking EXITS R.

----- (end of scene) -----

#### Scene Four

THE VILLAGE SCHOOLROOM. A full-stage set with blackboard, desk, forms etc. One of the forms at the back is a TRICK FORM. (with one set of legs set well in from the end so that anyone sitting on that end without anyone sitting on the other end to counterbalance will tip up and slide to the floor)

#### MUSIC NO 8. CHORUS NUMBER.

CHORUS, dressed as children, and JUVENILES. perform a noisy happy number.

MOPPET ENTERS U.L. and comes C. she wears mortar-board and gown and carries a long thin slap-stick.

**MOPPET** Right, places everyone.

There is a mass movement, those on the left go right and vice versa MOPPET is laid flat in the cross. THEY sit, SHE gets up mortar-board askew.

MOPPET Don't do that again. (to emphasise the point she hits her hand with the stick) Ouch!! (it hurts) Now is everybody here?

CHILD-1 No miss.

MOPPET Oh, who is missing?

CHILD-1 Ida.

MOPPET Ida who?

CHILD-1 I dun know.

ALL LAUGH

CHILD-2 Please miss, my sister is not here.

MOPPET Oh? Why not?

CHILD-2 Because I haven't got one!

ALL LAUGH

MOPPET Silence. or someone will feel this cane. (demonstrates on self again) Ouch. We must get on. Why is that form at the back empty.

CHILD-3 Cause there ain't no one sitting on it.

MOPPET I know. What I mean is why ain't there - isn't there anyone sitting on it?

CHILD-3 Cause it's empty! Cor, you ain't clever enough to be our teacher.

MOPPET What you mean is 'I am not' clever enough to be your teacher.

CHILD-3 That's what I said. You ain't clever enough to be our teacher.

MORE LAUGHTER

MOPPET That's enough, we will start with history. Now, famous inventors.

HER voice trails off as SIMON ENTERS U.L. HE ignores her and says 'Hello' to the chorus, who reply 'Hello Simon' HE takes a piece of chalk and draws a hook on the black-board and then hangs his hat on it. There is a nail already there.

SIMON Look, a thing from outer space. What are you doing here.

MOPPET I am your headmistress.

SIMON Go on.

MOPPET Why do you think I am wearing this funny flat hat.

SIMON Because you have a funny flat head?

1/4-22

MOPPET

Sit down!!

SIMON SITS at back on trick form.

MOPPET

Right. We will start with famous inventors.

BETTY and BOBBY ENTER U.L. carrying the wand wrapped up.

BOBBY

We are sorry we are late nurse.

BETTY

But we were stopped by two new boys.

BOBBY

They said they wanted to come to school with us.

BETTY

They are ever so old.

MOPPET

Where are they?

BERT and FRED ENTER U.L. dressed as school boys.  
ALL LAUGH.

MOPPET

Silence! (repeat bus. with stick) And what on earth are you two meant to be?

FRED

We are school boys.

BERT

And we have come to school.

FRED

With the Babes.

MOPPET

Haven't I met you two before somewhere?

BERT

Must have been three other people.

FRED

I expect it was our father you met - old lady.

MOPPET

Old?! Go and sit at the back with the other remnants, I'll deal with you later. (to Babes) You come and sit in the front with the quality material. What have you got there? (parcel)

BETTY

This is very special, it's secret. You see -

BOBBY

It's just something a friend of ours left behind and we are looking after it for her.

BETTY

It must be kept very safe.

MOPPET

(taking parcel) I'll put it down here. (by the box) It will be well looked after down there. Now we are going to talk about famous inventors.

SIMON

(there not being a lot of room on the form at the back) Give over.

FRED

Move up.

MOPPET

We are going to talk about - -

SIMON

You have pinched my seat.

BERT

I never. I'm not that sort of chap.

**MOPPET** We are going to talk about - -

**SIMON** You've got more seat than I have.

**FRED** He is just built that way.

**BERT** Nonsense.

**MOPPET** We are going to talk about nonsense - I mean - why is it that every time I open my mouth some fool speaks?

**SIMON** That's true.

LAUGHS.

**MOPPET** Come out here you three. Bring your form with you.

THEY DO.

**MOPPET** Bend over, I am going to give you the cane.

**SIMON** How hard?

**MOPPET** As hard as this. (demonstrates on her own hand again) Ouch!! Oh, sit down there where I can see you. And hurry up about it.

THEY ALL SIT after a certain amount of pushing and shoving; Simon on the trick end.

**MOPPET** Have you finished?

**F. & B.** (standing up so that Simon falls) Yes miss.

**MOPPET** Simon. What are you doing down there?

**SIMON** Getting up; what does it look like?

BERT & FRED have sat again. SIMON sits.

**SIMON** Don't do that.

**FRED** Do what?

**BERT** We only did this.

THEY STAND, SIMON FALLS.

**SIMON** Well don't.

BUSINESS. FRED & BERT stand and sit again at various speeds but SIMON is always with them.

**MOPPET** Have you done?

**F. & B.** (standing) Yes miss!

SIMON, on the floor, TURNS THE FORM ROUND so that the safe part is behind Fred and Bert, the trick end beyond them and nothing behind himself. HE STANDS smirking.

MOPPET Will you all sit down!

SIMON Certainly.

THEY ALL SIT, SIMON on the floor.

SIMON I won't survive to Act Two at this rate. (gets up and sits on other end)

MOPPET At last. Now a simple question about inventors. Children, who invented the steam engine?

CHILD-1 Please miss, Who didn't invent the steam engine; Dr. Who invented the Tardis.

SIMON She's right.

MOPPET I know she is right. Who did invent the Tardis but Who didn't invent the steam engine. So who did?

SIMON Search me.

CHILD-3 Please miss. Watt.

MOPPET Quite right.

SIMON What's right?

MOPPET That is.

SIMON That's right?

FRED No, 'that's' wrong, Watt's right.

SIMON Who's right?

FRED No 'Who's' wrong. Watt's right.

SIMON I don't know what's right!!!

MOPPET It's quite simple, Watt invented the steam engine.

SIMON But you cannot say 'what invented the steam engine' - you have got to say 'who invented the steam engine'!

FRED But 'Who' didn't invent the steam engine.

SIMON I know!!

MOPPET Now, James Watt -

SIMON James who?

FRED James Watt.

MOPPET Knew what's what.

BERT About you know what.

MOPPET And the other fellow.

FRED           Who was you know who.

BERT           And you know what who did.

MOPPET        So now you know what's what.

FRED           And who's who.

BERT           About you know what!

SIMON          Well, why didn't you say so before.

Relief all round.

SIMON          There is one little question though.

MOPPET        Yes.

SIMON          Who invented the steam engine?

OTHERS go for him.

MOPPET        We'll change the subject. Sums. What do you know about sums?

SIMON          Only that some are more difficult than others.

MOPPET        I won't tell you again

SIMON          Good.

MOPPET        If a man gets a penny a day for digging a field, what will he get for three weeks digging?

NOBODY KNOWS then, to their surprise, BERT stands up.

MOPPET        Ah good. What will he get for three weeks digging?

BERT           Please miss, back ache.

MOPPET        We will try again. How many is three seventeens?

SIMON          Three seventeens are twenty four.

MOPPET        Good. And how much is - here wait a minute, three seventeens isn't twenty four.

SIMON          Oh yes it is.

MOPPET        Oh no it isn't.

F. & B.        (standing up) Oh yes it is.

SIMON          Don't keep doing that. Three seventeens are twenty four.

MOPPET        Alright Einstein, prove it.

SIMON goes to the blackboard and writes up the sum.