

NODA Pantomimes Presents

**JACK AND THE
BEANSTALK**

BY

ROBERT MARLOWE

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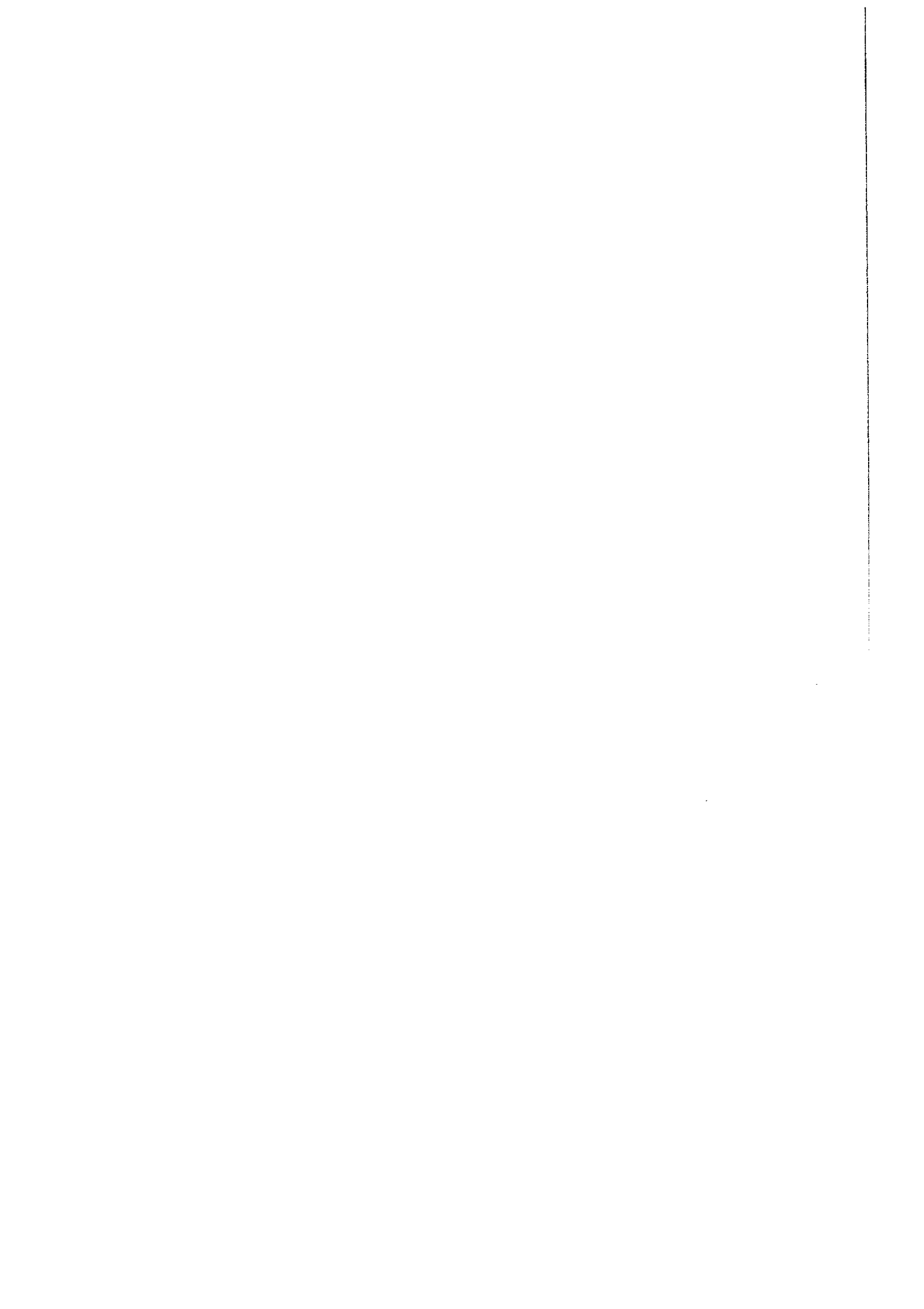
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JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

A NEW PANTOMIME BY ROBERT MARLOWE

CHARACTERS

DAME DURDEN	-	POOR BUT HONEST
JACK	-	HER SON
TOMMY TUCKER	-	WHO SINGS FOR HIS SUPPER
MARY MARY	-	QUITE CONTRARY
SIMPLE SIMON	-	WHO MET A PIE MAN
TOWN CRIER	-	A MAN OF LOUD REPORT
OLD KING COLE		
PRINCES FELICIA	-	HIS DAUGHTER
THE DUKE OF MALEVOLENCE	-	THE GIANTS HENCHMAN
THE CRYSTAL FAIRY OF BENEVOLENCE		
GIANT BLUNDERBORE		
A LADY IN WAITING		
VILLAGERS - MARKET SELLERS - SPIRITS OF THE ELEMENTS		
FAIRY FOLK		
GERTIE	-	THE COW AND LOVABLE FRIEND

SCENES

ACT ONE

1. THE VILLAGES OF MUCH RHYMING IN THE LAND OF FAIRY TALES.
2. OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE.
3. THE MARKET SQUARE OF MUCH RHYMING.
4. OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE AGAIN.
5. INSIDE DAME DURDENS COTTAGE.
6. THE BOTTOM OF THE BEANSTALK.

INTERVAL

ACT TWO

1. THE TOP OF THE BEANSTALK.
2. OUTSIDE GIANT BLUNDERBORES CASTLE.
3. THE KITCHEN IN THE CASTLE.
4. BACK HOME AGAIN.
5. A ROYAL WEDDING.

NOTES ON PRODUCTION

THIS PANTOMIME CAN BE PRESENTED AS SIMPLY OR LAVISHLY AS POSSIBLE OR DESIRABLE. THE VARIOUS SCENES ARE ALTERNATELY FULL STAGE AND HALF STAGE - THIS WILL ALLOW FOR SET CHANGES AND A SMOOTH RUNNING ORDER - MORE DETAILED NOTES ARE CONTAINED AT END OF SCRIPT TOGETHER WITH COSTUME SUGGESTIONS.

CHARACTERS ANALYSIS

- DAME - BEST PLAYED BY A MAN AS THIS IS TRADITIONAL AND THE ROBUSTNESS REQUIRED IS MORE ACCEPTABLE FROM A MALE - IF PLAYED BY A FEMALE BEWARE NOT TO FALL INTO THE TRAP OF CRUDENESS.
- SIMPLE SIMON - ANOTHER ESSENTIALLY MALE CHARACTER PREFERABLY YOUNGISH WITH WARM LIKEABLE PERSONALITY.
- JACK - THIS PLAYED BY STYLISH FEMALE - GOOD SINGING ESSENTIAL AS WELL AS LEGS.
- TOMMY TUCKER - CAN BE PLAYED EITHER BY GIRL OR BOY. THIS IS USUALLY REFERRED TO AS A SECOND BOY ROLE. GOOD SINGER NEEDED FOR OPENING NUMBER.
- MARY MARY - YOUNG COMEDIENNE ROLE - PERT AND PERSONABLE. GOOD SINGER.
- OLD KING COLE - CHARACTER ACTOR - ANY AGE FROM MIDDLE ONWARDS. AVUNCULAR AND LOVABLE.
- PRINCESS FELICIA - ESSENTIALLY YOUNG, PRETTY AND FEMININE. ALSO VUNERABLE. GOOD SINGER
- DUKE OF MALEVOLENCE - MALE - ANY AGE THOUGH OLDER IS PREFERABLE - AUTHORATIVE AND EVIL

FAIRY OF CRYSTAL

- CAN BE FEMALE ANY AGE. IF YOUNG THEN EVERY CHILDS IDEA OF A GLITTERY AND MAGICAL ETHEREAL BEING. IF PLAYED BY OLDER LADY THEN DO IT IN GODMOTHER STYLE THOUGH STILL WITH MUCH GLITTER AND MAGICAL QUALITY.

GIANT

- SHOULD BE PLAYED BY TALLEST MALE AVAILABLE USING ELEVATED BOOTS AND PADDED BODY - COULD USE A LARGE CARNIVAL GIANTS PAPIER MACHE HEAD BUT THIS MIGHT THEN ENTAIL THE DIALOGUE BEING TAKE BY ANOTHER ACTOR OFFSTAGE THROUGH A MICROPHONE AND SPEAKER SYSTEM. THIS CAN PROVE MOST SUCCESSFUL AND PROBABLY GIVES A MORE FEARFUL PORTRAYAL ESPECIALLY AS QUITE A BIT OF GIANTS DIALOGUES TAKES PLACE OFFSTAGE ANYWAY.

TOWN CRIER AND
LADY IN WAITING

- SMALL SPEAKING PARTS.

GERTIE

- IT IS PROBABLY ESSENTIAL TO HIRE A PROPER COW SKIN AS THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE WITH MUCH SUCCESS. NEEDS TO BE AUTHENTIC TO GAIN AUDIENCES SYMPATHY IN THIS PANTO.

PRODUCTION NOTES

SCENERY

The show is written with full sets followed by front cloths or tabs. If sets are hired then naturally you engage the expertise of the company you hire from to provide your needs. If however you make yourself then you will be confined by (a) expense (b) confines of your theatre or hall. As with costumes remember to keep things simple and brightly coloured. Again get your inspiration from children's fairy tale books which are usually alive with good drawings. If you have a good sky cloth or cyclorama, then this forms an excellent basis for all your sets. Cut out pieces placed against the sky will then indicate exactly what you intend. Knowledge of perspective will enhance the feeling of distance for you, though do remember that whilst smaller scaled pieces further back create distance, you must not allow artistes to enter behind these otherwise the proportions are thrown by the actors appearing giant size.

If working all front cloths on tabs then endeavour to have cut out pieces to indicate where you are, i.e. Palm trees and rocks for desert island etc.

Further information for each setting is at the beginning of each scene to assist you in making your production as spectacular as possible.

Remember pantomime is Fantasy Time.

Try not to have too large a chorus as this tends to clutter your storyline and an overcrowded stage means that nothing is noticed!

If using dancers from a local dancing school try to get some older ones to enliven the crowd scenes. If using babes do keep them to six or eight in number.

GOLDEN RULE Keep all musical items brief. Leave the audience wanting more, not grateful that you've finished!

PRODUCTION NOTES

- N.B. 1 The author has endeavoured to write a script that will be “All things to all men”. This may have resulted in some gags being too “cheeky” for certain clubs and organisations. Whilst these gags are purely in the script of Music Hall and many culled from children’s comics etc., they can quite easily be toned down or erased without effecting the meaning within the scene which has sufficient material to scan and play well. In actuality the script can benefit from the inclusion of local place names and personalities know in the locality. A perusal of the script to this end would personalise your production.
- N.B. 2 Never lose sight of the fact that pantomime is usually a child’s first taste of theatre. What might appear “corny” to adults is being heard for the very first time by children. **GOLDEN RULE** Please the kids and you please the adults!
- N.B. 3 Music throughout is merely suggestions. It is important though to keep all music relevant to the situation. Another point to remember is that golden oldies please more people - most of the time. It’s OK to add pop songs if applicable but keep them brief and under control. Remember pantomime is very traditional. Therein lies its success.

ACT ONE

SCENE 1

THE VILLAGE OF MUCH RHYMING IN THE LAND OF FAIRYTALES

OPENING ROUTINE - SUNG BY TOMMY TUCKER AND DANCED BY CHORUS.
Suggested number - "IT'S TODAY" from MAME

At finish enter MARY MARY

MARY MARY Why Tommy Tucker, what are you doing here?

TOMMY Just singing for my supper Mary Mary and hoping to see you go by.

MARY MARY (Partly) Well now you've seen me, but I can't stay for I'm off to shop for Mother Hubbard. She awoke this morning to find her cupboard bare and her dog starving again.

TOMMY Well, when can I see you?

MARY (Coily) Maybe later! Possibly tomorrow! - Perhaps the day after! - Could be this week, next week, sometime.....

TOMMY (Interrupting) Please don't say never Mary, Mary - Oh, why are you so contrary with me.

MARY For the same reason you sing for your supper. After all, we who live in Much Rhyming must (Grandly) Fulfil Our Destiny! Now I must hurry for the cows are in the meadow and the sheep in the corn and poor Little Boy Blue can't find his (Pause) Trumpet anywhere - Byeeeee, see you later. (She exits but puts head round the proscenium to say) Maybe!!!!!!

(TOMMY looks disconsolate)

1ST VILLAGER Cheer up Tommy, after all there are plenty of other fish in the sea.

TOMMY Ssssh. You mustn't speak of the little mermaid like that.

1ST VILLAGER Why not! She's got no soul (Sole)

VILLAGERS (Groan)

2ND VILLAGER And you should see her place (Plaice)

VILLAGERS (Louder Groan)

3RD VILLAGER She maybe small but she's certainly got muscles (Mussels)

VILLAGERS (Another Groan)

4TH VILLAGER And that's no cod!
(Fall about with laughter)

VILLAGERS Enter SIMPLE SIMON

SIMON Hey, what's going on here? Sounds fishy to me.

VILLAGERS (Give further groan then exclaim) Hello Simple Simon!

SIMON I say, have any of you seen the Pieman? I've been sent out to get more food for the party.

VILLAGERS What party?

SIMON My Grandpa's - He's just got married again at 93 years old.

TOMMY 93?

SIMON Yes, 93.

TOMMY (Incredulously) What did he want to get married again for?

SIMON (Slyly) He didn't **want** to !!!! (Pause)
Anyway off you go cos I want to talk to my friends

THEY ALL EXIT

SIMON

(To audience) Hello there! (Lukewarm Response) I said Hello! (Slightly louder response).

Oh dear, that won't do at all. Look, I'll go off again and when I come back and say "Hello There" you must say "Hello Simon". OK - here I go. (He exits and immediately returns) Hello There! (They shout back) Did you do it? Well I didn't hear a thing - Come on - One more, after three. Ready ONE! TWO! THREE! (they shriek) Well! There's no need to shout! Anyway now that we're all friends, will you help me? (Children "YES") This is my little friend Tweetypie (He brings a small cage containing a mock bird). Now, I want you to look after him for me - Will you? (Loud YES from kids). I didn't hear you (Even louder YES) Oh Good. Now look I'll hang him here (places cage on a hook on proscenium and if anyone tries to touch him I want you to shout "SIMON". Is that clear -good! We'll have a little practice. I'll go off and creep back and you must shout "SIMON"(He EXITS and IMMEDIATELY TIPTOES EXAGGERATEDLY BACK TOWARDS CAGE - Kids shout "SIMON"). Oh, Jolly good but I wouldn't have heard that if I'd been the other side of Much Rhyming so lets try again but much, MUCH louder this time (EXITS and repeats business as before). Oh, that was super; now be sure to look after Tweetiepie for me won't you and don't let anyone touch him. Cheerio, I'll see you later!

(HE EXITS and JACK enters upstage followed by a few villagers welcoming him)

VILLAGERS
VARIOUSLY

Hello Jack - where have you been? Nice to see you! What's doing etc. etc.

JACK

Hello everyone. What a beautiful day, it's far too nice to work, lets take a holiday!

VILLAGERS

Yes, Why not!
What a great idea (etc, etc.)

JACK

(Going over to birdcage) What is this doing here and whatever can it be

AUDIENCE

SIMON! SIMON!

(SIMON rushes on and villagers all move upstage wondering what all the fuss about. JACK, almost with cage in his hand, pauses and SIMON grabs him)

SIMON

OI! Don't you touch TweetyPie - my mates are looking after him for me. Anyway Jack, what do you think you're doing, wasting your time when you're supposed to be helping me clean out your Mother's dairy?

JACK

I couldn't possibly work on such a lovely day and anyway I've got the strongest feeling that something really exciting is about to happen. (laughs) Who knows, maybe I'll even meet my own true love!

SIMON

Something more than exciting will happen if your Mother catches you idling your time away.

JACK

Oh, don't be such a spoilsport, I thought we were friends. Come on relax - enjoy yourself!

(Duet JACK and SIMON with chorus. Suitable numbers - Friendship - Together -etc.

AT END ALL EXIT

(Stage blacks out and offstage sound of high-powered car is heard. Two powerful headlights enter and come straight towards audience - screech of brakes and full lighting comes on to reveal a supermarket trolley with headlamps on a wide bar at front to give illusion of fast sports car. DAME DURDEN is pushing trolley)

DAME

Hello there - allow me to introduce myself! I'm Dame Durden and I live in that little cottage over there with my son Jack. Oh, but he so idle, just like his father, would you believe I sent him out twenty years ago to get some cabbages for lunch and we haven't seen him since - I guess I'll have to open a tin of peas. But seriously girls, isn't life hard for a woman alone. Do you know, the other night I went to a Barn Dance with Brer Rabbit. We were having a lovely time until he did a (Dosey Do) Dozy Doe in the corner. Anyway, I decided to leave and I was just coming over the crooked style when a great big man jumped out in front of me - Oooh he

was big - anyway he said "Give me your money". I said "I haven't got any" so he searched me - **all over** - Ooooh he was thorough! Presently he said, "You're right, you haven't got any money". I said "Carry on searching, I'll write you a cheque"!!! (Pause for effect) Girls, do you like my perfume - it's Brut - makes me smell like Henry Cooper!!! I was telling you about my cottage. It's quite nice - little bit damp though. It's got **Mildred** all over the walls. But I've got a lovely three piece suit in **stimulated** leather. Would you like to come and stay with me? Oh, it's OK. There'll be plenty of room. I've got two bedrooms! Bring your own sheets though. But really, I mustn't stand here gossiping all day - in fact I've just been shopping. Look I'll show you what I've bought - here's my new bra (takes it out of trolley). It's called a "Westerner" - rounds 'em up and heads them out! Now who'd like some crisps?

(As kids yell she throws them into audience. After about three packets as far as she can throw them she take an opened packet and holding end scatters the packet all over front rows with a single throw)

Oh, look, there's a man down there with a chip on his shoulder! Is there a gentleman who'd like a good square meal? (She throws Oxo cube into audience) There's an Oxo cube! Do we have a lady with a lovely singing voice? Come on don't be shy - Ah yes, a lady over there. Here love, have a tune (throws a pack of Tunes). Good gracious, it can't be (She peers closely into audience) Yes it is..... Ladies and Gentleman, we're honoured today to have Gina Lollofrigidaire in the audience..... (She peers again) Sorry! Sorry! I've made a mistake, it's two baldheaded men sitting together. Now I really must get on. I thought I heard my son Jacks voice just now. Have you seen him? You have! Well, I wonder where he's gone? He's such a lazy good-for-nothing idler I guess I'll have to milk Gertie myself - Gertie! Gertie! (Calls offstage) Gertie ! Come on girl, where are you? (COW enters and stands behind her) Can you see her? (Audience reaction) Where? (Audience, "Behind you" as Dame moves around stage, closely followed by Gertie. Finally Gertie bumps her on the rear, knocking her over). Well, that's not a nice ladylike thing to do, is it? (To audience) why didn't you tell me she was there? (To Gertie) After all the manners I've tried to teach you, Oh I am disappointed you nearly ruptured my ruffles. (GERTIE muzzles her). No, you can't get round me like that.

KING Greetings, loyal subjects. It gives me great pleasure to invite you all to my beautiful daughter the Princess Felicia's birthday party on Friday week.

VILLAGERS Hooray!!

KING Furthermore, I shall proclaim it a public holiday and

(Loud crashing and thunder and lightning effects.
VILLAGERS race in panic to hide themselves).

GIANTS VOICE
(offstage) Fee fi fo fum
I smell the blood of an Englishman.
Be he alive or be he dead
I'll grind his bones to make my bread.

(Sound of huge footsteps disappearing into distance)

DAME Good gracious; sounds like Robert Carrier.
(her knees shake)

KING Oh dear, oh dear; it's the wicked Giant Blunderbore again.
He's already taken all our money in taxes. Whatever can he want now?

(Flash. DUKE OF MALEVOLENCE appears).

DUKE This message now is my command
It's from my master, who does demand
One thousand pounds, or in it's stead
The hand of one he wishes to wed.
By noon tomorrow your money must pour
Into the coffers of Giant Blunderbore.
Failing which, at his behest
My master will marry your Princess.

(VILLAGERS gasp and back away)

KING He shall not have my daughter.

DUKE Now take heed; ere clock strikes twelve
Your quest for gold you will not shelve.
Or else the Princess you'll see no more
For she shall marry Blunderbore.
(Exit DUKE)

DAME Well, I never did!

SIMON Go on, you must have done!

KING (Consoling Princess) Oh my poor daughter, whatever are we going to do? We've not enough money to pay the giant what he demands. Listen everybody; I proclaim that all outstanding rents must be paid by noon tomorrow.

VILLAGERS It's not fair..... we shall be ruined.... I've no money etc
etc

Exit VILLAGERS

DAME (Crossing to King) Your most high graciousness, your very illustrious majesticles, I can't possibly pay you back rent this week, I've lost it all at Bingo.

KING At Bingo?

DAME Yes, you see I went to the local Catholic Church Hall and they called the numbers out in Latin so that the Protestants couldn't win.

KING It you can't pay the rent I shall have to evict you and sell the cottage.

(Exit KING)

DAME Oh dear, turned out without a roof to my mouth, and me expecting.....

SIMON & TOMMY What ??????????!!!!!!!??????????

DAME A reduction in my rates. Anyway, come with me and we'll have a nice cup of tea.

MARY MARY Shall I put the kettle on?

DAME Why not? If you think it'll suit you.

(Exit DAME, TOMMY, SIMON and MARY MARY.
PRINCESS is left alone, crying.)

Enter JACK

JACK I wonder what all that commotion was about? (Sees Princess).
Excuse me; you seem so unhappy. Can I be of any help?

PRINCESS How I wish you could, but I'm afraid it's impossible. Giant Blunderbore's henchman has been to demand more money, and we haven't got any.

JACK We should refuse to pay him. After all, the more he gets, the more he wants. I think we must unite to fight him.

PRINCESS Such brave words, but no-one knows where he lives, and we only have until tomorrow to meet his demands.

JACK Well, I'm certainly not afraid of any giant, and if you will allow me, I will be your protector and see no harm befalls you. (He gazes admiringly at her). Now that my duties are settled, allow me to introduce myself. Jack Durden at your service. (He bows) Tell me, what is your name?

PRINCESS I am the (she pauses) They call me Felicia.

JACK What a pretty name; and, if I may make so bold, an even prettier owner.

(Cue to Duet. THE SUN WILL COME OUT TOMORROW
or SPREAD A LITTLE HAPPINESS)

(Enter DAME, SIMON, TOMMY and VILLAGERS)

DAME So there you are Jack. What do you mean by idling your time away flirting with the girls when your poor old Mother's going to be evicted. (SIMON tries to draw her attention to the Princess's presence). Simon, do stop fidgeting; what are you trying to say? (She sees Princess and curtsies) Oh your Royal Highness, I didn't realise..... I mean to say... (confused and blustering, she swipes Simon around the ears). Why didn't you tell me he was hob nobbing with royalty?

JACK (Gazing in surprise at the Princess) Felicia you A Princess?

PRINCESS It's true; but please Jack, don't let that change anything. I still need your protection; otherwise tomorrow I shall be betrothed to Giant Blunderbore.

ACT ONE

SCENE TWO

OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE

(Enter DUKE OF MALEVOLENCE)

DUKE
One Thousand pounds they cannot raise
Although they could try for many days.
At last will my hour of triumph draw nigh
For, to my master's domain beyond the sky,
I'll take the fair Princess with haste,
Where she will, with nuptial vows, be graced.
Then will my plan to rule this land
Be granted by my master's hand.
(Flash and enter FAIRY BENEVOLENCE)

FAIRY
Not so fast! For evil planned
Shall not befall this unhappy land.
A challenge to the giant shall be
Brought by one who is favoured by me.
My powers I'll use to give him aid
For with heart of lion and trusty blade
Young Jack shall fight and win the day.
No more will your evil power hold sway.

DUKE
Take care! And let it be understood
That vanquished will be the power of good.
You dare to threaten Giant Blunderbore
But evil shall rule for evermore.

FAIRY
Your wicked plans will come to naught
And Jack will win as well he ought.
For courage brings it's own reward
And evil will perish beneath his sword.

(Exit FAIRY and DUKE)

(Enter DAME and JACK and SIMON)

JACK
Mother, we must try to find the rest somewhere otherwise we
shall be evicted.

DAME I've got an idea. I'll become a Pop Singer.
They earn a fortune.

JACK But Mother, can you sing?

DAME Fancy asking such a question. I'll have you know all my family had lovely voices, even the sewing machine was a singer.

SIMON But.....well I mean..... (he doesn't know how to put this). You see, Pop signers must bewell, glamorous.

DAME I'll have you know, I was always told I had an hour glass figure.

SIMON Mmmmmmm..... Pity all the sand's gone to the bottom.

DAME How dare you! (Pulls herself to her full height) I'll have you know I'm on a seafood diet.

SIMON A seafood diet?

DAME Yes, the more I see it the more I try it!

JACK On Mother, this is not getting us anywhere. The only solution is to sell something and the only valuable possession we have is Gertie.

DAME (Horrified) Jack, how could we possibly sell such an old friend. There must be some other way to raise money.

JACK No Mother. You must be brave about it. I will take her to market and get the best price I can for her.

DAME (Sadly) Be sure she goes to a good home won't you?

JACK I will, Mother, I will!

(Exit JACK)

SIMON By the way Dame Durden, I hate to remind you at a time like this, but you haven't paid me any wages for a year!

DAME What do you mean - paid you! You don't work for me.

SIMON But I do. I scrub out the dairy, run all your errands. (weakly) Everything.

DAME (Briskly) Nonsense. I'll prove it. Get something to write on and I'll show you that you do no work.

(Simon calls offstage and TWO VILLAGERS enter with a blackboard which they hold).

DAME (Takes chalk) Now, how many days are there in a year?

SIMON (Brightly) 365

DAME Well, let's be generous. Say it's Leap Year.

SIMON Ah, that's 366.
(Dame writes 366 in large letters on blackboard)

DAME There we are, 366 days. Now how many hours do you work a day?

SIMON (Again brightly) 8 hours a day.

DAME 8 hours. That's a third of a day, so threes into 366 leaves 122 days.
(She divides 3 into 366 on blackboard. Remember to make figures large so that it can be seen by back row in theatre).

DAME Now you don't work on Saturday, do you?

SIMON No. You very kindly give me Saturday off.

DAME And you don't work Sunday either, do you?

SIMON (Slight misgivings) No..... I rest on Sundays.

DAME So there's 52 Saturdays and 52 Sundays. That adds up to 104, doesn't it.

SIMON (Uneasily) Yes But

DAME 104 away from 122 leaves 18 days.
(She again demonstrates this on the blackboard)

DAME Now, I also give you a summer holiday don't I?
(SIMON nods disconsolately)

DAME How many days is that?

SIMON (Forlornly) 14 days.

DAME So 14 from 18 leaves 4 days. Now you never work Christmas Day or Boxing Day, do you?

SIMON No You're right!

DAME Neither do you work Easter Monday or Spring Bank holiday, so that's 4 more days.
(She triumphantly illustrates this final point on board).
So 4 from 4 leaves - nothing - You see you don't work for me at all! *

(VILLAGERS exit with board and SIMON follows bewildered, shaking his head. *Triumphant chord from orchestra to terminate gag. If a song is required here SIMON could stay on and join DAME in "Side by Side" or similar number. At end SIMON exits leaving DAME on)

(Enter JACK with GERTIE)

DAME Please let me say goodbye on my own Jack. I'll call you when its time to go to market.

(JACK exits)

(GERTIE stands dejectedly)

DAME Oh Gertie, please don't think too unkindly of us. We don't want to sell you but there's no alternative. Jack will make sure you go to a good home and when we get some money we'll buy you back again. Now let me smarten you up a bit, we don't want them to think you come from a poor home where nobody cares.

(She take out a large toothbrush and gently brushes her teeth. Next a large powder puff which she powders her face with, finishing with a quick dab under her udders. Gertie skittishly kicks her back legs with pleasure. Lastly an enormous lipstick.)

DAME

There's a little dab of colour because you look a bit pale. And finally your best straw bonnet.

(She puts a pretty straw hat on trimmed with flowers and ties it under her chin in a large bow)

DAME

There, you look really beautiful!

(She stands back to admire her handiwork and GERTIE slumps sadly)

DAME

Please Gertie, don't look at me like that. You'll make me cry.

(She starts to break down) What's that? (Gertie whispers)

You want me to sing your favourite song - the one I used to sing when you were a little calf? How did it go?

(Lights start to fade and GERTIE squats on hind legs and DAME kneels at her side softly singing a lullaby type number. Suggestion "When you Wish Upon a Star". Make this a soft finish)

DAME

(Heartbroken) Jack Jack. Gertie's ready to leave now. Quickly before I change my mind.

(JACK enters and gently leads GERTIE off with sad backward glances. DAME sadly waves handkerchief. Music picks up again and DAME sings reprise softly but cannot finish and EXITS sobbing into her handkerchief)

BLACKOUT

ACT ONE

SCENE 3

THE MARKET SQUARE OF MUCH RHYMING

It is a very busy street with vendors and VILLAGERS bartering and generally having a festive time. Suggested song "Who Will Buy" from Oliver. General chorus singing and movement. At finish they slowly disperse, finally leaving the stage empty for the parcel gag. Enter SIMON with a large parcel. This must be large enough to represent a tea service. Ideal solution is to fill a large tin box with nuts and bolts very firmly wrapped in brown paper strongly tied with rope and a large address tag.

(SIMON moves carefully across stage with box. Enter MARY MARY)

MARY MARY Why Simon, what have you got there?

SIMON It's a twenty-four piece tea service.

MARY MARY And where are you going with it?

SIMON I'm just off to the Post Office.

MARY MARY (Long prolonged) Oooooooooohh. You mustn't go to the Post Office with it. Do you know what they do with it?

SIMON (Apprehensively) I've no idea.

MARY MARY Well, first they drop it on a very low counter (She holds it above her head, then takes her hands away as it crashes to the ground).

MARY MARY Then the clerk says "Where's it going to", and the postman says "The village of Giggleswick", so the clerk takes up a big metal stamp and stamps it all over (she picks box up and with her hands punches it all over). Over as though she's franking it, making as loud a clatter as possible. SIMON nervously tries to intervene without success. Finally she gently places box in Simon's hands saying -)

MARY MARY So you see if you take my advice you won't send it by post, (she moves to exit) it might get broken!!! (EXITS)

(SIMON gazes at box in dismay as TOMMY TUCKER enters)

TOMMY Hello Simon - I say that's a large box. What's in it?

(SIMON gently rattles box and we hear awful sound of broken pieces)

SIMON It's a (hesitates) **forty eight** piece tea service. (sickly smile). I was going to post it at the Post Office but Mary Mary kindly warned me that it might get broken, so I think I'm going to send it by rail.

TOMMY (Throws hands in air in mock horror)
Ooooooooooohh - you can't possibly do that (snatches box from Simon). Do you know what they do at the Railway Station? They drop it on a trolley (raises box above head and crashes it to the floor), then they pick up the trolley (he picks box up)and they trundle it across the cobblestones.
(He runs back and forth shaking box heartily - up and down - up and down)

TOMMY Trundle ! Trundle ! Trundle ! Trundle !
Up and down - Up and down

(After a really crashing time he gently places box in SIMONS hands)

TOMMY So you see Simon if you take my advice you won't send it by Rail (pause)

BOTH TOGETHER It might get broken!!

TOMMY exits and SIMON turns upstage as the DUKE OF MALEVOLENCE enters. DUKE goes towards birdcage.

DUKE Ah! Ah! I'll take this stupid little bird to my master. It'll make a tasty hors-doeuvres.

AUDIENCE SIMON! SIMON! (SIMON turns and goes towards DUKE)

SIMON Oi!! Don't you dare touch my Tweetiepie - thanks kids for looking after him for me.

DUKE (Pleasantly) Tell me my good fellow, what have you in that box?

SIMON (Shakes box loudly) It's a (Shakes again) It's a **Ninety Six** piece tea service!!!!!!

Enter JACK with GERTIE dragging her heels.

JACK Come along, Gertie, it's no good lagging behind, for I must get a good price for you, otherwise Mother will be turned out and have no-where to live. Don't cry, there's a good girl, I promise I'll find a kind master for you, and then, when I've made my fortune, I'll buy you back again. Now come along, stop crying and blow your nose. (Business with handkerchief and large holes in it). Oh look what you've done to my best handkerchief. Never mind Quick, look your prettiest, here comes a customer.

(Enter MAN and GIRL VILLAGERS)

JACK Would you like to buy this fine cow, sir, an excellent supplier of milk and cream, and of a most friendly disposition.

MAN (laughs) What, that old bag of skin and bones? Looks as though her milk curdled years ago. (He crosses stage still laughing, and whilst his back is turned GERTIE butts him with her horns.

(He EXITS shaking fist).

JACK Gertie, you shouldn't have done that; although he certainly asked for it. Now, best behaviour, here comes another customer And he looks really wealthy.

(Enter DUKE in disguise wearing a long cloak and broad brimmed hat)

DUKE Tell me boy, is that handsome cow for sale?

JACK Indeed, sire; and a finer one you'll not be offered.

(DUKE is meanwhile inspecting Gertie).

DUKE And how much do you ask for this magnificent beast?

JACK Well Er I thoughter

DUKE Would twenty golden sovereigns be sufficient?

(Takes out purse)