

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

By

RON HALL

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LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

A New Pantomime in Two Acts by Ron Hall

Characters in order of appearance:-

Dolly Dishcloth, Little Red Riding Hood's Grandma
Simple Simon, the Village Idiot
Jill, Owner of the Village Shop and Little Red Riding
Hood's Elder Sister
Little Red Riding Hood
Squire Smollett
Samantha Smollett, his daughter
Villager
Prince Valiant of Ruritania
The Prince's Valet
Count Calamitous, alias the Wolf
Crookback, his servant
Chorus of Villagers and Courtiers
Senior and Junior Dancers
(Junior Dancers are not required after Act II, Scene 1)

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Note:- Alternate scenes have small number of characters so that they can be played in front of the tabs allowing time to change the main set manually.

Estimated length of show allowing for songs, dances and 15 minute interval:- 2 hours 25 minutes

Note:- The musical numbers are only suggested and do not form part of the script. Societies should make their own arrangements from the Performing Rights Society for performance.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOODAct 1Scene 1 - The Village Green of Little Twittering-in-the-Mud

(This is a typical village green with cottages spread about it and perhaps a stream running through the middle. The stage is crowded with chorus dressed as villagers)

Opening Chorus and Dance (Chorus and Senior Dancers)

Suggested numbers:- One of Those Songs
On a Wonderful Day Like Today
Sunshine Lollipops and Rainbows

(After first chorus senior dancers enter and do high kick routine. At the end of the number dancers exit but chorus remain. Dolly Dishcloth enters on roller skates. She skates once around the stage and then notices audience)

Dolly:- Well hello there. Let me introduce myself; I'm Dolly Dishcloth. They may wipe the floor with me but I'm no scrubber. Do you like my new roller skates? I can't afford one of those new ---(latest make of car) so these have to do. They're the latest type, I've got the instructions here. (She takes out piece of paper). They say 'Lift up your legs and strap them to the bottom'. That's funny, I always thought they went on the soles of your feet. They must have given me some bum instructions, bum instructions, ha ha ha. I surprise myself with my wit sometimes.

Welcome to Little Twittering-in-the-Mud in lovely rural --- (county name). This village is in the stockbroker belt you know. I know this because I asked a stockbroker and he belted me. This village is so posh that they use Harrods' carrier bags as dustbin liners and even the outside toilets are double glazed. The Village Squire's just sold his Rolls Royce because all the ash trays were full.

Mind you, I don't live here. No, I live in a little cottage in the woods about five miles from here. It's got running water and a sceptical tank - the water runs down the walls and the sceptical tank runs heaven knows where. It's ruining the pattern of the wallpaper, well I thought it was a pattern on the wallpaper until it started moving. Even so it will be nice to see the old place again. I've been staying with my grand-daughter Jill for the last few days. She has the village shop. It's just over there past the Darby and Joan Bingo and Wife Swapping Club. She's a lovely girl is Jill and so is her sister Little Red Riding Hood. They run that shop so well they do more trade than Tesco's (or other local supermarket)

It's no good I'll have to take these skates off; they're not doing my corns any good.

(She sits on stage revealing bloomers as Simple Simon 'jogs' on in very long shorts, socks and suspenders. He sees Dolly's bloomers)

Simon:- Well they say 'Winter drawers on.

Dolly:- Never mind about that, give me a hand to take them off.

Simon:- Do you think you ought to, you'll catch cold.

Dolly:- Not my bloomers you twit, my roller skates.

Simon:- Oh! (He begins to help)

Dolly:- No wonder they call you Simple Simon
 Simon:- Well I can't help it if I'm daft.
 Dolly:- You missed your way, you should have been a politician.
 Simon:- Come off it, I'm not that daft.
 Dolly:- That's better. (Skates now off she rises) I feel like a new woman.

Simon:- So do I but where can I get one in this rotten village.
 Dolly:- Go and wash your mouth out with soap and water.
 Simon:- Oh not again, I keep getting carbolic wedged in my cavity.
 Dolly:- I don't know what the youngsters of today are coming to. When I was a girl we didn't indulge in any of this modern sex and violence you get today.
 Simon:- Was it just the old fashioned sex and violence in those days?
 Dolly:- There was no sex and violence at all.
 Simon:- I'm glad I'm only a youngster.
 Dolly:- Well, I can't stay here idling my time. I promised to help Jill polish her knick-knacks.
 Simon:- Can I come?
 Dolly:- No, you go and polish your own knick-knacks. See you later folks.
 (Dolly exits with skates)

Simon:- Oh dear, nobody loves me.
 Chorus:- Aw!
 Simon:- I'll never have a girlfriend.
 Chorus:- Aw!
 Simon:- I go jogging every day to keep fit and develop a magnificent body, (he poses) but still nobody loves me.
 Chorus:- Aw!
 Simon:- Even when I say hello to people they ignore me.
 Chorus:- Aw!
 Simon:- (to audience) If I said hello to you would you say hello back? (Reply from audience) Are you ignoring me as well? I can hardly hear you. Would you? (Reply) Good then let's give it a try. I'll go off and when I come back on I'll shout 'Hello Everybody' and I want you to shout 'Hello Simple Simon'. Let's try it.
 (He exits and re-enters)
 Hello everybody.

Audience:- Hello Simple Simon.
 Simon:- Is there anybody there? Remember you say 'Hello Simple Simon'. Let's try it again.
 (He exits and re-enters)
 Hello everybody.

Audience:- Hello Simple Simon.
 Simon:- That's better but it's still not good enough. Let's try it just one more time.

(He exits and re-enters)

Hello everybody.

Audience:- Hello Simple Simon.

Simon:- That's better. Now remember every time I come on you shout that, okay.

(Chorus gradually exit and Jill enters)

Jill:- Hello Simon, have you seen my grandmother?

Simon:- Hello Jill - ooh you are lovely. (He gasps)

Jill:- Thank you Simon. Have you seen my grandmother?

Simon:- I think you're better looking than --- (film star or local lady)

Jill:- Thank you, that's very nice, but have you seen my grandmother?

Simon:- (Coming to) Oh yes, she's just gone to polish your knick-knacks.

Jill:- Oh well I'd better get back to the shop, I wanted to tell her that her lunch is ready.

Simon:- Can't you stay here with me for a while?

Jill:- I'd like to but the roast beef will get cold.

Simon:- Don't I mean more to you than the roast beef?

Jill:- You're very sweet Simon, but I could never love you.

Simon:- Oh. (He starts to cry)

Jill:- I will be your friend though. Now dry your tears. Someday someone will come along and you'll forget all about me.

Simon:- I doubt it; there'll never be anyone else.

Little Red Riding Hood:- (Offstage) Are you there Jill?

Jill:- I'm here Little Red Riding Hood.

(Little Red Riding Hood enters)

LRRH:- You're not letting that Simple Simon chat you up again are you?

Jill:- Don't be silly, we were just talking.

LRRH:- Remember what that gipsy told you, one day you'll marry a prince.

Jill:- Yes and the moon's made of green cheese.

LRRH:- Yes, one day you'll become a princess and because I'm your sister I'll be made a duchess or something.

Simon:- And I'll still be Simple Simon.

LRRH:- Never mind, we'll find you a girl as daft as you are.

Simon:- Thank you very much.

LRRH:- (To Jill) Anyway I've come to tell you that Grandma's arrived home so we can all have lunch.

Jill:- Well I suppose we'd better go. Cheer up Simon; things are bound to get better. Goodbye.

(Jill and Little Red Riding Hood wave and exit)

Simon:- Goodbye. Well this won't do. I'd better go and try and find a job. I wonder if they're advertising for brain surgeons at the Job Centre.

(There is a flurry of excitement. Chorus enter with Squire and Samantha Smollett. The Squire is extremely nervous and flappable. Samantha is terribly posh. Simple Simon exits)

Song (Squire, Samantha and Chorus)

Suggested numbers:- Posh (Chitty Chitty Bang Bang)
 Come on and hear (Tune:- Alexander's Ragtime
 Band - words below)

Come on and hear

- Squire:- (Taking out the letter) Come on and hear, come on and hear,
 A letter's just arrived today.
 Come on and hear, come on and hear,
 Listen hard to what I say.
 It was such a big surprise, I could not believe my eyes,
 Such a surprise, I could not believe my eyes.
 There are some things that must be done, ev'ryone.
- Samantha:- (Taking letter) Come on and hear, come on and hear,
 We must get this village clean.
 Come on and fear, come on and fear,
 The man who wrote these words is mean.
 And on the first of May he's coming here to make a visit.
 Come on and hear, come on and hear, we must get this village
 clean.
- Squire:- (Taking letter back) The man who wrote this little note,
 Is the Count Calamitous.
 He's very bad and when he's mad,
 He will always make a fuss.
 He will take off all your socks and he'll put you in the socks,
 Take off your socks and he'll put you in the stocks.
 Then he will give your homes away, so we say,
- Squire)
 Samantha):- Come on and hear, come on and hear,
 Chorus) We must get this village clean.
 Come on and fear, come on and fear,
 The man who wrote these words is mean.
 And on the first of May he's coming here to make a visit.
 Come on and hear, come on and hear, we must get this village clean.
- Samantha:- (Spoken) Oh daddy, what are we to do? Count Calamitous says in
 that letter that if we don't clean the village up he'll turn us
 all out of house and home. And I believe what he says, he's well
 known for his cruelty.
- Squire:- Some people say that he's a magician and he can change himself
 into any shape he chooses.
- Samantha:- Oh no! I thought that was just a pigment of their imagination.
- Squire:- No! They say his favourite trick is to turn himself into a
 werewolf.
- Samantha:- A werewolf! How beastly!
- Squire:- We must make sure no-one upsets him or things could turn nasty.
 He's due to arrive on the first of May. When's that Samantha?
- Samantha:- I'll look in my diary. (She takes out diary and reads from it)
 Now let me see - 'Twickers with Rodders', no that was last week.
 'Drinkies with Johners', no that's next week. I've got it, May
 the first, the third Sunday after the Saint Ledger.
- Squire:- Never mind that. When is it?
- Samantha:- It's - - -
- Squire:- Yes.
- Samantha:- It's tomorrow.

Squire:- Tomorrow! (There is a gasp from the chorus) When was the letter posted? (He looks at envelope) February 28th. The Count's only put an --- (2nd class value stamp) stamp on the envelope. No wonder it's taken three months.

Samantha:- I'm desiccated by the news.

Squire:- Yes, my nerves are in shreds. We must get to work at once, or rather, the villagers must. (There is a groan from the chorus)

Samantha:- I love work you know.

Squire:- Do you really?

Samantha:- Yes, I can sit and watch people do it for hours.

Squire:- There is no time to waste. (To chorus) I want to see this village spotless before tomorrow morning. (More groans) Get out your brushes and shovels. This may be only a one horse town but that one horse certainly knows how to leave its trademark.

Samantha:- I will return to the Manor House daddy and give the servants their destructions.

Squire:- And I must make sure all arrangements are made to welcome the Count. (They begin to exit. To chorus) You'de better work hard or we'll all be out on the streets by tomorrow night. Come Samantha.

(Squire and Samantha exit. There is murmuring amongst the chorus. Little Red Riding Hood enters.

LRRH:- What's the matter? Why is everybody so sad?

Villager:- The Squire has just told us that Count Calamitous is to visit the village tomorrow.

LRRH:- Well, what's wrong with that?

Villager:- He's well known for his wickedness and if the place isn't spotless we'll all be in trouble. (Cries from chorus)

LRRH:- Ooh, you do get your tunics in a tangle. I've got the very answer to your problem.

Villager:- What's that?

LRRH:- The Miracle Temporary Staff Agency will help out --- for a modest fee.

Villager:- The Miracle Staff Agency? Who do we see about that?

LRRH:- Well, by a strange coincidence I happen to be in charge so if you all pay me 50p I will guarantee that by tomorrow morning the village will be as clean as a new pin.

(Whisperings from chorus)

Villager:- Very well, we agree.

LRRH:- (Going around stage collecting money) You won't regret it. Remember our motto:- 'If it's a good job it's a miracle'. Right team, you've got three minutes to clean the village starting from now.

(Junior dancers enter dressed as Mrs. Mopps with brushes, etc.)

Dance (Junior Dancers)

Suggested numbers:- Powder your Face with Sunshine
A Woman's Touch (Calamity Jane)
There's a Rainbow Round my Shoulder

(If desired the chorus can join with the words. At end of number LRRH, dancers and chorus exit)

(Prince and Valet enter. Prince is wearing elaborate cloak and insignia in the form of a chain around his neck)

- Prince:- This seems to be a pleasant little spot, the ideal place for the plan I have in mind.
- Valet:- But your highness, it's hardly a fit place for the son of a king.
- Prince:- Harry if I am to see how the ordinary people of my father's kingdom live this is the perfect spot.
- Valet:- Are you sure you'll be alright your highness? There are many rogues and cut-throats to be found outside the palace walls.
- Prince:- There are many rogues and cut-throats to be found inside the palace walls but I have managed to survive so far.
- Valet:- But how will you live?
- Prince:- I'll get a job. There must be plenty of work for a strong and willing lad. Now I think it's time I gave you my cloak and insignia before someone sees who I am. (He takes off cloak and chain) I'll wear your cloak and you can wear mine.
- Valet:- It's not fitting for a servant to wear the cloak of a prince. (He puts chain in pocket or purse)
- Prince:- Come on Harry, don't be such a spoilsport. (He puts cloak on Valet's shoulders) And remember for one week I am not Prince Valiant of Ruritania but Jack Straw, the village handyman.
- Valet:- What news shall I give to your father the King?
- Prince:- Tell him that I'm alive and well and living in Little Twittering in the Mud. Now go and remember I want you to return in seven days' time with a coach to take me back to the palace.
- Valet:- Yes your highness.
- Prince:- No not your highness, just call me Jack.
- Valet:- Very well. Goodbye Jack and good luck.
- Prince:- Goodbye Harry. See you next week.
(Valet exits)
- Prince is standing pondering which way to go when Squire enters talking to himself. He is carrying rolled up paper with notes on)
- Squire:- Now I must remember to engage the services of the --- (local band) for the Count's arrival and the --- (local choir) to greet him in song. We'll need a red carpet; I'll borrow one from --- (local carpet shop) and I'll get --- (local bakery or hotel) to do the catering. I just need somebody to cut a few trees down so that we've plenty of logs for the fire. (He sees the Prince) Who are you?
- Prince:- I am --- Jack Straw. I have just arrived in your village and I am looking for a job.
- Squire:- Well you seem to be a strong healthy lad. How do you fancy becoming a woodcutter for a few days?
- Prince:- That would suit me fine sir.

Squire:- The wages are not high but you do get your food thrown in ---- we have no plates. (He laughs at his own joke and expects Prince to do likewise. When he doesn't he repeats last line) We have no plates. (He nudges Prince who then laughs even though he doesn't think it funny) I'm a bit of a wit, am I not?

Prince:- Well shall we say you're half way there.

Squire:- I beg your pardon.

Prince:- I said your wit's very fair.

Squire:- This won't do, I must get on with these chores. Have you seen the number of things I have to do? (He lets list unroll. It is very long and reaches to the floor. It can be weighted to unroll more easily) Call at the Manor House in an hour's time and my daughter Samantha will really make you work for a living.

Prince:- She sounds like a dragon.

Squire:- Pardon?

Prince:- I said I'll come by the wagon.

Squire:- And don't be late. (He folds up list and exits muttering I must buy some Andrex and ---)

Prince:- I suppose that was the village squire. Well at least I've got a job. Now for a bite to eat before I start work.
(Jill enters carrying a pail)
Excuse me, could you direct me to a nearby inn where I can have a meal?

Jill:- Certainly sir. Just up the road is the --- (local pub) where you can obtain the best meat and potato pie in the county washed down with the finest ale.

Prince:- That sounds wonderful.

Jill:- You're welcome sir. (She curtsies and is about to exit)

Prince:- Please don't go. May I help you to carry your pail?

Jill:- It's empty as yet sir. I'm on my way to the well to fill it.

Prince:- Then let me carry it back for you.

Jill:- But sir I hardly know you.

Prince:- Not at the moment but I hope you soon will. You are the loveliest girl I've ever seen. What is your name?

Jill:- It's Jill.

Prince:- And I'm Jack. We're just like the boy and girl in the nursery rhyme and what's more we're going to fetch a pail of water.

Jill:- I hope you're not going to fall down and break your crown.

Prince:- I can't break my crown because I'm not wearing one. I am only a simple woodcutter but when I look at you I feel like a prince.

Jill:- And you make me feel like a princess.

Prince:- Who knows, perhaps you will be one day.

Jill:- A gypsy once told me I would marry a prince.

Prince:- She may have been telling the truth. May I see you later?

Jill:- Yes, call in at the village shop when you finish work. We stay open late.

Prince:- Jill, you are the answer to my dreams.

Jill:- The gypsy must have been wrong because I'm falling in love with a woodcutter.

Duet (Prince and Jill)

Suitable numbers:- I love you because
If
Deep in my Heart
Any popular romantic ballad

Note:- Tabs can draw during song to allow extra scene changing time.

Scene 2 - A Road in the Village (Front Cloth or Tabs)

(Dame Dolly Dishcloth enters carrying a 'chicken' on a platter. 'Chicken' is attached to cord leading into wings so that it can be whisked off very quickly. Samantha enters from the opposite side)

Dolly:- Freshly cooked chicken for sale, freshly cooked chicken for sale.

Samantha:- Ah, the very thing to serve to Count Calamitous when he visits us tomorrow. Tell me my good woman, how much do you want for your chicken?

Dolly:- Well I would normally ask a couple of quid.

Samantha:- A couple of quid. What does that mean?

Dolly:- A pair of knickers.

Samantha:- Pardon.

Dolly:- Two po unds. What's the matter with you? Don't you understand the Queen's English?

Samantha:- I'm sure the Queen doesn't use words like that. Two pounds is an awful lot of money.

Dolly:- Alright already, to you 50p.

Samantha:- Now that sounds more like it. (She takes 50p from purse and hands it to Dolly) I'll take it. (Dolly gives platter to Samantha) What a lovely plump bird. (Chicken is suddenly whisked into wings) My chicken! It's just jumped off the platter.

Dolly:- Well it's to be expected.

Samantha:- Why?

Dolly:- It's a spring chicken.

Samantha:- Oh! (She hands platter back to Dolly and storms off. Little Red Riding Hood dashes on with chicken)

Dolly:- It worked, it worked.

LRRH:- Of course it did Grandma. I didn't come over with the banana boat you know.

Dolly:- Shall we try again?

LRRH:- I think we'd better; 50p won't even get us into ---- (local cinema or bingo hall)

Dolly:- Quick hide, I can hear someone coming.

(Little Red Riding Hood dashes off with cord leaving chicken on platter with Dolly. Squire enters from opposite side)

Freshly cooked chicken for sale, freshly cooked chicken for sale.

Squire:- A chicken - that would make a marvellous meal for the Count when he arrives tomorrow. I say, how much is that lovely plump bird?

Dolly:- Are you talking about me or the chicken?

Squire:- The chicken, madam, the chicken.

Dolly:- As you've got a kind face - well, a kind of face, you can have it for 50p.

Squire:- What a bargain! I'll take it (He gives Dolly 50p)

Dolly:- Here you are your courtship. (She hands him platter with bird)

Squire:- I can't wait to get my teeth into that. (Chicken is whisked off) It's jumped off the dish.

Dolly:- Yes, it's a spring chicken.

Squire:- Oh! (He hands platter back to Dolly and storms off. Little Red Riding Hood dashes on with chicken)

Dolly:- We've done it again.

LRRH:- Yes but it's still only 50p each. We must try a third time.

Dolly:- Alright then, just one more time. (They giggle together)

LRRH:- Look there's Simple Simon coming, we must catch him out. I'll go and hide. (She puts chicken back on platter and runs off with attached cord. Simon enters)

Simon:- Hello everybody.

Audience:- Hello Simple Simon.

Dolly:- Freshly cooked chicken for sale, freshly cooked chicken for sale.

Simon:- Ooh I am hungry. I'd love a piece of chicken. Will you give me a leg?

Dolly:- No, it's for sale as a whole, no bits sold separately.

Simon:- How much is it?

Dolly:- To you my cherub 50p.

Simon:- But I haven't got 50p.

Dolly:- How much have you got?
(He searches in his pockets)

Simon:- Two pence ha'penny and a packet of polo mints.

Dolly:- Is that all?

Simon:- I've spent all my dole money on riotous living.

Dolly:- What riotous living?

Simon:- A bus ride into --- (local town) and a bag of chips.

Dolly:- Oh alright then, for two pence ha'penny and a packet of Polo mints you can have the chicken. (He gives her 2½p and mints)

Simon:- There you are.

Dolly:- And here's the chicken. (She offers platter)

Simon:- I don't want the dish, it's the chicken I'm after. (He takes chicken off platter leaving Dolly holding it) I'm going to enjoy this. (He begins to exit carrying chicken. Because it's attached to cord Little Red Riding Hood is dragged on)

LRRH:- Hey, you can't take our chicken.
 Simon:- (Stopping) Why not? You sold it to me.
 Dolly:- But all I've got is two pence ha'penny and a packet of Polos.
 Simon:- What a shame! They may call me Simon but I'm not so simple.
 (He exits and there is a blackout whilst Dolly and Little Red Riding Hood exit)

Scene 3 - Jill's Village Shop

(This is a typical village shop selling the usual clutter of merchandise. Along the back of the stage is a counter about three feet high. Behind this are shelves with various goods on. The chorus are on stage)

Song (Chorus)

Suggested numbers:- Can't buy me love
 Consider Yourself (Oliver)

(At the end of the number Jill enters behind counter)

Jill:- Are you all being served?
 Villager:- We've no money.
 Jill:- Oh dear! Never mind I've got an idea. Some girls have just arrived to give away free samples of a new product that's just come on the market.
 Villager:- What's the product?
 Jill:- It's a new sweet and whoever eats one is supposed to grow up intelligent and good-looking.
 Villager:- Well we'd better give some to the boys and girls down there. (Gesture to audience) We want them to be intelligent and good-looking when they grow up, don't we?

Chorus:- Yes

Jill:- What a good idea! I'll ask the girls to come in. (Shouting offstage) Bring on the sweets ladies.

(Senior dancers enter, each with a bag of sweets)

Dance and Song (Senior dancers and chorus)

Suggested numbers:- The best things in Life are Free
 Sweets for my Sweet
 On the Good Ship Lollipop

(During the number dancers and/or chorus throw out sweets to the audience. At the end of the number dancers and chorus exit)

Dolly:- (Offstage) Are you there Jill?
 Jill:- Yes, I'm in the shop Grandma.
 (Dolly enters)
 Dolly:- Is everything nice and tidy for the Count's visit tomorrow. He'll be annoyed if he sees coffee spilt down your Satsumas.
 Jill:- I think everything's shipshape and we've got a good selection of goods if he wants to buy anything.
 Dolly:- Have you got any of that streaky bacon that I like so much?
 Jill:- Oh no, I sold the last piece this morning.
 Dolly:- Oh dear I was hoping to take some back home with me in a couple of days.

Jill:- The next delivery isn't for another week. I know I'll get Little Red Riding Hood to bring it to your cottage; she won't mind.

Dolly:- No I'm sure she won't. She'll charge me for delivery, but she won't mind.

Jill:- Then that's settled; she'll call round with it as soon as it arrives at the shop.
(Prince enters)

Prince:- Hello Jill.

Jill:- Hello Jack.

Prince:- I've just finished my woodcutting for the day. Would you like to walk by the stream?

Jill:- I'd love to Jack, but there's no-one to look after the shop.

Dolly:- I'll look after the shop for you, don't worry.

Jill:- Thank you Grandma. May I introduce Jack, he's just started work as a woodcutter for the Squire.

Dolly:- (To audience) Seems like a nice boy. (To Jack) Hello Jack. You remind me of my late husband. He was handsome and virile like you.

Prince:- What happened to him?

Dolly:- Well he was a painter and one day he was asked to paint the Post Office Tower.

Prince:- Yes.

Dolly:- He started at the bottom and worked his way right up to the top floor. It was a very long ladder.

Prince:- It must have been, but what went wrong?

Dolly:- He was so proud he stepped back to admire his work. I've never been able to stand the sight of a tin of Dulux since.

Prince:- Never mind, I'm sure he had a lovely finish.

Dolly:- You young ones go off and enjoy yourselves.

Prince:- Goodbye and thanks.
(Jill and Prince exit. Simple Simon enters)

Simon:- Hello everybody.

Audience:- Hello Simple Simon

Simon:- Some lamb chops and make them lean.

Dolly:- Yes sir, which way?

Simon:- Do you serve customers with frogs' legs?

Dolly:- Sir, we serve anyone.

Simon:- I want a packet of cornflakes for my auntie.

Dolly:- Sorry sir, we don't do swaps.

Simon:- I have here a shopping list.
(He produces long list which is weighted and unrolls to the floor.
I was thinking of having my sister for tea.

Dolly:- Well?

Simon:- She looked a bit tough so I decided to have beans on toast instead.

Dolly:- Wait a minute, you've no money. How are you going to pay for all the things on that list?
 (Simon produces American Express Credit Card and gives it to Dolly)
 That'll do nicely sir.

Simon:- Now for starters we'll have a tin of soup. (Reading list)

Dolly:- One tin of soup coming up. (She descends behind counter so that only her head is visible. At the end of the counter, some 6 feet away, a hand appears clutching a tin of soup and places it on the counter) There we are sir. (Simon gasps in amazement) What else would you like?
 (She emerges from behind counter)

Simon:- One jar of coffee.

Dolly:- One jar of coffee coming up. (She descends behind counter again and this time a hand appears at the other end of the counter clutching a jar of coffee and places it on the counter) There we are sir. (Simon is again taken aback) What's next?
 (She emerges)

Simon:- (Consulting list) A packet of soap powder.

Dolly:- One packet of soap powder coming up. (She descends again) Now where's that soap powder? Oh I know, it's on the shelf. (She stays down and two long arms appear and take down packet which disappears behind counter. Dolly lifts similar packet from below counter with own hands and emerges) There we are sir. What's next?

Simon:- Two oranges.

Dolly:- Two oranges coming up. (She descends) Now where are those oranges? Oh yes, they're on the other shelf. (Long arms again appear and oranges are taken down one at a time. Each time the orange is placed on the counter by Dolly's own hands. All the foregoing business can be done with assistance of two helpers crouched behind the counter and two long pieces of wood clad in pink gloves and sleeves similar to Dolly's)

Simon:- And finally I'd like four tins of peas.

Dolly:- Four tins of peas coming up. (She descends again. Four tins of peas appear on the counter simultaneously, two using Dolly's own hands and two using helpers hands. Simon is even more amazed)

Simon:- That's clever, how do you do it?

Dolly:- Oh well, friends give me a 'hand' from time to time.
 (Little Red Riding Hood enters)

LRRH:- Gosh it's just like a scene from Coronation Street - Rita Fairclough serving Stan Ogden (or other more suitable characters)

Dolly:- You just be careful young lady or you'll get a thick ear.

Simon:- Yes and I'll be the one to give it to you.

LRRH:- I see Jill's got herself a boyfriend.

Simon:- Oh no! Is he tall, dark and handsome like me?

LRRH:- Well which do you want to know, whether he's tall, dark and handsome or whether he's like you?

Simon:- Less of your lip young lady.
 LRRH:- He's a goodlooking feller but he's not a prince though. I hope she doesn't marry him or I'll never be a duchess and wear fine clothes.
 Simon:- I'm not bothered about being rich. I'd sooner be poor and happy.
 LRRH:- Wouldn't you sooner be rich and happy?
 Dolly:- Ah but the two don't always go together.
 LRRH:- I'd make sure they did.
 Simon:- You're welcome.

Trio (Dolly, Simon and Little Red Riding Hood)

Suggested numbers:- Who Wants to be a Millionaire? (High Society)
 Hey Look me Over
 I Got Plenty o'Nothin' (Porgy and Bess)

Scene 4 - The Path by the Stream (Front Cloth or Tabs)

(Jill and Prince enter hand in hand)

Prince:- What a wonderful evening. It's true what they say - when you're in love all the world seems beautiful.
 Jill:- I never knew that love could be like this. I had visions of a prince riding up on a white horse and carrying me off into the sunset but I realise now woodcutters are just as attractive.
 Prince:- I can stay here for only seven days.
 Jill:- Then where will you go?
 Prince:- Back to my father at the p-p-peasant's cottage he lives in.
 Jill:- And will I never see you again?
 Prince:- Oh yes, of course you will. Now that I've found you I don't intend to let you go.
 Jill:- Perhaps you could bring your father over to see us all. We would make him very welcome.
 Prince:- I'm sure you would, but how about you coming over to see my father at the p-p-peasant's cottage? You could come with me in seven days time.
 (Samantha enters)
 Prince:- Good evening Miss Smollett.
 Samantha:- Oh I say, you're the new woodcutter chappie, aren't you?
 Prince:- Yes that's right, I started working for your father today.
 Samantha:- You don't waste much time do you?
 Prince:- I beg your pardon.
 Samantha:- I've met your sort before; you worm your way into a girl's affections and then leave her in the lurch.
 Jill:- Oh I don't think Jack would leave me in the lurch Miss Smollett.
 Samantha:- Oh no? I bet he's gone within the week.
 Prince:- It is true that I have to leave in seven days' time.
 Samantha:- There we are, what did I tell you, the man's nothing but a giggle-o.

Jill:- Oh I'm sure he's not Miss Smollett.

Samantha:- Has he told you where he's going to when the week's up?

Jill:- No but ---

Samantha:- Has he told you where he came from this morning?

Jill:- No but ---

Samantha:- Just as I thought, he hasn't told you because he daren't.

Jill:- How do you mean?

Samantha:- I should imagine he's wanted by the police in every village between here and --- (nearest big town).

Prince:- That's not true.

Samantha:- Well in that case you won't mind telling us where your home is.

Prince:- I'm afraid I can't do that.

Samantha:- No I didn't think you could. The man's obviously a known thief and is congealing his real identity.

Jill:- Oh Jack, tell me it's not true.

Prince:- I swear to you I'm no thief Jill.

Samantha:- Then answer me one question.

Prince:- What's that?

Samantha:- Is your real name Jack?

Prince:- I - I can't answer that.

Samantha:- The proof of the pudding I think. At least he's only the woodcutter and we don't have to trust him with the family silver. Goodbye Jill and think over what I've said.

(She exits)

Jill:- Oh Jack, say you haven't lied to me.

Jack:- I haven't really lied just bent the truth a little.

Jill:- Does your father live in a peasant's cottage?

Jack:- (Gulp) No.

Jill:- Where did you come from this morning?

Jack:- I can't tell you.

Jill:- It's true, everything Miss Smollett said is true. (She starts to cry)

Jack:- I'm not a thief, I swear. (He puts his hand on her shoulder)

Jill:- Don't touch me. Leave me alone. I never want to see you again.

(She dashes off crying)

Song (Prince)

Suggested numbers:- This Nearly Was Mine (South Pacific)
She
Hey There (Pyjama Game)
No Other Love

Scene 5 - The Village Green

(The chorus are on stage decorating the stage with flags and bunting)

Song and Dance (Chorus and Junior Dancers)

Suggested numbers:- I Whistle a Happy Tune (The King and I)
I Have Confidence in Me (The Sound of Music)

(After the song is sung through once by chorus the Junior dancers enter carrying flags of garlands and perform suitable dance. Dancers exit at the end of the number. Dolly and Simon enter. Dolly is overdressed for the occasion with very short dress and 'Union Jack' bloomers. Simon is in a dinner jacket several sizes too big for him. He follows her around the stage)

Dolly:- Is everything ready for the Count's visit?
Simon:- Is everything ready for the Count's visit?
Dolly:- He'll be here at any moment.
Simon:- He'll be here at any moment.
Dolly:- Are you all looking your best?
Simon:- Are you all looking your best?
Dolly:- Is there an echo in this place?
Simon:- Is there an echo - - -
(Dolly looks behind her)
Dolly:- Oh it's you, you great berk.
Simon:- Yes it's lovable little me. (To audience) Hello everybody.
Audience:- Hello Simple Simon.
Dolly:- What on earth are you doing in that thing? You look like a penguin that's been on a diet.
Simon:- I want to look smart for the Count's visit.
Dolly:- Dressed like that you're next door to an idiot.
Simon:- Hi neighbour.
Dolly:- Oh you're hopeless. How do you think I look? I've been down to - - - (local shop) for a new frock.
Simon:- You look like a cross between Raquel Welch (or other sexy film star) and - - -
Dolly:- Yes yes
Simon:- Oh what do they call her? She's got long auburn hair and big brown eyes.
Dolly:- You mean Millicent Martin (or Lulu or other well-known redhead)?
Simon:- No - - - Lassie.
Dolly:- I'll clobber you.
Simon:- Don't do that, I'm only weak.
Dolly:- Yes, weak in the head. (She looks at decorations) Those flags aren't hanging very well. Get me something to stand on and I'll put them straight. (Simon exits) It's always the same if you want anything doing properly you've got to do it yourself.
(Simon re-enters carrying a stool)
Simon:- Here, stand on this.
Dolly:- You'll have to hold me, I get dizzy spells when I'm more than a few inches above the ground.
Simon:- Oh alright, anything for a quiet life.
(He helps her up onto the stool and holds her legs)

Squire:- It's a disaster area sir.

Count:- (Gesturing towards Dolly and Simon) And who are these two refugees from the Muppet Show?

Dolly:- (Getting up indignantly) Refugee from the Muppet Show! Why you badly assembled article, I'll - I'll - I'll

Count:- (Menacingly) Yes

Dolly:- I'll set Simple Simon onto you. (She pulls Simon up by the scruff of the neck and sinks back down onto her knees)

Count:- Well lad and what have you got to say?

Simon:- I think -- I think --

Count:- Yes.

Simon:- I think you're one of the best looking fellers I've ever seen.

Count:- That's better. (He forces Simon back purely by staring at him. Simon gradually drops back onto his knees) Remember I'm the boss around here and when I give the orders you obey, got that? (Dolly and Simon both nod vigourously) And that goes for the rest of you as well. (Chorus all nod vigourously) This is my servant Crookback and he has ways of dealing with disobedient villagers, haven't you Crookback? (Crookback nods and laughs evilly)

Squire:- (Still on his knees) My Lord I have arranged for two of the village girls to present you with bouquets.

Count:- Well what are waiting for? Bid them enter.

Squire:- Yes my Lord. (He goes back down onto his knees and shuffles across the stage towards the wings) Bring in the bouquets.

(Music is played and first Red Riding Hood and then Jill enter with bouquets. They each courtsey and present the bouquets to the Count. As they do this the Prince enters quietly from the opposite side. The Count is obviously impressed with Jill and strokes her cheek. He gives the bouquets to Crookback)

Count:- And what is your name wench?

Jill:- Jill my Lord.

Count:- A pretty name for a pretty girl.

Jill:- Thank you my Lord. (Prince is obviously incensed)

LRRH:- My name's Little Red Riding Hood, I'm Jill's sister.

Count:- Well no-one's perfect.

LRRH:- She's got the beauty, I've got the brains.

Count:- Then your brains should tell you when to keep quiet.

LRRH:- I know you're not a prince but you are the next best thing and if Jill married you I would still be made a lady and ---

Count:- (Menacingly) Shut up liittle girl or I'll have your guts for garters.

LRRH:- But don't you see I could put in a good word for you. She's only going out with a woodcutter at the moment and even that seems to have fallen through so if you play your cards right you could be onto a good thing. (During the foregoing speech Count nods to Crookback who picks up Little Red Riding Hood and carries her off still talking. Her voice fades away as she exits. Crookback returns without her)

Count:- So you've no boyfriend my dear.

Jill:- (She notices Prince and pauses before speaking) No my Lord.
(Prince slowly turns and exits sadly)

Count:- Leave me, I wish to be alone with this girl.
(Chorus rise and bow as they exit backwards. Principals also rise and Squire and Samantha exit)

Dolly:- I'm not leaving you here with my grand-daughter, you might do her a nasty.

Simon:- Don't stay here Jill, something dreadful could happen to you.

Count:- Be off with the pair of you or I'll cut off your national assistance.

Jill:- I'ts alright Grandma, I won't come to any harm.

Dolly:- I'm not so sure, I met a feller like him on --- (local Lover's Lane) and finished up in --- (local hospital)
(Count nods to Crookback and he grabs Dolly and Simon by scruff of the neck)

Dolly)
Simon):- Get off you great lump, help, stop it, what do you think you're doing etc.
(Crookback pushes them offstage as they yell. He exits himself)

Count:- You're very lovely my dear.

Jill:- Thank you sir.

Count:- You're wasted in a backwater like this. Why not come away with me and we'll live together in my castle high in the mountains.

Jill:- Sir I hardly know you.

Count:- Not at the moment but you soon will. I need a sweet little wife that I can come home to each day after beating the peasants into submission.
(He moves close to her and she backs away)

Jill:- I'm happy as I am, thank you very much.

Count:- But you'll have jewels and fine clothes not to mention a beautiful coach with four black horses. (He moves towards her again and again she back away) Don't be frightened my dear. I'm sure we'd be dreadfully happy together. (He places his hand on her shoulder. She shrugs it off)

Jill:- I'm sorry my Lord, but I cannot find it in my heart to love you.

Count:- Not perhaps at the moment, but love will come I assure you.
(He grabs her by the waist)

Jill:- No please my Lord, let me go.

Count:- Don't be shy little girl, come away with me.

Jill:- No I won't. Leave me alone or I'll call for help.

Count:- And do you think any of those cowards will come to your aid. No my beauty, you're mine and mine you stay.

Jill:- Help please somebody, help.

Count:- I like a woman with spirit.

Jill:- Help, please, there must be somebody to help me.
(The Prince rushes on carrying sword)

Prince:- Unhand her at once or you'll answer for it.
(Count lets Jill go)

Count:- Threaten a man that's unarmed would you?

Prince:- No, get your servant to bring your sword and we'll fight on equal terms.

Jill:- Oh Jack don't, you'll get hurt. (She runs across to him)

Count:- (Shouting) Crookback. (To Prince) We'll soon see who's the better swordsman. A common peasant can't hope to compete with the gentry. (Crookback enters) Crookback, bring me my sword.

Crookback:- Yes my Lord (He laughs evilly and exits)

Count:- (To Prince) Your face looks familiar. I could almost have sworn that we'd met before but that couldn't possibly be because I never mix with riff-raff.

Prince:- And I don't mix with brutes and cut-throats so no doubt you're right.
(Crookback re-enters carrying sword and gives it to Count)

Count:- Aha! (He brandishes sword) Prepare to die.
(There is now a sword fight which can be as long and complex as the producer wishes. It finishes with the Count falling to the floor and the Prince standing over him)

Prince:- Do you yield?

Count:- Yes yes I yield
(Prince picks up Count's sword which is on the floor)

Prince:- Go and never come to this village again or I won't be so forgiving next time. (Count gets up and goes over to Crookback)

Count:- Come Crookback let us return to my castle. (He begins to exit but turns as he is about to leave the stage)
Beware peasant, you haven't seen the last of me. I will return and when I do it will be to take my revenge.
(He and Crookback exit with evil laughter)

Jill:- Oh Jack can you forgive me for all those awful things I said to you last night?

Prince:- Yes of course. I'm sorry I can't tell you all about myself at the present time but just trust me for a few days and then I'll tell you everything.

Jill:- I will trust you Jack and I promise I won't ask any more questions.

Prince:- You must take care; I don't think it'll be long before Count Calamitous is back to take you away by force.

Jill:- And you must take care as well. He'll be out to take his revenge and I couldn't bear it if anything happened to you.

Prince:- Everyone in the village will have to be extra careful especially at night for they say he can turn himself into a werewolf. (Jill shudders) Don't be frightened Jill, I'll see no harm comes to you.

Jill:- Oh Jack I do love you so.

Prince:- And I love you too Jill.

Reprise (Prince and Jill)

Reprise of duet they sang at the end of Scene 1

(They exit and Dolly enters)

Dolly:- I've a feeling that we're in for some trouble from that Count Calamitous. My woman's intuition tells me that they're back at the castle, him and that Crookback, plotting something terrible. As they're such a nasty pair will you do something for me? (To audience) Will you? (Hopefully audience will reply in the affirmative) Good. Will you hiss and boo every time they appear? I'll tell you what I'll pretend to be the Count and then you can have a practice. (She exits and comes back on walking like the Count. This is done two or three times until the audience are booing really loudly) Good. (The tabs draw and Dolly walks in front of them) Now he's due to appear any minute. Get ready to show him what you think of him. (Dolly exits)

Scene 6 - The Count's Castle (Front cloth or tabs)

(The Count enters followed by Crookback. They hiss back at the audience)

Count:- Well Crookback, what news do the spies bring me from the village? It's nearly a week since I left it and I grow eager to return and take my revenge.

Crookback:- Today Jill's grandmother, the one known as Dolly Dishcloth is to return to her cottage in the woods.

Count:- I'm not interested in that old faggot.

Crookback:- Perhaps not but it could help our plans.

Count:- How do you mean?

Crookback:- Well the delivery of streaky bacon has not yet been made to the village shop and so she will have to go home without any.

Count:- So she will have to have cornflakes for a change. What is this leading up to?

Crookback:- It has been arranged that Little Red Riding Hood will deliver the bacon to her grandmother.

Count:- I am rapidly losing patience Crookback. I am not in the least bit interested in Little Red Riding Hood, it's her sister that I want.

Crookback:- Yes but if you were to change yourself into a werewolf and carry off Little Red Riding Hood her sister would come looking for her.

Count:- And so would that miserable woodcutter.

Crookback:- We could set a trap for them in the castle and have two for the price of one.

Count:- Ha ha ha ha. This is going to be fun. I always love changing into a werewolf, it brings out the beast in me. Some of my happiest times have been spent baring my teeth and howling at the moon.

Song (Count and Crookback)

Suggested number:- Fangs for the Memory (Tune:- Thanks for the memory)

Count:- Fangs for the memory of terror in the night,
Of folks that screamed with fright,
If dinner with Count Dracula although it' just a bite.
How lovely it was.

Crookback:- Fangs for the memory of dungeon doors that creak,
Of prisoners so meek,
And if they yelled the jailer had a whip round twice
How lovely it was. a week

Count:- Where is the fun of the old days?
Thumb screws and rack were the old ways,
But we will make sure that our crime pays,
No doubts, no fuss, just howl for us.

Crookback:- Oh fangs for the memory of tentacles that clung,
of funeral bells we rung,
And 'I ain't got nobody' was the tune the spectres sung.
How lovely it was.

Both:- Fangs for the memory of ghostly hands that wave,
Of bones laid in a cave,
Of midnight in the churchyard when your future's looking
How lovely it was. grave

Count:- For bygone days we are yearning,
Crookback:- New evil deeds we are learning.

Count:- And soon we will both be returning,
Both:- To village life, we'll cause such strife.
Oh fangs for the memory,

Crookback:- Of ruins old and slummy,
Count:- Of pins stuck in a dummy,
Both:- The old Egyptian Pharoah who was lost without his mummy,
Oh thank you so much.

(Count and Crookback exit and tabs draw back on Scene 7)

Scene 7 - The Edge of the Village

(This scene shows a few houses and the beginning of the woods. The chorus are on stage)

Song and Dance (Chorus and Senior Dancers)

Suggested numbers:- Top of the World
Oh What a Beautiful Morning (Oklahoma)
Any up-tempo pop number

(Dancers enter after one chorus, do routine and then exit. Squire and Samantha enter)

Squire:- Ah peace at last. The Count's gone back to his castle
and everything's back to normal.

Samantha:- Yes we don't want any more of his deprived behaviour
thank you very much. After all this village is a conversation
area.

Squire:- At least he didn't turn himself into a werewolf or anything
nasty like that.

Samantha:- No we can all sleep safely in our beds tonight.
(There is the sound of a wolf howl from offstage. Squire and
Samantha cling together and the chorus look scared)

Squire:- What was that?

Samantha:- I don't know but I'm glad I'm not going back into those woods.

Squire:- So am I. I think it's time we all went back to the Manor House. Come along Samantha.
(Squire and Samantha are about to exit when Prince and Jill enter hand in hand)

Prince:- What a lovely morning Jill. Are you as happy as I am?

Jill:- Just as happy Jack.

Samantha:- (To Jill) Good gracious, you surely haven't let that woodcutter weedle his way back into your infections, have you?

Jill:- (Smiling) Good morning Miss Smollett. Isn't it a beautiful day?

Samantha:- It is not when you let a man like that sweet talk you. (To Prince) And why are you not working? We're paying you a good celery to cut logs for the fire.

Prince:- I've cut so many logs you'll have enough firewood for the next twelve months.

Samantha:- A likely story. It's just an excuse so you can be with your lady friend here.

Prince:- It's the truth honestly.

Samantha:- In that case you may consider yourself sacked. Don't you agree Daddy?

Squire:- Er --- yes, you're sacked.

Prince:- That's good news because it saves me handing in my notice.

Samantha:- And what do you propose to do now Mr. Woodcutter - go to the next village and flirt with some other simple minded young girl I suppose.

Prince:- No Miss Smollett, I am going to accompany Jill's grandmother to her cottage in the woods. There could be a wolf about and the path might be dangerous.

Samantha:- With you in the woods there'll be two wolves about.

Jill:- It's no good Miss Smollett you can't upset me any more. I believe in Jack and everything he tells me.

Samantha:- Then more fool you. I don't know there's no helping some people. Come father, let's treat this matter with the contempt it preserves.
(Squire and Samantha begin to exit)

Prince:- One moment.

Samantha:- What is it now Mr. Woodcutter?

Prince:- I think you've forgotten something.

Samantha:- And what might that be?

Prince:- My wages for the days I've worked for you.

Samantha:- And do you think we're going to pay good money to a scoundrel like you? Here's a Mars Bar. It'll keep you going until you reach your destination. (She hands him Mars Bar) Come father.

Squire:- Yes dear.

(Squire and Samantha exit)

Jill:- Why, the mean pair. You've worked so hard since you came and all she's given you is a bar of chocolate.

Prince:- Never mind, I'll keep it by me. You never know when I might need it again.

(Dolly, Simon and Little Red Riding Hood enter. Dolly is carrying an extremely small case, Little Red Riding Hood is carrying nothing and Simon is laden down with large suitcases and bags. He drops them all in the centre of the stage with a clatter)

Dolly:- Be careful with that luggage, you'll crumple my cauliflowers.

(There is another wolf roar from the woods)

Really Simon, you should have taken a couple of Rennies before you came out.

Simon:- That wasn't me.

Dolly:- We'll say no more about it but don't let it occur again.

LRRH:- Now have you got everything?

Dolly:- Yes I think so dear - ten packets of joggers' All-Bran.

Simon:- Joggers' All-Bran? What's that?

Dolly:- It gives you a good run for your money.

LRRH:- What else have you got?

Dolly:- Five jars of Idiots' Harpic.

Simon:- Idiots' Harpic? What does that do?

Dolly:- It drives you clean round the bend. Then there's my inflatable Robert Redford (or other handsome film or television star).

Simon:- Inflatable Robert Redford? What do you intend to do with that?

Dolly:- Never you mind, but I will tell you something, I'm not going to wear hairpins in bed.

(There is another wolf roar from the woods)

Simon I've told you about that before, now apologise at once.

Simon:- It wasn't me.

Dolly:- I won't tell you again, the next time it'll be a thick ear. Now where were we?

Jill:- You were telling us what you've got in your luggage.

Dolly:- Oh yes. There's a bottle of my favourite perfume 'Evening in --- (well known local slum area) and a copy of the latest long-playing record 'Hinge and Bracket meet --- (latest well known rock group). In fact I've got everything a girl could wish for apart from my streaky bacon.

LRRH:- Yes and I'm bringing that tomorrow when the Danish Bacon van arrives.

(There is yet another wolf howl)

Dolly:- That does it, I've already told you twice. (She goes up to Simon and grabs him by the ear. She is about to twist it when the wolf roars again. They both freeze and look scared) It wasn't you making that noise. (Simon shakes his head)

Prince:- It's only a wolf, don't worry.

Dolly:- Only a wolf! (She jumps into Simon's arms)

Prince:- Don't get upset, we'll protect you, won't we Simon?

Simon:- Will we? (He drops her)

Prince:- Yes, of course we will. You're not scared of a wolf, are you Simon?

Simon:- Aren't I?

Prince:- No, of course not. Now let's get these cases together and off we go.

(Prince and Simon pick up luggage. Just as Simon has picked them up there is another howl and he drops them all again. He picks them up again)

Jill:- Goodbye Jack, look after Grandma for us.

Prince:- Goodbye Jill. Goodbye Little Red Riding Hood. Come on Simon.

Song (Prince and all on stage)

Suggested numbers:- I'm on My Way (Paint Your Wagon)
Heigh Ho (Snow White)

(All exit at end of number. Count, now in werewolf disguise, enters as stage darkens)

Count:- Ha ha ha, the fools, walking straight into my trap, ha ha ha ha.
(There is a flash and suitable 'evil' music as curtains draw)

End of Act 1