

MOTHER GOOSE

BY

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MOTHER GOOSE

By Mark Llewelin

Scenes:

Act One:

- 1: The Market.
- 2: On The Road To The Farm.
3. Featherdown Farm.

Act Two:

1. Featherdown Farm Kitchen.
2. On The Road To The Farm.
3. The Magic Pool.
4. On The Road To The Farm.
5. The Market.

Characters:

Mother Goose
Billy Goose
Lord Loot
Amy
Cedric Clanger
Priscilla, the Goose
The Mayor
Fairy Thistledown

Chorus: Townspeople and double for Mother Goose.

MOTHER GOOSE

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Act One:

Scene 1: THE MARKET

THERE ARE STALLS WITH VARIOUS WARES. CHILDREN AND ADULT CHORUS MEMBERS, AS VILLAGERS, MILL ABOUT.

NUMBER Villagers (maybe using a maypole?)

ENTER LORD LOOT. THE CROWD MOVES ASIDE.

LORD: Right! Right! Reduce this ridiculous reverberating racket?

CHORUS 1: No need to get so R-sey!

LORD: Silence! I can hear it up at the Hall! I was enjoying afternoon tea with the Mayor anøall. Then you lot start singing and carrying on like this ó anyone would think it was a holiday! PAUSE Itø not a holiday is it? I do so hate holidays.

CHORUS 1: Please sir ó I can explainí .

LORD: Save your breath! Iøm not interested in excuses!

CHORUS 2: But you see itøsí í .

LORD: Didnø you hear what I said?

GENERAL MURMUR FROM THE CHORUS.

Quiet! SEES AUDIENCE ó CHEESEY SMILE Oh, good evening. I am Lord Loot and this is my village URNS TO CHORUS is it not?

CHORUS 1: Yes sir.

LORD: Then I can do what I like. So ó if you lot canø be quiet then I shall have to change the rules. I can feel a proclamation coming on. HE SHAKES A BIT Or itø that buttered tea cake repeating on me! CLEARNS THROAT This will be the very last market to be held in the square! Howø that?

CHORUS 3: But how will we make a living?

LORD: Thatø your look out. But donø think Iøll be lowering the rents on account. Now, the Mayor is waiting for a refill!

LORD EXITS.

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THE CHORUS GO BACK TO THEIR STALLS, IN GENERAL DISARRAY.
HONK OF HORN. ENTER MOTHER GOOSE AND BILLY.

MOTHER G: I'm here! I'm here! Pull your purses from your pockets, whack out yer wallets. Yes, Mother Goose is here with her organic, home-made wares ó no artificial additives, no colouring, no E numbers, no sugars or sweeteners ó in fact there's nothing to it at all. It's all coming down today! HER SKIRT DROPS Well, not everything SHE HOISTS IT BACK Just me prices ó 50% off the lot. Everything must go ó

CHORUS 1: But Mother Gooí .

MOTHER G: Bog Off!

CHORUS 1: Well, I say!

MOTHER G: Bog Off ó Buy one and get one free! It's me Saturday Special! Now, let the dog see the rabbit ó where is me stall?

BILLY GOES TO A TABLE WHICH HAS YET TO BE SET UP.

BILLY: This is it mother.

MOTHER G: Marvellous! Now, I'm sorry we're late. We had a little tarradiddle at Mother Morton's party. We were doing the hokey cokey and I was putting it in more times than I was taking it out. What a mess. Oh! Now! TURNS TO AUDIENCE We have yet to be introduced!

DURING THIS NEXT SPEECH, BILLY PULLS THINGS FROM UNDER THE TABLE AND PUTS THEM ON TOP: A FEW BASKETS OF EGGS AND A MONEY BOWL. THERE IS ALSO A HOLE IN THE TABLE TOP. UNDERNEATH THE TABLE IS A STAGE HAND WHO WILL OPERATE A CHICKEN PUPPET.

I am Mother Goose ó almost a widow of the parish. Well, he'd be dead if I get my hands on him. Yes, and I live on Featherdown Farm with my son Billy. BILLY BOWS Lovely lad isn't he! Just like his mother ó big, bold and beautiful. Our farm's on top of the hill over there. POINTS OFF If you're interested we do B&B ó yes, £5 a night but you must make your own bed. But we supply the wood and the nails. Yes, and here we are at the lovely village of Upham ó it's like (*local estate*) without the crime. Incidentally, did they take down your names and addresses when you booked your tickets? REACTION They did? Marvellous ó it's not for me but for my brother, he's a burglar and he's probably at your houses right now. PAUSE So, welcome to Upham. We're a happy, jolly, gay little community REACTION ó don't make up your own jokes ó well, these are a right bunch of miseries actually POINTS TO CHORUS. Yes, I'm the only gay one in this village - to tell the truth. Yes, a local village for local

people. Now, we are all happy because it's market day today and we live in a village on an estate ruled over by the lovable Lord Loot so you'll meet him later.

CHORUS: They have met him!

MOTHER G: You have? A charming chappy, isn't he? REACTION No! Lord Loot from Upham Hall? Yes, funny name isn't it so Upham Hall. Mind you, when I was a girl it was called Dirty Manor so it is ..

CHORUS 2: He told us that there wouldn't be any markets again.

MOTHER G: He did what? But how can I sell me organic eggs and me chicken nuggets if there's no markets? Don't worry so PAUSE, ASIDE: Which bit of a chicken are her nuggets anyway? PAUSE Don't worry so I'll sort Lord Loot out. It's a well known fact that he fancies me rotten! Well, who wouldn't? SHE TWIRLS.

BILLY: Oh no he doesn't!

MOTHER G: Oh yes he does!

BILLY: Oh no he doesn't!

MOTHER G: Well. We'll see about that. Now Billy, have you got that stall set up?

BILLY: Yes, but it's LOOKS AT WATCH Gone three already so we'll not sell anything at this rate.

MOTHER G: You haven't counted on my ace sales techniques. Yes, I did three months with Reader's Digest.

CHORUS WANDER OFF.

Where have they all gone? Come back so organic eggs! Helloooo!

SHE GOES BEHIND THE STALL.

Oh, this is no good. I knew we shouldn't have had that fourth Benalyn and Vodka so I don't know where the time's gone today.

BILLY: I'll go and see if I can round up some customers!

BILLY OFF.

MOTHER G: He's a good lad so simple but kind with it. You know the sort. Now, let's see whether my chicken will come out and say hello. I call her Colonel Sanders. Now, where are you Colonel! .

CLUCKING AND CHICKEN APPEARS THROUGH HOLE.

Ah, isn't she lovely. Lip smacking good you might say. Now don't worry ladies and gentlemen, don't worry about that bird flu or no, we came up with the perfect solution. Our new organic range of SHE LIFTS UP A FROZEN MEAL BOX or ready to go meal for one or Chicken in Lemsip sauce. Marvellous. Now Colonel, time to lay some eggs.

CHICKEN SHAKES ITS HEAD.

What's the matter? No! She's not in the mood. Well, what if mummy was to sing to you?

CHICKEN NODS HEAD.

Alright then!

BILLY ON WITH CHILDREN.

Oh, you're just in time kids or how would you like to help Billy and me sing to Colonel Sanders?

KIDS AGREE.

NUMBER Billy, Mother Goose and children.
--

CHICKEN CLUCKS AND GETS EXCITED.

MOTHER G: It worked! PRODUCES SOME EGGS Well done everyone or that's 8 pence worth of anybody's money. You've done very well there Colonel or back to sleep you go! CHICKEN VANISHES THROUGH HOLE. Now, would you like to meet my other prize layer? She's a goose called Priscilla. Oh, Cilla love! GOOSE ENTERS. There she is. GOOSE NODS AND TAKES IN THE ADULATION. She's a right show off if truth be told or she used to be on the telly. REACTION Oh, she did or she was an egg-stra and then she was on Eggs Factor. I've been on the telly too or I'd sleep anywhere when I'm drunk. They won't get any better I'm afraid to say. Now, Cilla or what are you going to lay today? GOOSE SHAKES HEAD Nothing? I suppose you want a song or all? GOOSE SHAKES HEAD No! GOOSE SQUAWKS What? She says she's heard me sing before! Cheeky! Well, what can we do to get them eggs rolling? GOOSE SHAKES HEAD Nothing? You mean to tell me that you're not going to lay a single egg? GOOSE SHAKES HEAD Well, I don't know what to say to you then. MOTHER GOOSE OUT FROM BEHIND STALL. How am I supposed to make a living if they won't lay and the market's closing andí .

BILLY: Calm down mum or I'd have a word with Cilla. I will.

MOTHER G: Well alright then ó see if you canø butter her up a bit while I use the facilities in the Red Lion.

MOTHER GOOSE EXITS

BILLY: Come on Priscilla, whatø wrong?

GOOSE TALKSø INTO HIS EAR.

Well, I see that ó you do have to be in the right mood, yes. Well letø see what we can do to create the right mood ó can we have some soft lighting please? LIGHTING CHANGES and some lovely melody - CHILDREN SWAY AND HUM A LAø Thank you! And the mood is setí .

ENTER AMY

AMY: What on earthø going on?

BILLY: Oh Amy -

THE LIGHTS GO BACK TO BEFORE. THE CHILDREN GO QUIET.

I was justí .

AMY: Getting romantic with Cilla.

BILLY: No, no, it wasnø like that at all. Thereø only one girl for me Amy ó and thatø you!

HE GOES TO HER.

AMY: Really?

BILLY: Yes, donø get your feathers in a flap ó I was just encouraging Cilla to lay some big goose eggs.

AMY: I see.

CHILD 1: He was Amy, he was!

AMY: Well, I still want to have a chat with you Billy Goose. Alone.

BILLY: Thanks for all your help kids ó but when Amy wants us to be alone, well ó

CHILD 1: We understand.

CHILD 2: Come on!

THE CHILDREN RUN OFF.

AMY: And you too Cilla.

THE GOOSE EXITS.

BILLY: Come on Amy ó donøt give me the bird.

AMY: Weøve got trouble Billy ó and I mean trouble with a capital T.

BILLY: Not your father again?

AMY: Exactly ó heø's been having afternoon tea with the Mayor.

BILLY: Trying to yank his chain no doubt.

AMY: Exactly ó and the Mayorø's son ó Cedric ó has been invited round to meet me.

BILLY: Why would he want to meet you?

AMY: Because papa thinks heø's a better catch than you are, thatø's why.

BILLY: I knew your father never liked me.

AMY: Well, look at the facts ó Cedric is public school educated, heø's the chairman of the family company, he lives at Clanger Castle and he is loaded in lolly.

BILLY: I know ó meanwhile I have no qualifications, live on a run down farm with my mum and barely have five pounds to rub together. GOES TO KISS HER But I *love* you Amy ó

LORD LOOT HAS ENTERED. THEY PART.

LORD: But thatø's not enough. Look at my lovely daughter ó she deserves happiness and money. Yes, yes, Cedric Clanger is the man for you my love. You mark my words, that man will make a Clanger out of you yet. Ding dong!

BILLY: Iøll knock his clanger out if I get my hands on himí

LORD: Violence never solved anything. No, you listen to me Billy ó Iøm bringing in my second rule of the day. I can feel another proclamation coming on. TWITCHES Only men whoøve made their fortune can see my daughter. You want to marry her so badly ó get working and make your fortune. Do you hear me boy? Make some money! Now, come Amy, Cedric is waiting to take you for a run in the country in his new motor car.

LORD LOOT AND AMY EXIT.

BILLY: Make some money? How can I make some money?

ENTER MOTHER GOOSE, CARRYING A COUPLE OF BEER BOTTLES.

MOTHER G: Oh thank goodness you're still here Billy.

BILLY: Where have you been all this time? You've been drinking!

MOTHER G: Drinking?? HICCUPS I swear a drop never lassed me pips ó I mean, passed me lips. Anyway, with the beer in that place ó you don't get so much drunk as water logged. Come on love, let's tidy up and get back home. It's been a complete washout.

BILLY COLLECTS THE BASKETS FROM THE STALL.

BILLY: Where's Priscilla?

MOTHER G: Where do you think? Having a swim on the village pond. CALLS: Oh Cilla! She loves a good swim you know ó

ENTER GOOSE.

Ah yes, here she is ó my pride and joy, even if she won't lay. HUGS HER We've been together some years, haven't we love. That's right ó and I wouldn't part with her for all the tea in China, not for all the MP's on the take, no, not for all the England football players I could fit into me bedroom. THINKS Well, it was 23 last count. WINKS Come on everyone, back to Featherdown Farm. THEY EXIT.

THEY EXIT TO SOME PLAY OFF MUSIC.

Scene 2: ON THE ROAD TO THE FARM.

ENTER BILLY, PRISCILLA AND MOTHER GOOSE.

MOTHER G: You know, it's a good job we've got each other, isn't it?

BILLY: Exactly 'o families are very important.

MOTHER G: Oh, they are that. I mean, take me 'o I was a very lonely child. Yes, hard to believe now but I was 'o even though I went to a school with lots of children. I was even one meself. But you know, none of the other children in that school wanted to be my friend 'o no they did not.

BILLY: Aah!

MOTHER G: Oh, it was worse than that.

BILLY ENCOURAGES AUDIENCE TO AAH.

MOTHER G: That's about right. Yes, I was all alone so I had to invent two imaginary friends, I did.

BILLY: And what happened?

MOTHER G: That was the trouble 'o my two imaginary friends didn't want to play with me either 'o they only played on their own. My brother you see, our Bruce 'o yes, Bruce Goose 'o he was naughty, oh he was. He used to knock on people's doors and run off. Yes, mind you it came in handy as it turned out 'o he works for the Royal Mail now. No, an unhappy few years I had 'o then I met your father.

BILLY: And he made you happy.

MOTHER G: No, he showed me how things up to then hadn't been so bad after all. A fine family your father came from 'o big and strong, a huge hairy moustache, tattoos!

BILLY: Me dad?

MOTHER G: No, his mother 'o she was a lovely woman. Used to be with the tank corps. But him 'o lazy and good for nothing. That's why we're better off on our own.

BILLY: Well, on our own 'o plus Amy. One day.

MOTHER G: Amy?? Oh yes, well, one day. Until then, just us.

BILLY: But you do want me to marry Amy and bring her to live on the farm, don't you mum?

MOTHER G: Of course I do ó what every mum wants is that, another younger girl about the place. Yes, I know you love her, son.

BILLY: I do.

NUMBER Billy

THEY EXIT. THE MAYOR AND LORD LOOT ENTER.

LORD: I am sure your son Cedric will make the ideal wife for my daughter Mayor.

THE MAYOR IS ELDERLY AND CARRIES AN EAR TRUMPET.

MAYOR: Whatø that? Sunny? It certainly is.

LORD: No, your son ó

MAYOR: TRUMPET TO EAR What? Son? My Cedric? Marrying your Amy ó marvellous. County wedding of the year, what? Weøll sell the pictures to Farming Weekly. Make a double page spread of it ó mind you, theyøll have to watch where they put the staples.

LORD: All we have to do is get rid of this Billy Goose chap. But how?

MAYOR: Get rid? HE HAS A FLASH OF INSPIRATION Thatø it ó I have just the cunning plan we need. You own their farm, donøt you?

LORD: I do ó yes.

MAYOR: So youøre their landlord?

LORD: I am ó yes.

MAYOR: Well then - chuck him and his tiresome mother out on the streets.

LORD: Oh you are a genius! Yes, that old bat owes me so much back rent I can have her out by the end of the week.

MAYOR: Spiffing idea. And while weøre about it why donøt we sell her chickens and cows ó oh, and that blasted goose ó to Mr Chop the butcher.

LORD: To cover some of the debt. LAUGHS Oh Mayor Clanger, we donøt half make a spiffing team.

MAYOR: Nothing I like better than kicking the paupers out. Come on ó we must almost be there.

THEY EXIT.

Scene 3: FEATHERDOWN FARMTHE CHORUS ARE HARD AT WORK.

NUMBER Chorus

BILLY ENTERS WITH A BUCKET.

BILLY: That's it 'o Esmeralda has been milked for the day.

HANDS BUCKET TO CHORUS MEMBER.

Well, it's time to close the farm up for another evening 'o good night everyone!

CHORUS: Goodnight, see you tomorrow Billy.

CHORUS EXIT.

BILLY: TO AUDIENCE: Well, welcome to Featherdown Farm 'o it's not very much to look at but it has beautiful views and it's always lovely and quiet -

HORN HONKS.

- and peaceful and unspoilt 'o

ANOTHER HONK.

- and still and lovely 'o

ANOTHER HONK.

- and 'o what the heck is that?

ENTER CEDRIC AND AMY.

AMY: This is the farm I was telling you about 'o and this is my friend Billy Goose.

CEDRIC: What ho! I'm Cedric Clanger. You might have heard of me.

BILLY: I have 'o how's the soup dragon? ASIDE: That's one for the mums and dads. PATS HER HAIR Of a certain age.

AMY: Oh come on Billy, try and be friendly.

BILLY: Well, just for you. Welcome! This is my farm 'o

CEDRIC: Spiffing.

AMY: I'd leave you two alone while I see how Billy's mum is.

CEDRIC: Spiffing.

AMY EXITS.

BILLY: So, you and Amy are friends then.

CEDRIC: Yes, we are, old chap. But 'o between you, me and the gatepost 'o what! I have a dilemma on my hands.

BILLY: Really? What kind of dilemma?

CEDRIC: She's a rum little filly, don't you agree? And father seems to think it's the thing to do 'o just the ticket and all that. What. SLAPS BILLY HARD ON THE BACK

BILLY: What is? What are you going to do?

CEDRIC: Ask her to marry me 'o the old ball and chain and all that.

BILLY IS STUNNED.

BILLY: Marry you?

CEDRIC: Exactly. How long have you known her then?

BILLY: Oh, not long. So you think she'd say yes?

CEDRIC: Why wouldn't she?

BILLY: She's the girl of your dreams is she?

CEDRIC: Not really but - PULLS BILLY CONSPIRATORIALLY DOWNSTAGE - my father's company is in trouble and if I could get my hands on the Loot family lolly then I could save the day.

BILLY: You're after her money?

CEDRIC: Not just that. LAUGHS AND LOOKS AROUND So William, tell me my good chap 'o what on earth do you do up here all day?

BILLY: Oh, I farm 'o and I write poetry.

CEDRIC: Poetry? Well go on then old bean 'o give us a little ditty.

BILLY: Very well 'o old stick. SLAPS CEDRIC ON THE BACK There once was a woodsman named Weaver, whose wife had a face like a beaver.

But her sharp teeth with ease, could cut down tall trees. And so no way could Weaver leave -er.

CEDRIC: Brilliant! LAUGHS So, apart from farming and writing poems ó what on earth does a young buck SLAPS HIM ON THE BACK AGAIN get up to of a night?

BILLY: We play games ó mother and me.

CEDRIC: Now I do love a good game. What sort of thing?

BILLY: Hereø a good one. WINKS AT AUDIENCE Itø called sticks. All you have to do is answer every question I ask you with the word sticks.

CEDRIC: Well, thatø rather easy-peasy.

BILLY: Is it? So, are you ready then Cedric - old boot?

CEDRIC: I am!

BILLY: Ah, you see ó wrong answer. Now, you have to give me £5.

CEDRIC: Oh dash it ó I didnø know youød started. Here you are - HANDS HIM £5. Now, Iø ready.

BILLY: So, youøve driven up here in your motor ó what kind is it?

CEDRIC: Sticks.

BILLY: Very good. Youøre getting the hang of it now, arenø you?

CEDRIC: I am. PAUSE Oh dash it ó HANDS ANOTHER £5.

BILLY: And do you like Featherdown Farm?

CEDRIC: Sticks.

BILLY: Sheø a beautiful girl that Amy, isnø she?

CEDRIC: Sticks.

BILLY: Thereø no flies on you ó how about double or quits?

CEDRIC WONøT SPEAK.

Youøre sharp. I tell you what ó you put another £20 into the kitty and and Iøll ask you one more question ó get it right and you keep the loot.

CEDRIC NODS AND HANDS OVER £20.

Here we go then ó for the lot! What would you rather have ó this money or - PRODUCES A BUNDLE OF STICKS ó these sticks?

CEDRIC: Sticks!

BILLY: Here you go then ó

THROWS STICKS INTO HIS ARMS, BILLY POCKETS THE MONEY. AMY AND MOTHER GOOSE APPEAR.

CEDRIC: Hey, that was ó

MOTHER G: Ah, so you must be Cedric Clanger. Iøve heard all about you!

CEDRIC: Spiffing to meet you Mother Goose. BOWS

MOTHER G: Charmed Iøm sure. BOWS. Ooh, I have had a trying day today.

CEDRIC: Really?

MOTHER G: Yes, the butcher tried, the baker tried and now, if you fancy it, you can try anøall. GRABS HIM.

CEDRIC: What ho! Must be the country air!

AMY: Well, itø's been lovely to see you ó

MOTHER G: Youøre not going already are you? Every night, before I retire to bed I always go through my beauty regime.

CEDRIC: Does it work?

MOTHER G: You donø get a figure like this without punishing yourself Cedric. Now, where is everyone?

SHE BLOWS WHISTLE. ENTER THE CHILDREN.

Why donøt you all join in?

NUMBER The Company

MOTHER G: Now, that takes years off you! Goodnight children!

CHILDREN EXIT AS MAYOR AND LORD LOOT ENTER.

MAYOR: So this is the old farmstead then!

MOTHER G: Oh, thank goodness I did my keep fit regime ó here come two hunks if ever I saw them. Lord Loot, Lord Mayor - BOWS

MAYOR: Good Lord!

PUSHES PAST HER.

This old farm would make the perfect spot for my new supermarket business. Has ta.

LORD: Does it?

MAYOR: What?

LORD: It -has taø you said. It -has taø what?

MAYOR: No, no, no, thatø what itø called ó Hasda.

BILLY: What do you mean? We live here and weøre not moving!

LORD: Yes, but I own it ó and Iøm selling!

MOTHER G: But you canø do that ó weøve lived here for sixty years and you canø just kick us out like this.

LORD: Perhaps if youød kept up with the rentí ..

BILLY: Mother!!

MOTHER G: I can explain ó you know how I like to look after the local animals.

BILLY: Yes?

MOTHER G: Well, I put the rent on a horse.

MAYOR: From one old nag to another. What!

BILLY: Donø you talk about my mother like that.

LORD: Youøve got a week to get out ó or of course, if you can come up with the rentí í .

BILLY: Well ó PRODUCES MONEY ó hereø £30 to be getting on with.

CEDRIC: But thatø my money.

BILLY: Won fair and square.

LORD LOOT TAKES THE MONEY.

LORD: That will do nicely. Now, only another £173 and 61 pence to go.

BILLY: But weød never raise that.

MAYOR: Then you'd better get packing. Cedric, start the car.

LORD: Come on Amy ó home we go.

LORD, MAYOR AND CEDRIC EXIT. AMY IS LAST TO GO, SHE TURNS TO LOOK BACK, SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT SHE CAN DO. SHE EXITS.

MOTHER G: Now don't start Billy ó the man at the bookies said that horse was a dead cert.

BILLY: Well what happened?

MOTHER G: It died.

BILLY: What are we going to do? The chickens don't produce many eggs, the market is closed and that's all we have ó

MOTHER G: No love, we have each other.

SHE HUGS HIM.

It's my silly fault we're in this mess but goodness knows I've struggled to keep a roof over our head since your father vanished.

BILLY: That's something you never talk about ó *who* was my father?

MOTHER G: It was all so fleeting son ó the army came through here on manoeuvres and ó

BILLY: Well, what was his name?

MOTHER G: Reggie ó Ment.

BILLY: Reggie ó Ment?

MOTHER G: We're better off just you and me, me and you.

NUMBER Billy and Mother Goose

MOTHER G: Come on love ó let's have a good night's sleep and think on it. We'll come up with something.

MOTHER GOOSE EXITS. BILLY STANDS CENTRE STAGE LOOKING AROUND AT THE FARM. HE SIGHS AND EXITS.

LIGHTING CHANGE ó FAIRY THISTLEDOWN APPEARS.

FAIRY: SHE OPENS A LARGE MAP Now then, is this it? Turn left at the church with a spire, up the lane, right at the roman fort, over the hill

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and through the ford, round the bend and right at the church with a tower. LOOKS AROUND This is it ó I think. SEES AUDIENCE Oh, hello! REACTION You couldn't tell me, could you? Is this Featherdown Farm? DOWNSTAGE. It is? Oh thank you so much. I'm new at this game I'm afraid. I'm still on probation. I've just finished at fairy school and they don't let you off on your own until you've done a few jobs under supervision. I'm Fairy Thistledown by the way ó but my friends call me Thiss. You can too, if you'd like. PUTS MAP AWAY BUT CAN'T FOLD IT PROPERLY. GIVES UP AND ROLLS IT. I have to tell you that I failed the first test ó how did I know it was the lamp Aladdin had to rub. PAUSE So, I'm at the right place ó well, I've been sent to help out a lady called ó PRODUCES PAPER FROM POCKET WHICH SHE READS Mother Goose. Does she live here? REACTION Fab, now we're cooking on gas. Well now, let me think ó oh yes, a pumpkin and mice is what I need. Oh no, hang on a jiffy, that was last week ó oh yes, a goose. Goosey, goosey, goose! NOTHING You don't know if there's a big goose on this farm do you? REACTION And does anyone know her name? REACTION Thriller? That's a funny name for a goose. What is it? REACTION Oh, Priscilla. Right then ó Priscilla!!

ENTER PRISCILLA.

I take it you're Priscilla.

PRISCILLA NODS.

Well I am Fairy Thistledown ó Thiss to my friends. I've been sent here to help your mistress raise the money to pay the rent on the farm.

PRISCILLA NODS.

She understands, good. TO AUDIENCE: Well, sometimes they don't. I mean, sometimes they just speak Goose you see and then we are in trouble. You should try working with toads and rats and the like. Now then, let me think back. What did Fairy Meadowdrift say? Ah yes, a magic spell I must weave. Are you ready Cilla?

PRISCILLA NODS. FAIRY PRODUCES HER WAND.

Good, then I'll begin. Oh come magic pixies, fairies all ó take this goose to the prince's ball!

PRISCILLA FLAPS ABOUT.

Wrong? The wrong spell she says. Oh lumey, she's right ó that's for Cinderella. Yes, now, concentrate old girl ó yes, here goes. I'll give my wand a magic wave, and open the rocks at Aladdin's cave.

PRISCILLA FLAPS.

I think you're right ó that's that dratted Chinese one again. Alright, alright ó here: I only know one more spell so this one has to be it. To all the elves and goblins I make my magic pitch, oh spirits of the lolly make Mother Goose rich. I pray you now, on bended legs SHE KNEELS That Cilla here lays golden eggs! RISES. Well, I think that did it.

PRISCILLA NODS.

Oh goodie goodie gum drops. If I don't get through my probationary period now, there's no justice. Right, well, goodbye everyone ó I have spells to do elsewhere. UNROLLS MAP Now, how to get out of here? Let me see, left at the church with a tower and over the hill and through the í ..I'll find it! Goodbye Priscilla ó and good luck!

SHE PATS PRISCILLA AND EXITS.
COCKEREL CROW. ENTER MOTHER GOOSE.

MOTHER G: Dawn already ó where does the time go? You can see I've had me beauty sleep now, can't you? Oh, Cilla, what are you doing up and about so early?

PRISCILLA FLAPS.

Ooh, I think she's going to lay an egg.

PRISCILLA SITS ON A MOSSY BANK.

That's it love ó you sit down and take the weight off.

PRISCILLA FLAPS.

Ooh, she's laying a big -un I think.

A GOLD EGG ROLLS ON.

Oh, what a corker. PICKS IT UP Hey, hey ó it's gold is this. Gold!!

ANOTHER EGG, BIGGER.

And another ó oh Cilla, have you been at my Terry's All Gold again? Keep them golden eggs rolling my girl.

ANOTHER EGG, BIGGER.

MOTHER GOOSE ROUNDS THE EGGS UP. CILLA COLLAPSES, EXHAUSTED. BILLY RUNS ON.

BILLY: What's all the noise?

FAIRY APPEARS AND CROSSES STAGE AT THE BACK. MID-WAY SHE
TURNS TO THE AUDIENCE:

FAIRY: It was left at the church with the spire after all.

EXITS.

MOTHER G: Things move in mysterious ways Billy ó and Cillaø moved alright.
Look! Golden eggs! And theyøre not from Poundland neither. SHE
TOUCHES AN EGG The proper stuff.

BILLY: But what does it mean?

MOTHER G: Mean? It means weøre rich Billy ó and our troubles are over. Thanks
to Cilla there!

ENTER CHORUS, JUBILANT.

NUMBER The Company

CURTAIN.

Act Two**Scene 1: FEATHERDOWN FARM KITCHEN**

MOTHER GOOSE IS DRINKING CHAMPAGNE IN A GLITTERY DRESSING GOWN. PRISCILLA ENTERS, SHE HAS A GLITTERY BOW OR BONNET.

MOTHER G: Oh look at us lasses, Cilla ó weød give Girls Aloud (*or other girl group*) a run for their money, wouldnøt we? Hey, hey, Cilla ó these days they go on about celebrity WAGø, donøt they? Footballerø wives and girlfriends ó WAGS! They think theyøve invented it. In my day I was considered a right catch ó a beauty and girlfriend, oh yes! A right BAG!

PRISCILLA NODS.

THINKS ABOUT IT Blimey, thatø not right! Eh, Cilla, I donøt know how you did it. Giving birth to our Billy was bad enough ó but three great big golden eggs like that. Youøre a pliable little goose, thatø for sure. Them yoga lessons paid off after all love. Well, weøre loaded in lolly, bursting with bundles and well and truly in the black down the bank ó yes, I donøt have to ring a call centre in Bombay any more! And itø all down to you my little lovely!

NUMBER Mother Goose and Priscilla.

KNOCK AT DOOR.

Who is it? Whoø there?

ENTER LORD LOOT AND THE MAYOR.

LORD: Itø us Mother Goose ó Iøve just cashed that cheque you sent round clearing all your back rent.

MAYOR: A turn of fortunes dear lady ó what! **BOWS**

MOTHER G: It is that. So you wonøt be kicking me out or building a supermarket on me house?

LORD: Of course not, letø put that little unpleasantness behind us. All a misunderstanding dear lady.

HE PULLS HER TO ONE SIDE, ARM AROUND HER.

MOTHER G: This is nice and cosy.

LORD: Well you know Iøve always had a soft spot for you.

MOTHER G: I was never sure ó I thought you had a glint in your eye but then again it could have been your bi-focals playing up. I may be an old man but there's many a good tune played on an old fiddle.

LORD: Indeed ó if you pluck it right.

MOTHER G: Well you know, I shall soon be owning as much of the village as you do.

MAYOR: TRUMPET TO EAR Did she just say ó own?

MOTHER G: Yes, well with all this gold I've bought the Red Lion, the White Lion, the Dog and Duck and the Blow and Bugle.

MAYOR: Good lord ó she's known in every pub in the county.

LORD: She always was.

MAYOR: This won't do ó won't do at all!

MAYOR PULLS LORD LOOT DOWNSTAGE.

You can't let her buy up the village ó no, no, she's not like us you know ó old money. No, you'd either have to marry the old bird or HAND ACROSS THROAT get her out of the picture.

MOTHER G: TO PRISCILLA: They're fighting over me.

LORD: But she's loaded! And if that goose keeps laying golden eggs ó

MAYOR: If you haven't got the guts then I have ó what! My son Cedric will come up with something to stop that goose!

THEY TURN BACK TO MOTHER GOOSE.

LORD: So, have there been any more layings?

MOTHER G: Oh no, Priscilla's resting poor girl ó we've just had the three eggs to date. I ran down to Ratners with them this morning and cashed them in, then I was off round the estate agents to buy the pubs, then I sent you that cheque for the rent and - PULLS A FEW COINS FROM HER POCKET I'm almost spent up.

MAYOR: And are you expecting *more* golden eggs?

PRISCILLA SQUAWKS.

MOTHER G: Not any time soon no - mind you PULLS THEM TO HER ó I do have my eye on a villa in Marbella so she'd have to do something pretty quick.

MAYOR: You want to get someone round to consolidate your assets.

MOTHER G: They can keep their hands to themselves.

LORD: Right, well, it's been nice to see you. But we must now away ó

MAYOR: Yes, very happy for you and all that! Good day!

THEY EXIT.

MOTHER G: What lovely people. You see, I always said Lord Loot was a gent. It's all in the breeding isn't it? I mean, I liked Lord Lucan. Hey you know Cilla, I think he fancies me an' all. I think they both do.

PRISCILLA FLAPS.

I know! Well, I think you should go and have a lie down ó I could do with some more glittering eggs by tea, if you could manage it.

PRISCILLA EXITS AS BILLY ON.

BILLY: Mum, I've been thinking ó

MOTHER G: I thought I could hear cogs turning.

BILLY: No, listen ó we should invest the money that we get for the eggs. You know, a nest egg we could live happily on for the rest of our lives.

MOTHER G: I don't want to live on an egg.

BILLY: You should take note mother. I mean, someone with less sense would spend the money quickly buying fripperies and ó and, pubs.

MOTHER G: Well, you're right ó of course. CLENCHES TEETH But there's nothing wrong with buying some of them fripperies ó and pubs, is there? Especially if you had an *endless* supply of golden eggs.

BILLY: But you haven't!

MOTHER G: Oh now, don't go on at me ó I just bought the Red Lion, White Lion, Dog and Duck and the Blow and Bugle.

BILLY: Mum, don't you see ó what if Cilla doesn't lay any more golden eggs? What if you've spent the lot?

MOTHER G: Well ó I'm going to marry into royalty. Lord Loot has been round already and set his cap at me.

BILLY: Lord Loot?

MOTHER G: Yes, his father was a peer ó mind you, mine had kidney trouble anøall. You know Iø'm usually cautious with money ó now, when you were a child didnø I make you save all your pocket money by putting it in that red box in the hall.

BILLY: Yes, and when I was 16 I realised it was the gas meter.

MOTHER G: But it taught you a valuable lesson. Anyway, as I say his Lordship is fair gagging for me. Heø's a man and a half him. Heø's a man whoø's got everything you know. And what do you give a man who has everything? A woman to show him how to work it.

BILLY: Things are moving too fast mum ó

MOTHER G: Oh Billy, for once in my life Iø'm happy ó canø't you be happy for me too?

BILLY: But I í . SHE IS DABBING HER EYES Oh, of course I can.

NUMBER Billy and Mother Goose

BILLY: Iø'd better open the barn and get the cows out in the field.

MOTHER G: Youø're a good boy.

BILLY EXITS.

Isnø't he a lovely lad?

ENTER CEDRIC.

CEDRIC: Oh I say, morning Mother Goose.

MOTHER G: Ooh, itø's Mayor Clangerø's lad. Howø're you diddling?

CEDRIC: Iø'm spiffing thank you. So, I hear youø're rich ó is that true?

MOTHER G: I am ó itø's no yolk! LAUGHS Yolk! You see ó golden eggs. Yolk!

CEDRIC: Ah yes, I see ó LAUGHS WEAKLY

MOTHER G: So what can I do for you?

CEDRIC: Well, given your new found fortune I was wondering if youø'd be interested in a little business deal ó

MOTHER G: Iø'm right out of cash, otherwise ó

- CEDRIC: But this wouldn't require cash ó oh no, all that filthy lucreí ..vulgar, vulgar.
- MOTHER G: Now you're talking. What's a bit of vulgarity between pals?
- CEDRIC: It's what you might call an investment.
- MOTHER G: Ooh Billy will be pleased ó he wanted me to invest a bit.
- CEDRIC: He's an intelligent lad. My father and my uncle, Lord Loot, were telling me what a lovely lady you were ó they said you had the figure of a 17 year old, the face of a 21 year old, the legs of a 23 year old and the personality of a 44 year old.
- MOTHER G: 17 ó 21 ó 23 ó 44 í í .. hang on, that comes to 105.
- CEDRIC: He was most impressed by your youthful skin ó
- MOTHER G: FLATTERED I do have the skin of a baby ó
- CEDRIC: ASIDE A baby elephant maybe.
- MOTHER G: So he's got the hots for me, has he? Lord Loot?
- CEDRIC: Fancy being Lady Loot, do you?
- MOTHER G: Ooh, Lady Loot ó it would suit me, wouldn't it!
- CEDRIC: But there is just one thing ó
- MOTHER G: What's that?
- CEDRIC: He did think you could benefit from a session at the Magic Pool.
- MOTHER G: The Magic Pool? What's that when it's at home?
- CEDRIC: The new beauty parlour in Chipping-Cum-Lately.
- MOTHER G: Ooh, I've heard all about that ó I read an article in Goodbye magazine - it's cheaper than Hello. Yes, all the stars go there ó that Vanessa Feltz, that Carol Vorderman and that Michael Winner (*or other waning stars*). What lovely people they are. But it's so exclusive; I mean it's harder to get in there than it is to get out of (*local prison*).
- CEDRIC: Well, *I* can get you in there ó it'll knock years off you, tone up bits you never knew you had. Make you irresistible.
- MOTHER G: But I'm fresh out of lolly.
- CEDRIC: I tell you what, why don't we do a deal?

MOTHER G: You keep saying this but ó

CEDRIC: Iðl take Priscilla in return for a session at the spa.

MOTHER G: Cilla? I couldnøt do that ó

CEDRIC: You will be so stunning that all the toy boys in town will be fighting over youí í ..but if youøre not interested, well ó

HE WALKS AWAY.

MOTHER G: Who will they make me look like?

CEDRIC: Have whatever you want. Itø Tuesday so theyðl be offering the Anne Widdicombe (*or similar*) special today.

MOTHER G: Anne Widdicombe? Iðl rather have the Shergar Special.

CEDRIC: ASIDE It can be arranged.

MOTHER G: Oh what to do?

CEDRIC: Look ó think of it like this: you have all this work done and youðl trap a rich playboy husband for sure, then you can buy Priscilla back off me.

MOTHER G: Buy her back? ASIDE By Jiminey heø right! Alright ó Iðl do it! Cilla is yours!

CEDRIC: Spiffing ó go and get your coat.

MOTHER GOOSE EXITS.

Stupid old crone! LAUGHS.

Scene 2: On The Road to the Farm

BILLY RUNS ON FROM ONE SIDE, AMY FROM THE OTHER.

BOTH: I was just coming to find you.

BILLY: Oh Amy, what are we going to do? My mother's squandered all the money from the eggs so now your father will never let me marry you.

AMY: He's so set on me marrying Cedric Clanger anyway, I don't think your mother even matters. Look Billy, I'm going to tell you something so but it's a secret. Can you keep a secret?

BILLY: Of course I can.

AMY: Do you think he can, boys and girls?

REACTION.

Well so my father isn't rich at all. He's spent all his money and that's why he wants me to marry Cedric so because his dad is loaded.

BILLY: Well, I know a secret too! Can I tell Amy boys and girls?

REACTION.

Mayor Clanger has lost all his money too. That's why he wants Cedric to marry you.

AMY: They're all as poor so

BILLY: - and stupid -

AMY: - as each other!

BILLY: But where does this leave us?

AMY: Well Billy so one thing's for certain so I love *you*! SHE KISSES HIM

BILLY: And I love *you* too!

NUMBER Billy and Amy

THEY EXIT AS FAIRY THISTLEDOWN ENTERS HOLDING A COMPASS.
LIGHTING CHANGE.

FAIRY: If the sun was setting over there then this must be due west. Or south. Or south west. SEES AUDIENCE Lost again I'm afraid. I'm not sure what I'm doing here anyway so I got Cilla to lay those golden eggs, didn't I? REACTION Now they tell me that Mother Goose has gorn

and sold the magic goose in return for a session at the spa. Whatever next! Sometimes the job of a Fairy isn't all it's cracked up to be you know. The hours are long, you can be summoned anywhere at anytime without so much as a bye or leave. That Mother Goose had everything she desired and now she has nothing! You explain it to me if you can! I mean, I don't know why I took this job and it's not something for the older woman. Like everything these days and they only want you if you're young.

NUMBER Fairy Thistledown.

SHE EXITS.

Scene 3: The Magic Pool

THERE IS A SCREEN UPSTAGE CENTRE (AS ELABORATE AS YOU LIKE). BEHIND IT IS THE CHANGING AREA.

THERE ARE TWO FIGURES, TURNED UPSTAGE, WEARING WHITE COATS AND WHITE TURBANS. ENTER CEDRIC AND MOTHER GOOSE AND PRISCILLA.

MOTHER G: Ah, so this is it ó the Magic Pool Spa.

CEDRIC: Spiffing ó or what?

MOTHER G: It's just like the description in (*local paper*). They said it was upmarket. Yes, wall to wall carpet ó oh, and some on the floors an' all.

CEDRIC: Now then Mother Goose ó you're booked in ó at my expense ó for the full monty.

MOTHER G: You mean they're going to strip off?

CEDRIC: No, you're getting the works. Yes, the complete and utter transformation. All I need now is the payment ó Priscilla.

MOTHER G: DITHERING Now it comes to the crunch, I'm not sure.

CEDRIC: Very well ó HE GOES TO EXIT. So near and yet so far.

MOTHER G: But then on the other hand. Look, Priscilla, it's only temporary ó you wouldn't rob me of me chance to look young and gorgeous, would you? And then I'll catch meself a right moneybags and I'll buy you back and we can live happily ever after ó

PRISCILLA'S NOT SURE.

Oh, go on love ó it's me one and only chance. Anyway, Cedric's a nice lad with his own hair and teeth and a flat over the Town Hall. You'll be very happy with him.

PRISCILLA LOOKS AT CEDRIC WHO SMILES LIKE A CHESHIRE CAT.

I've made up me mind ó the job's a good 'un.

SHE SPITS ON HER HAND AND HOLDS IT OUT. CEDRIC IGNORES IT AND PULLS CILLA TO HIM.

CEDRIC: Good! The deal is done. And you have been. Come on goose!

PRISCILLA AND CEDRIC EXIT.

MOTHER G: I hope I've done the right thing.

THE FIGURES TURN & THEY ARE LORD LOOT AND THE MAYOR.

You look familiar!

LORD: Welcome to the Magic Pool Spa and Sanatorium. My name is Candy & and this is &

MAYOR: Fifi. What!

LORD: Yes, and we're here to transform you. Now, is there anything you don't like about yourself?

MAYOR WHEELS ON A CHAIR AND PUSHES MOTHER GOOSE ONTO IT.

MOTHER G: Well, where to begin &

MAYOR: Perhaps I can give some professional advice. Your eyes are too squinty, your mouth is too puckered, your cheekbones are too low and your face has more lines than the London Underground. Other than that, not bad. For an old un.

LORD: I haven't seen that many chins outside the Hong Kong yellow pages, you've more crow's feet than a flock of birds and you don't just have bags under your eyes & they are suitcases madam.

MOTHER G: Then I need your help girls! Candy and Fifi you say?

MAYOR: At your service.

MOTHER G: I can see that I have to trust my lovely features into your hands.

BOTH: You certainly do.

MAYOR FETCHES A FULL LENGTH SMOCK, WHICH HE PUTS ON HER.

NUMBER Mayor, Lord Loot and Mother Goose
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DURING THE NUMBER THEY SLAP CREAM ALL OVER HER FACE AND PLACE A MOP CAP OR SHOWER CAP ON HER HEAD. AT THE END OF THE NUMBER SHE STANDS.

LORD: Well, I think it's time for the heating machine!

THEY PUSH HER BEHIND THE SCREEN. A DOUBLE IN IDENTICAL SMOCK, CREAM AND CAP EMERGES FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

MAYOR: I say! I think we might be getting somewhere. She's lost weight already.

THE DOUBLE FEELS HER HIPS AND NODS.

LORD: Mother Goose ó I think we're going to transform you into a right little filly.

THE DOUBLE PUTS HAND TO FACE COYLY.

MAYOR: ASIDE Actually she is beginning to look a bit better already and she does have the money after all. BACK TO HER: Well this is it ó in for a penny, in for a pound. Mother Goose ó PULLS OFF TURBAN ó I'm not Fifi, I'm Mayor Clanger and I wonder if you'd do me the honour of becoming my wife. When I was younger I was second to none, well groomed and handsome.

LORD: Yes, now look at you ó second hand, not too well and gruesome. PULLS OFF TURBAN And I'm not Candy ó but Lord Loot. DOWN ON ONE KNEE And I want to propose too. Look at that old fool ó he reminds me of the sea!

MAYOR: What! Rough on top but smooth and calm underneath?

LORD: No ó you make me sick. Mother Goose, let me schmooze you, whirl you round and drain you dry!

MAYOR: She wants a husband ó not a spin drier!

THE DOUBLE LOOKS FROM ONE MAN TO THE OTHER. THEY STAND.

LORD: Don't speak yet ó think about my offer.

MAYOR: And mine!

LORD: But we must finish your transmogrification. Please Mother Goose ó

HE TAKES HER HAND.

NUMBER ó reprise Lord Loot and Mayor.

TOWARDS THE END OF THE REPRISE THEY LEAD MOTHER GOOSE BEHIND THE SCREEN. AS THEY FINISH, OUT STEPS THE REAL MOTHER GOOSE NOW TRANSFORMED. SHE WEARS A STUNNING GOWN, A BEAUTIFUL WIG AND SPARKLING JEWELS. (IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE SOMEONE BEHIND THE SCREEN TO HELP WITH THE CHANGE).

MOTHER GOOSE TAKES IN THE APPLAUSE THEN PUSHES THE MEN ASIDE.

MOTHER G: You two didn't want me before all this happened 'o it's only my beauty and money 'o and puds 'o you're after. No, no, I can get a young virile catch now.

BILLY AND AMY RUSH IN.

BILLY: Has anyone seen my mum?

MOTHER G: I am your mum.

BILLY LOOKS AT HER AND TURNS AWAY.

BILLY: No 'o I'm not looking for Lily Savage (*or other drag act*) 'o I'm after Mother Goose. From Featherdown Farm.

AMY: Father, I can't help thinking you're involved in all this. He POINTS AT MAYOR bribed Cedric to steal Priscilla from Mother Goose. He promised to make her look young in return for Cilla.

BILLY: But I can't believe mum went through with it 'o she's not that stupid. And she's not that vain and selfish!

AMY: Father, I shall want to speak to you about this 'o but first we need to find Mother Goose.

THEY EXIT.

MOTHER G: Oh, what have I done? My own son didn't even know me. And I *have* been stupid, haven't I? REACTION.

BLACK OUT

Scene 4: On The Road To The Farm

BILLY AND AMY RUSH ON.

BILLY: I don't know where to look next ó

LIGHTING CHANGE. ENTER FAIRY THISTLEDOWN.

FAIRY: Oh what a mess this all is.

AMY: Who are you?

FAIRY: Fairy Thistledown is my name ó it's not my fault what's happened, it really isn't. How was I to know Mother Goose would be such a silly sausage? You see, it was I who made Priscilla start laying those golden eggs but I had no idea when I did it that ó oh dear, what a dreadful mess and tarradiddle all this has turned out to be.

BILLY: Let me get this straight ó you are a Fairy whoí .

FAIRY: Yes, but I'm on probation ó earning my wings as we say at Fairy school. You see, I messed up helping Aladdin and his lamp and then I sent Cinders to the opera rather than the ball and so Fairy Meadowdrift and Fairy Forget-Me-Knot, they both thought it would be a good idea if I came to the country ó to help your mother.

BILLY: To do what?

FAIRY: She is such a silly goose, always wanting a better life, never being content with what she's got and then when Lord Loot threatened to marry Amy off to Cedric well, I knew we just had to use some fairy magic to sort things out. So, I had a word with Cilla and ó well, the golden eggs were the result. I wanted to make things better but I hadn't banked on your mother spending all the lolly so quickly.

AMY: But it was Cedric who robbed her of the goose.

FAIRY: Yes, but only because she was so vain. That woman at the Magic Pool was Mother Goose you see ó she's not the person she once was. We have a saying in Fairyland ó never wish for something in case you get it. And that's what your mother did. I'm going to have to use some strong magic ó but I've never done it before. Let's see. No one believes I can do real good.

BOTH: Well, we do ó we believe in you Fairy Thistledown.

FAIRY: Well, that's the nicest thing I've ever heard. Well, just for you then - WAVES WAND A magic spell to make Mother goose appear, Let us look now children ó can you see her?

MOTHER GOOSE ENTERS, AS IN A TRANCE. SHE WAKES.

MOTHER G: í í í ..if only I hadn't been so daft you see. Now, have you any pink lotion for the chaffing í . NOTICES WHERE SHE IS Hey, how did I get here?

FAIRY: I commanded you to appear.

MOTHER G: I was in the queue for the doctors.

BILLY: Mother! What have you done to yourself?

MOTHER G: Oh Billy, forgive me ó I've been so stupid and so selfish.

AMY: And so vain.

MOTHER G: Alright ó don't push it.

BILLY: But you don't look like you anymore ó you don't look like my mum.

MOTHER G: Oh love, I just wanted a bit of happiness in me old age. I just wanted men fighting over me. You see, one day you and Amy will be married and move away and no one will think of me ó all alone up at that farm. Just me and Priscilla. No one will call, no one will write ó

FAIRY: Try not paying the rent.

MOTHER G: That's what got me here love. I just wanted a last fling, a final roll of the dice.

FAIRY: Lord Loot and Mayor Clanger proposed, didn't they?

MOTHER G: How did you know that? Are you Mystic Meg or what? Yes they did ó but only for me money.

BILLY: Yes, because they are both penniless.

MOTHER G: You see ó no one wants me for me.

FAIRY: Oh yes they do ó if only you could see what others see ó Billy loves you, Priscilla loves you ó

BILLY: Yes, because you're you ó not because of your money or your looks!

<p>NUMBER Billy, Amy, Mother Goose and Fairy Thistledown MOTHER GOOSE EXITS BEFORE THE NUMBER IS OVER.</p>
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Scene 4: The Market

CEDRIC ENTERS BRINGING WITH HIM PRISCILLA. SHE HAS A CLOTH OVER HER HEAD. HE IS VERY FURTIVE. MAYOR ENTERS FROM OPPOSITE SIDE.

MAYOR: Cedric, have you not killed that dratted goose yet?

CEDRIC: Father, I canø bring myself to HAND ACROSS THROAT.

MAYOR: If you wonø then I will. Mother Goose has been transformed into a raving beauty ø so that goose is ours fair and square. Get her up to the hall and into the oven.

CEDRIC: But father, what if we can get her to lay golden eggs for us?

MAYOR: You what? Golden eggs you say? Golden eggs for us? I hadnø thought of that ø yes!

PULLS CLOTH OFF PRISCILLA.

Right goose, lay golden eggs now ø or else! What!

CEDRIC: Yes ø get laying.

NOTHING.

MAYOR: You see, I told you to finish her off.

PRISCILLA BEGINS TO CLUCK AND FLAP.

CEDRIC: By jove! I think sheøø gonna do it!

MAYOR: Get under there then ø ready to catch it!

CEDRIC ON FLOOR UNDER GOOSE. SHE LAYS A REAL HARD BOILED EGG. HE STANDS UP.

MAYOR: Thatø a blasted tiddler ø whatø she playing at?

CEDRIC: Itø an egg none the less father. Look!

HE SMASHES IT ON HIS FOREHEAD.

Itø a boiled egg.

HE PEELS IT AND EATS IT.

MAYOR: A hard boiled egg ø she must be too hot!

PRISCILLA NODS THEN STARTS TO LAY AGAIN. CEDRIC DOWN TO COLLECT ANOTHER REAL HARD BOILED EGG.

CEDRIC: Well, what do you dashed think of that? Another hard boiled egg!

SMASHES IT ON HIS FOREHEAD, PEELS AND EATS.

MAYOR: Let me think ó if she's too hot I bet the gold can't set.

CEDRIC: Father, trust me ó the golden eggs will be on their way. We're going to be rich. Again.

PRISCILLA STARTS TO LAY ó MAYOR DOWN TO COLLECT ANOTHER REAL EGG. STANDS.

MAYOR: Will wonders never cease! Another hard boiled egg.

HE SMASHES IT ON HIS FOREHEAD BUT IT'S NOT BOILED.

Leeping lizards! This one is raw!!

PRISCILLA DOUBLES UP IN LAUGHTER.

MAYOR: That's it ó enough of this fiasco. This goose will only lay golden eggs for Mother Goose.

PRISCILLA NODS.

She's no use to us ó except on the dinner table!

HE LEAPS TO CATCH HER. SHE MOVES, HE FALLS. ENTER FAIRY THISTLEDOWN FOLLOWED BY AMY AND BILLY.

ALL: Stop!

BILLY: You two tricked my mother into giving Priscilla to you ó

CEDRIC: Tricked? Are you accusing us of foul play? Fowl play!! Get it? Dashed clever ó fowl and foul!

AMY: You're as funny as you are clever Cedric.

MAYOR CLIMBS TO HIS FEET.

FAIRY: You've been found out Mayor Clanger. And now, to complete my task here I have to reunite Priscilla with Mother Goose! EXASPERATED But only if Mother Goose has learnt her lesson!

ENTER MOTHER GOOSE, BACK TO HER OLD LOOKS.

MOTHER G: Ooh, I have learnt me lesson alright ó I might not have money, I might not have looks, but I have got some smashing family and friends and that's what counts.

FAIRY: Well said! Then Priscilla, back home you go!

PRISCILLA RUNS INTO MOTHER GOOSE'S ARMS.

MOTHER G: Will you ever forgive me Cilla?

PRISCILLA NODS. FLAPS.

FAIRY: Maybe I have one more trick up my sleeve. WAVES WAND

PRISCILLA SQUATS AND LAYS A GOLDEN EGG.

MOTHER G: Another egg.

CEDRIC: And a blooming golden one at that.

MOTHER G: Yes well ó

ENTER CHORUS.

ó I've learnt my lesson. I'm going to give everyone in the village a share of my fortune. How's that?

CHORUS CHEER.

NUMBER The Company

ENTER LORD LOOT.

LORD: What is all this commotion? I thought I'd banned market day.

MOTHER G: Ah, Lord Loot. We're celebrating our joint good fortune.

LORD: Good fortune?

MOTHER G: Yes, Cilla here has laid another golden egg and I've divided the dosh with all my friends in the village.

LORD: Really? SARCASTIC How very generous.

MOTHER G: But you and I have something to celebrate too.

LORD: We do?

MOTHER G: Yes ó My Billy and your Amy are to be married.

LORD: I'd dance on your grave first.

MOTHER G: Good ó I was going to be buried at sea.

AMY: Father, don't you see ó Billy loves me for who I am, Cedric only wants to marry me because he thinks it's a way to get his hands on your wealth.

LORD: My wealth? But I'm penniless ó I want you to marry him so we can get our hands on Mayor Clanger's cash.

MAYOR: But I'm penniless too!

AMY: Isn't it time we were all honest with each other?

BILLY: Yes sir, so ó may I have your daughter's hand?

LORD: SIGHS Ooh, go on ó take the rest of her and all.

AMY AND BILLY COULD KISS HERE.

FAIRY: Well it sounds absolutely spiffing ó but I'm going to have to get back to Fairy School. With all this happiness I'm sure to get my wings now!

BILLY: You can't go yet Fairy Thistledown ó

FAIRY: Please, call me This.

BILLY: This ó I feel like you're part of the family.

FAIRY: COY Oh, golly gosh.

MOTHER G: Yes, you've got to stay for the wedding!

CHORUS CHEER.

PRINCIPALS EXIT.

NUMBER Chorus

CHORUS TAKE THEIR BOW AND MOVE TO THE SIDES. THEN THE PRINCIPALS ENTER FOR THEIR BOWS AND DO LIKEWISE. THEY ENTER IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER: CEDRIC, LORD LOOT, MAYOR CLANGER, FAIRY, PRISCILLA, MOTHER GOOSE.

MOTHER G: And now please join me as we cheer the happy couple ó our Billy and his Amy. Mr and Mrs Goose. Hip hip! HOORAY Hip hip! HOORAY Hip hip! HOORAY.

ENTER BILLY AND AMY. BOW. EVERYONE MOVES IN AROUND THEM.

FAIRY: I want to thank one and all for inviting me to your happy day!

LORD: Yes, congratulations ó and Iøve learnt a lesson alright, the Mayor was only my friend because he thought I was rich.

MAYOR: Well, same here.

CEDRIC: And I never did love Amy ó not like Billy does.

MOTHER G: And Iøm happy because youøre all happy!

PEEL OF BELLS.

FAIRY: Then weøre all jolly happy! Ding dong!

CURTAIN.

INTRODUCTION:

Mother Goose is always popular with dames as it's the only panto where they get the title role. In this version I've turned the magic pool into a beauty parlour and I've set the whole thing in the 20s allowing you, if you have the means, to go the whole Clarice Cliff hog with the settings and costumes, to use period music in places and to play it awfully British. What ho!

TECHNICAL:**Act One:****Scene 1:**

Stalls: Elaborate as you like ó but at their easiest, some pasting tables with cloths over and baskets of wares.

Maypole: If you use it ó a pole on a base with long streamers attached to the top.

Honk of horn: Live or sound effect recording.

Skirt drop: Give Mother Goose a skirt which has a draw string waist so that she can undo the knot to make it drop and easily tie it again afterwards.

Table with hole/Chicken: An old table with a front or a cloth tacked to the front. Cut a round hole in the top and have a stage hand under the table to operate a large puppet chicken.

Ready Meal box: Use a real one (eat the food first!)

Baskets of eggs: A couple of baskets or trays with some straw and some half egg shells glued into it.

Eggs: For Mother Goose to produce when the chicken lays. You could use hard boiled ones.

Beer bottles 2x: For Mother Goose.

Scene 2:

Ear trumpet: A long trumpet (small end into the ear and a large trumpet end to point towards the speaker). Put it on a cord around the Mayor's neck.

Scene 3:

Bucket: For Billy to come on with.

Farming implements: You might like to give the chorus some brooms, hoe etc.

Honk of horn: As before.

£5 note x2: Fake over-sized ones.

£20 note: as above.

Bundle of sticks: Small bundle in Billy's pocket or hidden on the set.

Whistle: Real one on string around Mother Goose's neck.

Map: Large sheet of paper printed like a map and folded many times.

Wand: For the Fairy of course.

Paper: Small piece for the Fairy to read off.

Cockerel crow: Recorded effect.

Mossy bank: This is simply for Cilla to sit on and to hide the stage hand rolling the eggs on. Could be a pot of artificial plants.

Golden eggs x3: Make from papier mache ó each one larger than the last one. Cover in glitter.

Act Two:**Scene 1:**

Glass of champagne: A plastic cocktail glass.

Knock at door: Live effect.

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Coins: For Mother Goose to produce.

Scene 2:

Compass: One on a string round her neck.

Scene 3:

Screen: It has to be big enough for Mother Goose and a dresser to fit behind for the change. It could be a screen, a large piece of scenery maybe looking like a water feature.

Chair on wheels: An ordinary office chair will do.

Smock and mop cap x2: For Mother Goose to put on. The double will need an identical set.

Cream: Use an Angel Delight type dessert. If using shaving foam ensure the actors don't swallow it as it can expand in the throat. Remember that the double will need some behind the screen too.

Scene 5:

Cloth: For over Priscilla's head. It should be net or gauze so she can still see.

Hard boiled eggs x2: Practically it's better if Cedric already has these on him and he produces them.

Raw egg: Again, the Mayor can have this in his pocket ready to produce. I have seen this done with hen's eggs and goose eggs as the larger the egg, the better the effect.

Golden egg: Use one of the eggs from act one.

MUSICAL:

Some ideas for numbers you might use.

Act One:

Scene 1:

Chorus: *The Sun Has Got His Hat On* or *It's a Lovely Day Today*.

Billy, Mother Goose and the Children: *Chick, Chick Chicken* (lay a little egg for me).

Scene 2:

Billy: *Once In Love With Amy* or *Once You Lose Your Heart* (from *Me and My Girl*).

Scene 3:

Chorus: *I've Got a Brand New Combine Harvester* or *Sun In the Morning*.

Company: *Born To Boogie* (from *Billy Elliot*) or *Tap Your Troubles Away*.

Billy and Mother Goose: *We Go Together* (from *Grease*) or *You're The Tops*.

Company: *Money, Money, Money* (Abba) or *Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend*.

Act Two:

Scene 1:

Priscilla and Mother Goose: *Me and My Girl* (change 'girl' for 'goose') or *Can't Smile Without You*.

Billy and Mother Goose: *You Are My Lucky Star* or *Just the Two Of Us* (Dolly Parton).

Scene 2:

Billy and Amy: *Love Makes The World Go Round* (from *Me and My Girl*) or *I Could Be Happy With You* (from *The Boy Friend*) or *You're The One That I Want* (from *Grease*)

Fairy Thistledown: *No One Loves a Fairy When She's Forty*.

Scene 3:

Mayor, Mother Goose and Lord Loot: *Keep Young and Beautiful*.

Scene 4:

Billy, Amy, Mother Goose and Fairy: *I Can* (Dolly Parton) or *From This Moment On*

or *I've Still Got My Health*.

Scene 5:

Company: *Money, Money* (from *Cabaret*) or *I Should Be So Lucky* (change -luckyø to -eluckyø)

Chorus: *Let's Do It, Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* or *Get Me To The Church On Time*.

CHARACTERS:

Here are some ideas on how the characters might be played:

Mother Goose: Unusually in pantomime, this dame causes all the trouble by being selfish and stupid. She therefore needs to be played with a deft touch ensuring that she is seen to redeem herself and not to be nasty. I've written her as quite real, motherly but she's had a hard life and jumps at any opportunity to improve her lot ó and that's her downfall.

Billy Goose: Loves his mum to bits (and also Amy) but sees his mum's failings and is trying to be the head of the family and look after everyone. I prefer this part played by a man rather than as a principal boy ó but it still works.

Lord Loot: A puffed up old fool. He's lost his money but still lives the high life with no time for the townspeople. He is just a grander version of Mother Goose ó desperate for more.

Amy: A sweet girl with a bit of street sense. Like Billy, she has to look after her parent.

Cedric Clanger: A cad and a bounder. He's the sort of person Terry Thomas would have played ó an upmarket shyster.

Priscilla, the Goose: Even though the performer will be inside a heavy costume Priscilla does have a personality ó and that's vital for the tale to work. The children in the audience must love her.

The Mayor: Another pompous old fool. He's the eldest of the characters and could be played for laughs with wild white hair and a large moustache.

Fairy Thistledown: Modelled on Joyce Grenfell ó she's horsey and out of her depth but lovable. We want her to pass her exams. Could be any age.

COSTUMES:

The idea is that this is set in the 20s but you could easily change it. Here are some thoughts on simple costuming for those with restricted budgets:

Mother Goose: Bun wig, blouse, skirt and pinny to start with. She needs a glitzy dressing gown for act two which she wears until the transformation. She'll need a glam wig, frock and jewels for the transformation (she stays in it for scene 4 and returns to the opening costume for scene 5).

Billy Goose: A Pair of trousers, patched blouse and open waistcoat.

Lord Loot: A three piece suit with high collar and tie. He needs a white coat and turban for the spa scene.

Amy: A full bright coloured dress with pretty shoes and a bow in her hair (or she could have her hair in a bob).

Cedric Clanger: A straw boater, striped jacket with white trousers and shirt with bright cravat. He could also have a monocle.

Priscilla, the Goose: You may have to hire an effective costume. She'll need a glittery bow or bonnet for act two.

The Mayor: As Lord Loot but with a Mayoral chain. He requires a white coat and turban for the spa scene.

Fairy Thistledown: A handkerchief dress with a handbag and a band across her forehead.

Chorus: Trousers, shirts and jerkins for the men, patched skirts and blouses for the ladies. You could ring the changes with hats.

SETTINGS:

Some thoughts on settings for those with limited space or budgets.

Act One:

1: The Market: This is a full stage scene. You will need the stalls but otherwise, you could just dress with some trees in pots, a statue or wishing well.

2: On The Road To The Farm: Could be performed in front of the tabs or a cloth.

3. Featherdown Farm: Again, full stage. A cut-out farmhouse or barn at the back would indicate the setting. You'll need some foliage or a cut-out to disguise the rolling on of the golden eggs.

Act Two:

1. Featherdown Farm Kitchen: This was written to use half the stage depth but you could use a smaller space. A simple rocking chair and hearth would suffice.

2. On The Road To The Farm: As act one.

3. The Magic Pool: Full stage. The only essential item is the screen for the quick change.

4. On The Road To The Farm: As before.

5. The Market: Full stage. You could in fact use any setting or back cloth for this scene.

TOPICALITY:

Throughout the script you'll find chances to add in local references ó audiences always enjoy a mention of the local pub, football team and so on and it's usually a guaranteed laugh. You'll also find the occasional topical reference to TV personalities and so on ó obviously, as time passes since this script was written the topicality of these references will wane. However, the same jokes have been used for decades with the current Prime Minister's name or the current famous TV chef's name added in ó jokes about Fanny Craddock gave way to Delia Smith then to Jamie Oliver ó but the gag stayed the same so please, simply update the reference.

