



The Princes Ball

One Act Pantomime

by Simon Arnold

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Synopsis

The panto maybe just one act but it still contains all the laughter, songs and silliness you would expect. The story centres around the Prince's return to the kingdom and his upcoming marriage to the evil Queen Megana. What could possibly go wrong? The retired fairy, who likes to work from home, needs a new assistant and decides to recruit an apprentice. Her name is Josie and she is found in a most unexpected place. Flip & Flop are not the brightest of folk but they do their best to decorate the palace. Dame Widow Cleaner is keen to capture King Dandy's heart whilst washing his smalls. Silly Billy just can't stop telling jokes. Meanwhile Crystal, an old play mate of the Prince, is very keen to attend the biggest ball in the land – The Princes Ball!

Staging Notes

This pantomime was first performed in 2021 and has been updated since. It is relatively easy to stage, however it could also be a big, lavish affair. Scene 3 has a decorating scene which can be "wet" or "dry" and scene 4 that follows it, provides plenty of time to clear it up. The decorating scene works well accompanied by some appropriate instrumental music as there is no dialogue. The Fairy is working from home in scene 5 and appears via projection. The idea is she is on a Zoom or Teams call (just like real life). If this is technically difficult, or if you prefer, then there is a version of the script where she is on stage as normal, check the last 2 pages of this script for the alternative script. If you decide to use projection, then it might be easier to pre-record the video rather than doing a live zoom call. Josie should be seated in the audience as the audience arrives, she needs to pretend to be one of them before the show starts. If she feels uncomfortable doing that then she can just enter from the back of the auditorium when the Fairy starts her dialogue.

Main Characters (10 Main)

Fairy (F):	Retired Fairy who needs an assistant to help save the day
Billy (M/F)	The Palace Jester who loves to tell a joke!
Prince Harry (M/F):	The dashing prince returned to the kingdom.
Crystal (F):	Daughter of Widow Cleaner. Was a childhood friend of the Prince, but will he remember her?
Megana (F):	The Evil Queen, intent on making us all poor!
Josie (F/M):	Comes from the audience to learn about panto so she can earn her wings and help save the day.
Widow Cleaner (M):	The Dame that gets the king!
King Dandy (M):	Father to Prince Harry and always trying to escape Widow Cleaner's advances.
Flip (M or F):	An Idiot who works in the palace and does some decorating.
Flop (M or F):	Like Flip but even more stupid.

Smaller Characters and Chorus

Villagers

Boris the Spider

One Act (65 minutes including songs)

Prologue (Front tabs)

Scene 1: The Village Square (Full set)

Scene 2: Path through the Woods (Front set or Tabs)

Scene 3: The Palace Ballroom, ready to be decorated (Full set)

Scene 4: A Palace Corridor (Front set or Tabs)

Scene 5: The Palace Ballroom, ready to party (Full set)

Song Sheet (Front cloth)

Finale – The Palace Ballroom (Full set)

Optional announcement before the start

Ladies and Gentlemen, boys and girls.
Before you sit back and enjoy the show
one or two things you need to know.
Panto folk are make-believe
Not real people you might perceive
Please make sure your phones are silent
Else your neighbours might get violent
So, if you're ready, hear the call
Now we're off to the Prince's Ball!

Prologue – Front tabs

*Nothing needs to be set for this scene as it is on the front apron. **JOSIE** will need to have been seated in the audience as people arrive, 15 minutes before the start. She should have a blue coat on over her costume so the audience can't see it and remain unaware of her.*

FAIRY:

(Music Cue 1: Fairy Enters)

Hello everyone and Welcome back to Panto land
A brand-new audience! This is grand.
Now where do I start?
I know! I'll explain my part.

I am the good fairy and my name is Astra
Look at my wand! One like this will cost ya
It's a Potter mark 3 and many a villain it's made to flee!
But I've not used it for quite a while to rid the land of someone vile
As a fairy, I'm quite rusty and my spell book has got dusty

I've come out of retirement to face a new threat
She is nastier than anyone you've ever met!
She calls herself a Queen
But there is no one quite as mean!

I might need some help with this little drama
Together we can thwart the evil queen Megana
I'll need someone innocent and true
From the audience, dressed in blue!

JOSIE:

Excuse me miss may I interrupt
Apologies if I seem abrupt
I have no idea of what I could do
But I want to help, and I'm dressed in blue

FAIRY:

Come up on stage and let me see you
Don't be scared, we'll lead you through!
To earn your wings and save the day
You'll need to learn the Panto way
You'll dance the steps and sing a song
Tell jokes and spells, it won't take long!

JOSIE: (*Climbs up on stage*) Thank you so much fairy Astra
It's hard to speak 'n rhyme do I have ta?
Finding the words isn't easy,
avoiding lines that are so cheesy

FAIRY: I think for the sake of my ears
And in fear of audience jeers
It would be best if you didn't.

JOSIE: (*Talking to herself*) Thank goodness!
My name is Josieeee
Behind the scenes I can't wait to seeeee.

FAIRY: No more Rhyming! Please do stop
Get backstage, go on, off you pop

(**JOSSIE** goes backstage)
This has turned out really well!
She'll be a great assistant I can tell.
So now it's time come one, come all
We're off to see the Prince's Ball! (**Music Cue 2: Fairy Exits**)

MEGANA: (**MUSIC CUE 3: MEGANA** enters stage left) So that drippy fairy has a new friend.
She has been living alone for so long now she will befriend any poor excuse for a girl. (*Noticing the audience for the first time*) My God! There's more of them. Who let you lot in? I ordered all theatre tickets to be too expensive for common people! I cast my Hugus Taxus spell to create the cost-of-living crisis insuring nobody could afford to do anything fun! Looks like I will have to come up with a new plan to ensure evil triumphs over good! In the meantime, allow me to introduce myself I am Megana Queen of **<Local town>**. Thanks to all my victories over the poor people, the old fool, King Dandy Lion, has become desperate and is allowing me to marry his newly returned son Harry. In exchange, I have promised an economic plan to help you, the poor people (*evil laugh*). Once married I can ensure his older brother William disappears. I will then proclaim myself of Queen of **<Home town>**! (*evil laugh*). Silence you pathetic excuse for an audience. I've had more booze at a girl guide camp. The sooner I get rid of you, the better!! I will leave you, (*pause*) for now, as I have coins to count and potions to brew! (*evil laugh*). **MUSIC CUE 3.**

Black out open tabs

Scene 1 – The Village square

The villagers (**CHORUS**) are all happy and chatting as the curtains open. **FAIRY** shows **JOSIE** on stage. The villagers help her adjust her clothing as if she has just got into costumer. They will show her the dance moves and help her sing along **MUSIC CUE 4**. After the song.

JOSIE: That was fun! What happens next.

VILLAGER

GUIDE: We meet our heroine for the first-time and we find out a bit more about the story.

JOSIE: There's a story?

VILLAGER

GUIDE: Yesss, such as it is. Now watch!

CRYSTAL: *(Walks forward to the front of the stage as she says)* Oh its so lovely to be out and about meeting friends, shopping and socialising. I have been stuck in doors working on my own for so long now. I can't wait to have some fun!

VILLAGER 1: Hi Crystal, do you know Alice from the palace?

CRYSTAL: No, I don't think so

VILLAGER 2: You must know her, she received a ring from the king.

CRYSTAL: Really? Why?

VILLAGER 2: Because she made a gown for the crown

VILLAGER 3 And booked a big tent for the event.

CRYSTAL: Why did she do that?

VILLAGER 1: It's the location for the participation of the whole nation

CRYSTAL: Participation in what?

ALL

VILLAGERS: Their Great big celebration

CRYSTAL: Right! Alice from the Palace received a ring from the king because she made a gown for the crown and booked a big tent for the Event as the location for the participation of the whole nation in their great big celebration! (**ALL: Laugh**)

ALL 3

VILLAGERS: Yes!!

JOSIE: *(To VILLAGER GUIDE)* That must have taken a few rehearsals.

VILLAGER

GUIDE: You have no idea!!

CRYSTAL: What celebration?

VILLAGER 1: It's going to be a fab-u-lous dance organised for the Prince!

VILLAGER 2: No this one isn't for Prince William, it's for Prince Harry! He is returning home today! Back after studying abroad for 5 years.

CRYSTAL: Oh wow I would love to see one of Harry's balls! I bet it will be fabulous, full of colour and celebrities. Alas I am too low born to get invited even though we used to play together when we were kids. My mum would do all the Royal washing and laundry every Thursday. *(pause)* Harry always looked a bit wimpy, wonder if he has changed much. Right! Mum always said "Be positive" so I am going to buy a new dress just in case! Come on guys you can help me choose. (**CRYSTAL** and **ALL** exit stage except **JOSIE**.)

Enter **SILLY BILLY**.

BILLY: Where's she gone? I thought I just heard Crystal! *(Notices audience)* Oh hello you lot, I hadn't heard you come in! You're so quiet we are going to have to change that I reckon. *(Notices JOSIE and does a little jump in surprise)* Oh hello, who are you? What are you doing up here?

JOSIE: My name is Josie and the fairy invited me up stage to become her assistant. She said I need to learn all about panto before I earn my wings and then apparently, I can save the day. Who are you?

BILLY: Ahh Of course, allow me to introduce myself then! I am Silly Billy and I work at the palace as the handy man. I am also here to say hello to the audience and do stupid jokes. I'd like to start with some chimney jokes – I've got a stack of them. The first one is on the house. I read this book the other day, the "History of glue". I couldn't put it down. You meet all sorts at the palace, I bumped into the guy who invented the door knocker, he'd just won the noble prize. I was on Ebay and saw a TV for sale, £1, volume stuck on full. I thought, 'I can't turn that down.' I popped into Millets and said I'd like to buy a tent, the assistant replied to camp? I said oh sorry *(in a deep voice)* "I'd like to buy a tent." And finally, the big news at the palace is that Exit signs are on the way out.

JOSIE: Those are terrible!! They are so Silly.

BILLY: Everyone's a critic! Well that's how I got my name Silly Billy. It's strange because my name is Roger. Now let me get on with have a chat with these folk here. *(Audience interaction)*. OK you lot, you have some work to do. Every time I come on, I am going to tell a joke and you lot WILL LAUGH and then shout back "Don't

be Silly Billy!". Let's give it a practice. (*Go through this twice and warm up the audience*). I was given some Orthopaedic shoes, I thought "They're never work" but I stand corrected. (*Audience: Don't be Silly Billy*). Let's try again shall we?! My Iphone once beat me at chess, but it was no match for me at kickboxing. Excellent! Now don't forget!

Enter Dame **WIDOW CLEANER**

WIDOW CLEANER: Oh Billy, are you being silly again?

BILLY: Well, it is my job. What are you doing?

WIDOW CLEANER: I am out shopping for a beautiful dress to wear to the Princes' Ball.

BILLY: Have you tried Millets?

WIDOW CLEANER: You cheeky so and so! I'll have you know that I have a million-dollar body.

BILLY: Yes, shame it's made up of loose change

WIDOW CLEANER: I could have been a model.

BILLY: What for? Cargo Ships?

WIDOW CLEANER: I've been told many times that I have a lovely smile, teeth like stars.

BILLY: Yes, they come out at night!

WIDOW CLEANER: How dare you, I was once asked to pose naked by a painter.

JOSIE: Wow, did you do it?

WIDOW CLEANER: Yes! (*seductively*) I lay naked, for a whole morning on the sofa whilst he painted the lounge.

BILLY: I can't hang around here any longer, I am off to find your daughter. This is Josie, she is here to learn all about panto so she can earn her wings. Bye Everyone, smell ya later. (*Exits stage*)

WIDOW CLEANER: How lovely to meet you, Josie! I am the Widow Cleaner but you can me Carol if you like. My previous husband died, he fell down a Wishing Well.....I didn't know they worked! I've been trying to lose weight and I rang Weight Watchers and said, 'It's an emergency, can you send someone round' She said 'Yes, we've got plenty of them'. I eventually got kicked out for making sarcastic comments at the Weigh In...as you can imagine I accepted it with huge grace...cos she got

thrown out as well! You know I do like to go to the theatre and see a show, I went to see 'Walt Disney on Ice' Bit boring, just an old bloke in a freezer!

Anyway, I do the Laundry for the Royal Household, and quite often wash the King's smalls...well it's as near as I can get to handling the Crown Jewels! Talking of which, I've been invited to the Ball. Maybe he'll notice my unspoilt beauty and sweep me off my feet!oh alright Hoist me off my feet!!!

The audiences we get in here are always so fashionable, classy and good looking. *(pause)* Shame about this one! Right, I am off to grab the King's smalls. *(To Josie)* According to the script, Prince Harry Lion and the idiot duo are about to come on. Take a seat and see what you can learn from them. **(WIDOW**

CLEANER: *exits. JOSIE can sit on the front of the stage and pretend to watch the next bit).*

PRINCE HARRY, FLIP and FLOP enter. FLIP and FLOP are carrying suitcases.

PRINCE HARRY: Thanks for meeting me at the dock's guys. So, what have I missed, start from the beginning and leave nothing out. *(Puts down suitcase/bag to one side where it will be forgotten by him.)*

FLOP: Well in the beginning Dinosaurs ruled the world and then there was this big asteroid... *(prince tries to interrupt)*..and wiped them all out and then people came along....

PRINCE HARRY: Woah! You can skip forward to just the last 5 years.

FLIP: Well the big news is that the king is throwing a ball for you!

FLOP: Yeah, we think its either a football or tennis ball. I love playing with balls. I like all sports. But I don't really know why its such big news. I mean I throw balls and kick them all the time and nobody puts it in the newspaper.

FLIP: Not a ball ball! A Ball Ball!

FLOP: A bauble? Like a Christmas decoration? Surely they would break if you threw them? A friend of mine ate some Christmas decorations once and got tinsalitus.

FLIP: Shut up you fool! It's a dance, the king is holding a ball for the Prince.

FLOP: So, he's not throwing it then, he's just holding it? Not much of a game.

PRINCE HARRY: Laughing. I have missed you guys you are almost as crazy as I remember. How's my brother William?

FLIP: Willy?

FLOP: Willy What?

FLIP: Willy Lion.

FLOP: Eh? Will he lie... on what?

FLIP: Willy Lion!

FLOP: Yes! Will he lie on a bed or Will he lie on a sofa?

PRINCE HARRY: *(Laughing)*. I take it back! You are crazier than I remember. How is my brother

HARRY: Willy?

FLIP: He is very good! Very popular with the subjects.

FLOP: Yes everyone loves Willy.

PRINCE And what about dear ole dad? Has he met someone yet? I know he loved mum
HARRY: but she died long before I was born.

FLIP: He has had many admirers but there is one that seems to be getting very close to him, the widow cleaner. Known each other for years, she always did his laundry on a Thursday.

PRINCE Yes, I remember, I used to play with her daughter. Funny little thing. Wonder what
HARRY: she is up to now? (*Pause*). Any news of my betrothed? Megana? Is she a beauty? Is she kind and generous?

FLOP: Nobody knows. She has demanded she be given privacy, although she is always on the socials...and Netflix.

PRINCE I see. oh well. It doesn't matter I haven't met anyone else I would like to marry.
HARRY: How are the preparations going for my ball (*stops realises the confusion from before*) err party?

FLIP: They are going well; we just need to decorate the room and help the bakers with their supplies. There's a rumour of a butter shortage.

PRINCE Really, why's that?

HARRY:

FLOP: Well you know that stuff that they're selling now at **<Local town supermarket>**?

PRINCE What stuff?

HARRY:

FLOP: I Can't Believe It's Not Butter.

PRINCE Oh, yeah.

HARRY:

FLOP: Well, you know, I can't believe it's not butter.

PRINCE Yeah, well, I believe that is the idea, yeah.

HARRY:

FLOP: Well yesterday we went to **<Local town>** and we bought this other stuff, like a sort of home brand, you know.

PRINCE Yes...

HARRY:

FLOP: And, you know, I can't believe it's not I Can't Believe It's Not Butter.

PRINCE Mmmm? (*pause*). I'm losing you now.

HARRY:

FLOP: Oh, right. Well, you know I Can't Believe It's Not Butter?

PRINCE Yeah, yeah, yeah, you think it is butter.

HARRY:

FLOP: No, no. I mean, you know the stuff that I can't believe is not butter is called I Can't Believe It's Not Butter?

PRINCE Probably, yeah, yeah.

HARRY:

FLOP: Well, I can't believe the stuff that is not I Can't Believe It's Not Butter is not I Can't Believe It's Not Butter. And I can't believe that both I Can't Believe It's Not Butter and the stuff that I can't believe is not I Can't Believe It's Not Butter are both, in fact, not butter. And I believe... they both might be butter... in a cunning disguise. And actually, the rumours are false and there is lot more butter around than people think. (pause. **FLIP & FLOP** nodding in agreement and **PRINCE HARRY** looks confused)

FLIP: See you later Harry, we are off to decorate the ball room!

FLOP: Keeeeepp Piiinting. (**FLIP & FLOP** exit stage **PRINCE HARRY** shakes his head and walks off after them leaving the bag on.)

BILLY enters.

BILLY: I once made a joke about a TV controller, but it wasn't remotely funny. OR. The other day I was given a universal remote control, I thought to myself, 'This changes everything.' (Audience react. If not remind them.)

JOSIE: (Gets up and wonders over to him) Hiya Billy

BILLY: Oh hello again! So what have you learned so far?

JOSIE: That Crystal wants to go to Harry's Ball, despite thinking he was bit wimpy when they used play together as kids and the palace has employed two of the biggest idiots in the kingdom! So far I have learnt a dance and a song but I haven't told any jokes. The fairy said that would be part of my training.

BILLY: Not told any jokes yet!?!? Well, you have come to the right place!

JOSIE: But I don't know any.

BILLY: That's ok! I know loads! How about I tell you one and then you can tell the audience? How does that sound?

JOSIE: OK. But will these ones be funny?

BILLY: (annoyed look) Alright! I do sometimes tell jokes about pizza, but they are just a bit too cheesy. (**JOSIE** rolls her eyes and shakes her head.) OK, OK here we go then Why did the fish blush? Because it saw the ocean's bottom!

JOSIE: Ok let me try. Why did the fish blush? Because it saw the oceans floor!

BILLY: (Stunned at the incompetence, looks at the audience. Then back to **JOSIE**) Hhhmmm not quite. Um let's try again. What kind of bees produce milk? Boo Bees!

JOSIE: What kind of bees produce milk? Boobs!

BILLY: This is tougher than I thought. Although, to be fair, boobs do make me smile. One more go. What do Cows enjoy watching on a Saturday night? Moovies.

JOSIE: What do Cows enjoy watching on a Saturday night? Mooosicals!

BILLY: Yes! High five You are one step closer to getting those fairy wings!

Enter **CRYSTAL**

BILLY: *(Suddenly all a bit shy and goofy because he fancies her)* Oh hi Crystal. How are you? Eeerrr You look lovely

CRYSTAL *(She is holding a new dress on a hanger)* Hey Billy! I am good thanks! I have just bought myself a dress in case I get a ticket to the Prince's Ball. What do you think? *(passes it to Billy)*

BILLY: *(Tongue tied and silly admiring the dress)* Um yeah that's lovely. Um I could maybe see if I could get a ticket for....*(BILLY runs out of steam and doesn't finish the sentence as CRYSTAL, not really listening now goes to the bag left on stage from earlier).*

JOSIE: Billy! Do you fancy her?? You should tell her!

BILLY: Don't be silly, I am just the comic genius who makes people laugh, I never get the girl. *(Encourages the Audience to give him a sympathetic aahhhh)*

CRYSTAL: Billy is this your bag? *(Picking up the bag by the handle that was left by the Prince.)*

PRINCE: *(Rushing on)* Has anyone seen my bag. I left it here some... Ah there it is. Thank you. *(Takes hold of the handle of the bag along with CRYSTAL still holding it. Their eyes meet)* **MUSIC CUE5:** *(TING – Prince and Crystal stare at each other. Falling in love instantly).*

JOSIE: Wow! They have fallen for each other so fast. That's quicker than Love Island.

BILLY: *(Looking sad and a bit defeated)* You see? Told ya. *(JOSIE pats his arm in consolation.)*

CRYSTAL: Harry!

PRINCE HARRY: Crystal?!

CRYSTAL & PRINCE HARRY: You've changed!!

CRYSTAL: You used to be so wimpy but now you're so muscular and strong! And manly.

PRINCE HARRY: In the past you were a funny little thing but clearly you were born in the Cretaceous period, because you are a Babeasauros Rex.

CRYSTAL: Oh Harry

PRINCE: Oh Crystal

BILLY: Oh God! I'm off I can't watch this, are you coming?

JOSIE: Yes, I think they want some allooone time. Perhaps I can cheer you up by telling you some jokes? (**BILLY** gives **JOSIE** a look that's says he doubts it before they exit together)

CRYSTAL: Do you remember when we used to play together as kids?

PRINCE
HARRY: You used to play with my action man...

CRYSTAL: Whilst you rode my little pony.
BOTH: (*Laugh*). Happy days! (*Laugh again*)

PRINCE
HARRY: You will come to the ball won't you! I want to see more of you.

CRYSTAL: But Harry you're betrothed to Megana, surely you love her

PRINCE
HARRY: I have never met her!! I am sure I can persuade Dad to call off that wedding. I think I want you to be my wife...

MUSIC CUE 6: Towards the end of the song we can see **MEGANA** on one side of the stage (could be at the back) watching. On the other side we see **JOSIE** also watching.

PRINCE: Come on, let's go and find my dad!

CRYSTAL: (*as they are leaving the stage*) what about a game of Twister first?

BLACK OUT End of scene.

Scene 2 – Path Through the woods

This is a short scene. A conversation between Josie and Megana. It can be set anywhere including front tabs.

MEGANA *Enters from stage left*

MEGANA: How dare he dump me for her! Who does he think he is! I will tell the world his family secrets. I will have my revenge. He won't find it so easy to get rid of me. I must work out a new plan to rid the world of goodness, happiness and Allison Hammond. I thought my Bigus Taxus spell would do the trick but it appears I underestimated all of you!!!! You snivelling bunch of couch potatoes. Boo me all you like I will find a way to discover your weaknesses. I just need a way to find out more about you.

JOSIE *wanders on from stage right*

MEGANA: Ah how convenient, the fairy's new friend! One of you lot!!! I bet she knows what will melt your brains and reduce your IQs so that my next spell will have even more power.

MEGANA: *(In a sweet voice)* Oh hello, we haven't met yet. What's your name then?

JOSIE: Oh hello, my name is Josie. Nice to meet you.

MEGANA: What a stu...lovely name. And why pray tell are you here and not sitting out there in your seat like the rest of these..... *(sticks in the throat)* lovely people?

JOSIE: The fairy said she needed some help as she is now retired. She said if learnt the panto way I would earn my wings and save the day.

MEGANA: Oh, how lovely. And tell me have you learnt about *(pause)* me yet?

JOSIE: Umm No.

MEGANA: Well, I think it's time you come with me then so I can teach you what panto is **really** about.

JOSIE: I am not sure, *(asking the audience)* what do you think guys? Should I go? *(Audience will say no)*

MEGANA: Oh yes she should *(Back and forth with the audience. How ever long feels right.)* Now Josie, who are going to believe? Me? With all my experience and sophistication? Or them? With their mismatched clothing and cheap haircuts?

JOSIE: HHmmmm, ok perhaps you're right. OK I'll come with you.

MEGANA: Good! That's settled then. Now off you go, through there (*pointing at exit stage left. JOSIE walks off tentatively and more than a little nervous. Its likely the audience will react with boos and don't go's etc.*) Silence you fools! Don't you see? You simply can not win!! MMMwwwahahaha!

Optional **MUSIC CUE 7:**

After Song black out End of scene. Curtain up.

PantoScripts Perusal