



Cinderella

by Dave Crump

2019

Pantoscripts Perusal

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Characters

Cinderella	A charming principal girl but with some gumption, she is not the sickly sweet character of many pantos. (F)
Prince Charming	The traditional principal boy, a hero with a warm heart and a dashing figure. (F)
Dandini	In this version Dandini is a baddie giving a more sinister foil to the Fairy Godmother. He is vain, self centred and pompous. (M/F)
Brigadier Hardup	A bumbling ex-military explorer, he should be played by an older man. He is henpecked by Lady Hardup and is constantly torn between his love for Cinders and his fear of his wife and stepdaughters. (M)
Lady Hardup:	A battleaxe of the highest order. She is vicious and mean and really has no redeeming features at all. She should be haughty and proud. (F)
Portia:	One of the two ugly sisters, she is ugly (obviously) but also stupid and has a cruel streak. She hates Cinderella but then she hates her other sister too. (M)
Chardonay	Portia's other half. Chardonay is just as vicious and spiteful as her sister and takes every opportunity to belittle Cinders. (M).
Buttons	The most famous audience participation character of them all. Buttons is in love with Cinders but never gets the girl. The audience feel sympathetic to him for this unrequited love but Buttons himself is quite a cocky character when it comes to the other sisters. (M/F)
Fairy Godmother	A warm friendly mother figure to Cinderella who of course saves the day. She should be capable of charming the audience but has a twinkle in her eye when it comes to dealing with Dandini. (F)
The Brokers Men	The classic Pantomime comedy double act, traditional in Cinderella but missing from many versions. They help give some contrast to the Ugly sister who might otherwise steal every good line for themselves. (M)
Mr Wonga	The straight man, he is stupid but considers himself intelligent compared to his partner.
Mr Sponduliks	A hypochondriac, if his brains were dynamite he wouldn't have enough to blow his hat off.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT 1

Prologue

Scene 1 – The village

Scene 2 – A path in the forest

Scene 3 – The kitchen at Hardup Hall

Scene 4 – The Royal hunt

Scene 5 – The village

ACT 2

Prologue

Scene 1 – The Palace

Scene 2 – A path in the forest

Scene 3 – The kitchen at Hardup Hall

Scene 4 – A path in the forest

Scene 5 – The Ball at the Palace

Scene 6 – A path in the forest

Scene 7 – The Kitchen at Hardup Hall

Scene 8 – The Community Songsheet

Scene 9 – The Palace - Finale

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ACT 1**Prologue –**

(Fairy Godmother enters into spotlight d.s.r.)

Fairy: Hello boys and girls. Is this Sutton Coldfield? I said is this Sutton Coldfield? Oh of course, I can smell the money from here. You do look posh. All in your best frocks – and the ladies look lovely too. Do you know who I am? You do? That's right I'm the Fairy Godmother – smarty pants, oh that's terrible isn't it – when you drop Smarties down your pants – they get all covered in fluff – has that happened to you moms and dads? Oh yes, look that blokes trying to find his now. Anyway, I'd better tell you why I'm here. Now have you all heard the story of Cinderella? You have? Oh well in that case we can pack up early and open the bar. Only joking, well you'll know that Cinderella is a lovely young girl who I'm here to help. Yes I'm her fairy godmother and I'm here to keep an eye on her.

Dandini: And I'm keeping an eye on her too.

Fairy: Who are you?

Dandini: You can call me Dandini.

Fairy: What does everyone else call you?

Dandini: Dandini.

Fairy: I see. Go on.

Dandini: I'm the baddie of this little story.

Fairy: Well I'm glad we cleared that up, now I must be off.

Dandini: Wait! I haven't told you why I'm a baddie yet. I haven't made them boo or hiss.

Fairy: Oh I don't think they'll boo and hiss. This is Sutton Coldfield, they're very refined. They might shout 'poor show' or 'what a bounder', but never boo and hiss.

Dandini: We'll see. Listen you snivelling lot. I'm Dandini, Prince Charming's personal servant, but not everything is as it appears. You see unbeknownst to him.

Fairy: Unbeknownst. Good word. Write that down – I'll use that in conversation.

Dandini: Will you stop interrupting!

Fairy: Sorry.

Dandini: I'm also...

Fairy: Won't happen again.

Dandini: I'm also his younger half brother...

Fairy: Which half?

Dandini: *(Through gritted teeth)* ...and I'm about to claim the throne for myself – and there's nothing you or this pathetic lot can do to stop me! Ha ha ha!. *(Audience boo and hiss)*. See I told you they could do it.

Fairy: I'm ashamed of them. So you're his secret half brother?

Dandini: It's very complicated, my dad the King and my mom were cousins, that's why I look so much alike, and now he's dead so either Princey or me has to be the new King.

Fairy: But if he's older it goes to him doesn't it?

Dandini: Not quite. You see there's a little known law here in Panto-land that says that no-one can claim the throne until they are married. So all I have to do is make sure that I get married before him and the throne is mine.

Fairy: All right, try your chat up lines on me, go on I'll be the woman you pretend to be the man.

Dandini: Never mind me – the main thing is to keep the Prince away from any eligible ladies. And I'm warning you Fairy, stay out of my way – got it? *(Exit)*

Fairy: What about that boys and girls – we'll have to keep an eye on him won't we? Now what was I saying. Ah yes, I'm here to help Cinderella, and it sounds to me like maybe we should help her meet a Prince? Will you help me?

Audience: Yes!

Fairy: Brilliant, now don't forget to shout and cheer, and as someone once said, if you're too posh for that you can rattle your jewellery. See you later!!

Scene 1: The Village

(The scene is a village market square. The townsfolk are going about their business. Buttons is in the crowd getting some shopping.)

SONG 1

(Town crier steps forwards, he is wearing a large floral coat along with the traditional tricorn hat, etc.)

Town Crier: Oh Yeh! Oh Yeh!

Man 1: What now you silly old fool?

Town Crier: *(Bursting in to tears)* Oh that's not nice is it?

Man 2: Well you do go on.

Town Crier: *(Sobs)* But you're all supposed to listen to me.

Women: How can we take you seriously dressed like that? You look like you're wearing a pair of caravan curtains.

Town Crier: *(Sobs)* Everybody's horrible to me.

Buttons: What's up with him?

Woman: He's the town cryer.

Buttons: *(To Crier)* There there, who's upset you?

Town Crier: That woman said I looked like a pair of curtains.

Buttons: Come on, pull yourself together. You've got important news.

Town Crier: How do you know?

Buttons: Call it feminine intuition.

Town Crier: But you're a man.

Buttons: Then it's even more remarkable. Get on with it.

Town Crier: Right *(blows his nose loudly)*. Oh Yeh! To raise money for charity the lord mayor has had his head shaved.

Buttons: I've heard of council cuts but that's ridiculous.

Town Crier: He's had his hair shaved into stripes.

Buttons: You call that news?

Town Crier: Just the headlines.

Buttons: You're beginning to get on my nerves.

- Town Crier:** (Sobs) Not you as well.
- Buttons:** I think you're taking this town crying too literally. Give it here (*takes the scroll*) Hear ye! The Prince has returned from the wars to find a wife and claim the throne.
- All:** Hooray!
- Buttons:** And he'll be here any minute, make ready the town for his arrival!
- All:** (*Ad lib*) Ah! He's coming, quick tidy up, get your best frock on. (*All exit*).
- Buttons:** (*To Town Crier*) How did I do?
- Town Crier:** Really well (*sobs*) you'll put me out of a job (*exits*).
- Buttons:** (*To audience*) Honestly! Some people are never happy. Oh hello – I didn't notice you lot there lurking about in the dark. Can you guess who I am? You can? Well look at my jacket – see all them buttons? That's right my names Velcro. Only kidding – I'm Buttons, but you knew that didn't you? Of course you did, I can see you're intelligent just by the way you're all facing in the right direction. Velcro – I mean, that's just a rip off. That was fun being town crier, but actually I've already got a job – that's why I wear this uniform. I'm footman at Hardup Hall. I'm the most important servant there, in fact I'm the only servant there so it can be a bit lonely. I know will you keep me company? You will? Oh great. I tell you what when I come on will you shout – hello Buttons? You will? Brilliant – lets try it. (*he runs off, then on again*) Hello boys and girls!
- Audience:** Hello Buttons!
- Buttons:** Blimey that wasn't very good – you made more noise unwrapping your sweets when you came in. Have you all got sweets? No? Oh well I've got some here – would you like some? You would? All right then, here you go (*he throws out some sweets*). Right that's your lot, now where were we. Oh yes, we were practicing shouting 'Hello Buttons' – let's have another go (*runs off and back on*) Hello boys and girls!
- Audience:** Hello Buttons!
- Buttons:** (*As if he's got a mouthful of sweets*) Hello Buttons! I think we'll try again when you've finished your sweets. It's lovely to have some new friends. I've only got one you see. Her name is Ella and she lives at the Hall too. Her mother passed away and her father went off exploring to try and find his fortune so there's just her left to look after now. I wonder where she is? She was supposed to meet me here after her netball practice.
- (*Cinderella enters looking fed up*).
- Cinders:** Hello Buttons.
- Buttons:** Hello Ella, whatever's the matter?
- Cinders:** I've got thrown out of the netball team.

Buttons: What happened?

Cinders: I kept running away from the ball.

Buttons: Oh dear.

Cinders: Never mind, we'd better get back, we've got to get the Hall tidy - daddy is due back from his travels today.

Buttons: It's about time, I mean he's been gone six months and you haven't heard a peep from him till his letter this morning. Did he say if he'd had any luck?

Cinders: He said we'd never have to worry about money again.

Buttons: Thank goodness, I mean since your mother died we haven't had two pennies to rub together.

Cinders: Yes it was a shame she didn't tell anyone where she kept the housekeeping.

Buttons: I mean it's been terrible, having to get rid of all the servants.

Cinders: But you stayed Buttons.

Buttons: I only stayed because I like you so much. I couldn't watch you doing the washing and cooking and cleaning all by yourself.

Cinders: Oh Buttons, what would I do without you?

Buttons: You'd have to put the bins out as well.

Cinders: Well, our troubles are over. Now Daddy's back we'll be all right.

Buttons: Did he say where he'd been?

Cinders: He bought a round the world ticket.

Buttons: One way?

Cinders: He set off for South Africa.

Buttons: Ooh, perhaps he's found a diamond mine.

Cinders: But ended up in South America.

Buttons: No sense of direction that bloke. My dad was the same - he walked around the world.

Cinders: What happened to him?

Buttons: He drowned.

Cinders: Daddy won't let me down - he said he wouldn't come back until he'd found his fortune. I'll see you back at the Hall. *(Exits)*.

Buttons: I wish I could be so confident. Brigadier Hardup was never very reliable. You know I really like Ella, and I reckon she likes me too – maybe I should look on the bright side too.

(As he goes to exit a herald enters and blows a fanfare right in his face – Buttons reacts, staggering around with his hands over his ears.)

Herald: His highness Prince Charming approaches! *(Exits)*

Button: Blimey I've gone completely deaf, and I never thought I'd hear myself say that.

(Dandini enters).

Buttons: *(Bowing low)* Your highness.

Dandini: Get up you idiot. I'm not his highness.

Buttons: Of course not, not in that outfit. Who's your tailor?

Dandini: Why?

Buttons: That was my second question

Dandini: I am the Prince's special advisor.

Buttons: What's special about you?

Dandini: I do everything for the Prince, I pick his horses, I pick his clothes, I pick his...

Buttons: Nose *(Buttons pulls face to audience).*

Dandini: I pick his nose...bah! I am also his food taster, bed warmer, letter opener...

Buttons: So everything he does you have to do first?

Dandini: Quite so.

Buttons: I hear he's looking for a wife, if he meets a nice girl do you...?

Dandini: No.

Buttons: Bad luck.

Dandini: Talking of which, who was that I saw you talking to?

Buttons: That's Ella, Brigadier Hardup's daughter. She's the most beautiful girl in the kingdom.

Dandini: Is she now? And where does she live?

Buttons: Hardup Hall of course – eh and don't get any ideas, I'm there to look after her.

Dandini: Quite so – lucky she left when she did. *(To audience)* Wouldn't want the Prince to get a look at that beauty! *(To Buttons)* Now, the Prince is back from the wars in France.

Buttons: Eurostar?

Dandini: Well I've been in a few amateur productions but I'm no Jude Law. Now, can you get the villagers ready?

Buttons: But they've all gone.

Dandini: Where?

Buttons: To get ready.

Dandini: Well get them back you imbecile!

Buttons: Keep your hair on! *(Exits)*.

Dandini: *(To audience)* So Ella is the prettiest girl in the kingdom eh? Well then she shall be my bride.

(Prince enters)

Prince: I say subjects, here I am – prepare to be impressed.

Dandini: There's no one here sire.

Prince: Well that's dashed bad luck, I spent all that time on my hair for nothing.

Dandini: Do you use Brylcreem.

Prince: It's not that good. What am I supposed to do now? I was hoping to get the measure of the young ladies of the kingdom?

Dandini: I fear you're going to need a large tape sire.

Prince: I always think you can tell a lot about a people from what they're like.

(Mobile phone rings)

Dandini: *(Answering phone)* One moment sire. *(Talking on phone)* Dandini here. Right away.

Prince: Why has your mobile got little bars over the window display?

Dandini: It's a cell phone. That was one of my assistants from the palace sire they're expecting us for dinner.

Prince: I'd have thought we'd be a bit chewy – ha!

Dandini: Very drole. Now we must be going.

Prince: Very well Dandini – you're right as usual, it's so helpful having a faithful servant like you to look after me.

Dandini: Yes sire. *(Exits)*

(Buttons and townsfolk enter and gather excitedly expecting the Prince to arrive at any minute.)

Buttons: Hello folks!

Audience: Hello Buttons!

All: Where's the Prince, you said he'd be here *(Ad lib)*

Buttons: I'm telling you he'll be here. I've just spoken to his lackey.

(Herald enters and blows fanfare, all bow low. Brigadier Hardup enters. He is dressed as an explorer, complete with pith helmet, rucksack with assorted camping equipment hanging off it, etc.)

Hardup: What ho!

All: *(Ad lib)* Eh? Who's this? That's not the Prince.

Buttons: Brigadier! We thought you were the Prince.

Hardup: *(Saluting)* At ease Buttons, well here I am – home at last.

Buttons: So where have you been?

Hardup: I've been all over the world – Walsall, Kingstanding, Rugeley –

All: Rugeley! *(Gasp)*

Buttons: But I thought you were going to South Africa?

Hardup: Ah yes, went there first. Got caught up in the wars with the old tribes. Messy business.

Buttons: Blimey everybody's coming back from the wars today – there'll be no-one fighting.

(Chorus drift off)

Hardup: There isn't – we won.

Buttons: Oh that's all right then. Where were you fighting?

Hardup: Zulu territory.

Buttons: Ooh, Zulu territory eh? The toilets at the zoo can be shocking, I'm sure they let the animals in there.

Hardup: No the Transval.

Buttons: I knew one of them once, he started calling himself Val.

Hardup: Africa. Where the girls wear grass skirts and the men spend all their time saving up for lawnmowers.

Buttons: It must have bought back painful memories of your last safari sir.

Hardup: Yes, you'll remember I lost Ella's mother, the first Lady Hardup on that trip (*sniffs*). Have you ever seen a man eating lion Buttons?

Buttons: No sir, I saw a woman eating kangaroo once. Hopping mad she was.

Hardup: I don't mean a man eating a lion you idiot. I mean a wild beast. I'll never forget it. All I could do was watch as the lion closed in on Lady Hardup.

Buttons: What steps did you take?

Hardup: Very long ones. I managed to climb a tree.

Buttons: You must have felt so helpless?

Hardup: She shouted to me – Shoot! Shoot! But I couldn't.

Buttons: Why?

Hardup: No film in the camera. And then it was all over.

Buttons: Did you get down from the tree?

Hardup: Don't be stupid man, you get down from a goose. You get wood from a tree.

Buttons: Sad memories.

Hardup: Yes so then I headed for South America. Fascinating place, in some regions the hand of man has never set foot – Oh yes it's very dangerous country you know, my native guide was eaten by a bear.

Buttons: Grizzely?

Hardup: What do you think? Mind you I killed the beast with my bear hands.

Buttons: Bear hands, good one. How did you do it?

Hardup: It was looking the other way so I pushed it over a cliff.

Buttons: Well you've certainly come across some strange creatures.

Hardup: And then I found the rarest and most dangerous of them all.

Buttons: What's that?

Hardup: A woman with money. So I married her – from now on son we're on the up.

Buttons: Well I'm feeling lucky in love myself as it happens.

SONG 2

Hardup: Oh and here she comes now!

(Enter Lady Hardup – there is a chord from the orchestra, a clap of thunder and lightning. Buttons recoils in horror).

Buttons: Looks like it's clouding over.

Hardup: *(To pit)* All right, don't make a meal of it.

Lady H: So this is it, is it?

Hardup: What?

Lady H: It.

Buttons: Congratulations on your marriage Lady Hardup.

Lady H: It was a love match pure and simple. I was pure and he was simple. Where is this blessed house of yours Henry?

Hardup: Hardup Hall is just up the hill my little lambkin.

Lady H: Well I hope you don't expect my girls to carry their suitcases any further.

Buttons: Girls?

Hardup: My new step daughters, they're bringing up the rear.

(Chardonay enters).

Chardonay: Morning all! Switch your pacemakers to stun, I'm here. *(Shouts off stage)* Come on Portia move your backside.

Lady H: Such delicate creatures.

Chardonay: Now don't laugh when my sister comes on, she's not exactly a looker.

Hardup: She's not kidding.

Chardonay: In fact she joined a nudist colony but they'd only let her in on condition she wore the fig leaf over her face.

(Portia enters carrying the luggage)

Portia: I heard that *(hits Chardonay with her handbag)*. My sister jests of course, she's a bosom pal of mine. She gives me inspiration.

Chardonay: They don't know what inspiration means love.

Portia: It's a posh word for sweat.

Chardonay: Well you'd know all about that, you are carrying a little weight dear.

Portia: How dare you – you'd love a body like mine.

Chardonay: I would but I can't grow the chest hair.

Portia: I've been watching my weight.

Buttons: I think everyone has.

Portia: I'm on a special diet – I can only eat things with the word special in them. Special K, special fried rice, toffee profiteroles special offer.

Buttons: And are you two single?

Chardonay: Yes, how did you guess?

Buttons: You're really ugly.

Portia: How dare you! *(To Audience)* I'm lovely aren't I sproglettes?

Chardonay: No I'm the pretty one aren't I?

**Portia/
Chardonay:** *(To Audience)* Bah! What do you know?

Hardup: *(Hurriedly)* This is Buttons my footman.

Lady H: *(Looking down her nose at him)* Is he qualified to be a footman?

Hardup: Oh yes, he has all his own feet.

Portia: I'm Portia.

Chardonay: And I'm Chardonay.

Lady H: Named after the things I love most – fast cars and fine wine. I did have another daughter – Money.

Buttons: What happened to her?

Lady H: I sold her. Now let's get to this blinkin' hall.

Hardup: Buttons, will see to your bags.

Buttons: I don't think I can deal with both of them.

Lady H: Just come along you scruffy little urchin and prepare the Hall for our arrival. *(Portia, Chardonay and Lady H exit. Buttons and Hardup follow with suitcases).*

Buttons: Brigadier, is it true that in Africa a man doesn't know his wife until he marries her?

Hardup: It's true in most countries son

(Exit)

Scene 2 – A path in the Forest*(Forest Tabs. Prince and Dandini enter.)***Prince:** Are you sure we're not lost Dandini?**Dandini:** The Palace is ahead sire, I'm following the bats as they fly their usual route up the road to their home in the palace attic sire.**Prince:** Impressive.**Dandini:** I call it bat nav.**Prince:** It will take a while to get to know the kingdom again. And for my subjects to get to know me. I hope they like me.**Dandini:** Well that's the trouble with being rich and famous, you can never really be sure who your friends are. You can't be too careful.**Prince:** How do you mean?**Dandini:** Well, how can you be sure that they don't just like you because you're rich?**Prince:** So what you're saying is I'll never really know if someone likes me or not.**Dandini:** Exactly.**Prince:** But what if I find a nice girl – how will I know if she really likes me for me, or because I'm a Prince?**Dandini:** It is a problem sire, I'd just avoid finding a girl if I were you, they're not easy to get on with.**Prince:** I know, my last girlfriend was like that. Remember her? The one who was cross eyed?**Dandini:** Yes, why did you break up?**Prince:** I kept thinking she was seeing someone else. I'm not lucky with women and yet I so want to find a girl.**Dandini:** Well you know how I love the latest technology – have you thought about using the computer?**Prince:** I think I'd prefer a girl.**Dandini:** I mean internet dating?**Prince:** Tried that, signed up for 'kiss the frog dot com', wrote a lovely profile.**Dandini:** And?**Prince:** No one reddit. It's hopeless, and yet I have to get married – if I want to be King.

Dandini: Oh you know about that do you? Look your highness, marriage isn't all it's cracked up to be. Yes you can spend your evenings sat in your home, curled up on the sofa watching all your wife's favourite television programmes, but is that what you really want?

Prince: Yes.

Dandini: Fine. Then leave it to me I'll find you someone.

Prince: But if what you say is true, they probably won't really love me.

Dandini: I've got an idea. What about if you made me King instead? Then you'd have no problem.

Prince: Nice try, but no *(pause - he's thinking)* .Wait a minute, you might have something there.

Dandini: I have but I've got some cream for it, it's clearing up nicely.

Prince: Here's the idea - we could swap places for a little while.

Dandini: How do you mean?

Prince: Well I've been away ages so no one knows what I look like right?

Dandini: I suppose not.

Prince: So, you be me and I'll be you, just until I find a nice girl. That way she won't like me just because I'm a Prince - she'll think I'm a nobody like you.

Dandini: Thanks.

Prince: Here, take my royal sash. *(He places his sash over Dandini's head).*

Dandini: I think it rather suits me.

Prince: Don't get too used to it. It's only temporary.

Dandini: *(Aside)* That's what you think.

Prince: Right let's practice. You be a Prince and I'll be the servant.

Dandini: Right, get up to that palace and make my dinner...Dandini.

Prince: Oh yes *(to audience)* he's very good isn't he?

Dandini: And don't forget to clean my boots, I think I'll go hunting tomorrow.

Prince: Perfect, totally believable - you could have royal blood you're so realistic.

Dandini: How very astute.

Prince: I like the idea of a hunt too, that would be a good way to meet the eligible ladies of the kingdom.

- Dandini:** I don't think that's a good idea.
- Prince:** Of course it is, it's brilliant, ha! I'm so happy, I could dance (*Does a little jig*) why don't you have a dance with me?
- Dandini:** I don't think I will sire, I'm a little stiff from Badminton.
- Prince:** I don't care where you're from, you can still join in.
- Dandini:** There's no time sire, I have a hunt to organise.
- Prince:** No no, I'll get it organised – your highness (*bows low*). You parade around a bit, doing nothing and looking regal.
- Dandini:** Yes sire.
- Prince:** I'll go on ahead to the Palace – tell them I'm Dandini and that I've come to get everything ready for your arrival. You come a bit later – make a right royal entrance.
- Dandini:** Perfect – it's a foolproof plan.
- Prince:** Brilliant, thanks Dandini – I mean, sire. See you later.
- (Prince exits).*
- Dandini:** *(To audience)* What a fool! He's played right into my hands. Not only have I already identified the best catch in the town, she'll think I'm the Prince.
- SONG 3 – Dandini Solo**
- (Enter Wonga and Spondulicks)*
- Wonga:** Your highness.
- Spondulicks:** Your majesticals.
- Dandini:** Get up you idiots. I'm not the Prince.
- Wonga:** But you've got the Royal sash.
- Dandini:** I'm pretending to be the Prince.
- Spondulicks/
Wonga:** *(Tapping their noses knowingly)* We see.
- Dandini:** Are you the Brokers men?
- Spondulicks:** Are we the Broker's men?
- Dandini:** That's what I asked you.
- Wonga:** Yes and no.

Dandini: But you are rent collectors?

Spondulicks: Now and then.

Dandini: So what do you do?

Wonga: This and that.

Dandini: Where?

Wonga: Here and there.

Dandini: Is it regular work?

Spondulicks: Up and down.

Dandini: But you're available to work?

Wonga: On and off.

Dandini: Well I'm here to give you some work – I take it you got my text message?

Spondulicks: *(Sneezing)* Atischoo! So you must be Dan Greeny. *(Offers his hand, Dandini shakes it then realises he's just sneezed into it and wipes it on Wonga's jacket).*

Dandini: Dandini. And I of course got your email.

Spondulicks: How did you know it was from us?

Dandini: There was a stamp on it.

Wonga: I'm Mr Wonga, and this here is Mr Spondulicks.

Dandini: I understand you two manage the King's tenants.

Wonga: He doesn't just drink Tennants.

(Spondulicks coughs horribly).

Dandini: Is he all right?

Wonga: There's always something wrong with him. *(To Spondulicks)* You're coughing better than yesterday.

Spondulicks: I should be I've been practicing all night. I think it's bubonic plague.

Wonga: Don't give me that

Dandini: So you collect the palace rent?

Spondulicks: We did, now the King's gone, we're out of work.

Wonga: It's not been easy to find work with our qualifications.

Dandini: What qualifications have you got?

**Wonga/
Spondulicks:** *(Shaking their heads)* We haven't got any.

Dandini: Have you thought about voluntary work?

Wonga: I wouldn't do voluntary work if you paid me.

Spondulicks: So we've been doing odd jobs.

Dandini: Well you're both odd so that makes sense. What sort of jobs?

Spondulicks: Mr Wonga has been working as a pilot.

Dandini: Really?

Spondulicks: Yes, I chop wood and he piles it.

Wonga: He doesn't know what he's talking about, I'm an airline pilot.

Dandini: What do you fly?

Wonga: You know them big metal things with the whatsits sticking out of the sides.

Dandini: Wings?

Wonga: Are you an airline pilot too?

Dandini: No.

Wonga: You know there's a lot of pressure being up in the sky, above them white fluffy things.

Dandini: Clouds?

Wonga: Are you sure you're not an airline pilot?

Spondulicks: I've had a terrible week, my girlfriend got run over by a coach.

Dandini: That's terrible.

Spondulicks: Then I lost my job at the coach company.

Dandini: Had you had any accidents before?

Spondulicks: No, but I've seen hundreds in my rear view mirror.

Wonga: He had some close calls though.

Spondulicks: Especially since they moved the toilet to the back of the coach.

Dandini: So you'll be glad to get back to rent collecting?

Wonga: Oh yes!

Spondulicks: Apart from the plague thing, I think it's an infection I got swimming. I've got this terrible swelling under my arm.

Wonga: You've left your armbands on you dipstick.

Dandini: Right listen. I'm the Prince's right hand man so you take your orders from me.

Wonga: Are you a goody or a baddie?

Dandini: I'm not sure, what do you think boys and girls – am I a goody or a baddie?

Audience: A baddie!

Dandini: Well that clears that up.

Spondulicks: We like working for baddies.

Wonga: Allows us to stretch our acting range.

Spondulicks: I get to use my angry eyebrows (*pulls a menacing face*).

Dandini: I don't care about eyebrows.

Wonga: You should, there are twice as many eyebrows as people.

Dandini: What do you know about Hardup Hall?

Wonga: Ah yes, the lovely Ella lives there.

Spondulicks: And she's flat broke (*Sneezes*) Atischoo! Oh, how can I stop this cold going to my head?

Dandini: Tie a knot in your neck.

Wonga: We've had no rent from Hardup Hall for three months – they're flat broke.

Dandini: This gets better and better. I think you may have to pay her a little visit. Well go on!

(Exit)

Scene 3 – The Kitchen at Hardup Hall

(Kitchen cloth. Cinders is cleaning up, she has her hair in a scarf and soot on her face.)

Cinders: Hello boys and girls, welcome to Hardup Hall where I live all alone, except for my friend Buttons. But not for much longer, any minute now my father is coming home – and I hope he's found his fortune!

(Hardup enters)

Hardup: You should get down to the Villa, they could do with a new sweeper.

Cinders: Oh father it's wonderful to see you.

(They hug.)

Hardup: Good to be back in home barracks. Right, how about a cup of tea? Call the butler will you?

Cinders: Father, I've had to let all the servants go – we've had no money since mother died. That's why you left to find your fortune remember?

Hardup: Ah yes, forgot about that.

Cinders: So did you?

Hardup: Did I what?

Cinders: Find your fortune?

Hardup: Even better, I found love.

Cinders: Oh, can I pay the gas bill with that?

Hardup: No you don't understand, Our troubles are over, I found a wealthy new wife.

Cinders: How did that happen?

Hardup: I was in the bush, looking at this fine old ruin when she winked at me.

Cinders: And you secretly married her?

Hardup: No she knows about it.

Cinders: I mean you didn't think to tell me?

Hardup: Well, our courtship was fast and furious. I was fast and she was furious. She's feisty – but I love her for what she is – loaded.

(Buttons enters, carrying a pile of suitcases)

Buttons: Well she's certainly shaped like a cash machine. Hello folks!

Audience: Hello Buttons!

(Lady H, Portia and Chardonay enter)

Lady H: Oh my god – what do you call this hovel?

Hardup: Hardup Hall my sweet.

Portia: It's disgusting.

Chardonay: *(To Cinders)* Well don't just stand there gawping girl – make some tea!

Cinders: I'm not a servant.

Hardup: *(To Lady H)* My honey lamb, this is my daughter Ella.

Lady H: Well she looks like a servant.

Cinders: I was cleaning the stove.

Hardup: Ella, this is your new mummy and her two daughters – Portia and Chardonay. They're your new step sisters.

Portia: That's because we're a step up from the rest of you.

Chardonay: Where are the servants?

Cinders: They're gone, all except Buttons.

Lady H: Well he's as much use as a chocolate tea pot.

Portia: Chocolate Buttons, that's good.

Cinders: Perhaps now you're here we could employ some new ones.

Lady H: With what? I haven't any money.

Hardup: What? But you said you'd had a privileged life, yachts, houses, cars?

Lady H: And so I did, my late husband was very wealthy.

Portia: He had a factory making thongs.

Chardonay: But the bottom fell out of the market, Portia and I were his top models.

Lady H: Oh it was tragic when he died, he went into the garden to dig up some carrots for dinner and dropped down dead.

Cinders: That's terrible, what did you do?

Lady H: Opened a tin of peas. Then went hunting for the will. Turns out he left it all to the dogs.

Buttons: So it's your daughters who've got the cash?

Portia: She means the dog's home you idiot.

Lady H: He was completely barking. That's why I was glad when you came along Henry, to be married to a member of the aristocracy again.

Hardup: But I'm without funds - broke.

Lady H: What!

Buttons: It's like deal or no deal when they win the 1p.

Portia: Does that make you a banker?

Hardup: It's like déjà vu all over again

Chardonay: Oh Mummy! What have you done?

Portia: Oh it's too much! *(She faints).*

Lady H: Quick she's fainted!

(Hardup takes Portia's pulse)

Hardup: Your pulse is as regular as clockwork.

Chardonay: You've got your hand on her watch.

Buttons: Do you want a stretcher.

Chardonay: No that'll make her feel worse

Lady H: Buttons carry her to her room.

Buttons: You'd need six men to carry her.

Hardup: Six men?

Buttons: Yes three abreast.

Hardup: She's coming round. OK big breaths.

Portia: I know and I'm only sixteen *(She recovers her composure).*

Chardonay: I can't believe it, we've been hoodwinked.

Portia: Our hoods have been winked.

Chardonay: You were supposed to be rich.

Hardup: It's not that bad *(takes letter from pocket).* Look it says on my bank statement that I have two thousand and eleven pounds.

Cinders: Daddy, that's the date.

Lady H: There's only one thing for it - we'll have to find wealthy husbands for my girls.

SONG 4

Buttons: Well Good luck with that.

Hardup: My Ella is quite a catch.

Lady H: Who'd want her? Look at her.

Portia: Only fit for skivying.

Chardonay: But that's such a pretty dress, too good for cleaning out the fire. *(She grabs the skirt and pulls it away, leaving the dress in rags).* That's better.

Portia: Now she looks like a servant.

Chardonay: She should be called Cinderella.

Portia: Ha ha! Cinders – that suits you. Who'd want to marry you?

Buttons: Lots of people.

Chardonay: Name one.

Buttons: I'd rather not say.

Portia: Ooh look – he's gone all red. *(Me thinks Buttons is in love?)*

(Doorbell)

Buttons: Saved by the bell *(exits)*

Lady H: Henry, where is my room?

Hardup: Ooh yes my little cotton bud, let's get you all settled in. Ella, could you make up the fire in the spare room for the girls?

Cinders: But we've no wood father.

Lady H: Well get into the forest and find some you stupid girl.

Portia: And when you've done that you can unpack my things.

Chardonay: And make up our beds.

Portia: Yes get along Cinderella, while you're around we've got a servant at least!

(Buttons enters. Cinders exits)

Buttons: Hello folks!

Audience: Hello Buttons!

Buttons: I only went to the door. It was the postman. There's an invitation. It says *(begins to read it).*