



The Snow Queen

by Peter Denyer

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NODA Presents

**THE
SNOW QUEEN**

by

Peter Denyer

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PantoScripts Sample

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NODA PANTOMIMES

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A NOTE FROM THE WRITER

"The Snow Queen" is not a typical pantomime, far more of a "Fairy-Tale"; yet it is as exciting as any adventure story. The Narrator character of HANS ANDERSEN is crucial, and in our last professional production was played by Bernard Cribbins, who - in his own inimitable style - also played "CORR", "THE ROBBER CHIEF" and "THE OLDEST ESKIMO IN THE WORLD". You may well feel that these parts can be played by different actors/actresses; in which case the textual changes will be minimal...and ANDERSEN will be able to appear as himself in the various "voice-over" sections. If you only have a small company you will find that most of the actors can play more than one part; our "GRANNY" also played "CORA" and the "OLD ESKIMO WOMAN".

The characters of "GERDA" and "KAY" are very important: far better an actress and actor who can play the parts, and are a few years older, than real 14 year-olds.

I always try to see my pantomimes through the eyes of a seven year old who is seeing a stage show for the first time - a child who doesn't know that KAY will eventually be saved - so "telling the story" is the most important thing.

Above all else - enjoy it! The good feeling that happens with a happy company really does come over the footlights - if the audience can see you're having fun, so will they.

Good Luck.

PETER DENYER

OTHER TITLES AVAILABLE BY THE SAME AUTHOR FROM NODA

ALADDIN AND HIS WONDERFUL LAMP

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

CINDERELLA

DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

MOTHER GOOSE

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BABES IN THE WOOD

SINBAD THE SAILOR

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS

This script, like all Peter Denyer Pantomimes, was originally produced by Kevin Wood with a professional cast. Over the years the structure and dialogue were adapted to suit the requirements of the many star actors who appeared in the show. In 1997, at the invitation of NODA, the scripts were subjected to a cleansing process returning them to something like their original form, removing the quirks demanded by particular actors, and adding stage directions and technical tips, thereby making them more suitable for licensing. During the 1998/99 Season there were over sixty productions by amateur societies. Following their comments and suggestions, the scripts were revised again in 1999, and again in 2000 - this is the version you have here.

We thought you would be interested to know a little about the background to the piece, and the various actors who have played the roles. So we've trawled through the archives and come up with this potted history. This version of THE SNOW QUEEN was first produced at The Yvonne Arnaud Theatre Guildford in 1994.

The Cast was:

Hans Andersen	Bernard Cribbins
The Queen-	Anita Dobson
Gerda	Lucy Morgans
Granny	Katy Miles
Igor	Peter Blake
Prince Erik	Aled Jones
Princess	Vanessa Clarke

ABOUT THE WRITER

PETER DENYER has been writing for the theatre for more than thirty-five years, he has also directed hundreds of plays, musicals, and pantomimes, and in 1986 became the Artistic Director of Kevin Wood Pantomimes. Peter's pantomimes have been hailed as the best in the field, and his scripts cover the full canon of titles. Each Christmas there are countless presentations, making Peter one of the "most produced writers" in the country. But in spite of his success as a writer, it was as an actor that Peter became best known to the general public, with over two hundred television appearances to his credit. He is probably best remembered as the delightfully dopey Dennis in Please Sir! and The Fenn Street Gang, Michael in Agony, Malcolm in Thicker Than Water and Ralph in Dear John. What is not so well known, is that Peter's love and life long connection with the stage began as an amateur with the Erith Playhouse back in the mid-sixties. In producing these scripts for your use, he feels he has gone some way to completing the circle.

CAST LIST
Principal Roles

Hans Andersen -
 The Snow Queen -
 Kay -
 Gerda -
 Granny -
 Igor the Henchman -
 Prince Erik -
 Princess Katrina -
 Corr [A Raven] -
 Cora [A Raven] -
 The Captain of The Guard -
 The Robber Chief -
 Haikki [Her daughter] -
 Jorvik [A Reindeer] -
 Old Eskimo Woman -
 The Oldest Eskimo in the World -

Chorus Roles

Birds -
 Katya - A Lady in Waiting -
 Karvak - An Eskimo -
 Jan - An Iceman -
 Guards -
 Courtiers -
 Eskimos -
 Robbers -
 Icemen -

LIST OF SCENES**ACT ONE**

PROLOGUE:

- SCENE 1: The Attic
- SCENE 2: The Road North
- SCENE 3: The Forest of Birds
- SCENE 4: The Ice Corridor
- SCENE 5: The Palace Gardens
- SCENE 6: The Ice Corridor
- SCENE 7: The Great Hall of The Palace

ACT TWO

- SCENE 8: The Ice Corridor
- SCENE 9: The Robber Camp
- SCENE 10: The Ice Corridor
- SCENE 11: The Eskimo Village
- SCENE 12: The Road North
- SCENE 13: The Ice Palace
- SCENE 14: The Road South
- SCENE 15: The Palace Ballroom
- SCENE 16: Songsheet
- SCENE 17: Walkdown

ACT ONE**PROLOGUE****MUSIC CUE 1****MUSIC CUE 2****House tabs out****ANDERSEN is revealed, writing at his desk: he suddenly notices The AUDIENCE.**

ANDERSEN: Well, goodness me! What a lot of people...what are you doing in my house?...And not just big people, either...I think there are some of my favourite little people, as well...tell me, are there any boys and girls out there?...Are there? I'm so pleased to meet you, boys and girls - because my name is Hans...Hans Andersen! And I write stories for girls and boys like you. In fact, I'm famous for it!... I've written about "Thumbelina", "The Emperor's New Clothes", "The Little Mermaid"... and I've just started a new tale, it's called...er ...t's called...er... exactly!..."The Snow Queen!"...How did you know that?... Remarkable! Well, I know how "The Snow Queen" starts...but I'm not quite sure how it finishes yet - I may even have to be in it myself, just to help things along. So let me tell you how it all begins...

FX: The sound of a steam organ.

Once upon a time, in the little town of Koningberg, in the far-off land of Norway, there was a girl called Gerda...

As ANDERSEN speaks Cloth/Tabs out. Lights up revealing GERDA and KAY in the attic.

She lived with her Grandmother, and her foster-brother Kay, in the attic of a tall house that overlooked the main square. They didn't have much money, in fact they were quite poor - but they were very happy together ...until one fateful day...

ANDERSEN Exits.**SCENE ONE****THE ATTIC****An oil lamp hangs from a beam. A table and two chairs, GRANNY's armchair and a stool beside the stove, a low window seat. KAY is reading aloud to GERDA.**

KAY: He remembered how he had been laughed at and cruelly treated, and he now heard everyone say he was the most beautiful of birds. He shook his feathers, stretched his slender neck, and in the joy of his heart said, "How little did I dream of so much happiness when I was the ugly, despised duckling..." [**Closes the book**]

GERDA: Thank you, Kay - what a beautiful story it is...

KAY: I think it's my favourite.

GERDA: I wish I could read as well you do...

KAY: I'm older than you are.

GERDA: You're only two years older.

KAY: Two and a half! [**Taking the book to the window seat**]

GERDA: Two and a half, then! Is it snowing, yet?

KAY rubs ice from the window and looks out.

KAY: Not yet but it must do soon. The sky is blacker than pitch, and the clouds are swollen with snow.

FX: A church clock chimes the quarter.

GERDA: A Quarter to five - I must put the kettle on, Granny will be home soon.

GERDA goes to the stove.

KAY: Poor Granny, she works so hard - she's been out since six o'clock this morning.

GERDA: I know she gets very tired, but she always says "I'd do anything for my family."

KAY: But I'm not her family am I? You may be her grand-daughter, but I'm not a relation, am I? I'm just an orphan that she adopted...

GERDA: But she loves you, very much...and so do I.

KAY: I know...it's just that...I know I'm an extra mouth to feed when she has so little to spare...I'm sorry...It's getting even darker, I'd better light the lamp.

KAY climbs on a chair to light the lamp.

GERDA: Let's go down to the square and meet Granny on her way home.

KAY: I'd like to, Gerda ; but I have to do my homework - I need to learn my tables.

GERDA: You know all your tables.

KAY: Not my twenty-seven times table!

GERDA: Why do you spend so much time on your homework, Kay? You're always top of the class...

KAY: Because when I leave school, I need to get a really good job. A job where I can earn lots of money - then Granny won't have to go out cleaning other people's houses any more.

GERDA: That would be wonderful, wouldn't it?...I'll go and meet her on my own then...**[Puts on her scarf, hat and gloves]**...But don't forget you said we'd go out with your sledge this evening?

KAY: We can't, one of the runners is twisted.

GERDA: You promised, Kay you promised!

KAY: **[Calming her]** Alright, alright - I'll mend it.

GERDA: Well make sure you do!...**[Smiles at KAY]**...I won't be long.

KAY: Take care.

GERDA exits: KAY takes an exercise book from his satchel and sits down.

KAY: Once twenty-seven is twenty-seven, two twenty-sevens are fifty-four.

MUSIC CUE 3

FX: Wind. The lamp flickers.

KAY: Three twenty-sevens are eighty-one, four twenty sevens are one hundred and eight, five twenty-sevens are -

Wind and Music rise to a crescendo: The lamp goes out: The windows fly open. The SNOW QUEEN Enters through them and stands on the window seat.

KAY: Ah!! Who are you...?

SNOW QUEEN: I am the Snow Queen!

KAY: The Snow Queen? I've heard many stories about you...but I thought you'd be old...

SNOW QUEEN: I do not age as normal beings, boy - for I am not of your world...I am immortal!

KAY: ...The stories said that you were evil...but you are beautiful!

SNOW QUEEN: **[Moves towards KAY]** Do you think so...?

KAY: Oh yes...

SNOW QUEEN: What a clever boy you are...and don't believe that I am evil, either - all I ever did was reflect the faults and follies of the human race...

KAY: What do you mean...?

SNOW QUEEN: Centuries ago I made a mirror: it caused everything good and beautiful reflected in it to shrink up almost to nothing - while ugly and useless things were made to appear ten times larger and worse than they were! In my mirror the loveliest landscapes looked like boiled spinach, and the handsomest people become hideous.

KAY: Why did it do that?

SNOW QUEEN: Because it showed what lay below the surface of your human warmth... the canker beneath the skin! Remember...only ice is pure, boy, only ice is pure...

KAY: Do you still have the mirror?

SNOW QUEEN: ...Pieces of it...you see people began to believe that my mirror showed the true face of the world. They flocked to me in their thousands...and some of them wished to see the reflections of the angels in it; so they took the mirror and flew up to the sky. But the higher they flew, the more slippery the glass became, until they could hold it no longer; it slipped from their hands and fell to earth...breaking into millions, billions and trillions of pieces.

KAY: Where did they fall?

SNOW QUEEN: All over the earth...and fragments of it scarcely as large as a grain of sand, flew about in the air...and sometimes got into people's eyes, and then the glass worked its way through their veins...and into their hearts...and then their hearts became as cold and hard as ice...and then...

KAY: And then?

SNOW QUEEN: And then they realised that I was the truth-teller!...Only ice is pure, boy, only ice is pure...

- KAY Is this world truly such an ugly place?
- SNOW QUEEN: It is! Only in my land, the realm of ice and snow, will you ever find happiness! Come with me, Kay...
- KAY: I can't -
- SNOW QUEEN: I know all about you ,Kay - your poor, foolish grandmother, and that stupid, simpering Gerda. Forget about them and come with me! We'll fly upon the storm clouds to my palace in The Frozen North.
- KAY: I can't leave Gerda and Granny - they need me.
- SNOW QUEEN: Are you frightened of me, Kay?
- KAY: I'm not frightened of anything!
- SNOW QUEEN: Then if you are so brave...come with me.
- KAY: I don't want to come with you .
- SNOW QUEEN: Do you dare defy me Kay...? You will live to regret it!
- The SNOW QUEEN gestures...**
FX: Weird sound. LX: KAY is suffused in a strange light. He cries out in pain and puts his hands over his eye.
- SNOW QUEEN: You will forget what has passed between us now, but we will meet again, Kay - and then you shall be mine!
- FX: Howling wind. The lights flicker and then go out. The SNOW QUEEN Exits. When the lights come up KAY is rubbing his eye. Enter GERDA and GRANNY.**
- GERDA: We're back, Kay...why are you sitting in the dark?
- KAY: The lamp must have gone out...I'll light it again.
- KAY re-lights the lamp.**
- GRANNY: And why are the windows open? No wonder it's so cold in here.
- GERDA: It's freezing! I'll close them, Granny...
- KAY: **[Mimics GERDA]** "I'll close them, Granny!" - Little goody-goody!
- GRANNY: **[Anticipating trouble]** I think what we all need is a nice cup of tea...
- GRANNY goes to the stove: KAY laughs.**

GERDA: What's the joke, Kay?

KAY: Granny - she waddles about like an old duck! **[Mimics GRANNY]**

GERDA: Stop it Kay - that's cruel. Have you mended your sledge?

KAY: Not yet! Don't nag me, Gerda - you're getting on my nerves.

KAY gets his sledge and a hammer and starts to mend it as GRANNY brings the teapot to the table.

GRANNY: Now, now children - you mustn't quarrel...

KAY Tell her, not me!

GRANNY: ...Because today we have a special treat.

GERDA: What is it, Granny?

GRANNY: Well, Mrs Olafsson had a tea-party this afternoon, and they didn't eat all the cake - so she said I could bring it home - look!

GRANNY unwraps a piece of cake, wrapped in a cloth.

GERDA: It looks lovely, Granny - doesn't it, Kay?

KAY: I see...we're supposed to be grateful for other people's leftovers now, are we?

GERDA: It was very kind of Mrs Olafsson: don't you want a piece?

KAY: It's probably stale anyway.

GRANNY: Nonsense, it was freshly baked this morning.

GERDA: If you don't want it, I'll eat your slice too.

KAY: Do - then you'll be fat as well as ugly!

GERDA: Kay!

GRANNY: That was very unkind, Kay: you'll apologise to Gerda at once.

KAY: No I won't, because I'm going out with my sledge.

GERDA: You said you were going to take me with you.

KAY: That was only to keep you quiet - who wants to play with a stupid girl!

KAY Exits with his sledge: GERDA runs to the door.

GERDA: Kay...Kay! Come back! What's the matter with him, Granny?

GRANNY: I don't know, my dear - he's certainly got the wind up his tail today, and no mistake.

GERDA: He was so horrible to both of us, I've never seen him like that before - it was like a different person...?

GRANNY: Perhaps he's not feeling well?...Come and sit by the stove with me, child. Kay will be back to his old self again in the morning, I'm sure.

GERDA: We were talking together before I came to meet you, and he said how much he loved you...I don't understand it.

GRANNY: He's at a difficult age, Gerda - he's not really a boy anymore...but he's not quite a man either.

GERDA gets up and goes to the window.

GERDA: I do hope he'll be alright...

GRANNY: You love him very much, don't you?

GERDA: Yes, Granny - very much. **[Starts to cry]**

GRANNY: Come back here, my dear, and I'll sing you one of my old songs; one that used to soothe you when you were a little girl.

GERDA: But I'm not a little girl anymore, Granny, I'm fourteen!

GRANNY: However old one gets, Gerda, there are still times when we all need a shoulder to cry on...

GRANNY opens her arms, GERDA goes to her.

MUSIC CUE 4

**As GRANNY starts to sing the lights dim. Cloth/tabs in:
Enter ANDERSEN.**

ANDERSEN: Poor Granny, poor Gerda, but most of all - poor Kay! None of them realised that the Snow Queen had pierced his eye with a splinter of glass...and that, although he felt no pain, it was already moving towards his heart - and turning it as cold and hard as ice itself. So, Kay went out into the square with his sledge; the boys of the town loved to tie their sledges to the country people's carts and be towed along behind them - they thought this great fun; but as they played today a great white sleigh, which they had never seen before, appeared and drove around the square. The woman who drove it, was so muffled in

furs that no-one could see her face - but we know who it was, don't we?...Exactly - the Snow Queen!...And Kay tied his sledge to her sleigh! They drove twice around the square and then into the next street, as Kay was about to un-tie his sledge, the driver turned and nodded kindly to him, just as if they had been old acquaintances. So Kay sat still, and they drove on and on, and finally...out through the gates of the town.

FX: Wind and the sound of a horse-drawn sleigh.

The snow began to fall so thickly that Kay could hardly see beyond the end of his nose; he tried to free the rope that attached him to the sleigh - but somehow he could not undo the knots. On they flew like the wind. He cried out as loud as he could, but no-one heard him. The snow fell and the sleigh flew. Kay was very frightened, he wanted to say his prayers - but found the only thing he could remember was his ten times table.

Cloth/Tabs out: The SNOW QUEEN's sleigh, with KAY's sledge behind it, is pulled on.

Eventually, as the snowflakes grew bigger and bigger, the great white sleigh began to slow down...

ANDERSEN Exits.

SCENE TWO

THE ROAD NORTH

The sleigh stops and the driver stands: it is The SNOW QUEEN.

SNOW QUEEN: I said that we would meet again, Kay...and my prophecy came true.

KAY stands and moves away from his sledge in amazement.

SNOW QUEEN: You seem surprised...did you not realise this sleigh was mine?

KAY: No, ma'am.

SNOW QUEEN: Come here...you said that you were not afraid of anything: if that is true come here...

KAY approaches The SNOW QUEEN.

SNOW QUEEN: We have driven fast and travelled far...you must be frozen?

KAY: I am very cold, ma'am.

SNOW QUEEN: Then we shall remedy that...

The SNOW QUEEN kisses KAY's brow: momentarily he recoils and then looks astounded.

SNOW QUEEN: What is the matter?

KAY: Your kiss was colder than ice...and yet I feel warmer.

SNOW QUEEN: I told you, Kay - I am all-powerful! Now, untie your sledge; you have no further use for that, from now on you shall travel by my side.

KAY: But I have to go back to Granny and Gerda!

SNOW QUEEN: You still remember them?

KAY: Of course.

SNOW QUEEN: Then I must kiss you again...

Again The SNOW QUEEN kisses KAY's brow.

SNOW QUEEN: Now...untie your sledge...

KAY: Yes, ma'am...

As if in a trance KAY unties his sledge.

SNOW QUEEN: There are still many, many miles to travel till we reach my palace, Kay. We will fly over the woods and lakes, over sea and land. Beneath us the snow will glitter and the moon will shine - clear, and bright...and cold as my heart.

KAY: I am ready to go, your majesty.

SNOW QUEEN: Good...climb up here then, and I shall wrap you in my furs...

KAY gets onto the sleigh: The SNOW QUEEN puts her fur cloak around him.

I do not need their warmth, Kay, for all of me is ice. Already your heart is half-frozen, soon you will be mine completely!

KAY: I will be yours completely...?

SNOW QUEEN: Indeed, there is no power on earth greater than mine!

MUSIC CUE 5

**As the sleigh begins to move. FX: Wind and flying sleigh.
As the sleigh moves off. Cloth/Tabs in...Enter ANDERSEN.**

ANDERSEN: Once again the Queen's sleigh surged forward on its journey to the Frozen Kingdom...but what of Gerda? Neither she nor Granny had slept that night, waiting for Kay to return, and at first light they hurried to the square to ask the boys if they knew where he was - but no-one did. They had seen him driven through the gates of the town, but that was all. Some thought he had drowned in the river, others that he had frozen to death in the snow - but Gerda did not believe them. As soon as Granny went to work, she put on her warmest clothes, took a piece of bread from the larder, and set off in search of Kay. She did leave Granny a note - I've got it here...**[Reads]**...Deep Cranny...I'm sorry her writing's dreadful...**[Puts his glasses on]**...Ah ...Dear Granny, I hope you won't be to cross with me...but I have gone to find Kay...

As ANDERSEN reads the voice of GERDA is heard over an off-stage microphone...

GERDA: **[VO]** ...But I have gone to find Kay...I know in my heart that he is still alive, though I fear he is in great danger. I will bring him back, I promise ...All my love...Gerda.

ANDERSEN: I must confess that when Granny read the note she came out with some very un-granny type language...but we won't go into that!...It was too late anyway - Gerda was on her way! The boys had told her the sleigh headed north, so that was the way she went. Though the snow had stopped it was still very cold, she walked for hours and hours. As the sun began to sink she saw some trees in the distance and hurried towards them - she was grateful for any shelter from the bitter cold - but she did not know what lay in store...

FX: Bird cries.

...For within that wood you can hear strange noises...listen...can you hear them?...And what sort of creatures make those sort of noises?... Right again...you're quite clever, really...Gerda has found herself in...The Forest of Birds...

ANDERSEN Exits: Cloth/Tabs out revealing...

SCENE THREE

THE FOREST OF BIRDS

MUSIC CUE 6

At the end of the dance The BIRDS gather in an inward-looking circle and "chatter" together. Enter GERDA.

GERDA: What beautiful birds!...And birds fly all over the sky - so perhaps they have seen Kay! [Calls] Excuse me!
The BIRDS see GERDA for the first time and with squawks of alarm Exit in all directions.

No...please don't fly away! I need your help...come back, please! ...I've brought you some bread...

Pause...CORA's head appears around a tree. [N.B. The words that are *highlighted* in CORR and CORA's speeches are ones which contain the "caw" sound which the RAVENS both emphasise.]

CORA: Did you say...bread?...*Caw!*

GERDA: Yes...I have it here...

As GERDA goes to put the bread on the ground she moves towards CORA who "caws" and disappears.

I didn't mean to frighten you! Please don't go!

Pause...CORA's head appears around another tree.

CORA: *Caw!*...[She cautiously circles GERDA]...This bread?...Is it wholemeal?

GERDA: Of course - Granny baked it yesterday. You're welcome to it!... Though it's all the food I have.

CORA: *All* the food you have?...I couldn't possibly!

CORA turns to go.

GERDA: Lets share it...[Breaks the bread in two and puts half on the ground] ...*here*...

CORA: It's *awfully* kind of you...*caw!*

During the next speeches CORA begins to peck at the bread.

GERDA: I hope you enjoy it...miss...er...er?

CORA: My name is *Cora*...I'm a raven.

GERDA: I'm pleased to meet you, ma'am - my name is Gerda...

CORA: Gerda! What a *gorgeous* name!

GERDA: Thankyou - I was hoping you could help me...

CORA: Of *course* I will, if I can...

GERDA: My friend, Kay, disappeared yesterday - he was carried away by a great white sleigh.

CORA: *Poor* Kay!

GERDA: I wondered if you had seen him?

CORA: *Aw!*...I flew as far as the *ffjord* today - but I never *saw* a sleigh...

GERDA: Where can Kay be? I know he is in danger.

CORA: How *awful* for you! If only my husband was here...

GERDA: Your husband?

CORA: Yes, *Corr!* He should be back soon - he knows *more* than any bird in the *forest*. He's a Royal Raven, you see - he works at the palace - he's a *courtier!*

GERDA: Do you think he could help me find Kay?

CORA: If anyone could - *Corr* could!

CORR Enters.

CORR: *Caw! Caw!!*

CORA: *Corr!*

CORR: *Cora!*

CORR and CORA "peck-kiss"; cawing contentedly at each other.

What a day, *Cora*, what a day! I'm *exhausted!!*

CORA: I'm *sure* you are, dear

CORR: There were problems at the palace - the *court* was *overwrought!*

CORA: *Poor Corr!*

GERDA: Is this your husband?

CORR: **[Sees GERDA and flaps about]** *Caw!* who is she?

CORA: This is Gerda, *Corr* - she *implores* your help.

CORR: It's one of the *chores* of office, my dear. **[To GERDA]** You do know that I am one of the most *important* people at the Royal *Court*?

GERDA: So your wife has told me - and I'm honoured to meet you, sir...

GERDA curtseys.

CORR: But don't be *overawed*, although I hold high office - I am also much *adored*.

CORA: Gerda is looking for her friend, *Corr*.

CORR: Her friend is called *Corr*?

CORA: No, her friend is called Kay, *Corr*.

CORR: *Aw...tell me more.*

GERDA: He left the town yesterday, and I was told he was heading northwards.

CORR: Describe this boy, is he *tall*?

GERDA: He's about...**[Demonstrates]**...this much taller than me, he has blue eyes, fair hair...

CORR: And tell me what he *wore*.

GERDA: He was wearing a red jacket -

CORR flaps around.

CORR: I knew it! *Caw! Caw!* I knew it! *Caw!!*

CORA: I think that means he *saw* him...

GERDA: Where is he?

CORR: He's *installed* at the Palace!

GERDA: Kay...at the palace? Are you certain?

CORR: *Of course*, I'm *sure*! And what's *more* - he's going to marry the Princess!

GERDA: Kay marry the Princess? It can't be true!

CORR: If you doubt my word I shall *withdraw*! **[Moves away]**

CORA: She meant you no harm, I'm *sure*, *Corr*...

GERDA: [Goes to CORR] I didn't mean to offend you, sir - it must be as you say...but how did it happen?

CORR: Sit on the *floor*, and I'll tell you the whole *story*, I'm very good at that; when I tell *stories* people usually shout."Encore, Corr!"

CORR and CORA find this very funny and "caw" delightedly: GERDA sits.

GERDA: I'm ready when you are, sir...

CORR: *Before* I start I should *inform* you that the Princess Katrina is so clever that she has read *all* the newspapers in the *world* - and has *forgotten* them too. But because she is so bright she does get *bored* rather quickly, and one day - not long ago -

CORA: It was *four* weeks ago actually -

CORR: Who's telling this *story*?

CORA: *Sorry, Corr!*

CORR: She decided to *organise* a search *for* a Royal *Escort!* Proclamations were sent *forth* to the *four* corners of the land. Any young man who could *talk* well with the Princess and show himself most at home in the *court*...she would take as her husband.

CORA: It's such a romantic *story!*

CORR: *Cora, please!*

CORA: *Sorry, Corr...*

CORR: Many young men came *forward*, but when they *saw* the *glories* of the palace - with the guard in silver *uniforms* and the *courtiers* in gold - they were struck dumb. When the Princess *talked* to them, *all* they could do was repeat the last word she had said! So she sent them *all* away...until this morning

GERDA: Is that when Kay arrived?

CORR: I *deplore* interruptions!

GERDA: Forgive me, but I must know if it is him.

CORR: Certainly a young man, with eyes that sparkle just like *yours*, came to the *court* today. He was not in *awe* of the guards or the *courtiers*, he just *walked* in - his boots creaked terribly; but he was not afraid.

GERDA: It must have been Kay - I know he had new boots!

CORR: He chatted to the Princess as if it were the most *ordinary* thing in the world. They had instant *rapport!* The Princess was *enthralled!*. When he told a joke she made everyone *applaud!*

GERDA: It is Kay! He always was clever, he could do all sorts of sums in his head, even fractions! Will you take me to him?

CORR: It is no easy thing to get permission *for* a small girl like you to enter the *court*.

GERDA: Just tell Kay that I am there, I know he'll want to see me.

CORR: Are you *sure* of that?

CORA: After all - he is *courting* the princess...

GERDA: If Kay wants to marry her then I shall be happy for him - but I have to know that he is safe.

CORR: Getting you into the Palace is still *fraught* with difficulties!

GERDA: Surely an important person like you could arrange it?

CORR: **[Flattered]** Oh, very well then - you're very *fortunate* to have met a bird with such high connections, you know...

MUSIC CUE 7

At the end of the song...Blackout. Cloth/Tabs in. Lights up revealing...

SCENE FOUR

THE ICE CORRIDOR

MUSIC CUE 8

Enter The SNOW QUEEN and KAY.

SNOW QUEEN: It has been a long journey, Kay - but now you see the beauty of my home - are you not glad you came with me?

KAY: It's wonderful, ma'am...is this the Great Hall?

SNOW QUEEN: This is just a corridor, Kay - there are more than a hundred rooms in my palace; each wall formed by drifted snow, its doors and windows by the cutting winds.

KAY: ...And this is where I am to stay?

SNOW QUEEN: You will have a room fit for a prince, Kay...for I mean to adopt you; and as the son of The Snow Queen your name will be renowned throughout the world...Prince Kay!

KAY: Prince Kay?

SNOW QUEEN: I am the only friend you have now, Kay...

KAY: No...not my only friend...there is another...**[Struggles to remember]** ...Ger...Ger...Gerda!

SNOW QUEEN: **[Aside]** Still he remembers her...**[Calls]** Igor! Igor!!

KAY: What?!

SNOW QUEEN: Be calm, Kay...be calm...**[She kisses him]**...I was only calling my servant.

Enter IGOR: he stands in a taught, upright position.

IGOR: I didn't know you were back, your majesty - I never heard your sleigh.

SNOW QUEEN: What on earth is the matter with your body, Igor?

IGOR: Me braces are twisted, ma'am.

SNOW QUEEN: Then untwist them at once!

IGOR: Yes, your majesty...

IGOR adjusts himself: his body contorts into a crouched, hunchbacked position.

IGOR: Ooh! That's better...back to normal!

SNOW QUEEN: As normal as you ever could be, I suppose. This is Prince Kay, Igor...

KAY: Once eight is eight...two eights are...sixteen...

IGOR: Oh...a new one, eh? **[Circles KAY, sniffing him]**

SNOW QUEEN: Indeed...I want you to take him to his room - put him in Stalagmite Seven - and ensure his every comfort.

IGOR: I'll make sure there's fresh snow in his bed meself, your majesty.

SNOW QUEEN: Then go to my spell-room and bring me my Magic Crystal.