



# Humpty Dumpty

by Stephen Duckham

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**CHARACTERS**

Mystic Myrtle	The local mystic, usually spreading gloomy forecasts
Tommy Tucker	Assistant to Mother Hubbard
Polly Flinders	Chambermaid at the Palace
Mother Hubbard	Owner of a bakery
Humpty Dumpty	Guardian of the 'egg'
Sergeant Lock	One of the King's men
Private Bolt	Another of the King's men
King Cole	A jolly monarch
Princess Melanie	His daughter
Madam Miniver	A villainess
Snivel	Her assistant
The Boggart	A malevolent creature of the swamp

Chorus and Children

**SYNOPSIS OF SCENES****ACT ONE**

SCENE 1	THE MUSEUM OF CURIOS AND CURIOSITIES
SCENE 2	OUTSIDE THE ROYAL PALACE OF EGGSHELLIA
SCENE 3	THE PALACE GARDEN
SCENE 4	THE PALACE THRONE ROOM
SCENE 5	THE PALACE GARDEN
SCENE 6	OUTSIDE THE ROYAL PALACE OF EGGSHELLIA

**ACT TWO**

SCENE 1	THE PALACE THRONE ROOM
SCENE 2	THE EDGE OF THE KINGDOM
SCENE 3	THE SWAMPS OF AGRADORE
SCENE 4	SOMEWHERE
SCENE 5	THE EDGE OF THE KINGDOM
SCENE 6	OUTSIDE THE ROYAL PALACE OF EGGSHELLIA
SCENE 7	THE PALACE GARDEN
SCENE 8	THE PALACE BALLROOM

The original nursery rhyme story of 'Humpty Dumpty' is a pretty slim one, so when I decided to write this pantomime, the addition of other children's nursery rhyme characters seemed a good place to start. We know about the egg on the wall and its fall – but I decided to tell a story about why the egg was on the wall and what made it fall. There would obviously be All the King's Men – well, two of them – Sergeant Lock and Private Bolt. Merry Old King Cole and his daughter, Princess Melanie and of course the Dame – in this case Mother Hubbard – Principal Boy Tommy Tucker, and Polly Flinders, the Palace Chambermaid.

Then I had to invent some other characters important to the story. Myrtle, the local mystic, who sees all sorts of gloom and doom in the future, and the 'baddie'. This, I decided for a change, would be a female – Madam Miniver with her strange servant, Snivel.

The eponymous 'Humpty' would be the big change. Instead of making him a character that came out of the fallen egg, he is the guardian of the egg with an interesting tale of how and why he was created. A warm-hearted, cheeky-chappy who handles the running catch phrase with the audience.

### Character Breakdown

Humpty Dumpty	A 20+ year old happy-go-lucky chap. Warm-hearted and friendly.
Mother Hubbard	The Dame and owner of the local bakery. Played by a man, the character is comic, with a good rapport with the audience.
Tommy Tucker	Her assistant. The principal boy. Young, good-looking, with a fine singing voice. (As the principal boy, the part could be male or female.)
Old King Cole	A merry soul who is always laughing at his own jokes. Easily flattered!
Princess Melanie	Pretty principal girl. Should also have a good singing voice.
Polly Flinders	The Palace Chambermaid. Easy-going with a great sense of fun.
Sergeant Lock	One of the King's Men. Typical 'sergeant', full of his own importance.
Private Bolt	The other King's Man – a little dim-witted.
Myrtle	The local mystic. Full of gloom and doom. Doubles as the Curator in the first scene.
Madam Miniver	A Sorceress. She should be very glamorous – able to dupe anyone into thinking her of noble birth. Will obviously have the audience booing her.
Snivel	Her servant. A hard-done-to, grovelling wretch of a man. With a perpetual cold, and therefore is prone to sneezing.
Boggart	A grotesque creature who lives on the side of a swamp.

The Chorus are Townspeople of all ages.

## SCENERY

The pantomime consists of three or four main scenes, two front cloths and a set of black tabs.

### **Act One**

Scene 1 is black front tabs with a sign stating '*Curios and Curiosities*' and a slim display cabinet containing the 'egg'.

Scene 2, 6 and Act 2 Scene 6 is a full set with the King's Palace on one side and Mother Hubbard's Bakery on the other. A wall runs partway across the back with the egg sitting on it.

Scene 3 and 5 is a front cloth. If a cloth is not available, use the tabs with some foliage cut-outs

Scene 4 and Act Two Scene 1 can be a full or half stage set with a cloth. Up centre is the throne.

### **Act Two**

Scene 2 and 5 is the second front cloth. If a cloth is not available, use the black tabs.

Scene 3 is a full set with a ground row depicting the swamp and the Boggart's hut on one side. Up stage of the hut is the cage with the Golden Birds of Marakanda in it, and the Carrinocus plant next to it.

Scene 4 starts on the front black tabs. After Miniver's reprise, they open partway to reveal a cut-out of the bird with Humpty and Tommy riding on its back. This part of the scene can be backed by a star cloth, a second set of black tabs or some flats depicting the sky. (See notes on special effects.)

Scene 8 is a full set for the finale. If space is limited, it could be played in the Throne Room set.

The scenery for this production can be as simple or elaborate as your theatre demands. These are just suggestions for a basic running order. The more you can add, the better the finished production will look.

## ACT ONE

SCENE 1 THE MUSEUM OF CURIOS AND CURIOSITIESMUSIC INTRODUCTION

*[A front scene played on black tabs with a sign hanging above that reads 'Curios and Curiosities'. Dominating the scene is a large glass case containing an egg. Although it is whole, the shell has a crack running from top to bottom. It is present day, and the CURATOR (who doubles later as MYSTIC MYRTLE.) is showing a group of tourists around.]*

**CURATOR** And so we come to the last, and perhaps the most curious of all our curios and curiosities. The mysterious egg of Eggshellia.

**WOMAN** Eggshellia? Never heard of it.

**CURATOR** It was a Kingdom that existed long ago, now lost in the mists of time.

**MAN** How did that egg get here?

**CURATOR** No one really knows. Some say it has travelled through time in all sorts of disguises. Others say it has lain hidden, waiting to retell its story.

**MAN** So why is this egg so special?

**CURATOR** The legend says it was put in its place on the wall outside the Royal Palace by an ancient mystic who trapped a wicked curse inside it. While the egg remained intact, no harm would come to Eggshellia or its inhabitants.

**WOMAN** Well, someone must have knocked it off. Look at those cracks!

**CURATOR** That is all part of the legend.

**MAN** How do we find out about this legend?

**CURATOR** It is said that if you look hard enough at the egg, slowly, the power of your imagination will reveal the mystery.

*[All the TOURISTS gather around the case and look at the egg.]*

**WOMAN** Come on, Bert. We can't stand staring at an egg. Coronation Street will be on in an hour!

**MAN** Just five more minutes. I want to see what happens.

**CURATOR** Concentrate on the egg and look deep into its surface.

*[The lights are dim around the TOURISTS, and then a light from inside the egg begins to glow.]*

Let your imagination take over and see what mysteries lie within its shell.  
*[The music comes up as the CURATOR moves away from the TOURISTS to down right. She starts to sing. Note: this is a slow verse of what will become the first company number in the next scene.]*

SONG CURATOR

*[As the song continues, the lights on the egg and the Tourist fade, leaving the CURATOR down stage in a pin spot.]*

**CURATOR**

I show the egg to a lot of people. Some learn its secrets, some do not. If you would like to know what happened all those years ago, clear your minds and let your imagination take flight - and you too will learn the magical story of an egg known as Humpty Dumpty.

*[The music swells, and the lights fade. The scene changes to...]*

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SCENE 2 OUTSIDE THE ROYAL PALACE OF EGGHELLIA

*[The scene is outside the Royal Palace with an entrance up stage right and a wall running across the back to centre stage. On the wall is a large egg. On stage left is Mother Hubbard's Shop. It has a sign over the door that reads – 'Mother Hubbard's Beautilicious Bakery'. Down stage of the shop door is a small table with a white cloth on it. The Royal crest is seen on the tablecloth. On the back cloth, we can see part of the Palace garden and more of the town. As the lights come up on the scene, a CITIZEN of Eggshellia enters and calls at the door of Mother Hubbard's shop.]*

**1<sup>st</sup> CITIZEN** Mother Hubbard? Are you there? It's nearly time.

*[Another CITIZEN runs on.]*

**2<sup>nd</sup> CITIZEN** Mother Hubbard? *[To 1<sup>st</sup> CITIZEN.]* Is she ready yet?

**1<sup>st</sup> CITIZEN** I've called her, but there's no reply.

**2<sup>nd</sup> CITIZEN** *[Knocking on the shop door.]* Come on, Mother Hubbard, you don't want to be late today of all days.

*[Others enter, including POLLY FLINDERS. She is carrying a dustpan and brush.]*

**3<sup>rd</sup> CITIZEN** Polly Flinders, have you seen Mother Hubbard this morning?

**POLLY** No. I'm just about to start cleaning out the fire grates at the palace. *[She puts her cleaning items down.]*

**1<sup>st</sup> CITIZEN** Let's give her one last shout.

**ALL** Mother Hubbard!

*[TOMMY TUCKER enters from the shop carrying a large tray of various colourful cakes. He is Mother Hubbard's assistant. A handsome young man with a winning smile.]*

**TOMMY** Hello all!

**POLLY** Tommy Tucker, where's Mother Hubbard?

**TOMMY** She's just finishing off the last batch of celebration cakes.

**POLLY** The Royal Party will be here soon, and we wanted everything to be ready.

**TOMMY** Polly Flinders, has Mother Hubbard ever been late for the annual celebrations?

**POLLY** Well... no.

**TOMMY** Then what's all the fuss about?

**1<sup>st</sup> CITIZEN** Those cakes look delicious. What's in them this year?

**TOMMY** You know the secret. Just imagine what you would like to be in them, and you won't be disappointed. *[HE puts the tray on the table and continues the song started by the Curator in the previous scene. The Company join in.]*

COMPANY NUMBER

*[The song builds to a vocal climax.]*

**2<sup>nd</sup> CITIZEN** *[Moving towards the table.]* Can we taste one?

**TOMMY** Certainly not!

**3<sup>rd</sup> CITIZEN** Oh, go on. Just one?

**4<sup>th</sup> CITIZEN** No one will notice.

**TOMMY** You know the King has to be the first one to taste.

*[The whole CHORUS now try to persuade TOMMY to let them try a cake. TOMMY guards the tray as MOTHER HUBBARD enters from her shop.]*

**MOTHER H** What is all this shouting about? You sound like a rowdy crowd at a – *[She names the latest pop sensation.]* – concert!

**TOMMY** This greedy lot were trying to taste your cakes.

**MOTHER H** Before tonight's party? Are you all mad? What would the King say?

**1<sup>st</sup> CITIZEN** Sorry, Mother Hubbard.

**2<sup>nd</sup> CITIZEN** They all look so mouth-wateringly marvellous!

**MOTHER H**

Well, you'll just have to wait. There are a lot more cakes to be brought out, so you can all lend a hand while I welcome our guests.

*[All exit into Mother Hubbard's shop. SHE comes down front to address the audience.]*

Hello to you all. Now, I suppose you are wondering what Rent-a-Crowd was making such a fuss about! Well, let me tell you. I'm Mother Hubbard and this - *[She points to her shop.]* - is my very special 'Beautilicious Bakery'. Here is where I bake bread, cakes and all kinds of delicious delicacies for the people of the town. And I am proud to say we have the Royal Seal of Approval. His name's Sammy, and he lives at the zoo! *[She giggles.]* No, I'm only kidding. The King himself has his morning toast, his lunchtime sandwiches and his tea-time tantalising tropical tangerine torte from my establishment. I've been baking and making mouth-watering morsels ever since I met my late husband, Horatio Hubbard. We met while taking part in the Great British Bake-off! One glimpse of his large farmhouse white, and it was love at first sight! We were blissfully happy and started up this business together. Oh, girls, he was a wonderful man. And so talented. What he couldn't do with his rolling pin wasn't worth talking about! And then one fateful day, he was taken from me. *[SHE gets a little tearful.]* One minute he was using the giant mixer to make a surprise upside-down cake, and the next minute - you've guessed it - he was the surprise! Oh, it was a tragic loss. *[More business-like.]* All those ingredients gone to waste! For some time afterwards, I couldn't face cooking. My cupboard was bare. Not even a bone for the dog! And then I realised that the only way to keep his memory alive was to do what *he* loved doing. Supplying the town with all the lovely cakes that he created. And that's what I do. And of course, today's batch is even more special than usual because of the celebration of the egg. *[SHE realises the audience doesn't know the story.]* Oh, but silly me, you don't know about the egg, do you?

*[HUMPTY DUMPTY pops up from behind the wall. He is a young man wearing white trousers and a yellow shirt. His hair is white on one side and yellow on the other, and his shoes consist of one yellow and one white. No other colour is used in his costume. HE emphasises any word or part of a word that sounds like 'egg'.]*

**HUMPTY**

Then it's about time you told them!

**MOTHER H**

Oh, Humpty, you made me jump. *[HUMPTY comes out from behind the wall and joins MOTHER HUBBARD down stage.]* This cheeky chappy is Humpty Dumpty. Say hello to our visitors.

**HUMPTY**

*[Waving to the audience.]* Hiya all. You look like an eggcellent bunch of people.

**MOTHER H**

*[To the audience.]* Oh, here we go. You'll have to excuse him, but you're in for two and a half hours of 'egg' jokes!

**HUMPTY**

Don't you mean egg yolks? *[He laughs.]*

- MOTHER H** See what I mean? *[To HUMPTY.]* As you are the guardian of the egg, you'd better relate the story.
- HUMPTY** OK. *[To the audience.]* I suppose you have all seen this egg and are wondering why it's perched on the wall of the palace.
- MOTHER H** *[To the audience.]* This could take some time, and I have work to do. So pin back your lug-holes, and he'll bring you up to speed! See you later. *[She waves at the audience and exits into the shop.]*
- HUMPTY** Twenty years ago, a wicked Sorcerer who lived on the edge of the Kingdom tried to use his powers to usurp our dear King Cole and take the throne. He failed, but as a result of his actions, he was banished, never to return. Before he left, the Sorcerer tried to put a curse on the land that the sun would be forever hidden behind dark clouds, and that the Kingdom would always be grey, causing misery and sadness everywhere. Septimus, the Royal Court Magician at the time, quickly used an ancient spell to counter the curse at the very last minute. He gathered up all the darkness and misery that the Sorcerer had brought down and hid it in that giant eggshell. It was placed on the palace wall, and as long as it remained intact, Eggshellia would be safe from the curse. Of course, room had to be made in the egg, so out of its contents I was created! *[Points to his clothing.]* See. Neat, isn't it? *[With a hand on the egg.]* I think of this as my dad! Humpty Dumpty senior. *[He turns the egg round and we now see a smiling 'Humpty Dumpty' face.]* And I'm Humpty junior! I'm the guardian of the egg, and every year we celebrate the day that it happened, which happens to be today. And it also happens to be my birthday! *[Encouraging the audience.]* Well, come on then. Say 'happy birthday, Humpty. *[The audience responds.]* Thank you very much. Have you all brought me cards and presents? *[Reaction.]* No? Well, I suppose I can forgive you, seeing that we've only just met! Now I know everyone around here, and they are a really friendly, happy bunch, so I hope you're the same. Are you? *[Reaction.]* That's good. So every time I see you I'll shout 'how are you', and you shout back – 'eggcellent Humpty'. Will you do that? *[Reaction.]* Great. Let's give it a trial run! *[He gets the audience to shout a couple of times.]* Splendid.
- [MYSTIC MYRTLE enters. She is the same person we saw in the first scene as the CURATOR, but now SHE is dressed like a gypsy fortune teller. She always carries a large carpet bag with her.]*
- MYRTLE** *[Full of doom and gloom.]* A warning. I have to give a warning.
- HUMPTY** Oh dear, this is Myrtle. She's the local mystic. Her uncle was Septimus, the Court Magician, so she knows everything about the egg.
- MYRTLE** Warning. I sense a great calamity coming.
- HUMPTY** Honestly. She sounds like News at Ten!
- MYRTLE** There is trouble approaching.

**HUMPTY** Trouble? There can't be any trouble today. It's the anniversary of the egg. We are having the usual celebrations.

**MYRTLE** But I have seen it – *[She takes a crystal ball out of her bag.]* – in my crystal.

**HUMPTY** Are you sure? Have you got it tuned in to the right channel? *[To the audience.]* She's never been the same since it went digital!

**MYRTLE** The crystal never lies. I must warn everyone.

FANFARE

*[A fanfare is heard off.]*

**HUMPTY** That it will have to wait. The King is on his way. You can't spoil his royal entrance!

*[SERGEANT LOCK and PRIVATE BOLT come running on from the palace. They are the two 'King's Men'.]*

**LOCK** *[With a voice of importance.]* Everybody make way for His Majesty King Cole and the Princess Melanie.

**BOLT** Stand back and don't crowd the Royal Household.

**HUMPTY** *[Seeing only himself and Myrtle.]* We'll try not to!

**LOCK** His Majestic effervescence.

**BOLT** Her Regal Magnesia.

**LOCK** *[Celebrity style introduction.]* The big man himself! Old.....

**BOLT** King.....

**BOTH** Cole – and the Princess Melanie.

*[OLD KING COLE enters, waving regally. He is followed by his daughter, PRINCESS MELANIE.]*

**KING** Good day, my people.

**HUMPTY )**  
**MYRTLE )** *[Feebly.]* Hurrah!

**KING** *[Looking around.]* What's going on? Where is everyone? Sergeant Lock, Private Bolt, was I announced properly? As all the King's men, I expect you to carry out your duties.

**LOCK** We did your Maj.

**BOLT** In our best regal voices.

**HUMPTY** *[Coming forward.]* Good morning, Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness.

**MELANIE** Good morning, Humpty.

**KING** Ah Humpty. How are things with our precious egg?

**HUMPTY** Everything is eggceptionally fine, your Majesty.

**KING** Good, good. I'm pleased that someone is doing their duty.

**HUMPTY** If I may, sir, I think everyone is in Mother Hubbard's Bakery to help bring out the celebration cakes.

**KING** *[Rubbing his hand together and smiling.]* Oooh goody! I have been looking forward to seeing her latest creation. *[To LOCK and BOLT.]* Lock, Bolt, call everyone out.

**LOCK** Yes sire.

**BOLT** At once.

*[They rush to the door of the bakery.]*

**LOCK** Oi. You lot. His royal nibs is here.

**BOLT** And he wants to get his royal gnashers into the cake!

**KING** All right, all right. A little statelier if you don't mind.

*[TOMMY and POLLY enter, followed by the COMPANY. They all carry plates of brightly coloured cakes. All bow and curtsy.]*

**TOMMY** Your Majesty, your royal Highness.

**MELANIE** Hello Tommy.

**KING** Ah, Mister Tucker. As Mother Hubbard's assistant, I hope you have been hard at work preparing for today.

**TOMMY** Indeed, I have, Sire.

**MELANIE** Father, look at all those wonderful cakes.

**KING** Yes, Mother Hubbard has done us proud again this year. *[Looking round.]* But where is she?

**MOTHER H** *[Off.]* I'm coming, Cuthbert. And I've got just what you're after! *[SHE enters with a large portion of cake on a plate.]*

**KING** *[Slightly shocked.]* I beg your pardon?

**MOTHER H** *[Holding the plate in front of his face.]* Something to tickle the royal taste buds.

**KING** *[Smiling.]* And splendid as always, I've no doubt.

**MOTHER H** *[Aside to the King.]* All your favourites are in it. Gin, whiskey, brandy and just a dash of Guinness! You're going to love it, Cuthbert.

**KING** *[Aside to her.]* I think it ought to be 'your Majesty' when we are in public.

**MOTHER H** Of course, dear. I forgot. After all these years, I still can't get my head around you becoming King. We've known each other since we used to romp around the nursery together in our birthday suits! *[She gives him a nudge and a wink.]*

**KING** *[Flustered and trying to keep some royal decorum. To everyone.]* Now that we are all assembled, I would like to say a few words.

**MYRTLE** That's all you'll have time for! Mayhem is mounting!

**KING** What was that?

**HUMPTY** Nothing, your Majesty. She's rambling again!

**KING** Oh, right. Well, as I was going to say. Today, we celebrate the wonderful gift of the egg that saved us from a terrible curse. So without further delay, let's get started!

**MOTHER H** *[Holding up a slice of cake.]* Here you are, Cuth.. *[HE looks, and SHE catches herself.]* ...your Majesty. Especially for you. A little taster of what you can expect later!

**KING** *[He gives her a look and then takes the cake.]* That looks mouth-wateringly good! *[He takes a bite.]*

**HUMPTY** You could say she's eggcelled herself!

*[All groan at Humpty's egg joke.]*

**KING** It certainly has royal approval. You are all in for a treat later.

**MOTHER H** Oh, I can't wait for the party. I hope the royal bar is well-stocked.

**KING** Of course.

**MOTHER H** Champagne and I are so alike. We've been drunk all over the world!

*[Everyone laughs.]*

**MYRTLE** *[With a worried look.]* Yes, enjoy yourselves while you may. Things are going to change very soon.

**HUMPTY** Oh Myrtle, don't spoil the celebrations. Go and check your crystal again. I think you must have got the wrong news bulletin.

**MYRTLE** Alright, I'll go. But mark my words, the crystal never lies.

*[SHE exits as the COMPANY gathers around to admire the cakes. TOMMY moves down stage, and MELANIE joins him.]*

**TOMMY** How are you today, your highness?

**MELANIE** Why so formal, Tommy?

**TOMMY** Your father is only over there. I don't think he would take too kindly to my paying close attention to his only daughter!

**MELANIE** Father is far too preoccupied with Mother Hubbard's cakes to notice anything at the moment.

**TOMMY** But Melanie, you know we can only be friends at a distance. I'm just a commoner and not worthy of your attention.

**MELANIE** You are a worthy assistant to Mother Hubbard. That is a very important position. Especially preparing the royal meals.

**TOMMY** But not important enough to warrant the affections of a princess.

**MELANIE** Nonsense. I'm tired of having to follow protocol. I want some fun in my life.

**TOMMY** Well, as today is a celebration holiday, why don't I sing a special song for you at the party tonight? Then, as a 'thank you', you could command me to dance with you.

**MELANIE** That sounds like a splendid idea. And I'm going to talk to father about who I can and can't see.

*[The KING moves down to them.]*

**KING** Melanie, my dear, don't you want to see the cakes?

**MELANIE** Of course, Father. I was just asking Tommy what he had in store for us at tonight's party. And he's promised to sing for us.

**KING** Really? Mr Tommy Tucker sings for his supper, eh? *[He laughs at his joke.]* Sings for his supper! Sing for his... *[Realising no one is laughing.]* Yes, well - I hope you have something tuneful to hum along to. None of this modern - *[He names a current pop star and gets it wrong.]* - rubbish!

**TOMMY** I think it will be to your Majesty's taste.

**KING** To his Majesty's taste, eh? Just like the food, I hope. *[HE laughs again.]* Taste – food! Get it? *[The COMPANY gives a weak laugh. The KING turns quickly to MELANIE.]* Now come along, my dear. We have a lot to do today. Mustn't neglect our royal duties.

**MELANIE** *[With a glance at TOMMY, then to the KING.]* Father, couldn't I stay and help your good people start the celebrations? It would mean a lot to them.

**KING** Mm. I suppose it would be good to see the Royal family getting stuck in with the populace. All right, just for a short while.

**MELANIE** Thank you, father.

**KING** Goodbye, all. Enjoy the day. *[HE moves towards the palace. LOCK and BOLT run to assume a guard of honour.]*

**LOCK** Royal party preparing to leave the party.

**BOLT** The party of the first part is leaving the party.

**LOCK** Not that he's a party pooper.

**BOLT** Just that the party has another party to go to....

**KING** Yes, alright. I think they've got the message! *[HE exits into the palace. TOMMY, POLLY and MOTHER HUBBARD cross to HUMPTY.]*

**POLLY** Humpty, what was Myrtle saying?

**HUMPTY** Oh, you know Myrtle. Always spreading doom and gloom around!

**MOTHER H** That woman is more depressing than – *[Name of a politician.]*

**POLLY** We shouldn't dismiss everything she says. Once or twice, she has been right.

**TOMMY** *[To MOTHER HUBBARD.]* Remember when you lost your special cookbook? Myrtle had a vision of where it was.

**HUMPTY** Where was it?

**MOTHER H** Under my bedside table.

**POLLY** And remember she told you where you left your favourite rolling pin.

**HUMPTY** Where was it?

**MOTHER H** Under my bed!

**MELANIE** And she told father where he had left his royal seal of office.

**HUMPTY** Where was it?

**MOTHER H** Under my duv.. *[She starts to say duvet, but stops herself.]*... no idea!

**TOMMY** But nothing should stop us celebrating the wonder of the fabulous egg.

**HUMPTY** Tommy's right. Come on, everyone. It's my birthday today. *[Pointing to the egg.]* And that of my dear old dad!

COMPANY NUMBER

*[At the end of the number, all exit in a celebratory mood. MOTHER HUBBARD exits into her shop. TOMMY and MELANIE exit right. POLLY, LOCK and BOLT exit into the palace, and HUMPTY behind the wall. The lights dim slightly, and a carriage bearing MADAM MINIVER arrives up stage. It is pulled by her servant, SNIVEL.]*

MADAM MINIVER'S ENTRANCE

*[SNIVEL runs to the side of the carriage to help her out. HE is a grovelling, weakling of a man with a constant cold. HE sneezes, sniffs, rubs the back of his hand across his nose and then holds his hand out to help her down. SHE glares at him. HE wipes the back of his hand on his opposite sleeve and holds out his hand again. She holds the tip of it and steps out.]*

**MINIVER** Snivel, you snivelling wretch. When are you going to do something about that cold of yours?

**SNIVEL** *[Who speaks with a slight nasal accent.]* Sorry, Madam Miniver. I've tried everything. Nasal spray, aspirin, Paracetamol, Rennie's....

**MINIVER** Alright. I don't need a list of supplies from Boots!

**SNIVEL** No, Madam. *[HE sniffs.]*

**MINIVER** Just get it seen to before I have your nose cut off!

**SNIVEL** Yes, Madam. *[HE sneezes.]*

**MINIVER** Now, the reason for my visit to this – *[SHE looks around with disdain.]* – quaint little Kingdom. Twenty years ago, my dear brother was banished from here. Before he left, he attempted to put a curse on everyone, but was thwarted at the last moment.

**SNIVEL** But why was he banished?

**MINIVER** *[Casually.]* Oh, a minor thing. He just wanted to overthrow the King and take the throne for himself. Nothing to get so upset about!

**SNIVEL** I bet the King didn't like the thought of being overthrown!

**MINIVER** That's because he's a weak-minded little fool. Not a great King, which is what my dear departed brother would have been. So now I have come to right the wrong perpetrated on him. *[Mock tears.]*

**SNIVEL** There, there, Madam. Don't upset yourself. *[Pulling out a dirty-looking handkerchief.]* Would you like my hanky? *[MINIVER glares at him. He puts the hanky away.]* Perhaps not!

**KING** *[Off.]* Melanie.

**MINIVER** That's the King coming. Take my carriage away and wait for me to summon you.

**SNIVEL** Yes, Madam. *[HE pushes the carriage off stage as the KING enters from the palace.]*

**KING** Melanie. *[Looks at MINIVER.]* Oh, you're not Melanie.

**MINIVER** No, I'm not.

**KING** Don't think I've had the pleasure.

**MINIVER** I am Madam Miniver.

**KING** Pleased to meet you. I'm King Cole. I guess the clobber gives it away! *[He giggles.]* Been here long?

**MINIVER** *[With a bow.]* I have just arrived, Your Majesty.

**KING** Really? On a – *[Says the name of a local coach firm.]* – Day trip, are you?

**MINIVER** I have my own carriage and servant. Where I come from, my family dynasty goes back hundreds of years.

**KING** Oh. And where is that?

**MINIVER** *[Not giving anything away.]* A long way away.

**KING** Further than – *[Names a town close by.]*

**MINIVER** I am on a grand tour and decided to rest a while in this – *[With a look of disdain.]* – quaint little country.

**KING** And you've arrived just in time for our annual celebrations.

**MINIVER** Celebrations? In aid of what?

**KING** *[Indicating the egg.]* Our egg!

**MINIVER** *[Looking at him in amazement.]* You celebrate an egg?

- KING** It's no ordinary egg. It saved the Kingdom from a terrible fate twenty years ago. We were all going to be cursed by an evil Sorcerer, but the plot, I am happy to say, was foiled. Lucky for all of us.
- [MOTHER HUBBARD is heard singing off.]*
- MOTHER H** "I should be so lucky. lucky, lucky, lucky." *[Or some similar pop song. SHE enters.]*
- MINIVER** *[Looking directly at MOTHER HUBBARD.]* I thought you said the curse was foiled!
- MOTHER H** Oh, look, boys and girls, it's – *[Name of a female politician.]*
- KING** This is Madam Miniver. She's just visiting. *[To Miniver.]* This is Mother Hubbard, our resident purveyor of fine baking. She prepares the most mouth-watering meals for me.
- MOTHER H** How do? So, are you here to celebrate old Humpty Dumpty?
- MINIVER** Humpty Dumpty?
- KING** The name of our egg. The Sorcerer's curse was to drain all the sunlight and happiness from our Kingdom, but luckily, it was trapped inside the egg.
- MINIVER** Fascinating. So, if the egg were to fall and break...
- MOTHER H** Oh that would be a catastrophe...*[SHE has trouble saying 'catastrophe']*.. catastropher...cateroff.... That would be terrible!
- KING** It must never happen. *[Proudly.]* We have a special guard for the egg. Humpty Dumpty junior.
- HUMPTY** *[Popping up from behind the wall.]* Somebody call? *[He crosses down stage and calls to the audience.]* How are you? *[Reaction.]* Well done. You've remembered.
- KING** Humpty knows the story better than anyone.
- HUMPTY** Yes. Want to hear it? It's an eggciting tale.
- MINIVER** *[Bored.]* Not really.
- OTHERS** What?
- MINIVER** *[With false charm.]* I mean, I'm not really receptive to hearing such an important part of your history, as I am weary from my journey. I feel I should rest a while.
- KING** Of course.

**MINIVER** Is there such a thing as a seven-star hotel in the vicinity?

**MOTHER H** There's the – [*Name of local hotel.*] – they take anyone!

**KING** Oh, you must stay at the palace as my guest.

**MINIVER** I couldn't impose on Your Majesty.

**MOTHER H** Oh, go on – impose. He's got an indoor toilet!

**MINIVER** Well, if you insist. I would be most grateful.

**KING** And we're having a celebration party this evening to which you are invited.

**MINIVER** I will tell my servant to unload my things.

**KING** Make yourself at home.

**MINIVER** [*Under her breath.*] Don't worry, I intend to! [*SHE crosses down left and calls.*] Snivel. Come here, you wretch. [*The others chat quietly as SNIVEL enters and meets MINIVER down left.*]

**SNIVEL** You called, Madam? [*HE sniffs and wipes his nose on his sleeve.*]

**MINIVER** Have all my things taken into the palace. I've been invited to stay. The first part of my plan has worked even more smoothly than I had hoped.

**SNIVEL** In the palace? Ooh, it will be good to sleep in a proper bed for a change.

**MINIVER** I will be staying in the palace. You will sleep where you usually sleep – under the carriage!

**SNIVEL** [*Disappointed.*] Yes Madam.

**MINIVER** Now get my things unpacked. Immediately.

**SNIVEL** Yes, Madam. [*HE exits. SHE turns back to the others.*]

**MINIVER** All taken care of.

**KING** Splendid. [*Offering his arm.*] Then let me show you to your room.

**MINIVER** [*Taking his arm.*] Delighted, Your Majesty. I hope we are going to become very good friends.

**KING** [*Slightly smitten.*] I'm sure we will. [*THEY start to leave.*]

**MINIVER** [*Over her shoulder to MOTHER HUBBARD.*] Oh, Mrs Cupboard, perhaps you could bring a little egg something on a tray to my room.

[*She and the KING exit into the palace.*]

**MOTHER H** *[Furious at being ignored by the King.]* Who does she think she is?

**HUMPTY** Soon got her feet under the King's table!

**MOTHER H** There's something fishy about her. Better keep a watch out.

**HUMPTY** I think you are right. Be eggstra vigilant.

*[LOCK and BOLT come running on from the palace.]*

**LOCK** Where is everyone?

**BOLT** His Majesty King Cole wants to hear everyone celebrating.

**LOCK** We need the populace present!

**HUMPTY** Well, that's easy. Mother Hubbard?

*[MOTHER HUBBARD puts two fingers in her mouth and gives an ear-piercing whistle. The COMPANY come running on to reprise part of the celebration song.]*

REPRISE – COMPANY NUMBER

*[At the end of the number, the lights fade and the scene changes to...]*

SCENE CHANGE 2 – 3

PantoScripts Perusal

SCENE 3 THE PALACE GARDENS

*[A front cloth with trees, flowers and the palace in the background. MYRTLE is down right. She is wailing about an impending disaster.]*

**MYRTLE** Why will no one listen to me? There is danger all around, and I don't know how to stop it. The celebrations are all that everyone is thinking about, but they will end in disaster. My crystal has foretold it, and it is never wrong. I must find a way to warn everyone. I'll go to the party at the palace and try to see the King. Someone must listen. Oh woe, woe, a terrible thing is coming. *[She starts to exit right.]* Woe, woe.

*[She has gone. MADAM MINIVER enters left, followed by SNIVEL.]*

**MINIVER** In the short time since my arrival, I have found out just what I need to do to avenge my brother.

**SNIVEL** What is that, Madam?

**MINIVER** That egg must be destroyed.

**SNIVEL** But how are you going to do that? Isn't it guarded by that fella in the white and yellow outfit?

**MINIVER** He won't be a problem. With a wave of my hand, I will send it crashing down off that wall. *[She gives an evil laugh.]*

**SNIVEL** Won't it create an awful mess?

**MINIVER** It will create a catastrophe. And then I will take the King's crown and declare myself the ruler of this Kingdom. I will banish him and all his followers the way he banished my brother. Oh, my revenge will be sweet.

**SNIVEL** And then will I be able to have a proper place to sleep?

**MINIVER** I might find you somewhere in the servants' quarters – if you do everything I ask.

**SNIVEL** Oh, I will, Madam. *[Trying to please her.]* You know I live to serve you. *[HE sneezes and wipes his nose on his sleeve.]*

**MINIVER** And if you get rid of that awful cold.

**SNIVEL** I try to, Madam. But I get one chill after another sleeping under your carriage. *[HE sneezes again.]*

**MINIVER** Oh stop whinging! *[Looking off.]* Someone is coming. Let's get away and plot the King's downfall.

*[She laughs, and they both exit left as HUMPTY enters right.]*

- HUMPTY** *[To the audience.]* How are you? *[Hopefully, the audience shouts back, "eggcellent Humpty".]* That's good. You remembered! It's all go here. Everyone is having a great time and looking forward to the party at the palace tonight. The only problem is I don't have anyone to go with. *[Sympathy from the audience.]* I spend all my time guarding the egg, so I never seem to have time to go out and meet anyone. *[More reaction from the audience.]* There is someone I have a bit of a soft spot for. Shall I tell you who it is? *[Audience shouts out.]* OK, I will. It's Princess Melanie. Oh, I know she's way above my station, but I do think she's pretty. And you never know, she might just be free tonight.
- [MOTHER HUBBARD enters.]*
- MOTHER H** Hello Humpty. Are you chatting with our new friends?
- HUMPTY** Yes. I was just saying I've yet to ask someone to tonight's party.
- MOTHER H** *[Primping slightly.]* Well, as it happens, I may just be available.
- HUMPTY** No offence, but I was looking for someone nearer my own age!
- MOTHER H** I'll have you know I'm just approaching thirty-five!
- HUMPTY** Yes, but from which direction? *[HE laughs and then sees an icy stare from MOTHER HUBBARD.]* Anyway, I thought you had your sights set on someone with a little more eggsalted.
- MOTHER H** I can't think who you mean.
- HUMPTY** Oh, come on. Everyone knows you've got a soft spot for his Maj!
- MOTHER H** I just make sure his favourite meals are ready for him.
- HUMPTY** And everyone knows the way to a man's heart is through his stomach!
- MOTHER H** It is true we get on very well. We've known each other for such a long time.
- HUMPTY** If I were you, I wouldn't let the grass grow under your feet. I think a certain visitor may have designs on our good King.
- MOTHER H** That Miniver woman?
- HUMPTY** Yes. He did seem quite smitten with her.
- MOTHER H** If she thinks she can muscle in on my territory, she'll have a battle on her hands! *[SHE puts her fists up in a boxing pose. HUMPTY feels her arm muscle.]*
- HUMPTY** Well, I know who I'd put money on!
- MOTHER H** So, who were you thinking of asking to the party?

**HUMPTY** If you promise not to laugh, I'll tell you.

**MOTHER H** Cross my heart. *[SHE does.]*

**HUMPTY** It's Princess Melanie. *[MOTHER HUBBARD screams with laughter.]* You promised!

**MOTHER H** Oh, I'm sorry, Humpty. *[SHE sucks in her cheeks to stop herself laughing.]*

**HUMPTY** I know it's a long shot. But if I don't ask ...

**MOTHER H** Well, now's your chance. Here she comes.

**HUMPTY** Oh – er – *[HE starts to panic. MELANIE enters]*

**MELANIE** Hello, you two. How are you enjoying the day?

**MOTHER H** *[Crossing between MELANIE and HUMPTY.]* Very much, thank you, your highness. How about you?

**MELANIE** I'm so looking forward to tonight.

**MOTHER H** And is there someone special you have in mind to escort you?

**MELANIE** *[Feigning innocence.]* I hadn't given it much thought.

**MOTHER H** *[With a glance at HUMPTY.]* Really? *[Aside to MELANIE.]* There's someone not a million miles away who I'm sure would be delighted to escort you.

**MELANIE** *[Not getting it!]* Oh, Mother Hubbard. It would look a bit odd – you and me together at the party!

**MOTHER H** *[With a knowing look at the audience.]* Not in this day and age, dear! I don't mean me. *[Aside to HUMPTY.]* Go on – ask her. *[She pushes HUMPTY to the side of MELANIE.]*

**HUMPTY** *[Still panicking.]* Er – um....

**MELANIE** Humpty.

**HUMPTY** *[Hearing his name.]* Yes, that's me!

**MELANIE** I bet you have dozens of girls hoping you'll ask them out tonight.

**HUMPTY** Um, yes....dozens. *[He looks at MOTHER HUBBARD for help.]*

**MELANIE** And I'll bet there is one special one you have your eye on.

**HUMPTY** *[Melting as he gazes at MELANIE.]* Oh yes.

**MELANIE** Well, I think she will be a very lucky girl.

**MOTHER H** *[Prodding HUMPTY.]* She will be if he hurries up and asks her.

**HUMPTY** *[Aside to MOTHER HUBBARD.]* Alright! I will. *[To MELANIE.]* You highness. Princess Melanie.....we have known each other for a very long time now.

**MELANIE** Yes, we have, Humpty. And I know we'll always be good friends.

**HUMPTY** Yes, eggceptionally good friends.

**MELANIE** *[Not able to stop her excitement.]* So I just have to let you in on a secret.

**MOTHER H** A secret? I love secrets!

**MELANIE** There is someone who I am very close to who I hope will be with me tonight.

**HUMPTY** *[Excited.]* There is.

**MELANIE** And I know he wants to be with me.

**HUMPTY** I do!

**MELANIE** It's Tommy Tucker.

**HUMPTY** *[Not hearing.]* Of course I'll go.... *[Realising.]* Tommy Tucker?

**MELANIE** Yes. He's so handsome.

**HUMPTY** Handsome....

**MELANIE** Charming.

**HUMPTY** *[HIS bottom lip starts to tremble.]* Charming....

**MELANIE** And you know he's got a lovely singing voice. He's going to sing a special song for me tonight.

**MOTHER H** That's nice, dear. *[HUMPTY looks at her and tears well up in his eyes.]* There, there. *[SHE clasps him to her bosom.]*

**MELANIE** Humpty, are you alright?

**MOTHER H** He's a little emotional. These romantic stories get to him. *[A big wail from HUMPTY.]* He's delighted for you! *[SHE moves HUMPTY toward the exit.]* You go and get yourself ready for those dozens of girls lining up for you. *[SHE rolls her eyes at the audience. HUMPTY sadly exits, and the audience will no doubt have tremendous sympathy.]*

**MELANIE** I hope he's alright.

**MOTHER H** He'll be fine. And so will you be my dear. Look who's coming. *[TOMMY enters.]* Fancy seeing you here.