



Puss in Boots

by Rob Fearn and Leo Appleton

An original take on a fairy story that's littered with cat jokes!

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Welcome to Robleo Productions!

Welcome to the third pantomime written by us, Rob Fearn and Leo Appleton. Another great story for the young and young at heart given a refreshing make over and hopefully one you will enjoy 'putting on'.

With our many years' experience of treading the boards at an amateur level we are hopeful that we continue to deliver what you're looking for in a panto script.

All the original Puss in Boots characters are in and should provide you with many opportunities to style your production as you wish and although we like our words and stage direction we also understand the need to tailor scripts to performers, their settings and locations. So, it can be grand and lavish with a fantastic set and all the magic tricks you need to perform the show or it can be done simply on a Parish Hall stage with limited funds and space. This script should suit both and is scalable either way.

Again, much fun has been had writing it and far more jokes have been excluded than included (material hopefully for future shows). We have suggested places for songs and chorus numbers which you can use as you please.

Whatever you do with it, we sincerely hope you enjoy it and don't forget, make it fun!

Thanks

Rob & Leo

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Cinderella
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Aladdin
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Dick Whittington and his cat

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Characters in order of appearance

Courtier 1 (Male or female)

Courtier 2 (Male or female)

Courtier 3 (Male or female)

King Charlemagne (Male)

Arnie (Male or female if prepared to dress up. Ogre's henchmen. A bit slow but eventually likeable).

Rambo (Male or female as above for Arnie, as he is his sidekick).

Princess Rene (Female heroine of the piece. Sweet and loving. Should be able to sing and act. Name should be pronounced as Rennee).

Princess Antoinette (Male or female. This is the ugly sister role so whoever takes this role should be happy that they won't be good looking and will have all the over the top costumes).

Princess Maisonette (As above for Antoinette).

Hero (Male or suitably attired female. Lots of posturing for their moment in the spotlight).

Queen Nicole (Female. Nice little part. Not too demanding and with some comic lines, should also be able to sing).

Lord Chamberlain (Male. Pompous).

Father (Male. Comic role. Only appears in one scene early on so could double with other parts if necessary).

Randolph (Male comic role. As for Father).

Tristen (Male comic role. As for Father).

Alf (Male, the hero of the piece. A bit dim, but wins through in the end. Should be able to act with comic timing and sing. Gets the girl in the end).

Puss in Boots (Male or female. Should be played with lots of swagger. Puss is a real clever clogs with plenty of wisecracks and just a bit of magic).

Cat Warden (Male or female. The 'behind you' gag. Chases Puss in Boots trying to catch him).

Chorus 1 (Male or female. Small parts).

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Chorus 2 *(Male or female. As for Chorus 1).*

Ogre *(This villain can be either male or female, short or tall. Quite a big part but doesn't appear until well into the show. Should be played as a real villain so needs to be able to act and sing or at least deliver a song).*

Guard 1 *(Male or female. Small part suitable to double with a member of the chorus).*

Guard 2 *(Male or female. As for Guard 1).*

ACT 1

Scene 1

(The curtains open on the Court which should be full stage. All the courtiers are there with King and Queen, the three princesses and Lord Chamberlain. There is an active discussion about the Ogre and what they need to do to get rid of him, some general hubbub. He has been eating some of the town's folk but now has turned his attention to the courtiers).

Courtier 1 Honestly, he's a beast. I saw him the other day he picked up this poor man from *(local town)* and swallowed him whole. But now he's gone too far he is eating the *(local town)* people as well, apparently he says we're better for him, taste like chicken. He must be slain! *(All courtiers agree)*

(Again, some general agreement with that statement, oh yes we do, I eat a lot of chicken you know, I do to, oh yes etc. etc.)

Courtier 2 *(Thought).* My wife thinks she's a chicken y'know.

Courtier 3 How long has she been like that?

Courtier 2 About two years.

Courtier 3 Why haven't you taken her to see a doctor?

Courtier 2 We need the eggs!

King *(Cutting in).* Enough of this inane chatter.

Antoinette *(Full of meaning).* Yes! What we need is a real man to sort out this beast!

Maisonette No no, Antoinette. Two real men!

Antoinette Ooh yes it would take at least two.

Maisonette Possibly four or five!

Rene Sisters! Four or five? What for?

Antoinette No, five.

Maisonette *(Adds almost dreamlike).* Yes five.

King We're not looking for husbands, well not at the moment. Do we have anyone here brave enough to take on this Ogre? Bearing in mind he has the power to change into any animal he wishes.

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Rene What we need is a hero!

(Song here about a hero. Song ends and a 'hero' appears dressed up with a shield and sword hamming up this part well and truly).

Hero Did someone call for a hero? *(He thrusts out his jaw and strikes a pose).*

All Yes!

(The women all swoon and some of the men can as well with great drama).

Hero I understand you're having ogre troubles.

All Yes, yes!

Hero And you need someone to slay him?

All Yes, yes, yes!

Hero Then look no further, leave him to me, I see him in the distance.

(Hero looks off dramatically and rushes off into wings and the sound of a great battle can be heard augmented by sound effects. Hero does a lot of shouting and the ogre roars a bit. Looking into the wings the chorus give a commentary on the different animals they see).

Courtier 1 Oh no he's become a tiger.

(Sound effect of a roar).

Courtier 2 Now an eagle!

(Sound effect of a big bird call).

Courtier 3 Now an elephant!

(Sound effect of an elephant trumpet).

Sounds of swords clashing and sounds of different animals are heard. All the chorus are watching this off stage and flinching and reacting to the action almost as if they were watching a tennis match. Then there is a sound of a big GULP and everyone reacts 'Eeeoow' and his shield gets thrown onto the stage and again the chorus react with a deflated OHHHhh!).

Queen *(To King).* He didn't even chew!

King No manners! *(He looks around the gathered throng).* Anybody else fancy having a go? *(Looking at the chorus)* What about you, or you, or you. *(They flinch)*

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when he looks at them and they all start drifting off in case they get coerced into facing the monster. All the chorus finally exit). I thought not.

Lord Chamberlain Well, my lord its back to the drawing board I'm afraid.

(Blackout).

(Curtains).

(End scene).

Scene 2

(Front of tabs. Set is a bed on which the father is dying; his three sons are standing around him. Randolph is stupid and feckless, Tristen is mean, selfish and lazy, Alf is loving, hardworking but not overly bright. Prop required is a bag of money which is hidden behind the bed).

Father *(In a weak and frail voice).* Randolph, Tristen, Alf, come closer my three sons, so I can see you. It's good to have you together, here with me in these my final hours, for I don't think I will see dawn.

Randolph *(To audience).* Who's Dawn? She better not want a share of our inheritance.

Father I've had a good life boys, made my fortune, worked hard. *(Suddenly looks into the distance and appears afraid).* Oh no, there it is again.

Tristen *(Concerned).* What is it Father?

Father The bright light son, it's calling me.

Randolph Bright light?

Father: The light, I want to go towards it.

Tristen: *(Starting to get little hysterical)* Don't go near it Father.

Father: It's getting closer son, I feel I'm moving towards it.

Randolph: *(Getting more hysterical)* Don't go any farther, Father. *(Looks quizzically towards the audience at what he has just said).*

Father I'm going to a better place son.

Randolph What, *(Local town renowned for being 'posh')*?

(Father slumps back).

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Tristen He's gone brothers.

Alf *(In a stage whisper. He's not the sharpest knife in the drawer)* No, I can still see him.

Tristen No, I mean he will be at peace now.

Alf *(Still not sure)*. So, you're leaving then?

Tristen and Randolph *(Speaking louder to Alf)*. No! He's dead!

(They all turn as if to console each other and then jump when Father speaks again).

Father No need to shout. Oops, my mistake, it must have been that big spotlight. Who's the idiot manning it, I thought it was the end?

Randolph *(An aside to the audience)*. No, we still have another fifty pages of this drivel.

Father But before I do go, *(to audience)* and I really am going soon, *(to sons)* I have two things left to do. Boys, I've accumulated a great deal of wealth in my life, I've worked hard and I never shirked my responsibilities. So first, I want to leave you with a bit of good advice. Never steal, the government hates competition and always borrow money from a pessimist, they don't expect it back. But now, I want to give you three boys something. The most precious thing to me in the whole world is *(voice starts failing again)*, my ca.... *(voice trails off)*

Tristen Did he say cash?

Randolph *(Not quite sure)*. No, I think he said cat.

(They all agree with him).

Tristen *(To audience knowingly)*. It would be terrible if he got those two mixed up wouldn't it. I mean imagine the problems such a little confusion could create.

Father *(Recovers again and addresses each son in turn)*. You need to remember in this life you get what you deserve, so Tristen of the many words that have been used to describe you, honest, hardworking and reliable were not amongst them. You have been lazy and bone idle since the day you were born, so in keeping with your habit of not getting up in the morning, I'm leaving you my bed.

(Tristen seems happy with this and strokes the bed).

Father Randolph, everything you have touched has amounted to nothing, you could make a sow's ear out of a silk purse, so you need something you simply cannot make any worse, Blackpool Football Club. *(Or another such club that has not done well).*

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Randolph (*The following can of course be any football club*). Not Blackpool! Fleetwood, Preston, Wren Rovers, anything but Blackpool! (*Randolph quietly sobs into a big hanky, the nose blowing gag*).

Father Alf, my precious and dutiful son, you have worked hard and are loyal, loving and so you my favourite son, (*his voice trails off again*) you get my ca.....

Tristen (*To audience*). He definitely said cat that time.

Alf (*Hesitantly*). No he didn't! I'm sure he said cash.

Tristen Oh no he didn't!

(*To audience, Oh yes he did, Oh no he didn't et al. When this is exhausted back to the script*).

Tristen (*Whispers to his father*). Father, I know you're a little busy at the moment with your dying, but could you clarify just one tiny little point for us, did you say "cat" or "cash"?

Father The light it's so bright now, this is it boys, I'm fading, (*drags this out*) going, going, gone. (*Collapses for a second and then suddenly sits up very sprightly*) and I said (*spells it out*) C...A.... (*he dies*). Aaaagh!

Tristen (*Smugly*). Sorry brothers but he definitely said cat, besides, he gave me the bed and that's where he hid all his cash. (*Pulls a big bag of money out from under the mattress*). So, looks like I'm a wealthy man. Bye bye and that's what I intend to do, buy buy! See you later.

(*Tristen exits*).

(*Randolph is looking disconsolate and speaks to Alf in a pointed way. All the following needs to be made relevant to a local club and if not suitable should be adjusted accordingly. There is always one isn't there?*).

Randolph (*Speaking in a knowing way*). Talking about a general football club, not any specific one, it could be any club I'm talking about, how the heck do you make any money out of that?

Alf (*Disconsolate with head in hands*). Well, one way would be to invest the gate receipts, any TV money and parachute payments in hotels and properties, run the club into the ground, don't buy any expensive players, ignore the fans, then sell the stadium to yourself at a knock down price to build a car park and exclusive flats. But what do I know?

Randolph (*Cheering up*). Thanks bro. Later!

(*Randolph exits*).

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(Puss in Boots (PIB) enters at first on all fours licking it's paws and looking very aloof and cat like).

Alf *(To audience. He hasn't seen PIB).* A cat! He left me a measly, moth eared, moggy! *(PIB is stroking its ears at this point).* That's all I get for all my years of hard work and devotion, a puss. *(Resignedly).* Oh well, I started out with nothing and I still have most of it. *(Alf sits down head in hands and is oblivious to PIBs next bit).*

(PIB stands up and starts talking to the audience).

PIB *(To audience)* That's better. *(Stretches a bit as it stands up).* I don't know how they scabble around on all fours like that. *(Looking at Alf).* Look at him. Looks like someone is feline disappointed, do you get it feline, feeling. Oh come on. What Alf doesn't realise is I am not an ordinary cat, No I'm not! I'm a walking, talking cat. *(Preens himself with pride).* I love the look on people's faces when they first hear me talk. They expect a meow or perhaps a purr but not a full blown conversation. Why, just the other day I scared a chemist half to death by ordering my own prescription for *(embarrassed so covers his mouth so he can only just be heard)* flea powder. "Oh my word" she shouted "we will not allow a puss in boots". *(Laughs at his own joke).* No, seriously though, I do have a problem. How do I break the news of my talking, without Alf having a heart attack? He's of a very delicate disposition. I need to be subtle; maybe drop in the odd word here and there so he thinks I'm gradually learning to talk. Yes, slowly does it, that's the way.

(PIB walks over to where Alf is and sits on his knee. Alf absent mindedly strokes PIB who purrs for a few seconds then...)

I say that's nice, lovely, a bit to the left, yes just there behind the ear, perfect, I could sit like this all day.

(Alf takes a few moments to realise what has just happened, he jumps up. PIB falls to the floor and he stares down at PIB.)

Alf What?

PIB *(Looking up at Alf).* Meow?

Alf You just spoke!

PIB No I didn't.

Alf See, you're doing it again.

PIB No I'm not, *(pause)*, meow.

Alf *(To audience).* I'm going crazy, that's the only explanation. I have lost my mind through the grief of losing my father.

PIB Ok, Ok, you win. (*Getting up*). The cat's out of the bag. (*Laughs at self*). I can talk.

Alf But how, why, what, where?

PIB (*Solemnly*). Alf, there's something else you need to know. (*Excitedly*). I can sing as well. (*Music strikes up and PIB goes into 'What's new pussycat whoaaaaa' What's new pussycat whoaaaaa etc.'*)

Alf I need to get out of here and clear my head, this can't really be happening.

(*Alf exits looking flustered*).

PIB (*Watches Alf leave then to audience*). Was it something I said? It was my singing wasn't it, I thought so, next time I need to warm up, perhaps under someone's window, that always does the trick. (*Mock singing warm up in a false operatic tone and then breaks into a cat meow at the end*) mee, mee mee mee meeee-owww. (*Shocked look on PIB's face*).

(*PIB draws the audience in*).

Now, I need to tell you about something scary. There's this cat warden, he is wearing a (*Gives a description so they know who it is when he / she comes on*), and he keeps trying to kidnap me or in my case catnap. (*Getting back to the story*). Aaaanyway if you see him it means I'm in danger and I want you to sing "What's new pussycat whoaaaaa" to warn me he's about. Do you think you can do it? (*Audience reaction*). You're very sure of yourselves aren't you, well let's give it a go then. I'll stand here and you pretend you have seen the cat warden when I say go. (*Cat Warden (CW) appears behind PIB, they all start singing and shouting*). No, not yet, I haven't said it yet. Look, you can't just point and shout you have to sing. What! He's really behind me.

(*PIB goes left no sign of him, goes right no sign of him – perhaps a little ad lib with the audience then CW taps PIB on the shoulder and he runs off closely followed by CW*).

PIB: Aaaaagh!

(*PIB Exits*).

(*End scene*).

(*Close curtains*).

SCENE 3

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(This is in front of tabs and CW re appears. The audience should start their singing. As they respond a sign appears "Thanks").

CW *(Engages the audience).* You've not seen a cat have you? He's about so high and occasionally so high. *(Indicating height on all fours and then when he stands on two legs).* Thinks he is oh so clever with his walking and talking. Well, it will take a better cat than him to get the better of me. I've caught them all in my time. Tom, y'know from Tom and Jerry, Garfield, I lured him in with a piece of lasagne, easy peasy, it was like taking milk from a kitten, which I quite enjoy actually. I've got some jokes about cats. Well actually, I was just kitten! In fact this whole show is littered with them. But you do see some sights though in this job. I once saw a cat swallow a whole ball of wool. Ugghh. I heard later she had mittens! No it's true, it is! And then there was this cat who drank five bowls of milk at once, set a new lap record *(Mimes cat lapping up milk).* I don't like cats. They are so cool and aloof. They think they are so much better than us. Anyway, I'm going to catch that Puss in Boots if it's the last thing I do. You see if I don't!

(He exits, as PIB comes on from the opposite side looking off the way CW went out. The curtains open onto a full stage to reveal Alf sat disconsolately on a 'wall' by a road with his belongings over his shoulder and a hitchhiker's sign displaying "Jeopardy". He remains oblivious to all that is going on).

PIB *(To audience).* Phew! *(Mock wipes brow).* Thanks for warning me I nearly walked in on him. I think he is a frustrated cat lover really don't you. *(Spotting Alf).* Look, there's my new master. Hello. *(No response from Alf. Repeats his hello but louder).* I said hello! *(Alf looks up).* Didn't you see that nasty cat warden, I've had to rely on all my friends out there to stop him pinching me.

Alf Sorry, I was in a world of my own.

PIB *(Aside to audience).* One where there's plenty of space *(pause)* between the ears! *(Back to Alf).* What are doing here anyway?

Alf Isn't it obvious, I'm hitchhiking. *(He holds up the sign).*

PIB I'm a talking cat not a reading cat. Hang on though don't tell me let me have a go, let's see. *(Spells it out).* J.E.O.P.A.R.D.Y *(pause)* Leighton Buzzard?

Alf Jeopardy, I'm going to jeopardy.

PIB Why?

Alf Well I've heard there are lots of jobs in jeopardy.

PIB *(To audience).* Hands up all those who saw that one coming. *(Peers out into the audience, then back to the script).* But, you're my master, you can't leave without me *(hams this up to get some aahs from the audience).* What will I do without you? This script is licensed for amateur theatre by NODA Ltd to whom all enquiries should be made.

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You know a dog is a dog but a Cat is a purrrson. (*Starts rubbing his head against Alf's shoulder purring*).

Alf You're a talking, singing cat. You don't need me. Why, you could make a fortune in a circus or on the stage.

PIB Funny you should say that as I did once take the lead role in an Andrew Lloyd Webber musical.

Alf Cats?

PIB (*Innocently*). Evita! Look we are partners, buddies, best mates, we should be sticking together.

(*Perhaps a song here for Alf and PIB*).

Alf I suppose that we could try it for a while and see how it works out.

PIB Excellent, I knew you'd see sense. Now, I've heard of a kingdom where I am sure we could make our fortunes together.

Alf Ok, what's it called?

PIB Cat - alonia.

Alf Very funny.

PIB Well, what about Kat - mandu.

Alf No!

PIB (*Tentatively*). Purr-eston.

Alf (*No comment just a look of disapproval and a shake of his head*).

PIB Seriously though, I do know of somewhere we could go, though it makes me shudder to think about it.

Alf Come on then, where is it.

PIB I couldn't possibly go to (*dramatically*) The Isle of Dogs!

Alf Sounds perfect, but actually you don't have to 'cause we're going to Catatonia, so come on!

PIB (*To audience and wipes his brow*). Phew!

(*Blackout*).

(*Curtains*).

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(End scene).

Scene 4

(Curtains open onto a full stage in the court. The king enters very irate. He is followed onto the stage by the Lord Chamberlain who is walking meekly behind him, head bowed).

King Lord Chamberlain you promised me this would be resolved. How can I rule a kingdom and keep my subjects loyal if we have a filthy rotten ogre eating them all.

Lord Chamberlain I can see how this may feel a little challenging Your Highness, but let's not focus purely on the negatives.

King Not focus on the negatives! But this is a negative situation Lord Chamberlain, how could it be anything else?

Lord Chamberlain Well perhaps, could we not, turn it to our advantage?

King And how do you propose we turn the fact that an ogre is feasting on my subjects into an advantage?

Lord Chamberlain We do have some troublesome subjects Your Highness, some we would quite like to be rid of if the truth be told.

King You are talking about that rabble from, what was that little principality called *(local town or area)*.

Lord Chamberlain Yes sire.

King *(Suddenly interested)*. Ahhh. Continue Lord Chamberlain.

Lord Chamberlain Well sire, we could simply slip some Bisto *(aside to the audience)* other gravy granules are available, *(back to King)* into *(local town or areas)* water supply.

King I like you're thinking Lord Chamberlain, do it on bath night?

Lord Chamberlain Yes, Your Highness.

King Which self-respecting ogre would be able to resist that gravy supper. Oh no what am I talking about, we are off in the realms of fantasy. *(Pause to look at audience)*. We need to be rid of this ogre and you promised me it would be sorted out.

Lord Chamberlain Your Highness I did as you requested and recruited the service of the good witch to place a curse on our ogre, but it appears this has only made him more determined.

King A curse you said, a curse from the good witch would sort him out, that's what you told me. Well what now?

Lord Chamberlain Another curse perhaps?

King And after that, what then, another curse? He would still be eating my subjects only now it would be a three curse dinner.

Lord Chamberlain I see I have failed you, Your Highness and the only honourable thing for me to do is resign. *(Takes out paper and starts to write his resignation)*

(Queen Nicole enters she has a few swatches of fabric in her hands).

King *(To Lord Chamberlain)*. Put that away, I refuse your resignation. If you're to leave I at least want the satisfaction of sacking you. No, I want a solution from you Lord Chamberlain and I want it quickly.

Queen My King Charlemagne, this is very serious. *(She is still looking at the swatches).*

King I know it is my dear Queen *(emphasising the name)* Nicole. I am just discussing it now with the Lord Chamberlain.

Queen So, what are we to do?

King You always have good ideas. What do you suggest?

Queen I was thinking that we paint them gold.

King *(Does double take. Lord Chamberlain looks a bit shocked)*. What! Paint them gold?

Lord Chamberlain Paint what gold?

Queen *(Looks frostily at the Lord Chamberlain)*. The doors, they clash with the new drapes I have had made for the emerald room, it is a very serious interior décor faux pas.

King My dear, do you have the slightest idea what we are discussing here? These are important matters of state. This kingdom hangs in the balance and all you can think about is drapes and gold doors. We are battling a vicious beast, and if he is victorious you may well be deciding which colour would go with ogre.

Queen *(As if really pondering the problem).* Olive green, with a hint of putrid yellow I think?

King Lord Chamberlain, tell me, how many subjects have been eaten this week?

Lord Chamberlain None, Your Highness.

King None? Why all the fuss then, this is the first week this year that we have had no subjects eaten. This is good news, maybe the curse has worked.

Lord Chamberlain Well not quite. You see he hasn't eaten any, but he has taken to biting off bits and then spitting them out, we have a number of farmers who are now without limbs and they are very upset.

King Oh, they're armless.

Lord Chamberlain Indeed sire, very droll, but they are holding a meeting in the Kings Head to discuss a revolt.

King *(Amusing himself).* Probably legless as well.

(Chorus enter looking at something off, with much noise and shouting 'they'll kill us / they smell / they're ugly, etc etc. They are running away from something).

Lord Chamberlain *(To chorus).* What is this? What's happening?

Chorus 1 There are two men to see His Highness. They're quite scary.

(The two henchmen Arnie and Rambo enter. They look at the chorus and indeed everybody else and then Arnie points at the Lord Chamberlain).

Arnie You the king?

(Everybody on stage looks in a state of fright and they say nothing. Arnie and Rambo approach the Queen. Rambo this time points).

Rambo You the king?

(Queen hesitatingly points at the king but they ignore her and approach a member of the chorus).

Arnie & Rambo You the king?

Lord Chamberlain *(Losing his patience).* Oh for goodness sake, try the one with the crown!

(The King steps forward).

King Yes, I am the king now what do you want?

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(Trying to sound official and important, possibly speaking a little slower).

Arnie & Rambo We have a message for you

King *(Looks very upbeat and almost pleased. There is some confusion here and the king thinks he is getting a massage).* Lovely, well, I'll just take off my coat and you can begin. *(Starts to sit or lay down on something).*

Lord Chamberlain *(Aside to the king).* Sire, I believe that's a message not a massage.

King *(Putting his jacket back on).* Oh dear, how embarrassing. Well, get on with it then.

Arnie It's a peace offering from the ogre. But he has some terms and conditions.

King *(To the rest of the court as if he has the measure of it all).* Small print hey. Well, at least we will have peace at last. Alright let's hear them then.

Rambo *(Reading as if a proclamation).* I the ogre, of Ogre castle, Ogre street, Ogreville, somewhere ogre the rainbow, offer you a lasting peace.....

Arnie *(Interjecting and taking the note)*on one condition, you give me your daughter the Princess Rene as my bride on her eighteenth birthday.

All Hurraaay! *(Big chorus cheer as they think it's a great idea).*

King What? Never!

All Ohhhhhh. *(Their hopes have been dashed).*

King That is ridiculous. I will not allow my daughter to marry that hideous people eating monster. I mean what would the grandchildren look like for a start? *(Pulls a funny face).*

Chorus 2 *(To the rest of the chorus).* He's got a point!

(Chorus all mumble their agreement).

Rambo *(Carrying on).* In return he promises to spare the whole kingdom.

King I will not accept those terms and I have a message back for you.

Arnie *(Looking at Rambo).* Oh lovely, and on the back as well, just let us take our coats off. *(Pointing now at his back).* I have been having a little trouble with my lower spine if you could focus around there. *(They go to lay down).*

King I said message not massage.

Arnie & Rambo *(Putting their coats back on).* Oh how disappointing.

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King You can tell the Ogre that he may not marry the Princess Rene.

(Moves to the front of the stage to deliver his rousing speech. Chorus start drifting off as he starts, they have lost interest now he's not going to save them. The King doesn't notice).

You can also tell him that we will not be beaten. *(Becomes statesman like)*. We few, we band of few, we band of brothers; for he today that stands with me shall be my brother. We shall fight him on the beaches, on the fields of which a corner is forever Catatonia. *(Thinks he is rousing the chorus)*. What say you my people, let's fight this hideous ogre!

(Silence. He turns. The chorus have all disappeared).

Arnie *(Starts clapping completely enthralled. Talking to Rambo)*. He's very good isn't he. I hear his Macbeth in Oldham was something to behold!

Rambo *(Giving Arnie a sideways glance but talking to the king)*. He's not going to like that you know.

Arnie *(Still entranced by the king's speech)*. I bet his King Lear's alright too.

Rambo Be quiet! C'mon!

(Both exit. They leave the stage giving each other a quick shoulder rub and grumbling).

King *(Composing himself)*. Lord Chamberlain, I need a solution to this ogre problem.

Lord Chamberlain I thought you were going to fight him on St Anne's beach *(or any other local beach)* with your brothers.

King Don't be silly that was just to rouse the spirits. Besides, they don't seem too keen on the idea. *(Looks behind him and indicates the now empty space)*. We need a solution? Make it so Lord Chamberlain.

Lord Chamberlain Yes my liege.

(He exits as the Princesses enter).

Rene Father what was all that noise?

King Nothing my dear. *(Kisses them all in turn on their cheeks)*. Just a little state business I needed to attend to.

Rene But father, we heard that the ogre had sent some men with a message on foot.

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Antoinette Oh lovely! *(Goes to take off shoes excitedly)*. It must be a French massage. *(Repeats what Rene has said but in a French accent)*. A massage en foote.

Maisonette I've not washed my feet in days I can't wait. *(Goes to take her shoes off as well)*.

Rene No, sisters! How silly. I said message!

Antoinette & Maisonette Ohhhh! *(Looking very dejected)*.

King Well, I suppose I should tell you, as you will soon find out anyway so I am going to break this to you gently. Right my beautiful daughters. *(Daughters shuffle themselves into a line)*. Those of you who are not, going to marry an ogre take one step backwards. *(All three take a step back)*. Where are you going Rene?

Rene What! *(Sees the injustice of it all)* No Father, I can't! *(Runs off in tears)*.

(Rene exits).

King *(To Antoinette & Maisonette)*. Go and look after your sister *(include if played by men)* will you lads I mean lad-ies, ladies.

(The two princesses exit).

(To the queen who all this while has been matching swatches of fabric and paper as if thinking about decorating).

King Oh dear, oh dear, what are we going to do?

Queen You'll think of something, you always do.

King I can't possibly let the ogre marry Rene, even when she turns eighteen. To be honest the other two princesses are more useful around the place, you know for DIY, scaring the crows, sorting out pub brawls that sort of thing, but Rene, well she's my, she's my princess. What I need is a ride in the country to clear my head, that should do the trick, might give me an opportunity to have a chat with Rene as well, she was so upset.

(Possible song here for the king or a duet with the queen).

(End song)

(Blackout, close curtains).

(End scene).

Scene 5

(The curtains open on Alf who is sleeping on the side of the river bank. If necessary, this can be done quite simply with a small piece of scenery to indicate the riverbank and then sound effects for Alf jumping in the river as he goes off stage).

(PIB enters as a cockerel crows).

PIB *(To audience).* Look at him. He looks much more intelligent when he's asleep. I took the liberty of having a look around whilst he was in the land of nod. I spent a night on the tiles, got chatting to some of the local moggies and well the things I've learned would make your whiskers curl, if you had any that is. *(Pauses to lick his paw and wipes them over his ears).* It seems that Catatonia is not quite as peaceful and prosperous as I'd hoped, in fact, it is being plagued by a giant ogre. The royal family are most upset and a little bird told me the king would be passing this way with his daughter Princess Rene, this very morning. So, I have come up with a master plan to make us rich. *(Goes to Alf's side and whispers).* Alf. *(No response so he speaks louder).* Alf! *(Still no response so louder still).* Alf!! *(Still no response so shouts).* FIRE!

(Alf jumps up suddenly awake but groggy).

Alf *(Panics)* What, fire, where? *(In his panic he runs off stage and there is a sound effect of a big splash. PIB, looking off stage stands shaking his head, hands on hips).*

Alf *(From off stage).* Where's the fire?

PIB *(Hand to mouth as if having to shout).* You must have been dreaming master, there is no fire. And look at you now, you look like a drowned ca.... *(Looks at audience)* dog. You need to climb out of the river and remove your wet clothes or you'll catch cold. Get behind this bush and hand them to me and I'll wring them out.

(Alf steps onto stage and goes behind a bush and is out of sight when voices and sounds of horses are heard. Alf hands PIB the clothes who looks at them and then towards the voices and it's clear he's had an idea. He throws Alf's clothes deliberately off the other side of the stage).

PIB *(To audience).* He won't need those anymore. King Charlemagne and his entourage will be here any minute.

(Sound of a horsey neigh. The king enters with Lord Chamberlain and Rene talking amongst themselves. PIB rushes up to the king).

PIB *(As if in a state of panic. He bows to the king).* Your Highnesses, please, I need your help urgently.

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King Lord Chamberlain. Please slap me, I believe I'm being spoken to by a cat.

PIB There's no need for that I can explain in a moment but first my master was taking a swim when some thieves stole his clothes. He is stuck behind that bush (*indicates bush*) in nothing but his birthday suit.

King At least he has some clothing then.

Lord Chamberlain No, your highness a birthday suit is not an item of clothing it is ... (*Whispers in his ear*).

King It is what?

Lord Chamberlain (*Slightly exasperated*). Sire, it is the suit you were born in.

King I'm sorry Lord Chamberlain but I wasn't born in a suit, I was born completely stark (*penny drops*) Ahh yes, I get you now, very funny. (*Laughing and then sternly*). Walk away Rene. (*Pause for the audience to get it. Rene turns her back on the bush*). Lord Chamberlain run back to the carriage and get the spare cape and tunic from the trunk and some boots for the erm, erm, talking cat.

(*Lord Chamberlain exits*).

PIB Thank you, Your Highness. Sir Alf of (*starts to purr then realises*) Purr... oni, yes, Purroni, will be very grateful and indeed a pair of boots for me. (*To audience*). I knew there was something I was missing.

King (*Musing to himself*). Sir Alf hey, a nobleman. (*Back to PIB*). Well, we can't have thieves and vagabonds roaming our land, preying on fine upstanding gentleman like you can we. Ripping the poor off is one thing, but the rich, whatever is the world coming to.

(*Lord Chamberlain returns with the cape and tunic and hands them to Alf who is still out of sight behind the bush. He gives PIB a pair of boots. (Alf puts on the cloths and comes out from behind the bush oblivious to what has just happened. PIB puts on the boots)*).

King Sir Alf, we welcome you to Catatonia and I apologise for the ill treatment you have received at the hands of those thieving scoundrels who took your clothing, they must be from (*A local town or place*) it's the only explanation.

(*Alf looks at PIB confused, who in turn gives him a knowing wink and indicates he should just get on with it*).

Alf (*Still not quite sure what has gone on but goes with it*). Tha...thank you, I think.

PIB (*In an aside to Alf*). It's King Charlemagne.

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Alf *(Slightly surprised)*. Oh, Your Highness. I am sure that not everyone in your land is as *(Rene half turns and Alf is smitten and moves towards her)* gorgeous, majestic, stunning,

King Sorry?

Alf *(Hastily pulling himself together)*. Er, I'm sure not everyone in your land is as outrageous, sadistic and cunning as those scoundrels. *(To PIB)* Phew!

PIB *(To audience)* Phew indeed!

Rene Father, can I turn around now?

King Yes, sorry my dear. *(He introduces her to Alf)*. Rene this is Sir Alf of Purroni *(Rene sees him as she turns and falls instantly in love with Alf. Love Story music plays)*.

King *(They start to move off)*. Sir Alf, I insist that you come back to the palace at once and we will find you some new clothes that befit your status. *(The king puts a fatherly arm round Alf as they leave)*. You must also tell me about him he's quite a fellow *(indicating PIB)* and then about your land and your disposable income?

(They leave with the king trying to talk to Alf and Alf constantly trying to look at Rene. Lord Chamberlain follows dutifully and PIB is left on stage alone. He steps forward and the tabs close).

PIB *(To audience)*. Well, thank you very much! My brilliant plan, my brilliant execution and then I get forgotten. Well alright, except for the boots, but I do deserve some credit and recognition for my part in getting Alf into the royal palace, I feel hurt and betrayed. As soon as Alf saw Princes Rene I was forgotten. *(Elicits sympathy from the audience. They should ahhh)*.

(The Cat Warden enters, sneaking up to PIB. Audience should sing 'What's New Pussy Cat' and PIB responds).

PIB: *(PIB joins in singing)*. **'What's new Pussycat whoaooowhoa'**

I love that song. How kind of you to sing it for me. I usually use it as a warning. *(Remembers)*. Hang on, is that why you're singing it? I've already told you to sing it haven't I? I am a daft puss. Is that cat warden sneaking up on me? *(Turns to run but goes right into the arms of Cat Warden)*.

CW Ha haaa! Got you!

PIB *(Pauses for a second and begins rubbing himself against the warden's face, cat like)*. Meooow!

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CW Aaaaaaa Tishooooooooo (*Cat Warden does a giant sneeze and releases PIB who races off the stage*).

PIB (*As he runs off*). Sir Alf, wait for me, I'm coming.

Cat Warden This flippin' cat allergy. Has anyone got a tissue? (*Either a member of the audience or stage crew hand him a tissue. He does a big comedy blow of the nose*). Thank you. (*Hands the tissue back to wherever it came from*). I'll get him one of these days. I would really like to catch two of them, then I could have myself a new satnav, you know, a Tom Tom. I'm not all bad you know; I actually love animals. Chasing balls and howling at the moon; so eventually my dad bought me a dog. I didn't want to be a cat warden y'know, I wanted to work for the RSPCA. I love animals (*thinks*) as long as they don't talk. Maybe I should just give the whole thing up.

(*Perhaps a song from the Cat Warden here*).

(*End song*). (*Blackout*).

(*End scene*).

Scene 6

(*The curtains open either full stage or in front of a cloth with the townsfolk on their way to the ogre's lair (signs could indicate this). They are singing a song about how they are going to attack the ogre and defeat it. At the end of the song there is a mighty roar from the ogre and the townsfolk run off. The ogre appears on stage or at the top of his castle and starts to speak to the audience. The spotlight can be having a bit of trouble focusing and going bigger and smaller for the joke later.*)

Ogre First things first, this isn't Shrek and I'm not green am I? (*He is obviously green thus ensuring a 'yes I am no I'm not' with the audience. He roars they go quiet*). Actually, I'm puss coloured, which I suppose given the show is quite apt. Also there is no donkey, apart from the guy on the spotlight. (*Spotlight goes out*). Oh very funny! (*Spot comes back on*). Thank you. Where was I before I was rudely plunged into darkness. (*Light goes out again*). Sorry! (*Light up*). Did you see that lot then? (*Indicates chorus who have exited*). Once a week they try it on and it always ends the same way. Trouble is, ever since that witch cursed me I don't really have the stomach to eat any of 'em. Y'see, I get terrible heartburn every time I even licks one of them. I'm fading away. In fact I'm struggling to eat anything. A bite here and chew there, it wouldn't hurt would it? Well, I suppose it would but I am an ogre aren't I. The only thing I know of that will cure me is a Princess, specifically Princess Rene. I went to see the doctor a (*local doctor's name*) he's some kind of witch doctor I've heard and he gave me a prescription. It says, if you get heartburn take a Rennie, so that's

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what I going to do take a (*stresses*) Princess Rene that should cure it. I know I did say I wanted to marry her but I thought the King might not give her up if I said I wanted to eat her. Can't understand why?

(*Arnie comes in with a villager man or woman*).

Arnie Here you are Your Ogreship, I caught one of them running away, do you want to risk a lick, or shall I save it for later?

Ogre (*Getting excited*). Oooh! she / he looks like he / she should taste of chicken. I'll save it for later, I don't want to risk upsetting me stomach too soon, not with all (*looking at the audience*) these tasty looki I mean lovely people out here.

(*Arnie takes the person off who is struggling with him*).

Ogre (*Back to the audience*). Anyway, I've decided if they won't give her to me willingly, I am going to steal her away. (*Shouts*). Henchmen!

(*Arnie and Rambo come running on from different directions*).

Arnie & Rambo (*As they run to a halt they salute*). Here we are your Mighty Greenship!

Ogre Your what?

Arnie (*Speaks out of the side of his mouth*). Greenship!

Ogre Ohh! (*Looks curiously at the two who have very blank faces and carries on*). Riight, alright you two I want you to inveigle your way into the castle.

Rambo In what'll?

Ogre Sorry. (*Clarifying*). Wheedle your way into the castle.

Arnie Wee what?

Ogre Wee nothing. (*Exasperated*). Sneak into the castle.

Arnie & Rambo (*Penny drops*). Ohhhhhh!

Arnie Then what?

Ogre Find out where the Princess Rene is, kidnap her and bring her back here.

Arnie & Rambo (*Saluting again*). Right Your Monstership!

(*Ogre turns sharply and looks at them both as if he is not hearing right*).

Arnie (*Almost In a stage whisper to the Ogre*) Monstership!

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Ogre *(Completely unsure)*. Riiiiight. Well, hurry up and bring her straight back, I'm not feeling at all well, in fact I'm quite fancying caterpillar on toast, covered in Marmite! *(Starts to go off or to disappear from the top of his castle)*. Here little caterpillar, I have some Marmite for you!

(Arnie and Rambo are left on stage. They relax now he has gone).

Arnie He's acting very strangely isn't he?

Rambo Yes, not only is he eating strange things instead of people I think he's goin' deaf. I think it's down to lack of 'umans in his diet.

Arnie You could say, he's lost his humanity.

(Slight pause then they look at each other).

Rambo *(With a shake of the head)*. Nah, he lost that years ago.

Arnie Yeh you're right!

Rambo Well, we better get on with this or he'll be 'aving us on toast.

(They start to go off).

Arnie: Ooooh! I don't like the thought of that. *(Pause)* I'm not keen on Marmite at all!

(Song or exit. End song or exit / blackout, curtain).

(End of scene).

Scene 7

(Curtains open onto a full stage in the palace. There could be an opening song and dance for the chorus. Once again it's the royal court. All the courtiers have assembled to hear the announcement about the royal ball to celebrate Princess Rene's eighteenth birthday and to greet the new heroes of the hour Lord Alf of Purroni and Puss in Boots the walking, talking cat. There is some general hubbub from the chorus as the curtains open. The royals have not appeared yet and they are all getting excited).

Courtier 2 Oh I do love a good ball.

(All around agree, Oh yes, so do I etc.).

Courtier 1 All that dancing and drinking and drinking and dancing.

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